

UNDERMOUNTAIN

THE LOST CHAMBERS



PHIL BECKWITH, ALEX CLIPPINGER, ELISE CRETTEL, ASHLEY MAY,
LUCIELLA SCARLETT, CHRISTOPHER WALZ & MICAH WATT



UNDERMOUNTAIN

The Lost Chambers

Publisher: Pyromaniac Press

Authors: Phil Beckwith, Alex Clippinger, Elise Cretel,
Ashley May, Luciella Scarlett, Christopher Walz & Micah Watt

Layout: Micah Watt

Editor: R. P. Davis

Cover Art: Dean Spencer

Internal Art: Dante Cifaldi, Luciella Scarlett, Dean Spencer,
Luigi Castellani, Fesbra, Daniel Commerci - daniel.comerci.com,
DMsGuild Creator Resource (Varied)

Cartography: Phil Beckwith, Chris Bissette

Backgrounds: Dante Cifaldi



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.

©2016 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.

Table of Contents

Adventure	Level	Author	Page
Introduction			3
Abandoned Atelier	3	Ashley May	4
Maestro's Hideout	6	Elise Cretel	11
Sanctuary of the Goddess	6	Elise Cretel	18
UWPS (Undermountain Water Purification & Sanitation)	6	Alex Clippinger	24
Keeper of Secrets	7	Micah Watt	29
Mouthers of Madness	8	Alex Clippinger	35
Of Two Minds	8	Christopher Walz	40
Hunger of Abbathor	9	Micah Watt	50
Molthglor's Garden	12	Phil Beckwith	58
Sargauth Sanctuary	12	Luciella Scarlett	63
Cathedral of Bones	13	Christopher Walz	70
Author Biographies			77

Introduction

Welcome to *Undermountain: The Lost Chambers*!

This compilation of 11 adventures, brought to you by seven of the Dungeon Masters Guild's best authors, is intended to be a modular set of adventure locations designed to be dropped into any location within Undermountain with little to no effort on your part to integrate them.

They are intended for use with the *Dungeon of the Mad Mage* hardcover, but could easily be introduced as part of any Undermountain or dungeoncrawl campaign.

Undermountain: The Lost Chambers has some internal continuity, but each of the locations can be used as self-contained encounters, each with unique features and NPCs, to add depth and detail to your journey through the vast, dark halls of the Mad Mage.

Substance and Style

Upon first read through you will notice that there is variation in the presentation of the adventure locations from author to author. For example, some make use of read-aloud text while others do not. Some have a sword & sorcery/OSR influence, while others are more high fantasy, comedic or even a grittier flavor.

This is not a mistake. This is an effort to ensure that your favorite authors remain true to **their** unique style as they contribute to this compilation. Continuity is maintained through layout consistency, but as each author brings a unique voice to the project, we wanted to honor that by letting each write the way they are most comfortable with.

The result is a compilation that reflects the contributors. Some readers may find that this makes various adventures perhaps more or less compelling, but we're sure that you will find material to your tastes within *Undermountain: the Lost Chambers*.

Adjusting the Adventures

In addition to indicating the appropriate character level

for play, some of these adventures provide suggestions in making adjustments for smaller or larger groups, characters of higher or lower levels, and characters that are otherwise a bit more powerful than the adventure is optimized for. You're not bound to these adjustments; they're here for your convenience.

To figure out whether you should consider adjusting the adventure, add up the total levels of all the characters and divide the total by the number of characters (rounding .5 or greater up; .4 or less down). This is the group's Average Party Level (APL). To approximate the **party strength** for the adventure, consult the following table.

Determining Party Strength

Party Composition

3-4 characters, APL less than
3-4 characters, APL equivalent
3-4 characters, APL greater than
5 characters, APL less than
5 characters, APL equivalent
5 characters, APL greater than
6-7 characters, APL less than
6-7 characters, APL equivalent
6-7 characters, APL greater than

Party Strength

Very weak
Weak
Average
Weak
Average
Strong
Average
Strong
Very Strong

Some encounters may include a sidebar that offers suggestions for certain party strengths. If a particular recommendation is not offered, or not appropriate for your group, you don't have to make adjustments.

Acronyms Used

PHB - Players Handbook
DMG - Dungeon Masters Guide
MM - Monster Manual
VGTM - Volo's Guide to Monsters
MToF - Mordenkainen's Tome of Foes

ABANDONED ATELIER

The adventure location is designed for 4-6 characters of level 3 (Tier 1, APL 3).

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Between the mad wizard and his mad apprentices, no one can be entirely sure who is to blame for the construction of this alchemical laboratory, or who eventually left so much valuable knowledge and equipment to decay. At the heart of the abandoned atelier lies a hidden garden that was once used for the controlled growth of special plants and mushrooms. Over time, a combination of curiosity, madness, and perhaps an interest in Zuggtmoy, the Demon Queen of Fungi (see Adventure Hooks), led them down the path that eventually led to the ruin of this lab.

A parasitic fungus deep within the atelier's underground garden mutated and infected a colony of otherwise peaceful myconids that lived in the neighboring caves. By hijacking the rapport spores the myconids use to communicate, the parasitic fungus quickly took over the entire colony of myconids, turning them into mindless followers that exist only to tend to the growth and continued survival of the stationary parasite.

ADVENTURE OVERVIEW

The characters enter the abandoned atelier by clearing some light, moss-covered rubble that blocks its entrance. The entrance is noticed in passing by a dim, blue-green glow coming from the other side of the debris.

In exploring the abandoned atelier, they find a variety of bizarre, overgrown fungi have consumed the dark and damp space.

The goal is to flip three gold-handled levers in the upper, middle, and lower studies, granting access to the hidden garden and the final boss.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Strange Goings-On. A "zombie myconid" was spotted in a cave closer to the surface, or even on the surface at night. It was behaving strangely, and attacked someone (a miner, a traveling merchant, a farmer, etc). The adventurers are asked by a local researcher to look into

the bizarre occurrence.

Look, A Suspicious Rock Pile! The adventurers stumble on the Abandoned Atelier as part of their wanderings through the halls of Undermountain.

Not Her Again... If your party has played Rage Of Demons storyline, they've likely already become acquainted with Zuggtmoy, the Demon Queen Of Fungi. Her influence can be easily woven into this dungeon via symbols of worship and motifs etched in stone or on book covers. This isn't necessary for the narrative, but can be a fun tie-in for a party that will recognize the references.

SUGGESTED TREASURE

There are some minor treasures provided in the dungeon, but besides a few scrolls and potions, they are generally items pertaining to the dungeon itself and will be of limited use in later adventures.

The theme of the dungeon is very plant-like, but at its core, it is a long-abandoned atelier once used by an alchemist. For this reason, it could have any number of items and equipment of interest to adventurers. You may use this as an opportunity to distribute items that will benefit your particular party at your discretion.

General Features

Terrain. The entirety of the alchemy lab is worked stone block. The stone itself remains in relatively good condition, but much of it is faintly slickened by a thin sheen of algae flourishing in the humidity.

Light. Most rooms have very little light. There are numerous bioluminescent plant growths, but none cast enough of an ambient glow to even provide dim light.

Odor. The atelier carries a musty scent of stagnant air and mold. The humidity is almost oppressive.



1a. Library Hall, Upper

You stand on the landing at the top of a flight of stairs leading downward into darkness. Every wall around you, every conceivable vertical surface, is embedded with bookshelves. The stairs below your feet are unremarkable, but the ceiling is a stunning sight to behold.

Above your head is an upside-down forest of fungal growths. Fuzzy, curling stalks extend downward from the ceiling some ten feet above your heads, emitting soft glows in blues and greens. Water droplets seep through the stone blocks above, catching the light as they drip down before falling into darkness.

Stairs lead downward to another landing before doubling back. If a light source is tossed from the uppermost landing, it clatters down the stairs and falls 20 feet before landing on the moist floor below, illuminating a ruined laboratory.

From the upper landing, there is a large wooden double-door to the west. From the lower landing, there is a large wooden double-door leading to the east.

The Doors. The doors are all secured, likely barred from the other side, as there are no visible locking mechanisms. However, the rotten wood can easily be broken and the doors can be broken through with a **DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check**. A *knock* spell will also unseal the doors.

The Bookshelves. The humid air has not been kind to the library here, and the books are nearly all rotted and destroyed. Various fungi grow from the parchments and leather book bindings, and the ink within has run to the point of illegibility. Each 5-foot section of bookshelf has a 5% chance of finding something noteworthy.

Roll 1d4 Treasure

- 1 A rare tome worth 20gp
- 2 A hollowed-out book hiding gems (DM's discretion)
- 3 *spell scroll*, *cantrip* (DM's discretion)
- 4 *spell scroll*, *1st level* (DM's discretion)

1a. Library Hall, Lower

Your feet make wet sounds each time they unstick from the algae-slickened stairs, descending further and further until you finally reach the bottom of the tall room. A quarter inch of stagnant water has pooled on the floor.

The focal point of the room is a grand desk made of dark wood. Once a model of craftsmanship and the woodcarver's art, the desk is now half-collapsed from rot. The glass bottles on its surface are broken, the alchemy equipment has rusted beyond repair, and the desk now hosts a variety of fungi that have made the wet wood their home.

On the southern wall, you can see the frame of a large door, but rather than a set of wooden doors like you've seen several times before in this place, there is a slab of smooth stone.

Descending the stairs past the middle landing, the party enters the ruined lab. There is a set of wooden double doors on the western wall. There is also a larger door here, on the southern wall, that is made of solid stone. There are no visible key holes, and the locking mechanism is too complex for a *knock* spell to provide any benefit.

Heaps of rotten books lay against the walls, fallen from the bookshelves that line the stairs above, and a broken ladder lies across the floor.

2. The Upper Study

Beyond the-west facing door, and past the reach of your light sources, is a dark room. Wherever your light does not reach as the door swings open, the surfaces glow faintly.

Entering the uppermost door on the western landing presents the party with a dark and eerie room, in which surfaces faintly glow with bioluminescent fungal growths. If the party progresses into the room with a bright light source, they risk triggering several shriekers growing around the room, as well as the room's possessed myconids and a singular gas spore on the far side of the room, guarding a gold-handled lever on the wall.

Creatures. Four **shriekers** (MM p138) are scattered around the room. Five **possessed myconids** (see Appendix) and a **gas spore** (MM p138) are present at the far end of the room. Remember that the gas spore appears

ABANDONED ATELIER

1 square = 5 feet



to be a beholder (MM p28), and should be described as such to the party, unless a character succeeds on a **DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) check**.

Tactics. The shriekers mindlessly scream as long as there is a bright light source nearby, but they are essentially a harmless distraction. The gas spore attempts to move itself into the middle of the party so that its death burst will effect as many creatures as possible. The possessed myconids try to attack the closest enemy to them, with little concern for threat potential. One of the possessed myconids is armed with a gold-headed “club”, which does 1d4 bludgeoning damage.

Treasure. On a successful **DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check** to examine the club carried by one of the possessed myconids, an adventurer realizes that the club resembles the gold-handled lever on the wall. The opposite end of the “club” has several notches and grooves, somewhat like a round key. It does not fit into any devices in the current room, but will be necessary for operating the device in Room 4, The Lower Study. Note: If the players make no attempt to investigate the club or show no interest in it, you can turn the Investigation check into a **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check** to “notice” the same features.



Development. If the party flips the lever at the other end of the room, they will hear mechanical sounds echoing through the walls, but no additional effects are apparent.

3. The Middle Study

Upon entering this room you feel a welcome reprieve from the suffocating humidity of the stairwell. In fact, by comparison the dryness in this room is almost unsettling. The room is dimly lit by large, lantern-like dandelion puffs, which emit a faint fiery glow from under their fluffy surfaces.

The bookshelves that wrap around the room seem remarkably well preserved, and dust-covered alchemical equipment lays on the desks along with some large, sealed clay jars. On the far side of the room, you can see a gold-handled lever in the wall.

The floor here is littered with the desiccated remains of what were once myconids, now shriveled and apparently lifeless.

Entering the eastern door on the middle landing will place the party in a warm, dry room. The ceilings are roughly fifteen feet high, and the glowing ‘dandelion puffs’ that hang above emit low light. If the party attempts to check the books, they’ll find that most are long-winded and technical treatises on the influences of various schools of magic on gardening.

Creatures. Seven “dessicated myconids” are laying around the room, and appear to be shriveled and lifeless until they choose to take action. They will be stirred to attack the party once the party has fully entered the room, and a creature approaches the lever on the wall. These dessicated myconids are functionally the same as the possessed myconids used elsewhere in the dungeon, but are vulnerable to fire damage. In addition, they regenerate 1d8 hp per turn if given access to water (water-based attacks, stolen waterskins, etc).

Tactics. The dessicated myconids are drawn to any water source they can identify, and relentlessly pursue visible water skins hanging on belts or backpacks. If any adventurer uses a water-based attack on them, they focus their attacks on that adventurer.

The clay jars on the desks are filled with one gallon of water each. Area-of-effect spells can damage the desks

and cause the jars to break, providing the dessicated myconids with a source of restoration.

Development. The “dandelion puffs” that hang above the room are in fact flammable and will violently combust if struck, creating an explosion of fire in a 15-foot radius around them. A creature caught within the area must make a **DC 15 Dexterity saving throw**, taking 14 (4d6) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. You can consider having missed ranged weapon or spell attacks trigger the ‘puff’ explosions. The bookshelves and work tables in this room are highly flammable due to the dryness. The dessicated myconids single-mindedly flee from exploding puffs.

If the party flips the lever at the other end of the room, they hear mechanical sounds echoing through the walls, but no additional effects are apparent.

4. The Lower Study

The shelves of this room are covered in bottles of various shapes and sizes.

A large contraption sits on a stone platform against the far wall, composed of bottles suspended over unlit burners, spiraling glass tubes, valves, gauges, and other almost needlessly-complex alchemical brewing devices.

Entering the western door at the bottom of the stairs presents an old alchemy lab and potion storage. A convoluted brewing device consumes much of the far side of the room, and a **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check** reveals that liquid remains in some of the tubes and suspended bottles. Further examination of the liquid will rely on a **DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check** to identify that the liquid is likely acidic.

The base of a lever, like those seen in previous rooms, is mounted on the wall behind the brewing device, obscured by the device and only noticed on a successful active or passive **DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check**. However, the arm of the lever is missing. If a mundane object is inserted into the device to function as a makeshift arm, the lever does not budge, seemingly ‘locked’ in place. It requires the use of the lever arm from the Upper Study to unlock it. Alternately, a lever can be unscrewed from a previous room and inserted into the mechanism to move it.

The brewing device is immovable, as various sections are bolted to the stone base. Sections may be disassembled to allow access to the lever socket beyond the device with a **DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check**. An adventurer proficient in alchemist’s supplies has advantage on this check. On a failure, pieces of the glass apparatus break and the creature attempting disassembly takes 5 (2d4) acid damage.

A Small creature can attempt to climb through the device’s maze of tubes and bottles to access the lever base with a successful **DC 15 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check**. A Tiny creature can perform the same feat with a **DC 10 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check**. On a failure, pieces of the glass will break and the creature attempting to traverse the device takes 5 (2d4) acid damage.

Treasure. Searching the shelves reveals that most of the potions are clearly compromised, with fungi growing through the corks, tangled plant masses growing inside the liquid, etc. Of all of the hundreds, if not thousands of potions here, searching each shelf has a chance of yielding an intact potion. Roll 1d100. On a result of 01-10, the searcher finds a usable potion. Select a potion from the following table, or roll to determine the result.

Roll 1d10	Treasure
1	<i>elixir of health</i> (DMG 168)
2	<i>potion of climbing</i> (DMG 187)
3	<i>oil of slipperiness</i> (DMG 184)
4	<i>potion of poison</i> (DMG 188)
5	<i>potion of water breathing</i> (DMG 188)
6	<i>potion of resistance - acid</i> (DMG 188)
7	<i>potion of resistance - fire</i> (DMG 188)
8	<i>potion of resistance - cold</i> (DMG 188)
9	<i>potion of resistance - poison</i> (DMG 188)
10	<i>potion of greater healing</i> (DMG 188)

Development. If the party successfully moves the lever, they hear mechanical sounds echoing through the walls. If the levers in the upper and middle studies have already been flipped, the party hears the sound of stone grinding on stone as the slab in the main room slides back.

5. The Accursed Garden

This room is eerily beautiful. Fresh water flows from fountains on the wall into troughs that run through the garden, nourishing the wildly overgrown plant life. Shimmering spores float in the air like fireflies, stirred gently by the rush of air that came through the now open door.

In the center of the room is a heap of tangled plant life, coated in luminescent purple mold.

Entering the sealed door on the southern wall brings the party into an eerily beautiful space.

A successful active or passive **DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check** notices there is a lever on the back wall, covered in plant growth.

Creatures. The focal point of the room is the luminous growth (see page 10), the source of the parasitic spores that overcame the myconids. It is assisted by four possessed myconids (see page 10) that blend into the overgrowth in the corners of the room, and can only be spotted by a **DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check** before they begin moving.

The luminous growth and other threats in the room do not become active more than half the party has entered the room.

The heap seems to simply be an overgrown pile of weeds, until it stirs and opens a massive maw, filled with tooth-like thorny protrusions. In the center of its amorphous 'body,' A high-pitched whistling sound issues from deep within it, not unlike a leaf whistle, and several myconids emerge from the overgrown and shadowy corners of the room, whistling in chorus with their leader.

Tactics. If the myconids in the corners of the room are not noticed before they become active, they receive a surprise round. They use this to try to put themselves in a more advantageous position (blocking the exit, etc). The luminous growth is immobile, so the possessed myconids attempt to cut off the party's retreat by getting between them and the door, and try to herd the party toward the growth.

If the luminous growth is dealt damage, the possessed myconids screech as if in pain (though they don't actually take any damage). If the luminous growth dies before the possessed myconids have died, on its death they remain hostile, but their regeneration feature will cease to function.

Treasure. Lying on the floor of a garden path is a stone amulet on a chain, covered in mossy growth. The amulet depicts a skeletally thin but feminine face set against the underside of a mushroom cap. A successful **DC15 Intelligence (Religion) check** identifies the symbol as Zugtmoy, the Demon Queen of Fungi, and Lady of Rot and Decay (MTof, p156).

Development. If the lever is flipped, a grinding sound echoes through the room, and the water flowing into the fountains will slow to a halt. This enrages the luminous growth and the possessed myconids, who single-mindedly attempt to turn the lever back on, except to attack any creature between themselves and the lever.



POSSESSED MYCONID

Medium plant, lawful evil

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 22 (4d8+4)

Speed 20 ft.

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

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages --

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Sun Sickness. While in sunlight, the myconid has disadvantage on ability checks, attack rolls, and saving throws. The myconid dies if it spends more than 1 hour in direct sunlight.

Regeneration. The myconid regains 3 hit points at the start of its turn. If it takes fire or radiant damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of the myconid's next turn. The myconid only dies if it starts its turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

Actions

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

Pacifying Spores (3/day). The myconid ejects spores at one creature it can see within 5 feet of it. The target must succeed on a DC 11 Constitution saving throw or be stunned for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

LUMINOUS GROWTH

Large plant, lawful evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 136 (16d10+48)

Speed 0 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	8 (-1)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	5 (-3)

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Sun Sickness. While in sunlight, the myconid has disadvantage on ability checks, attack rolls, and saving throws. The myconid dies if it spends more than 1 hour in direct sunlight.

Actions

Multiattack. The luminous growth makes two slam attacks. If both attacks hit a Medium or smaller target, the target is grappled (escape DC 14), pulled closer, and the luminous growth uses its Engulf on it.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

Engulf. The luminous growth engulfs a Medium or smaller creature grappled by it. The engulfed target is blinded, restrained, and unable to breathe, and it must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw at the start of each of the growth's turns or take 13 (2d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage. The growth can have only one creature engulfed at a time.

Pacifying Spores (3/day). The myconid ejects spores at one creature it can see within 5 feet of it. The target must succeed on a DC 11 Constitution saving throw or be stunned for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

MAESTRO'S HIDEOUT

The adventure location is designed for 4-6 characters of level 6 (Tier 2, APL 6).

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Every day the City of Waterdeep has merchants filling the harbors with ships as goods flow into the market place from the far reaches of Faerun. People travel far to see the vast Waterdeep markets, the glittering jewels, mystic swords, and other treasures found by the bravest of adventurers.

As the fiery sun begins to set on the city's horizon, candles and oil light the night markets and taverns begin to fill with adventurers, merchants, and singing. Like any city, the City of Splendors is full of rumors of hidden relics, mysterious lore about the depths of Undermountain, and great adventure come day break.

ADVENTURE OVERVIEW

This adventure can take place in Undermountain or any adventure that includes mountainous, underground, or hilly terrain and a city full of rumors.

A small earthquake hits Undermountain. It doesn't cause much damage, but there are a couple of landslides. One of the landslides reveals an entrance to Undermountain that was previously unknown. This entrance can be deep within Undermountain or right outside it on Mount Waterdeep.

Party members will come across young NPCs who have a failed flying machine that wrecks while on search of a fabled book of alchemy in this cavern.

Instead of a fabled book, the heroes instead find a portal, which looks like a normal doorway, that leads to a vast hidden lab and an eccentric thinker, artist, and inventor who is excited about his projects and capturing the wildlife of the island in pen and paint. He is happy to share his new discoveries and to help the adventurers to their next conquest with the help of his invention. The heroes also discover they are no longer in Undermountain once they pass the portal into Leo's lab: They have entered a small cave system on a floating island far above Waterdeep after entering the portal.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Fabled Book of Mystic Alchemy

Young adventurers approach the party asking for aid finding a fabled secret book of alchemy deep in the mountains. A young girl named Helena wants to find the book to impress her grandmother and to read its secrets.

Missing from the Waterdeep

A merchant's son has gone missing in Waterdeep. The merchant Lana says her son went out help his young inventor friend, a young girl who has built a simple hang glider. The last her son told her was that the two were headed to the mountain to test one of her inventions.

Strange Lights

There are rumors in the Waterdeep taverns that mysterious lights have been appearing in some of the abandoned caverns of Undermountain. Some say it is ghosts of the old wizards or dwarves of Undermountain. Others say a mad wizard is camping out there.

A Cry for Help

While adventurers are questing in Undermountain, they suddenly hear a cry for help coming from a nearby cavern entrance.

Dramatis Personae

Helena is a young human woman. Her parents are both carpenters, which motivated her to build her own creations. She wants to impress her grandmother by finding a fabled book of alchemy rumored to hold great alchemical secrets of Faerûn from the goddess Mystra.

Helena's best friend is a merchant's son named **Andre**. They have been friends since they were small children. They built the hang glider together, using materials left over from her parents' inventive projects and materials they found in the woods. Helena is always full of new ideas and always coming across old treasure maps and legends of old relics, secret societies, and forgotten knowledge.

Lana is Andre's mother. She is a half-elf that sells elven and dwarven-made armor and weapons. She is a retired adventurer who runs a tent in one of the crowded markets of Waterdeep and sometimes has rare magic items among her wares. She was once a great fighter of Waterdeep and still carries her trusty swords.

Leo is an eccentric artist who seems to have wandered into Waterdeep through a portal. Many people thought his ideas of flying machines and other inventions completely mad, so he sought refuge in Undermountain, where he could work on his projects in peace. He is very kind and immensely curious about Faerûn, magic, and the Weave. The whole planet—and the concept of magic—seems foreign to him. He had never seen dragons until he moved his laboratory and workshop to Undermountain. He carries small daggers and a crossbow, and he knows some wizard spells and cantrips. He is very humanitarian and enjoys helping others with his inventions. Occasionally he hunts deer and rabbit in the woods of Undermountain with his crossbow. Sometimes Leo invites a few of his artisan friends from Waterdeep to hang out with him in his laboratory to share ideas.

Caverns of Maestro's Hideout

General Features

Terrain. The caverns lead into the depths of Undermountain. The walls are deep green and blue granite. The ceilings of the entrance are vaulted and seem to reach toward the heavens. There is a deep crevice in the entrance chamber, likely caused by the earthquake.

Light. The caverns are dark except for those describing torches or other forms of lighting.

Ceiling Height The ceilings are vaulted and the entrance with the river and gorge are intimidatingly high. Some of the smaller storage rooms seem to be carved out of the granite and have ceilings that are 15 feet high.

1. Cave Entrance

The path up Mount Waterdeep is overgrown and full of dangers such as hungry bears and rock slides. After a long hike, you make it to a cave. The sun burns hot as you wipe your brow with relief at finding a place to rest.

The sun is hot and the air wavers off the dark granite and rubble as you walk into the large, dark cave opening. The temperature drops and eyes adjust as you step into the depths of Undermountain.

As you adjust to the cool darkness of the cave, you walk into great commotion. Ahead, a hang glider wavers in the air with two passengers. It crosses a deep gorge with a rope trailing behind it. The glider begins to lean to one side and a loud crack fills the air as it clips the edge of the gorge and crashes onto the other side. You hear a young man's cry of pain. A young woman frantically pulls animal skins and branches off the shattered glider to reach her companion.

The young woman is Helena, and the young man is Andre. Treat Helena as a **scout** (MM p349) and Andre as a **tribal warrior** (MM p350).

Helena sees the party and shouts that her companion is hurt. She asks them for help.

The young woman has a heavy rope which the heroes can use to cross the gorge. However, she is not strong enough to throw it 100 feet across the chasm.

The gorge is 100 feet wide and 60 feet deep. A rushing cave river meanders through it. There are plenty of stalagmites on either side to which the rope can be anchored.

Encourage the players to come up with a plan to get the rope across. This could be anything from one of the characters simply flying across the chasm and carrying one end back to firing a smaller rope tied to a crossbow bolt across the gorge and using the lighter rope as a pilot line.

Once the large rope is secured, creatures crossing it must make a **DC 15 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check** to cross the gorge by the rope suspended. A failed check results in a fall into the gorge. A falling creature takes 18 (6d6) bludgeoning damage, lands in the water, and washes up on the sand bar in Area 5.

2. Cavern of Deep Sashelas

After you cross the bridge, you see the glider has crashed into a heap of animal skins and splintered wood next to a beautiful altar carved from layered blue granite. The altar emits a great sense of peace before you. When you near the altar, you almost sense the breeze of the water plane. A beautiful male statue of a water deity stands bearing a tritan. Before him is a bowl surrounded by shells, dolphins, and animals of the deep.

The travelers tell the party that there is a fabled mystic and ancient book of alchemy within these caves and they came to find it. Helena asks the adventurers if they will look for it while she attends her wounded friend.

Altar of Deep Sashelas. Another deep crevice lies

MAESTRO'S HIDEOUT

1 square = 5 feet



to the north of the altar. On both sides of the gorge are pillars that look like a foot of a stone bridge, but there is no bridge linking the two sides.

The statue holds an empty basin decorated with shells, starfish, dolphins, and nautiluses. A successful **DC 12 Intelligence (Religion) check** reveals that the statue depicts Deep Sashelas. Succeeding by 5 or more reveals that Deep Sashelas is an elven deity known for sculpting the oceans, corals, and islands.

On the altar are four jars. Each contains one of the following alchemical items: oil, water, salt, and aluminum shavings. The jars can be picked up.

If a creature adds water and salt to the basin, the water will glow a magical blue, and large stones begin to fly from the walls to form a bridge across the gorge between the pillars. The noise of them clattering together echoes throughout the caverns.

There is enough water to fill five water skins with the glowing blue water. A creature proficient with alchemist's tools can make a **DC 13 Intelligence check** to identify the glowing liquid as a potion of water breathing that, in addition to the normal abilities, gives a +1 bonus to the drinker's AC.

The characters will undoubtedly wish to mix other substances in the basin. If they mix the substances in any other way other than water and salt, one of the following monsters sets will appear. Roll 1d6 and consult the table:

Roll	Creatures
1-2	2 blue dragon wyrmlings (MM p91) and 1 black dragon wyrmling (MM p88)
3-4	4 dire wolves (MM p321) and 4 death dogs (MM p321)
5-6	3 basilisks (MM p24)



The jars magically refill their contents after being poured into the basin. The magic glowing water remains in the basin. Incorrect mixtures magically drain from the basin as soon as the trap is triggered. The party can only make the magical mixture once. If they fill the basin with salt and water a second time, it will be plain salt water. Moving a jar more than 10 feet from the altar causes that jar to become non-magical forever.

3. Vaulted Cavern

Giant granite stalactites loom above stalagmites, dripping water into small pools and puddles. Transparent creatures dart about in the pools of water. Some pools have creatures glowing with bioluminescence, offering dim light around the pools.

Creature

One of the stalagmites is a **roper** (MM p261) that gently shifts as its attention moves toward the adventurers' footsteps on the wet cave floor. A hero with a passive **Perception of 16** or higher notices this movement.



If no party member notices the roper, it gets a surprise round, and attacks with its tendrils as soon as a creature comes within range.

The tunnel from Area 3, past Area 4, to Area 5 slopes steeply downward.

4. The Roman Bath

The wooden door opens to a very large, torch-lit bath. The light flickers off the glistening tiled mosaic of creatures from the Elemental Plane of Water. Merfolk and fish cascade the walls as dolphins dive across the intricate tile designs. The reflection of the water wavers across the walls as the smell of wine wafts from empty wine cups on the side of the pool.

This beautiful room is a very large bath lit with torches mounted in large decorative metal brackets on the walls. The walls and floors around the large bath are tiled in shades of blue and teal with mosaics of sea life. There are two empty decorative metal wine cups on the side of the bath. The bath is about three feet deep around its edges. In the center a pit plunges 60 feet. Only creatures with darkvision will see the chest at the bottom of the pit.

The chest is unlocked and held shut with a simple latch. It contains a 50 gp diamond with a symbol etched into it. A successful **DC 12 Intelligence (Religion) check** reveals the symbol represents Deep Sashelas. There are also large granite stones in the chest.

When a hero opens the chest, read or paraphrase:

The latch easily slides open as a rush of bubbles dances around you and rises above. Warm and cool water surrounds you as look into the chest. An engulfing feeling of deep sea magic fills your being as you pick up the beautifully carved diamond.

The tunnel from Area 3, past Area 4, to Area 5 slopes steeply downward.

5. Underground River

Glowing creatures dart about a pool of water nearby. Torches light an entrance to the north. The flames warmly crackle and pop, almost welcoming you to the wooden door.

This area is mostly empty. There is a small pool full of cave creatures such as clear crayfish and small blue glowing creatures.

Any creature which fell off the rope bridge will wash up on the sandbar here.

There is a locked wooden door in the granite wall to the north. Metal torches are mounted to the wall on both sides. A successful **DC 12 Dexterity (thieves tools) check** unlocks the door.

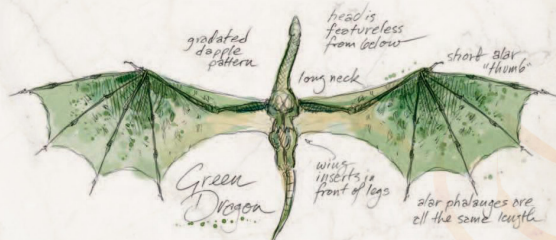
When the door opens there is an almost invisible watery film over the doorway. This door is a portal that leads to the rest of the dungeon, which is part of the sandstone mountain within the floating island.

Note: After this adventure, if the floating island disappears and goes somewhere else, the north wall will look like a plane granite and will be a dead end.

6. Artist's Laboratory

A short passage leads you to a room full of cluttered tables. Beautifully crafted drawings and paintings of Undermountain wildlife and dragons cover the wall. Schematics of strange and wondrous inventions are scattered across the walls. The candles flicker around fresh paints and a vast collection of books.

This room has several thick wooden tables covered in candles, art tools, and lab supplies. Schematics of marvelous inventions, animal anatomy, nature, and strange artifacts cover the walls. One table is full of books on topics such as arcana, alchemy, geology, and art. None of them seem to be the book the travelers were looking for. One table has alchemical components, beakers, a lantern, and burners with jars bubbling. Another table has an easel, paints, a large jar of multi-colored fireflies, art supplies, and more art books. The painting is of a strange flying machine. There is an unlocked door to the north.



Jar of Fireflies. The jar of fireflies sheds bright light in a 10-foot radius and dim light for an additional 10 feet. The jar lasts for 24 hours.

7. Trap Doors

This room is dark and has stone doors that lead to the west, north, and east.

The doors are sealed shut, and are made of a dense, hard stone. They cannot be opened with thieves tools, or indeed opened by any physical means the characters possess. A *knock* spell or similar magic opens a door.

Trapped Doors. 15 feet above each door—or 25 feet from the floor—is a mechanism with a star symbol. Each star mechanism has AC 15. Any ranged weapon or spell attack which hits a symbol will trigger the door below it to open. A miss causes a bolt of magical energy to shoot from the star toward the creature who made the attack. The bolt causes 2 (1d4) damage. Roll on the following table to determine the damage type:

Roll 1d6	Damage type
1	Fire
2	Frost
3	Psychic
4	Poison
5	Lightning
6	Radiant

8. Storage Room

This room is full of crates of various sizes that are nailed shut. These crates are full of wood, canvas, wooden nails, and candles. Small harmless horned beetles crawl about if any of the boxes are disturbed.

9. Pantry Storage

A door leading outside is wide open, allowing light from the glowing sunset to pour in. Two colorful faerie dragons rest on large bags of potatoes and grains. Two other faerie dragons play tug of war with a large piece of dried meat clenched between their powerful jaws. One of them shakes its head like a playful dog as it pulls hard on the salted meat.

This room is stocked with crates of produce, dried



meats, and jars of preserved vegetables and jams that are now splattered across the room. The dragons have ripped open sacks of grain and haphazardly smashed into crates of apples and dried fish. The door to the north leading outside is wide open. It appears the dragons figured out how to open the latch and break in to get to the food.

Creatures. 4 faerie dragons, one each of the following colors: green, blue, indigo, and violet (MM p133), which have gotten into the crates and baskets of food.

10. Open Door to a Cliff

Outside, you stand on a cliff on a floating island soaring high above Waterdeep. The sky is streaked with pink, orange, and purple as the sun starts to set peacefully. You can hear the rustling of trees further up the mountain as a mother dragon teaches her baby dragon to fly.

This area is a large cliff on the side of a floating island with a drop of hundreds of feet to sharp rocks below. This area is a dead end. A beautiful view unfolds before the adventurers as the sunset glows in oranges and pinks. In the distance dragons dip and glide through the glowing skies, and the heroes can see Waterdeep through the clouds below.

11. The Runway

This large room looms high with a cavernous ceiling. Crates covered in building tools line the walls along the sandy stone floor. Carefully painted white lines lead out to giant double doors both to the north and the south.

Lumber and crates of building materials are stacked along the walls. There appears to be a well used runway with lines painted onto the sandy ground.

12. The Flying Machine

Through the large doors stands a magnificent machine. A finely-crafted wooden frame pulls taut layers of canvas along their seams. A young man with brown hair pulled back into a ponytail appears out of the canvas. He puts down his tools, smiles, greets you warmly, and introduces himself as Leo.

This room contains a large flying machine crafted from wood and canvas. It is much larger and more complex than the small glider the party saw earlier.

Leo is a painter, inventor, scientist, and thinker. He says he is not quite sure if he is from this plane of existence as he shows his intricate work to the party. He says he is interested in learning about magic because the Weave does not exist where he comes from. He offers the party a ride on his latest contraption. If the party asks about the mystic alchemy book, Leo knows nothing about the book but says the party is free to look at the collection in his laboratory. Treat Leo as a **mage** (MM p347).

13. Flight!

This is a large cliff face with a beautiful view of the clouds and the lights of Waterdeep below. The large doors

Leo activates a mechanism which pushes open the giant doors, and a cool evening breeze rushes through the warm air of the cave. The large torches waver in the wind as the wheels of the flying machine creak faster and faster down the runaway.

You hold on tight, your blood burning with adrenaline and excitement. A gust of wind from the mountains pushes against the canvas of the machine and you see the burning lights of the city below like stars in the sky. As the machine takes flight, Leo yells out loud with excitement with the success of his flying machine. The night sky streaked with stars opens up as everyone enjoys a ride out of Undermountain.

leading out will easily allow the flying machine through after going down the runway.

Conclusion

Party members may wish to return to save the young NPCs that have crashed and return them to Waterdeep. The flying machine can hold everyone. Leo is willing to take the party to other adventures or places of interest along Undermountain and Waterdeep. Leo may also find interest in Waterdeep to put his skills in art, science, building, and engineering to use in trade for supplies. If Leo is not summoned for help, he remains happily in his lab, only leaving occasionally to order supplies for his creations, hunting wild game, or spending time with his artisan friends.



SANCTUARY OF THE GODDESS

The adventure location is designed for 4-6 characters of level 6 (Tier 2, APL 6).

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

During ancient times, the Drow were a thriving society in the splendor of Undermountain. They dwelled in intricate cities in endless labyrinths of caverns. Great creatures helped them pull wagons of treasures and goods deep underground for trade and to fill the underground markets. Many prominent families lived there and held great influence over Drow society. One of the wealthiest families took power. Not only were they keen merchants, but also full of new ideas to help the Drowcity thrive and maybe even rejoin other nations in trade who lived above ground in Waterdeep.

But one of their ideas created a great uprising. This family worshiped a good-aligned drow deity instead of Lolth. Lolth herself heard of this and turned the great underground city against this family. Legend has it that assassins played a hand in their demise. Others say a mob came and pillaged the great house, but no one truly knows who dealt the most severe vengeance on the family who worshiped Eilistraee and tried to bring a good alliance within the Drow society of Undermountain.

ADVENTURE OVERVIEW

That ancient Drow society is long gone. Only the remains of their great cities are left, crumbling deep in Undermountain, the ruins just a whisper of what was once a prosperous realm. One great house looms high in the caverns. Its tapestries long disintegrated and floors now crumbling, this symbol of Drow prosperity and power still holds the last few clues of what happened to the great Drow family. Their names have been long lost in time after looters chiseled out their effigies, but their legacy is still a secret legend in the shadows of Waterdeep.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Whispers in the Darkness. There are rumors in Waterdeep that there are whispers and voices heard from

Drow ruins deep in Undermountain. Some even claim they have heard children laughing deep in the shadows of the old great Drow house.



Goblin Creeping. An archeologist in Waterdeep claims they saw a strange goblin disappearing into some ruins within Undermountain. They saw the goblin wearing costly robes and carrying a great staff instead of wearing tattered rags like most goblin folk.

Mysterious Ruins. While adventuring through Undermountain, the adventurers stumble upon towering Drow ruins. The decorative carvings include statues and scenes that don't seem to match most Drow ruins. One can almost see amiable Drow in the beautifully carved scenes. Grand steps lead to a stone door left cracked open.

The Sanctuary

General Features

Sights, Sounds & Smells. Deep shadows caused by the party's torches fill detailed, ancient Drow carvings as the light flickers across it.

It is silent except for the echoes of distant water dripping and the sound of the adventurers' feet.

Doors & Walls Unless noted otherwise, all doors are unlocked and made from stone (AC 20, 50 hit points).

Unless noted otherwise, all walls are made from smoothed stone (AC 20, 50 hit points per 5 foot cube) and the ceiling heights are 10 feet.

Light. Unless otherwise noted the dungeon is unlit.

As the characters approach the Sanctuary entrance, read or summarize:

You've been walking for hours, accompanied by nothing but the sound of your feet echoing through the vast deep labyrinth of chambers which comprises the splendor of Undermountain. Your path gives into a massive cavern in which you see a great castle looming the cave wall, seemingly carved from the rock. A heavy, carved stone door lies open before you.

SANCTUARY OF THE GODDESS



1. Entrance Hall

When the characters open the door, read or summarize:

Ahead is a large, vaulted room. Parts of the floor have fallen in, and giant, ornately-carved fireplaces are to the east and west. A large archway looms to the north.

This whole room is difficult terrain. Creatures who wish to cross the crumbling floor and rubble must make a successful **DC 12 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check**. Creatures who fail the check fall into a room 10 feet below onto a pile of rubble, taking 4 (1d6) bludgeoning damage from the fall. There is no entrance or exit from the lower room other than somehow climbing out of it.

A successful **DC 12 Intelligence (Religion) check** reveals the carvings are of the Drow goddess Eilistraee. Succeeding by 5 or more reveals that Eilistraee is a good-aligned Drow goddess.

2. The Throne Room

This room appears to be a vast throne room. The beautiful mosaic tile has cracked and shifted with time. There is a door in the north end, to the left of two large granite thrones, and a door in the southwest corner in the western wall.

If the adventurers walk near the walls with a light source, they see ancient paintings of a Drow royal family that spans over centuries. The room has been long since looted and anything not made of stone has faded into dust. If the heroes search the rubble in the corners of the room, they find a small, ornate metal toy ball that was once painted with bright colors.

A successful **DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check** reveals a secret door in the northwest wall. A successful **DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation) check** reveals that a knob on the western throne can be rotated, which opens the door.

3. Hallway

This small hallway reveals a door to the south and a passageway to the west. The door has been boarded up. The rest of the hall is blocked by collapsed rubble.

The door can be forced open with a successful **DC 17 Strength check**.

4. The Library

The room appears to be an old study or library that was been burnt out long ago. The walls are covered with ancient graffiti scrawled over the signs of fire.

A successful **DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check** reveals faint impressions of where the bodies of two adults and two children lay during the fire.

Old graffiti messages have been hastily scrawled across the walls. They are written in ancient elven, and say things such as 'blasphemers' and 'traitors to the gods.' Anything else in this room has collapsed to dust.

The south wall has markings of a recent magical blast that has struck the wall; no check is required to detect these markings. A successful **DC 12 Intelligence (Arcana) check** reveals traces of a fire spell, perhaps fire bolt or burning hands.

Development. Stepping within 10 feet of the markings, which characters wishing to gain more information about them must do, causes a **wraith** (MM p302) and 4 **will o' wisps** (MM p301) to appear. The undead attack at once and fight until slain.



5. Old Kobold Hideout

This is a small cavern that looks like it was once occupied by kobolds or similar creatures after the Drow palace was abandoned. There is an old fire pit, some broken crates, and a shabby chest. There is a small door to the east and an archway at the end of the hall that is half blocked by fallen rubble, but still passable. The archway leads to a crudely-delved tunnel, perhaps a secret tunnel leading out of the castle during the ancient times.

Inside the chest, adventures find a few rounded stones along with old leaves, sticks, and wood chips. The area looks as though it has not been inhabited in decades.

6. Cave of the Living Fungus

This is a large cavern full of stalactites and stalagmites. It appears an entrance to the west has caved in and is impassible. There is a stone door to the east that is shut. Two stone statues of a beautiful drow goddess gracefully holding a sword appear on pedestals on either side of the door.

In this area are 2 **quaggoth spore servants** (MM p230), 2 **myconid adults** (MM p232), and 3 **myconid sprouts** (MM p230). The monsters immediately attack and fight to the death.

A successful **DC 15 Intelligence (Religion) check** reveals the statues are of Eilistraee. A successful **DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check** shows that these statues are part of a large mechanism. The statues cannot be lifted, but if both are turned a quarter of a turn in any direction, they will open the stone door, which leads to Area 2.



7. Passage

You see a long hallway that was once grand. Dust lines the ancient tile and cracks spider across the walls.

At the north end of the passage there is an archway to the right with stairs leading down to Area 8. To the left is a door leading to Area 10. This door is newer than the surrounding work, though still old, and is made of heavy wood. It has two locks, each of which can be picked with a successful **Dexterity (thieves tools) check**. One is **DC 13** and the other is **DC 17**. The door is AC 15 and has 20 hit points.

8. Chapel

The stairs going down from the tiled passage lead to small room with smooth stone benches on either side. It appears candles and statues once stood here and there for offerings. Beautiful stone etchings of a drow goddess appear on the walls before the benches. There is also a door in the south wall.

Any creature can see that the goddess looks kind and good hearted. A successful **DC 12 Intelligence (Religion) check** shows that the carvings are of Eilistraee and reveals that, unlike other deities in the drow pantheon, she is not a thing of twisted evil.

The heroes also discover that the carvings of Eilistraee and her symbolism have been chiseled over previously-existing art which is no longer identifiable.

9. Crypt

This room is a small crypt with 10 ornately carved tombs. A large, dusty statue of the beautiful elven goddess elsewhere depicted stands tall before the south wall.

Opening any of the tombs will trigger 2 **wights** (MM p300) and 6 **shadows** (MM p269) to appear, immediately attack, and fight until slain.

A successful **DC 12 Intelligence (Religion) check** shows that the statue is of Eilistraee.

If the tombs are open, some will reveal charred bones

of two adults and two children. The rest of the remains do not appear singed by ancient flames. Inside one tomb is a drow-style silver ring and a silver pendant, each worth 50 gp each. There is also a silver mirror worth 25 gp, a 10 gp topaz, a 40 gp emerald, and a 50 gp diamond scattered in the tombs. The two small children's tombs contain trinkets—a small carved stone pony and a stone frog.

10. Servants' Kitchen

Opening the door, you see a small, round room with tables, which was once an old servants' kitchen. There is a large hearth and several tables. The thick wooden tables are cluttered with strange statues and artifacts of various deities that seem to be a collection of ancient art found in Undermountain. Most are too heavy to lift and are drow or dwarven in appearance. The room appears to have been recently cleaned. There is a small doorway in the far wall with stairs leading up.

The items on the tables are too damaged to be very valuable. The entire collection, which is too heavy and bulky for one creature to carry, might be worth 100 gp to a sage or collector in Waterdeep. The stairs lead to Area 11.

11. Tower Base

It appears this room is the base of a tower. A water and a fire elemental that look like knightly elven guards stand on both sides of a wooden door across the room. The flickering fire and sparks of lightning emanating from the beings gently glow on the surrounding walls.

The knightly figures are a **fire elemental** (MM p125) and a **water elemental** (MM p125). They provide dim light in this room.

If the adventurers were quiet on the lower level, the elementals appear to be in a deep meditative state. If combat spilled to Area 10, they are alert. If the elementals are not alert, the heroes can attempt a group **Dexterity (Stealth) check**, opposed by the elementals' **passive Perception (10)**, to sneak past them. Failure indicates the first character to reach the door opened the unlocked door, which made a loud squeak.

If the elementals awaken, they ask the adventurers why

they are in their master's tower (note the elementals only speak Ignan and Aquan, respectively). The elementals are peaceful as long as they aren't attacked and the adventurers don't try to force their way past them.

The door guarded by the elementals leads to spiraling stairs going up. At the top of the stairs is an unlocked door.

12. Upper Tower

The door creaks open and the room is warm. A crackling fire burns in a simple fireplace. Two chairs facing the fire. The room is welcoming and full of simple furniture such as a bed and a dining table on which is a wooden bowl of fruit. You notice an elbow on one of the chairs and a pointy ear as someone rests quietly in the chair.

That someone rises, a goblin dressed in wizard's robes, who says in a cultured, urbane voice, "Who are you, and what are you doing in my home?"

The goblin, named Lazuli, will not attack unless in self-defense. If the "heroes" attack him, treat him as a **mage** (MM p347) armed with a *staff of frost*.

If the party convinces him they come in peace and need his help, he has a few supplies for them, which include 2 *potions of healing*, a *potion of invisibility*, and a *spell scroll of chromatic orb*.



Whether or not he helps the heroes, complaining that he is very busy, at the earliest opportunity he guides the heroes out a door and down a long spiraling flight of stairs that leads to Area 13.

If the characters ask about the fire or the charred bones, Lazuli tells them he found the ancient bones in the library and laid them to rest in the crypt.

At your option, you can use Lazuli as a recurring NPC in Undermountain.

13. Portals

This round room contains three portals, each swirling and sparkling with magical energy. There are no other exits.

The portals go wherever you want, within or outside of Undermountain. At your option, the portals can permanently close once the adventurers have passed through, or they can remain open so the players can return to Lazuli's dwelling.



UWPS - UNDERMOUNTAIN WATER PURIFICATION & SANITATION

"You take a pee in here, what do you think happens? You think it just sits there? Can you imagine what it would smell like in this dungeon if everyone's pee just sat there? What the fountains would look like if nobody was cleaning up the water?" - Hisbis Brizznickel

The adventure location is designed primarily for exploration and roleplaying and can be used with any party of 6th level or higher.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Who keeps the dungeon clean? When adventurers relieve themselves, where does it go? Where does water for fountains down here come from? The answer is UWPS: the Undermountain Water Purification and Sanitation area. Wastewater magically arrives in this sanitation department, where it filters through an enchanted swamp and down into a sanitation facility before being transported back to areas all around Undermountain. The entire facility is staffed by modrons and run by an eccentric gnome named Hisbis Brizznickel.

Recently the modrons have been impeded by some new arrivals in the enchanted swamp; a tribe of lizardfolk have planted themselves in the area under belief it is their promised land, and they aren't interested in leaving.

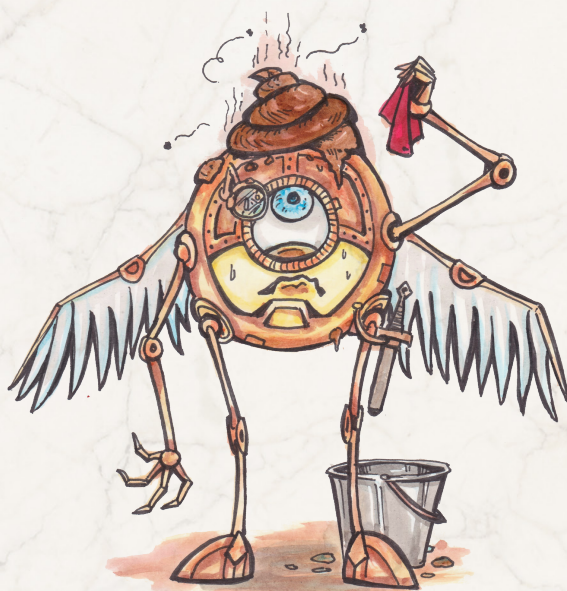
ADVENTURE OVERVIEW

The characters discover the entrance to the UWPS, which leads them into the foul-smelling swamp of sanitation. Here they might encounter lizardfolk who

warn them away from their tribal territory.

In exploring the swamp, the characters find their way to the sluice gates and access to the lower level of UWPS, where they meet overseer Hisbis Brizznickel, who seeks a solution to the aggressive lizardfolk living in the swamp.

The characters can solve Hisbis's issue in a number of ways, including negotiating peace with the lizardfolk tribe. They might discover that the lizardfolk tribe actually improves the swamp's efficiency, making them an odd but welcome addition to the sanitation process.



ADVENTURE HOOKS

The Customer Appreciation Letter

Before the characters enter Undermountain, a mysterious figure gives them a letter addressed to 'UWPS,' telling them they'll know it when they see it. The letter has a wax seal of a strange ring-shaped city. Opening the letter reveals it is a customer appreciation letter from 'Marvins Magnificent Modrons.'

Lizardsign

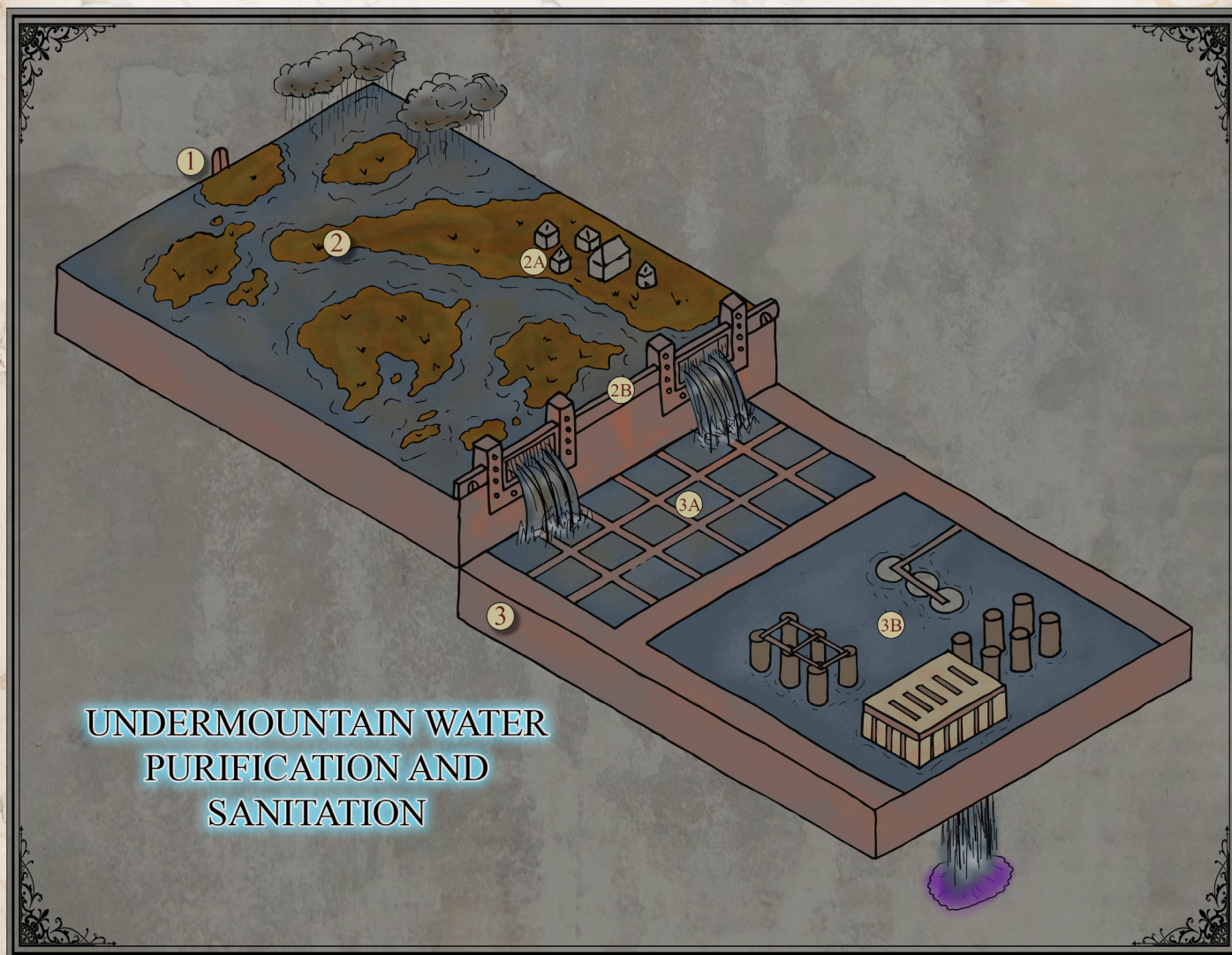
Rough letters in draconic, scratched into the walls of Undermountain with a humanoid-sized creature's claws, point the way to

'Semuanya's chosen land.' Following the markings through Undermountain's corridors leads to a strange door with a metal placard beside it.

The UWPS

1. Entrance

A huge iron door ten feet wide and twelve feet high is secured to the wall by heavy metal hinges. The door is ajar, and a heavy, humid bog smell is emanating from the foot of space between the door and jamb.



UNDERMOUNTAIN WATER PURIFICATION AND SANITATION

Placard. A bronze placard is bolted to the wall beside the door. Its lettering is enchanted, and when first looked at is impossible to make out. After a moment, the letters writhe, shimmer, and settle, and a creature will either see the words in common, elvish, draconic, or dwarvish, depending on its native tongue. The placard reads:

U.W.P.S.
UNDERMOUNTAIN WATER PURIFICATION AND SANITATION
IF IT DRIPS, FLOWS, SLOSHES, OR SPATTERS – WE CLEAN
IT
NO GENERAL SOLICITORS

The door is heavy, but opens easily on its well-maintained

and oiled hinges. Beyond the door is the Swamp of Sanitation (Area 2).

2. The Swamp of Sanitation

The largest area of the UWPS is the Swamp of Sanitation, a massive wetland area that mixes natural and arcane components.

General Features

Arcane wetland. The plants and terrain of the swamp are real and living, but a detect magic spell or similar effect reveals a faint aura of abjuration magic on the plants and waterways. The magic here is a simple, permanent enchantment which encourages the plants to remain healthy and strike the perfect balance for optimal water flow.

Shitstorms. Moisture from across the levels of Undermountain magically evaporates and reappears in clouds over the Swamp of Sanitation. These clouds are the first step of the sanitation process, filtering out the first impurities and causing the rest to fall onto the swamp in heavy downpours. The filtration of the clouds is nowhere near complete, and the rainfall from the storms is a torrent still containing elements of the blood, urine, sweat, fecal matter, and water that has been magically transported here from across Undermountain.

Waterflow. The placement plants and terrain is designed to maximize waterflow in a uniform direction. The natural function of a wetland—its filtering effects—has been deliberately optimized and maximized by cunning design. As the water is removed of impurities, it eventually winds up at the sluice gates in Area 2B.

2A. Swamp Lizardfolk

A tribe of **lizardfolk** has recently found its way into the UWPS and established their home in the Swamp of

Sanitation. Their shamans have used plant growth to harvest enough grasses and other materials to build their huts, which are located near the northwest corner of the Swamp.

Modron clashes. The lizardfolk are fiercely territorial and have attacked the sluice gates (see Area 2B) several times. The modron bodies disintegrate when killed, but the lizardfolk have used the modrons' weapons and tools to make warding-monuments to mark the edge of what they believe is their territory. The lizardfolk are extremely wary of non-modrons but will refrain from attacking immediately, believing strange newcomers could be an omen from their deity, Semuanya, to ensure their survival.

Theocratic rule. There are approximately three dozen lizardfolk living in the tribe, led by a trio of lizardfolk shamans; Thess, Kss'ik, and Hiyuu. The tribe wandered Undermountain for years, and believes this swamp is a holy gift from Semuanya.

2B. Eastern Edge



Sluice Gates. Two huge sluice gates are located along the east edge of the swamp. From here, the water filters through and falls down into the Maintenance Area (Area 3). The gates have filters which remove most of the remaining major impurities from the water. When the filters need to be cleaned, the sluice gates can be raised, cutting off waterflow to the Maintenance Area.

The two sluice gates are some distance apart, and each is manned by a team of modrons. Each gate is supervised by two **quadrones** (MM p226), which are tasked with defending the gates against damage, monitoring waterflow through the gates, ensuring the sluice gate filters are maintained, and commanding monodrones to accomplish the first three tasks. Each gate has a group of ten **monodrones** (MM p224) that follow the commands of the quadrones, and are most commonly tasked with cleaning the gate filters as needed.

Service tunnels. On opposite ends of the eastern edge of the swamp are maintenance doors, behind

both of which are service tunnels sloping down to the Maintenance Area (Area 3). The doors are not locked.

3. Maintenance Area

The Maintenance Area is as artificial in appearance as the swamp of sanitation is natural; it is comprised of mechanical structures and metal walkways. It is set at a lower elevation than the Swamp of Sanitation, as the swamp's waterflow through the sluices falls down into the Sanitation Pools (3A).

3A. Sanitation Pool

Water from the sluice gates cascades down into one large pool. The Sanitation Pool is sectioned off with a gridlike pattern of ten-foot-wide metal walkways. Each large squared-off section of the pool has mechanical rods above it, which are intermittently lowered into the water by nearby control panels. These panels are constantly manned by **monodrones** tasked with lowering the mechanism into the pool at regular intervals (every 5-10 minutes). The device is a large-scale magical contraption enchanted with effects similar to the *prestidigitation* cantrip and the *purify food and drink* spell. Together, the spells purge large volumes of water of their remaining impurities.

Modrons. As noted above, each squared-off section of the sanitation pool has a **monodrone** stationed permanently at its control panel. Six **tridrones** (MM p225) patrol the walkways and are tasked with regulating the monodrones, defending the panels from attack, and maintaining the equipment as needed. Three **quadrones** can be found in this section, instructed with the same tasks as the tridrones and additionally overseeing the tridrones themselves. The quadrones' fourth task is to direct unauthorized (but nonhostile) personnel to Area 3B.

3B. Dispersal Facility

Purified water from the Sanitation Pool is piped into the Dispersal Facility, where it awaits final preparation before being returned to where it is needed in Undermountain. The facility is a sprawling warehouse of vats and constant activity, as modrons of all kinds swarm about performing

their tasks, overseen by **Hisbis Brizznickel**.

Preparation vats. Hundreds of large vats contain water that is treated with various additives. If the water is going to be used for a fountain of pure drinking water, it's sent out as pure drinking water; if it's supposed to replenish a pool where the water is poisoned, the modrons add the appropriate poison; if it's supposed to have dead rats floating in it, well...

It's not entirely clear where the modrons acquire this massive variety of additives. Only Brizznickel is permitted to requisition the materials, and even he isn't sure half the time where this stuff comes from.

Dispersal portals. A maze of narrow pipes underneath the dispersal facility diverts the final product to one of hundreds of portals, which (apparently) connect to every relevant fountain, pool, puddle, and body of water the UWPS services.

Marut. A massive **marut** (MTofF p214) is motionless against one wall of the facility, tucked out of the way in an alcove. with its massive, single eye staring unwaveringly forward. The marut's instruction, as far as Hisbis knows, is to ensure the dispersal facility is protected. It has never activated, and has never responded to any instruction Hisbis has ever attempted to give it.

Hisbis Brizznickel. The facility's foreman is a wildly eccentric gnome named Hisbis Brizznickel (LN gnome **mage**). Hisbis has the businesslike competence of a union boss and the social grace of a gnome who spends literally all of his time surrounded by modrons. Remarkably, he has learned the modron language and can replicate its sound of precise clicks and whirring sounds.

Hisbis primarily instructs pentadrones and quadrones who help him keep track of supply orders and the need for replacement modrons. Despite his stressed rants about 'budget,' Hisbis would be the first to admit that he has no idea who, if anyone, is actually paying for supplies and obedient modrons; Hisbis shoves written supply orders into a mail slot in his office and the requisitioned materiel kind of just...shows up from somewhere.

4. UWPS and the Lizardfolk

As noted above, the lizardfolk in the Swamp of Sanitation have attacked the sluice gates and used modron tools to make totems marking the edge of their perceived territory. Hisbis sees the lizardfolk as pests who threaten the work of the UWPS. He offers the adventurers a piece of special gear if they can deal with the problem (see Reward, below).

Odd phenomenon. Hisbis admits that despite the destruction and replacement of multiple modrons at the sluice gates, the efficiency of the swamp of sanitation has actually improved since the lizardfolk tribe was established.

Investigating adventurers who speak with the tribe might be able to piece together that the lizardfolk shamans' use of plant growth for the tribe's needs is actually improving the filtering properties of the swamp. Sharing this information with Hisbis Bizznickel may sway him toward letting the lizardfolk remain—if other rules for peace can be established.

Possible Resolutions.

The adventurers might choose to roust the lizardfolk by combat, in which case the tribe might very well fight to the death to defend their territory. Alternatively, Thesk, Kss'ik, and Hiyuu might agree to leave the modrons in peace as long as their territory in the swamp is respected. In addition, the lizardfolk are happy to repel (and eat) any other threat that might wander into the swamp from elsewhere in Undermountain.

Reward

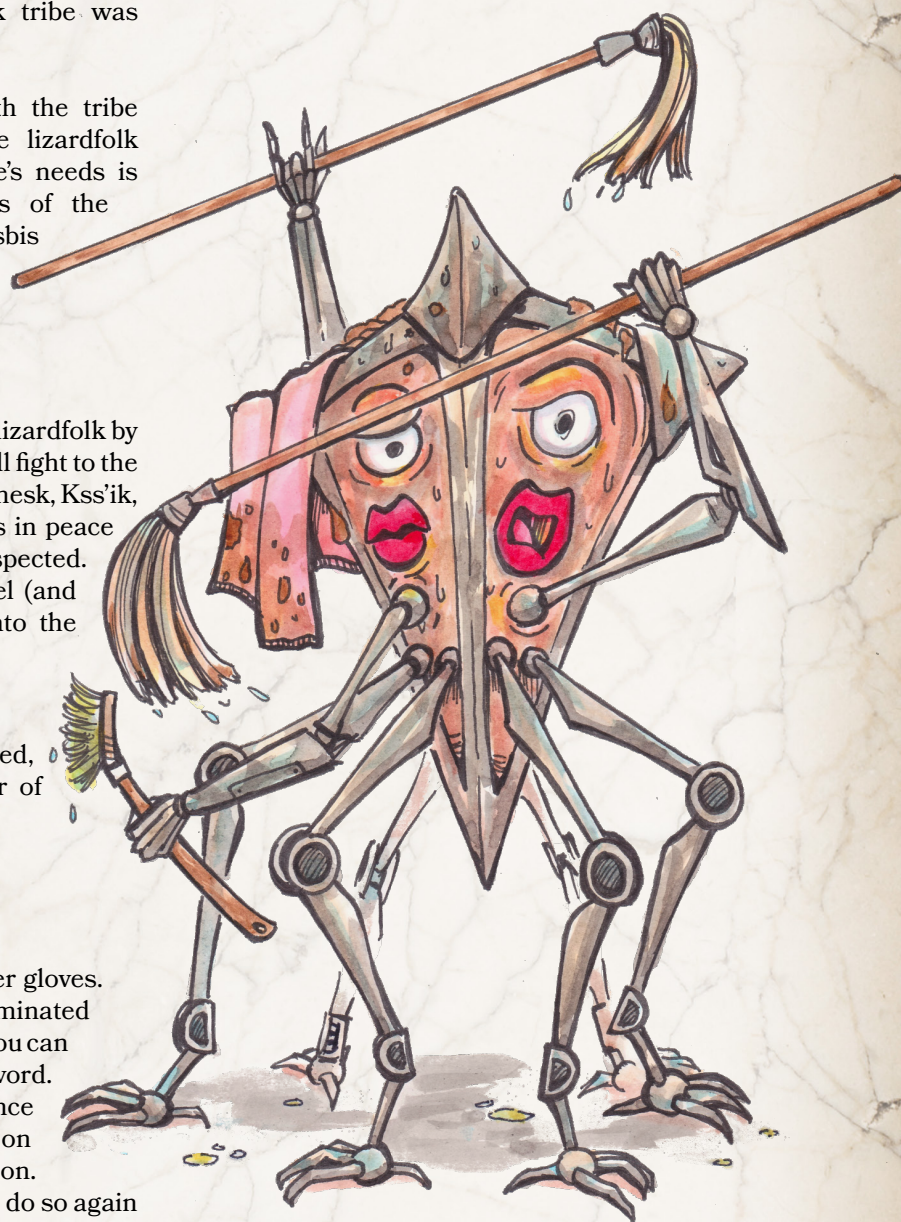
If the issue with the lizardfolk is resolved, Hisbis rewards the adventurers with a pair of gloves of safe handling.

Gloves of Safe Handling

Wondrous item, uncommon

These look like a pair of thick, green rubber gloves. Normally made for modrons handling contaminated substances, this pair is sized for humanoids. You can use a bonus action to speak the command word. For 1 minute, the gloves give you resistance to acid and poison damage, and advantage on saving throws against the poisoned condition. Once you use the gloves in this way, they can't do so again

until the next dawn.



KEEPER OF SECRETS

The adventure location is designed for 4-6 characters of level 7 (Tier 2, APL 7).

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Dumathoin is the dwarven god of Secrets and Treasure. Abbathor is the dwarven god of Greed and Avarice. These gods and their followers often come into conflict. This dungeon is an example of this conflict.

Long ago the Melairkyn dwarves inhabited the dungeon now known as Undermountain, and it was a vast and powerful empire. Over time it began to fragment into enclaves. The temple of Dumathoin was—by design—founded in an isolated location of the dungeon, where the priests felt their treasure and secrets could be better kept away from prying eyes.

Unfortunately they eventually drew the attention of the greedy followers of Abbathor, who attacked the isolated temple. Powerful magics were wrought, the very earth cracked, and an underground river spilled into the complex.

The invaders, summoning water elementals, were able to overcome the reclusive priests, but in their arrogance could not pierce the protections on the portal to the chapel and treasure room. They died to their own elementals as the trapped creatures reverted to their savage nature. Now avaricious dwarven spirits haunt the temple, still seeking access to the treasure they were denied.

ADVENTURE OVERVIEW

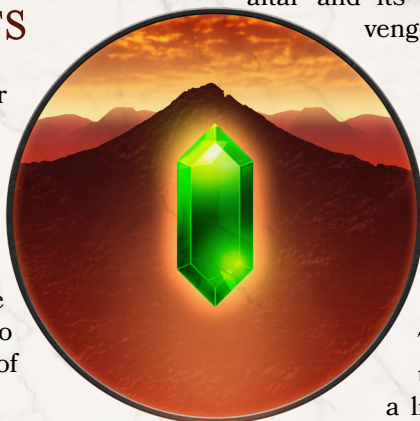
The characters enter the ruined temple and discover its elemental defenders.

The altar is locked away behind a simple yet troublesome ward that requires the sacrifice of something both valuable and secret.

Searching the library they may discover secrets both useful for their further journeys and perhaps to open the warded doors.

Entering the altar room allows access to Dumathoin's

altar and its divination powers, but also rouses the vengeful spirits of the thwarted invaders.



ADVENTURE HOOKS

Discovery by Chance....

The adventurers may simply stumble onto the Temple as part of their travels within the halls of Undermountain.

Or by Design...

The adventurers may have heard that the temple of Dumathoin exists, and has both a library of lost secrets, and is rumored to have the power to reveal divine secrets if one can overcome its remaining protections and master the altar.

General Features

Terrain. The entire complex is worked stone except for cave-ins (Areas 2a and 5a).

Light. There is no light anywhere except Area 6. The lighting conditions are based on the party's resources.

Ceiling Height. The tunnels are all 10 feet in height, and chambers have their height stated under their descriptions.

Flooding. The lowest points in the complex – areas 2 and 4 – are under 2 ½ feet of water, and are *difficult terrain* for any creature without a swim or fly speed.

Summoning. The Temple is warded against summoning magic, though the wards are damaged and fading. Every time a spell is cast that summons creatures, a DC 12 spellcasting ability check must be made or the spell fails. Items that summon creatures make be invoke with a DC 12 Intelligence (arcana) check or also fail. After the spell or effect's duration expires, the creatures remain, uncontrolled by the caster and reverting to their natural disposition. You have discretion as to what the creature's actions might be.

1. Grand Entry

The smooth, unremarkable stone of the endless halls of Undermountain slowly begins to change. At first it is a simple runic carving at the top and bottom of the side walls, but as you progress the carvings become more elaborate, forming a maze-like pattern that encompasses all the walls, ceiling and floor.

The pattern is so mesmerizing that you barely register what looks like a huge chamber up ahead.

The pattern is hypnotic. Any character stating that they examine, search or look closely at the pattern must make a **DC 12 Wisdom saving throw**. On a failure, that creature is Stunned for 1 minute. A creature is shaken from this state by being roused by a comrade, or by taking damage.

A **DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check** (subjecting the searcher to the above effect) reveals a single word repeatedly written in dwarven script (Dethek Runes) in the otherwise random symbols. It reads “Xoth”, which translates as “secret or special knowledge.”



2. Main Chapel

The steady drip of water can be heard as you look out over the huge ruined chapel before you. The earthy scent of mould hangs heavy in the cold, moist air.

Once-intricate stonework has been shattered, possibly by an earthquake, and water has poured in from a fissure in the west wall, cascading down over a collapsed section of stonework. The water has covered the floor, obscuring the lower section of the split level room.

What is left is a strange series of islands as the upper sections still protrude from the flood below. Four massive statues of a regal dwarf in robes glare down from each of the corners of the room, though the northwest one has partially collapsed. Of the six floor-to-ceiling columns that support the chamber, three have shattered, leaving a collection of partially submerged rubble across the floor.

At either end stand raised platforms, with stone stairs leading down into the dark water. The entrance area is plain except for two life sized statues of armoured dwarves that flank you, while at the opposite end great bronze portals stand closed. There seem to be several corpses before them.

Finally, at the water level, passages lead off the both sides.

The chamber is 40 feet high from floor to ceiling, with

each of the raised areas being 10 feet from the floor.

The water is 3 feet deep, and acts as *difficult terrain*. It is also uncomfortably cold.

20 feet above the floor on the east side is a one-way crystal window into the high priest's quarters. It is magically opaque from this side, appearing to be an unremarkable part of the wall. It is magically hardened and cannot be broken. Anyone using detect magic within range can detect the auras of abjuration and illusion magic.

There are three **water elementals** (MM p125) living in the water, accidentally entering with the water from the cave in, and since unable to leave. They slew the duergar invaders long ago, and lie semi-dormant in the chapel. They will attack anyone disturbing the water in either the main chapel or the library (area 4), fighting until slain. If the characters manage to avoid disturbing the water in their actions (through flight, or other methods) the elementals remain unaware of their presence.

Searching the floor level takes 10 minutes per 5 foot section. There are seven corpses of tomb robbers scattered about, but time, water and the violent attentions of the elementals have destroyed almost everything of worth. Each 5 foot section has a 5% chance of yielding something valuable amongst the junk:

Roll 1d6	Result
1	1d10 copper pieces
2	1d8 silver pieces
3	1d4 gold pieces
4	A usable weapon (DMs discretion)
5	A single piece of gear from the Adventuring Equipment table.
6	A single gem worth 1d4x10 gold pieces

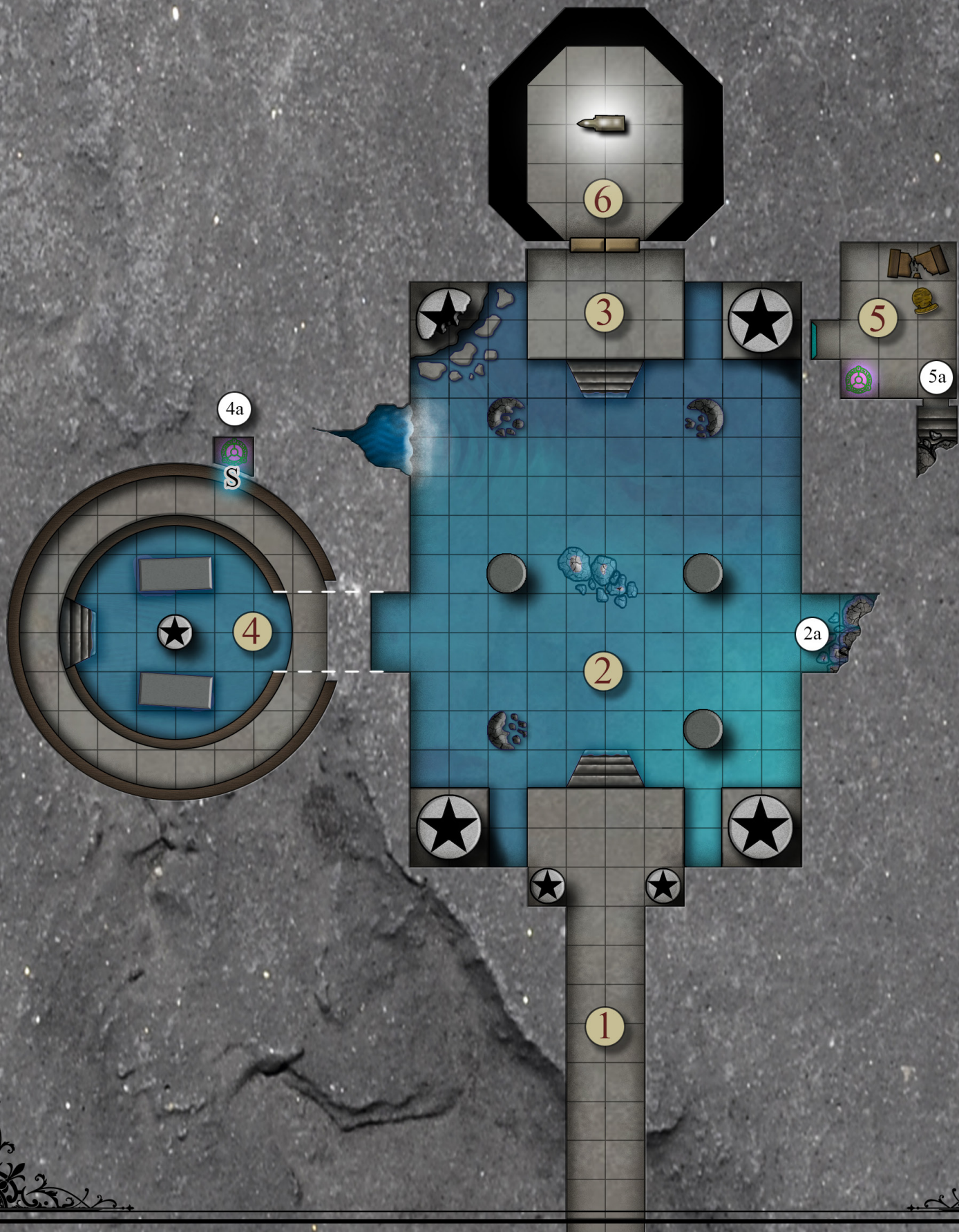
Adjusting this Encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak:** Remove 1 **water elemental**
- **Weak:** Reduce the hit points of each elemental by 40
- **Strong:** Increase the hit points of each elemental by 40
- **Very Strong:** Add 1 **water elemental**

KEEPER OF SECRETS

1 square = 5 feet



2a. Blocked Tunnel

The eastern tunnel is blocked by a tightly packed wall of debris. Any attempt to excavate the area causes a cascade that deals 8 (2d6) bludgeoning damage to anyone within 5 feet of the collapse, though a **DC 12 Dexterity saving throw** can be made to avoid the damage. The rock falls are effectively endless.

3. The Altar Doors

Massive double doors of bronze dominate this raised platform. Each is carved with the symbol of Dumathoin – a diamond inside a mountain - below which is a depiction of an anvil. A plaque above the door displays a phrase in Dethek runes.

On the otherwise clear area before the door sprawl four ancient corpses garbed in rusted and rent plate armor. From their size, shape, and remaining facial hair they were clearly dwarves.

The doors are enchanted and cannot be damaged or opened by any means save that inscribed on the door plaque.

The plaque is written in Dethek runes, so any creature that is proficient in the dwarven language can read it. It says: “Seekers offering that which is both valuable and unique may discover the wisdom of the Keeper of Secrets.”

The quote literally describes how to open the door. An object that is both valuable (at least 100gp) and genuinely unique must be pressed to the door or presented before it in offering to Dumathoin. If the players don't immediately guess the mechanism, you can let the characters make a **DC 12 History or Religion check** to make the determination.

The characters may already possess such an object. You decide if an object meets the criteria. Otherwise the crown in the High Priest's Quarters is a sufficient offering.

If the characters use an appropriate offering in an appropriate way, the doors swing open easily and the object disappears. Creatures offering up unworthy objects take 1 point of psychic damage as they incur Dumathoin's

displeasure.

The dwarf corpses have little of value on them as tomb raiders have picked them clean. A successful DC 18 Wisdom (Medicine) check reveals that the corpses are actually duergar. Only scraps of armor and clothing remain. A holy symbol of Abbathor (an iron talisman depicting a jewelled dagger) is hidden under one of the corpses, and can be found with a **DC 8 Wisdom (Perception)** check, and identified with a **DC 14 Intelligence (Religion)** check.

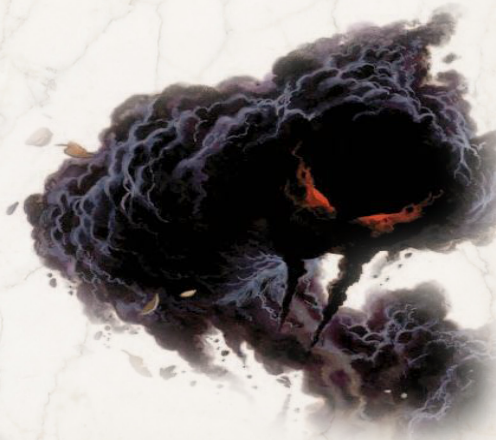
Any ability that can detect evil or undead will generate an oddly inconsistent reading from the corpses. While the corpses are not undead, they do remain the physical tether the disturbed spirits of the duergar. Damaging, destroying or moving the corpses has no effect, though anyone who does so hears vaguely menacing whispers until the undead actually coalesce.

Development. If a character manages to open the doors, the restless spirits of the duergar coalesce into actual undead, their hate and avarice giving them drive. The spirits form 4 **wraiths** (MM p302) which immediately attack.

Adjusting this Encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak:** Replace two wraiths with **specters** (MM 279)
- **Weak:** Reduce the hit points of each wraith by 20
- **Strong:** Increase the hit points of each wraith by 20
- **Very Strong:** The lead creature, a former priest of Abbathor, is a ghost (MM 147) with maximum hit points (80)



4. The Library

The water-filled passage opens up into a domed chamber thirty feet in height, culminating in a domed ceiling. A set of stone stairs leads up to an open balcony level ten feet from the floor.

Shelves line the walls on both levels, filled with rows of stone tablets with Dethek runes on their spines.

Partially submerged in the centre of the lower floor is a stature of a robed dwarf holding a finger to its lips as if commanding silence. It is flanked by two stone tables that barely protrude from the water.

All noises are strangely muted in here, though not silenced (see below).

The tablets are ancient books, their faces carved with Dethek runes and their spines showing the titles (or descriptions). Each 'book' weighs 5 lbs. In its day, this library held rare and precious secrets, but in truth much of the content has become common knowledge. Nevertheless, referencing the library offers advantage on any History, Religion or Arcana checks to do with dwarves and dwarven society. At your discretion, characters may find useful information here referring to other areas of Undermountain from the time of the Melairkyn Clan, but not after. If you intend to run **Hunger of Abbathor** from this compilation, the library has a reference and a map to the duergar temple, as well as a warning to "beware the treasure guardian within" (but no more information than that).

If any of the tablets are damaged or taken from the room, the offender is cursed with *silence* (like the spell), unable to make any kind of sound until the theft or damage is rectified. A *remove curse* can end this effect.

On the second level there is an odd tablet that just has the word "Xoth" on the spine. If pulled, it triggers a section of the bookshelves to sink into the floor, revealing a small room. The secret door can be found with a **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception)** or **Intelligence (Investigation)** check. Anyone who

investigated the Grand Entry and discovered the writing there has advantage on this check.

4a. Secret Room

An arcane circle is inscribed on the floor in this otherwise bare chamber. Stepping on it instantly transports a creature to the High Priest's Quarters (Area 5). A **DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana)** check identifies it as an active teleportation circle, but not where it goes. A *detect magic* shows it to be conjuration magic, and an identify spell indicates its purpose and target location.

The secret door is easily identifiable from this side, and there is a small button on the wall next to it that opens and closes it.

5. High Priest's Quarters

This spartan room has the remnants of stone furnishings, though most have been split and sundered. A broken desk lies against the north wall, a stone tablet and bent, dust covered crown.

To the south side of the room is a blocked stairway and a runic circle inscribed on the floor.

To the west a window overlooks the chapel below.

The inscribed circle is an active teleportation circle that transports creatures to and from the library. See Area 4a for full details.

The window into the chapel is made of magically-hardened crystal. Any creature on this side can see through it, but it is opaque from the chapel side.

The tablet on the desk is a half-finished catalogue of the crown. A delicate hammer and chisel lie nearby. The tablet is in Dethek (dwarven), and suggests the crown is a relic from a lost dwarven outpost called Veldarheim, which was reported destroyed by goblins in 309 DR (more than 1100 years ago). The entry begins to record



the location's unearthing, but stops abruptly.

The crown itself is silver chased iron, set with twelve bloodstones. It is worth 150gp, and would serve as a sufficient sacrifice to open the doors in Area 3.

5a. Blocked Stairs

Much like the area at 2a, this is effectively impassable.

6. The Altar of Dumathoin

Beyond the huge bronze doors is a roughly cylindrical chamber that extends vertically out of sight both above and below you. The walls are lined with thousands of niches containing glittering treasures of every imaginable type.

The chamber has a stone floor extending from the door, though it doesn't reach the walls at any other point. In the centre of this floor is a silvery anvil resting on an onyx base, bathed in a shaft of light that extends down from an unknown source above.

The chamber extends an infinite distance in either direction, becoming an extradimensional space after the first 20 feet so it doesn't affect any of the levels above or below. Attempting to reach either end results in frustration and heartbreak for seekers.

The niches in the walls hold an incalculable fortune in wealth, but are all blocked by *wall of force* effects that fit like invisible tiles over the inner surface. Each niche could be accessed by destroying its individual *wall of force* if a creature possessed the power to do so. The stone behind each is impervious to all attempts to alter or bypass. Any creature that actually manages to open any of the niches may take the treasure within (ranging from 100 to 1000gp value) but is subject to Dumathoin's Curse (see below).

The real treasure here is the anvil. Any creature that has made an acceptable sacrifice may enter the shaft of light and kneel before the altar, gaining the effect of a *commune* spell, the duration of which commences as they enter the light. Repeatedly sacrificing acceptable objects allows multiple uses of the altar, but the cumulative effects of the spell do apply. Any other creature attempting to enter the light finds it solid like stone. The anvil cannot be moved

or damaged by any means.

Dumathoin's Curse

At dawn each day, one random item you own (not necessarily carry) worth greater than 1gp turns to worthless lead. This will never be an item that rightly belongs to Dumathoin.

This curse can be suppressed for 24 hours by *remove curse*, but can only be permanently removed by a *wish* or returning any stolen items to their rightful place in Dumathoin's Vault.



THE MOUTHERS OF MADNESS

The adventure location is designed for 4-6 characters of level 8 (Tier 2, APL 8).

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Archaeologist Willem Dyer entered Undermountain with a team of assistants to find chambers belonging to a long-lost empire. Dyer's expedition was successful, but at a terrible cost. One of the expedition's members, Phinean Ackels, was secretly a cultish servant of the Abolethic Sovereignty, the rulers of this lost empire. Phinean betrayed the expedition with his fellow cultists. Dyer escaped, only to die paranoid and insane in the expedition tents outside.

ADVENTURE OVERVIEW

The characters discover the abandoned tents of the expedition outside the entrance to the dungeon area. Inside one of the tents they discover the body of Willem Dyer and his journal. Entering the dungeon area, the characters discover a circular chamber with words carved onto the floor. The words and journal provide clues to opening the next area.

In the main chamber of the dungeon, the characters can enter the final room by finding and defeating the traitorous Phinean Ackels, who carries the seal needed to open the final set of doors. Inside the last chamber is a well and maddening light, from which appear foul aberrations. When the horrors are finally defeated, one of the characters finds an item in their possession; a token of the lost Abolethic Sovereignty.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

The Lost Expedition

A scholar from Candlekeep approaches the characters in the Yawning Portal. He's looking for a colleague, a man named Willem Dyer. He believes Willem was gathering a group to delve into Undermountain on a research expedition and hasn't heard anything since.

The Whispers

While in Undermountain, one or more characters hear soft whispers echoing through the corridors. Following their source leads them to the double doors and expedition tents outside. The whispers stop as soon as the tent containing Willem's body is opened.

1. Entrance

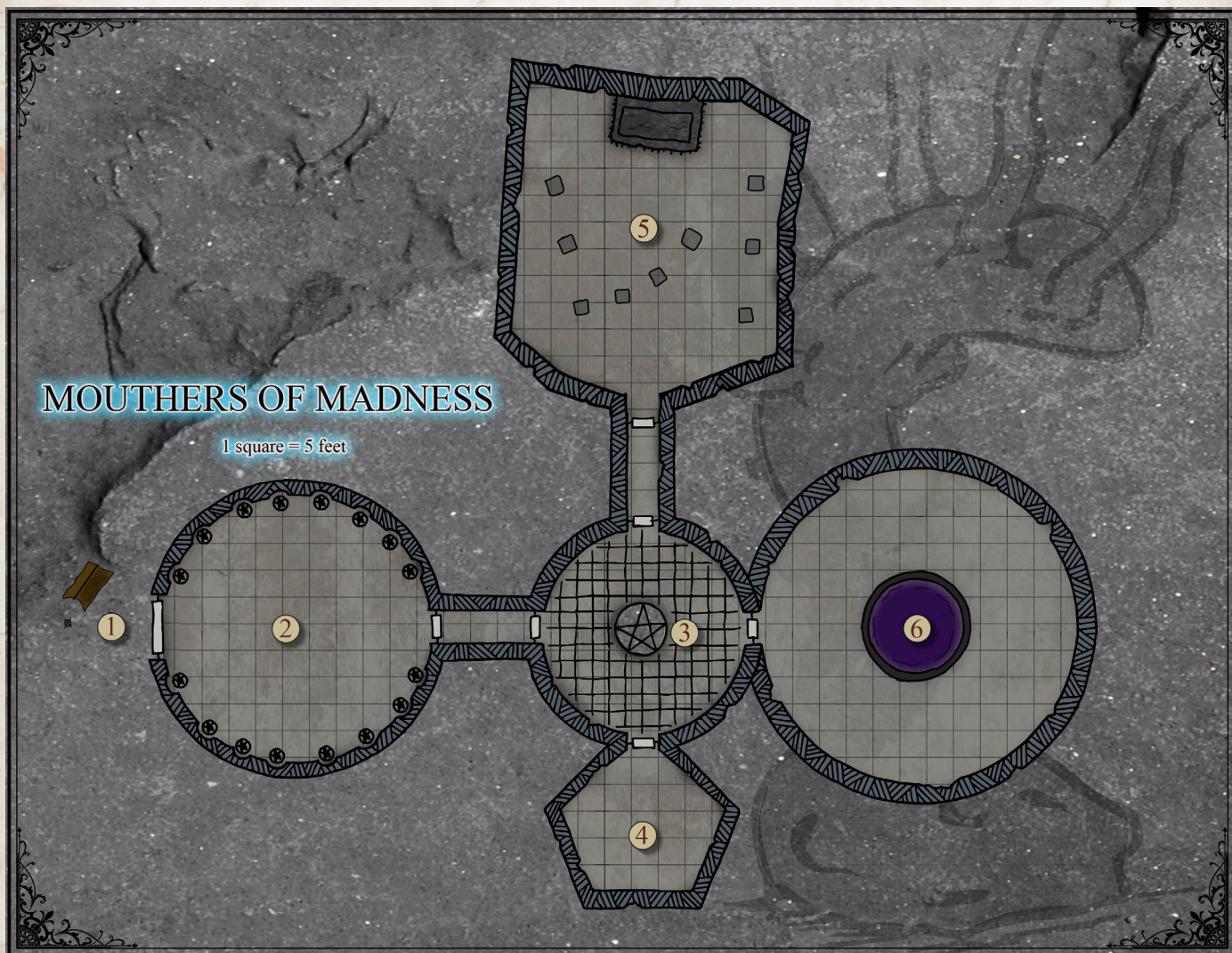
A set of stone double doors, 12 feet high and 8 feet wide, stands closed. Whirling, hideous shapes are carved in relief on the doors, creating the merest suggestion of a shape that cannot be fully identified. Two tents are pitched next to the stone doors.

Expedition tents. The two canvas tents are each big enough for three Medium-sized creatures to sleep in. The canvas is worn and has numerous holes, but the structure of the tents still holds up. Between the two tents are five bedrolls, along with a set of mason's tools and cartographer's tools. Inside one of the bedrolls is the body of Willem Dyer (see below).



Willem Dyer. The body of this half-elf is pale and cold, though there is no obvious cause of death. His clouded eyes are wide open and fixed on the tent's entrance, as if waiting for something to enter. His journal is clutched in one hand, a now-dry pen in the other.

Willem's Journal. The journal identifies its owner as an archaeologist who studied for a time at Candlekeep. Many of the journal's pages are missing, possibly torn out; the first page details a group consisting of Willem, his hired bodyguards, a member of Waterdeep's mapmaker's guild named Lira Peabody, and a wizard named Phinean Ackels with several unnamed assistants. They were looking for "an outpost of a fallen empire" that seemed to predate known history.



The last, shakily written page states that “the others have fallen” and that Willem is “the only one to survive without being changed.” He writes that he is terrified of leaving the comforting confines of the tent, but fears at any moment “one of those things” will come through the door. His final scrawled line is “I dare not sleep. I dare not sleep.”

2. Xxiphu Rises

As the characters approach, read or summarize:

This circular chamber is 40 feet in diameter and 30 feet high. Set into alcoves around the perimeter of the floor and in rowed niches all the way to the ceiling are hooded stone figures, empty voids of shadow where their faces would be. The disturbingly lifelike detail of their robed bodies is made all the more unsettling by the hint of writhing, inhuman anatomy hidden under the stone-depicted cloth. Lines of flowing script are carved in a spiral on the floor.

Floor carvings. The writing on the floor is written in Deep Speech. Translated, it reads “WHAT IS ABOVE IS NOW BELOW, AND SHALL BE ABOVE AGAIN. THE KEY OPENS AS XXIPHU RISES.”

Journal page. The player character with this highest

Passive Perception notices the corner of a torn-out journal page barely pinned under the far door. The page can be easily retrieved; it's a page from Willem's journal, which includes many excited, shorthand notes about this current room. He states the script on the floor is "an Espruar elvish script of unknown language." He later provides the translation (see above), stating that Phinean provided the translation "but refused to acknowledge where he learned this tongue." The page identifies one section of the strange script as 'Xxiphu,' noting that Phinean pronounced it as "ZEE-foo."

Xxiphu rises. Investigating the floor finds an instance of the name "Xxiphu" in Deep Speech; creatures who cannot read Deep Speech can at least match the recreation of the word as written in the aforementioned journal page. Examining this section of floor reveals that the section with "Xxiphu" on it has a square seam surrounding it; the section of the floor can be gripped and pulled upward. The floor section is attached to a stone, gear-toothed pillar.

When the pillar is lifted to its maximum height (about two feet), the far door (to Area 3) opens. As it does so, a magic mouth spell activates on the statues in the room. In Deep Speech, they intone in a chorus of buzzing voices "Long do we wait for the day when the Eldest shall rise, when long-buried Xxiphu shall rise, and unlock the heavens with the Key of Stars! Ia! Ia! Xxiphu rises!"

3. The Statue-Hall

A rough-carved statue of a sinuous, eel-like creature rises from the erratic floor of this circular, thirty-foot wide chamber. Thin, tentacle-like spindles of stone radiate out from the creature and attach randomly to the domed ceiling twenty feet overhead.

Opposite the entrance to Area 2 is a locked set of stone double-doors to Area 6; from this same perspective there is a single stone door to the right and a ten-foot-wide open corridor to the left.

Floor. The chamber floor is made up of some iridescent metallic material, and is highly irregular. The floor is a conglomerate of square-shaped recessions and recessions-within-recessions. This staggered and uneven floor is difficult terrain.

Solitary stone door. The single stone door is eight

feet high and ten feet wide. It is meant to slide back, but is caught on something. Creatures with a combined Strength score of 20 or higher can force the door open; it slides all the way open and reveals Area 4. A sickly stench like sweat and rotting fruit emanates from the new area when it opens.

Hallway. The hallway leads to Area 5. The uneven nature of the floor does not continue into this hallway.

Stone double doors. The double doors are sealed shut. Dizzying geometric patterns on the door surround a diamond-shaped recess split between the two doors; the door is only opened with a fitting seal, which is currently carried by Phinean in Area 5.

Once the seal is placed into this space, it splits down the middle and the doors slide open, revealing Area 6.

Area 4. Mouthers of Madness

This small, pentagon-shaped chamber was a kind of meditative chamber for the mad worshippers who once lived here.

Gibbering moulder. Just inside the sliding stone door is a **gibbering moulder** (MM p157), which attacks immediately. Also inside the chamber with the gibbering moulder are Willem's surviving bodyguards, driven insane by the room's whispers (see below). The bodyguards are allies of the gibbering moulder; they are immune to its Gibbering and Aberrant Ground traits, but not its blinding spittle. The bodyguards fight to the death, ranting incoherently in slurred snippets of Deep Speech.

The bodyguards consist of 2 **archers** (VGtM p210) and 2 **knights** (MM p347). The knights do not have access to their Leadership action.

Chamber whispers. If a creature closes itself inside this room, sounds from outside the room are cut off entirely, and the occupant hears faint whispers. A creature that spends more than a minute in this room must make a **DC 14 Wisdom saving throw** or gain a form of long-term madness (DMG p260).

Adjusting this Encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak:** 1 gibbering moulder, 1 knight, 1 archer
- **Weak:** 1 gibbering moulder, 1 knight, 2 archers
- **Strong:** 1 gibbering moulder, 2 knights, 3 archers
- **Very Strong:** 1 gibbering moulder, 3 knights, 3 archers

5. The Incomprehensible Chapel

This large room is a kind of inner sanctuary where large groups of worshippers—or other creatures—could gather in twisted worship. Every angle of the cyclopean walls makes the room feel as though it is leaning dizzily towards the altar at the far end of the room. Bulky, irregular columns are placed asymmetrically around the room.

Phinean. Phinean, a **warlock of the great old one** (VGtM p220), is lurking in this chamber along with three of his followers. A follower who accompanied Phinean prayed at the shrine and was shown terrible eldritch knowledge, becoming a **nothic** (MM p236).

Door seal. Phinean is carrying a diamond-shaped object made of strange iridescent metal. It fits the sealed double doors in Area 3.

Adjusting this Encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak:** 1 warlock, 1 nothic
- **Weak:** 1 warlock, 2 nothics
- **Strong or Very Strong:** 1 warlock, 4 nothics

6. Entrance to the Maddening Depths

A light emanates from the central pool in this large, chamber, which is otherwise barren. The light is like nothing of this world, and even attempting to identify its color is a fruitless struggle. Shadows are thrown onto the walls as creatures from the depths of the pool rise toward its surface.

Rising from the pool are multiple **chuul** (MM p40), ancient guardians of the sanctuary chamber awakened by the opening of the door.

Adjusting this Encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak:** 2 chuul, 1 nothic
- **Weak:** 3 chuul, 1 nothic
- **Strong:** 3 chuul, 3 nothics
- **Very Strong:** 3 chuul, 4 nothics

Depths of Madness. Diving into the central pool reveals it is actually a brightly lit shaft with no discernible bottom. Somewhere several hundred feet down, the water-filled tunnel becomes a tunnel to a portion of the Far Realm. As a creature who is not an aberration attempts to swim down into this area, it faces progressively harder saving throws to avoid a random form of short-term madness as described in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. A creature at a depth of 50 feet or less must make a **DC 10 Wisdom saving throw** to avoid this madness. For every 50 additional feet of depth, a creature must repeat the saving throw, and each time the DC increases by 4.



Treasure. The chuul, the room, and the pool are devoid of treasure. After this chamber is opened, one party member of your choice finds a small object among their possession; the *Icon of Xxiphu*.

Icon of Xxiphu

Wondrous item, very rare

This appears to be a small, thin icon of an obelisk made of some strange, iridescent metal. A creature in possession of this object can use it to cast the *contact other plane* spell. Casting the spell in this manner places the creature in contact with an aboleth in the ancient city of Xxiphu, which answers questions to the best of its considerable knowledge. The creature using the icon of Xxiphu is unaware of who or what is answering its questions. Once the icon of Xxiphu has been used in this manner, it cannot be activated again for 7 days.



OF TWO MINDS

The adventure location is designed for 4-6 characters of level 8 (Tier 2, APL 8).

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Psytatosk, an ulitharid, and a group of loyal illithid broke away from their elder brain two years ago. After traveling to Skullport in search of a place to begin a new colony, Psytatosk approached Halaster and offered to defend Undermountain in exchange for a space to use as a laboratory. Halaster agreed to the proposal for inscrutable reasons of his own. In addition to making worthy guardians, the illithids also provide Halaster with information about the wider world, taken from the brains they devour.

Psytatosk believes their former elder brain was too passive in ushering in a new Illithid Empire. The ulitharid is obsessed with researching ancient illithid history, hoping to uncover a secret to help rebuild the empire. Recently, Psytatosk's enclave captured Jooloch, an aboleth who resided in the Underdark. Psytatosk hopes to break into the aboleth's consciousness, gaining access to its undying ancestral memories. After gaining this knowledge, the ulitharid plans to relocate to a new domain and evolve into an elder brain, creating a colony that will bring about the New Illithid Empire.

ADVENTURE OVERVIEW

The characters find Psytatosk's lair in Undermountain. While exploring the illithid enclave, the characters learn about strange mind-flayer experiments and have the opportunity to interact with a githzerai monk. Finally, the characters face Psytatosk, engaged with Jooloch. In the process the characters may make an unlikely ally as the two psions are locked in a standstill.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Skullport Rumormonger

In one of Skullport's shady taverns, a goblin beggar approaches the characters. For a few coppers, she says she saw "tentacle-faced weirdos" dragging a giant "toothy eel" through Skullport. They were headed toward Undermountain.

Empty-Headed Adventurer

The characters come across a dead half-orc adventurer. Whatever killed him tore off the top of his skull; there's nothing inside! A tiny blood trail leads further into the dungeon.

Undermountain Enclave

The mind flayers have claimed a small corner of Undermountain and turned it into a horrific laboratory. The area is bisected by a large chasm that leads deeper into undeveloped sections of Mount Waterdeep. The illithid make regular excursions into the surrounding halls, searching for food and new thralls. The tight confines means they cannot keep many slaves and their experiments must be tightly controlled.

General Features

Sights, Sounds, and Smells. The enclave is kept meticulously clean and well-organized. Strange implements used to dissect and study living creatures can be found throughout the area.

The area is silent other than a distant shuffling as mind flayers move about. The illithids communicate with one another and their thralls telepathically at all times.

The enclave smells chemically sanitized.

Doors and Walls. Unless noted otherwise, all doors are made from iron-reinforced wood (AC 16, 20 hit points). Doors are unlocked unless noted otherwise.

Unless noted otherwise, all walls are made from 5-foot thick smooth stone masonry (AC 17, 50 hit points per 5-foot cube) and are 10-feet tall.

Lighting. The enclave is unlit at all times. The illithids and their thralls rely on darkvision to see.

1. Cries for Help

As the characters approach the enclave, read or summarize:

In the distance you see a wooden door slightly ajar. No light comes from beyond. A hushed cry calls out, "Help! Help us! Something horrible has taken us."

The door moans as it opens, centuries of wear shouldered on its rusted hinges. The small square chamber, void of any decoration, smells sanitary. The hairs on the back of your neck stand on end as the darkness seems to creep out of the lair.

The mind flayers have set a trap to lure unwary adventurers. In order to open the gates leading to the prisoners, two characters with at least 9 Strength each must pull and hold a lever near each gate. The gates

OF TWO MINDS

1 square = 5 feet



remain open as long as each lever is held in place.

The levers can be jammed in place with a metal implement, such as a crowbar or piton, with a successful **DC 12 Strength check**. A character can lift the heavy iron gates with a successful **DC 20 Strength check**.

The prisoners are restrained in fake manacles anchored to the wall. An attempt to open the manacles with a Dexterity check using thieves' tools automatically succeeds. A character who succeeds on a **DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check** realizes the manacles are fake. The prisoners can free themselves using an action.

Creatures. The prisoners are controlled by **intellect devourers** (MM p191). The intellect devourers are in telepathic communication with the **mind flayer** (MM p222) in Area 2 (see below). The prisoners are **veterans** (MM p350), armed only with one dagger each. Add the following Actions to their stat block:

- **Multiattack.** The veteran makes two melee dagger attacks and one unarmed strike.
- **Dagger.** *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage.
- **Unarmed Strike.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 4 bludgeoning damage.

The prisoners claim they were captured by strange aliens and their companions taken deeper into the lair. If pressed for information, the prisoners promise to explain the details once they have freed their friends. A character who succeeds on a **DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check** senses a lie.

Tactics. If the intellect devourers lure a few characters into their cells, they send a telepathic message to the mind flayer in Area 2. The mind flayer enters after 2 rounds, targeting any character holding a lever with Mind Blast. The intellect devourers teleport out of their host bodies and attack, attempting to use Body Thief on a low Intelligence character trapped in the cell.

If the characters attack the prisoners before the mind

flayer arrives, the intellect devourers fight until the hosts are killed. Then they Disengage toward area 2, where they Hide and ambush the characters.

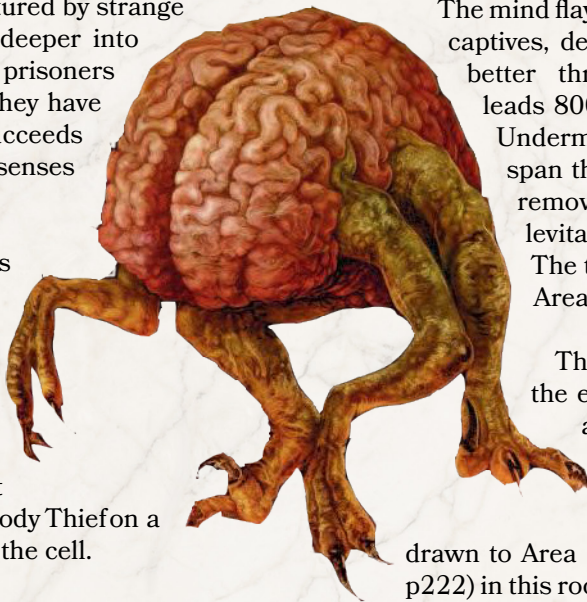
Adjusting this Encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak:** Replace the prisoners with thugs (MM pg 350). Reduce the mind flayer's hit points by 30.
- **Weak:** Reduce the veterans' hit points by 20 each. Reduce the mind flayer's hit points by 20.
- **Strong:** Increase the veterans' hit points by 10 each. Increase the mind flayer's hit points by 10.
- **Very Strong:** Increase the veterans' hit points by 15 each. Increase the mind flayer's hit points by 20. Increase the Wisdom (Insight) DC to 17

2. Interrogation Chamber

Along the wall of this small chamber are two heavy iron chairs. Leather straps hang loosely from one. In the other is a half-elven man, his face blank and eyes soulless, staring into the dark. Serrated hooks, scalpels, and other medical instruments hang from the walls in neat rows. The floor ends abruptly in a natural chasm, diving deep into the mountain.



The mind flayers use this area to interrogate captives, determining whether they make better thralls or meals. The chasm leads 800 feet down into the depths of Undermountain. A rope bridge used to span the chasm, but Psytatosk had it removed, ordering the illithids to use levitate to pull themselves along. The trash chute in the floor leads to Area 7 (see below).

The characters can climb along the eastern wall of the chasm with a successful **DC 13 Strength (Athletics) check**.

Creatures. Unless it was drawn to Area 1, there is a **mind flayer** (MM p222) in this room. The illithid wears a flowing black dress, ornamented with bloodstained tools

hanging from the belt sash. It is interrogating a half-elven adventurer, whose mind is shattered. The mind flayer attacks the characters on sight.

The half-elven adventurer was being made a thrall. He retains none of his former personality or memories and simply stares blankly at the characters. If greater restoration is cast on the half-elf for three consecutive days, he regains his personality and may become an ally. A character who succeeds on a **DC 18 Intelligence (Arcana) check** understands how to cure the thrall-to-be.

Tactics. The mind flayer attempts to stun as many characters as possible with Mind Blast. If any characters succeed their saving throw, the mind flayer casts dominate monster on the most heavily-armed character, ordering the character to defend it. The illithid prefers spellcasters' brains.

If reduced to half or fewer hit points, the mind flayer casts levitate on itself and floats above the open pit. The mind flayer fights to the death and pursue the characters.

Psionics and Counterspell

Remember, that in order to *counterspell* a spell, you must be able to perceive it being cast. Because a mind flayer casts spells without using any components, they cannot be countered. They are still subject to *dispel magic*, however.

Treasure. The mind flayer interrogator has not completely stripped the half-elf. If the characters search through his belt pouch, they find 20 gp, a small ruby worth 125 gp, and a *potion of greater healing*.

The mind flayer carries a key to Area 3C.

Adjusting Any Single Mind Flayer Encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak:** Reduce the mind flayer's hit points by 30.
- **Weak:** Reduce the mind flayer's hit points by 20.
- **Strong:** Increase the mind flayer's hit points by 20.
- **Very Strong:** Increase the mind flayer's hit points by 30.

This adjustment block should be considered when running any encounter with a single mindflayer. Extreme care should be taken running encounters with multiple mind flayers!

3. Illithid Living Quarters

As you settle along the far side of the chasm, you see a serpentine hallway stretching into the darkness. Doors break up the cold expressionless stone walls to the east. The dark, cold hall is made all the more unsettling as you notice someone humming a tune at the edge of your perception.

Each of these five rooms serve as living quarters for individual mind flayers. They pursue personal research projects and store their thralls here when they are not out on excursions. Each room is joined together by a series of small tunnels in the ceiling, carved by duergar thralls. The mind flayers use their levitate ability to easily traverse to other quarters.

All of the doors into the living quarters are locked; each mind flayer carries the key to their own room. The doors can be opened with a successful **DC 15 Dexterity check using thieves' tools** or forced open with a successful **DC 16 Strength check**. The latter causes enough noise to alert the entire dungeon.

The floor in each room contains a trash chute, leading to Area 7.

3A. Nascent Research

This room is filled with jarred fetuses from a dozen different humanoid species. A character who passes a **DC 16 Intelligence (Nature) check** realizes some of the specimens are not from Toril. There are abundant scientific drawings of young children and adolescents.

3B. Maritime Pursuits

There are star charts, astrolabes, and other navigation tools neatly organized throughout the room. A large glass jar contains a murky green-brown liquid and a severed human head, perfectly preserved. It is humming a sea shanty. If the characters unstopper the jar, the head begins merrily singing the tune. It only knows the one song and does not answer questions or engage in conversation.

Creatures. A **mind flayer** (MM p222) is asleep in this chamber. It makes Wisdom (Perception) checks at disadvantage, but awakens if there are loud noises in its quarters. If the characters wake the illithid, it telepathically calls for help from its ally in Area 3E.

3C. Ancient History

This chamber is lined with bookcases full of elven lore. The small desk contains the illithid's work in progress: a translation guide between the illithids' psionically resonant language, Qualith, and Elven.

Treasure. If the characters succeed on a **DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check**, they find a pair of boots of elvenkind in a small bookcase drawer. Elves have advantage on this ability check.

3D. The Science of Chance

This illithid is obsessed with the similarities in games of chance. The room is littered with dice, cards, and boardgames.

3E. New Pets

This chamber smells of embalming fluids and fresh blood. Preserved dogs, cats, birds, and small rodents line the walls in cases. The illithid here is researching how to create a new species of psionically enhanced beast, similar to the cranium rat.

Creatures. A mind flayer (MM p222) is here dissecting an animal. It attacks the characters on sight.

4. Psytatosk's Private Chambers

The door opens to reveal a pair of small rooms. The first is dominated by a cage made of shimmering blue-green light. A complex matrix of purple crystals float four feet off of the ground, hovering in front of the prison. Inside is an alien female, her emaciated body covered in scars and burns. She presses her back against the far side of the cage, her eyes wide with terror and madness.

In the room beyond, you see a beautiful oaken bed, clearly crafted by elven hands. A curio cabinet containing fine crystal glasses and rare wines stands alongside a small table and plush velvet chairs. Red, gleaming eyes peer out of the darkness as musclebound, shaggy, creatures rush you.

These two conjoined rooms are Psytatosk's quarters. The door is locked and can be opened with a successful **DC 15 Dexterity check using thieves' tools** or forced



open with a successful **DC 16 Strength check**. The latter causes enough noise to alert the entire dungeon.

Creatures. 3 enthralled **quaggoths** (MM p256), guard the area. They attack the characters on sight and fight to the death. They do not leave Psytatosk's quarters.

A **githzerai monk** (MM p161) is held captive in a cage made of psionic energy. It acts as a *forcecage* spell, but can be dispelled as if it were a 7th-level spell. If the characters succeed on a **DC 18 Intelligence (Arcana) check** to rearrange the crystal matrix powering the cage, it is deactivated. If a character fails the check by 5 or more, they take 11 (2d10) psychic damage.

The githzerai monk, called **Arwah**, currently has 15 hit points and is on the verge of insanity. Although she knows Common, she speaks only in faltering Gith until her madness is cured. Her body is covered in scars and cauterized wounds. Characters who succeed on a **DC 13 Wisdom (Medicine) check** know that she has been operated on many times. She only speaks to the characters if they calm her, either momentarily with a successful **DC 18 Charisma (Persuasion) check** or permanently by casting *lesser restoration*. See Roleplaying Arwah for more information.

Adjusting this Encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak:** Reduce the quaggoths' hit points by 20 each.
- **Weak:** Reduce the quaggoths' hit points by 10 each.
- **Strong:** Add 1 quaggoth thonot (MM p256).
- **Very Strong:** Add 1 quaggoth thonot (MM p256) and increase the quaggoths' hit points by 10 each.

Developments. If the characters spend 10 minutes searching the area, they find a smooth stone tablet carved in Qualith and three black iron spikes, 4-inches long and 2-inches in diameter. If a character touches the tablet while under the effects of a comprehend languages spell or similar effect, they understand enough of the alien language to determine the spikes, when carefully driven into a thrall's skull, prevent them from being psychically influenced by anyone but their master. Psytatosk uses these creations to protect his thralls from the aboleth.

If the characters cure and ally with Arwah, she tells the characters about the aboleth and Psytatosk's plans. She fights alongside the characters against Psytatosk. If she survives, she might remain loyal to the party or offer a reward, at your discretion.

Roleplaying Arwah

Use these notes to help bring Arwah to life if the characters cure her madness.

Background. Just before leaving the elder brain, Psytatosk led an attack against a githzerai monastery on the plane of Limbo. The ulitharid and its followers slaughtered many of the monks, but Psytatosk chose to capture Arwah. She has been a personal experiment for several years and bears all of the physical and emotional scars that brings.

Traits. Arwah is perfectly calm at all times. She often quotes Zerthimon.

Ideal. Order. The mind and body must be well-ordered to grow.

Bond. The teachings of Zerthimon must be told to every world.

Flaw. I become frustrated with less enlightened races.

5. Brain Library

As the characters enter, read or summarize:

This circular chamber contains dozens of glass jars suspended from the ceiling on retractable chains. Inside each jar is a humanoid brain, floating in a clear viscous liquid.

An illithid and its brawny thralls stand in the center of the room. The mind flayer is carefully handling a brain, turning it over in its hands while wearing strange leather gloves, a pulsating red crystal set into each palm. Tendril-like probes snake up from the gloves, attaching to the illithid's head. As it notices you, it throws down the brain with a sickening squelch and reaches for a curved crystalline blade.

Mind flayers do not keep libraries of books or even Qualith infused tablets. Instead, they store the brains of particularly intelligent creatures for prolonged study. When an illithid devours a creature's brain, it acquires faint memories from the victim, but by preserving valuable brains, the colony can harvest deeper knowledge.

Using the Library. If the characters succeed on a **DC 20 Intelligence (Arcana) check** to understand how to use the library, they can read any number of brains in the collection. If Arwah is present and her madness cured, she shares her knowledge of illithid lore, granting advantage on the ability check. After selecting a brain, the character must succeed on a **DC 14 Intelligence saving**

throw or take 11 (2d10) psychic damage and be unable to use the library for 24 hours.

The machine allows the user to read a brain as if it were affected by a deep *detect thoughts* spell. The brain reveals only factual information it knew in life and cannot hide or distort memories. The machine also brings forward subconscious memories the living person may have thought they had forgotten.

You may populate the library with as many brains as you would like. This provides an opportunity for you to share more information about Undermountain, Waterdeep, or your campaign as a whole. Here are a few brains the party might find:

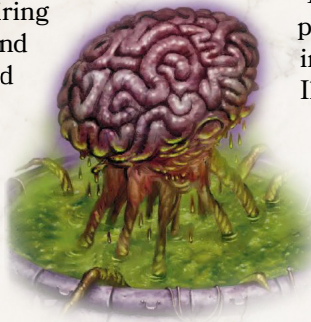
Valiant Harper. An elven Harper and her dwarven friend ventured into Undermountain to find a lost temple of Dumathoin. They were attacked by the mind flayers before discovering the temple. The Harper held a hallway, allowing her companion to escape.

Foolish Thayan. Psytatosk enticed a Red Wizard of Thay to visit the enclave, promising the illithids would purchase his magic items. The ulitharid valued the wizard's knowledge, so he kept it.

Agent of Xanathar. The illithid enclave ran afoul with Xanathar's Thieves' Guild soon after arriving in Skullport. Psytatosk acquired a captain's brain, which he uses to learn more about the Waterdhavian underworld.

Creatures. A **mind flayer psionic warrior** (see below) and its thralls, 2 **quaggoths** (MM p256) are in this chamber. The illithid is using a strange machine to connect with a preserved brain. The machine is worn on the hands like a pair of gloves, which have six probes that connect to the user's head. The illithid is delicately holding a brain, turning it over slowly. When it perceives the characters, it disconnects the machine (requiring no action) and attacks with its thralls. The mind flayer and its thralls fight to the death and pursue the characters.

Treasure. The mind flayer carries a key to Area 3D. The *mind blade* (VGtM p81) can only be attuned to by the mind flayer, but is worth 400 gp to the right buyer.



Adjusting this Encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak:** Remove 1 quaggoth and reduce the mind flayer's hit points by 20.
- **Weak:** Remove 1 quaggoth.
- **Strong:** Add 1 quaggoth.
- **Very Strong:** Add 1 quaggoth and increase the mind flayer's hit points by 20.

6. Psytatosk's Laboratory

As the characters enter, read or summarize:

This large chamber's vaulted ceilings tower above you. Workbenches, chairs used to restrain captives, and a pristine operating table decorate the area. In the center of the laboratory is a captive monster, a large aquatic creature resembling an eel with a lamprey-like mouth and long tentacles. An illithid stands near the cage, whipping the creature with a glowing lash. Armed grey dwarves watch with blank stares, iron spikes protruding from the base of their necks. Along the western wall is a large domed carriage made of black wrought iron stylized with vicious, slender barbs. The glass dome is filled with fluid. It floats several inches off the ground.

Standing above the scene on a balcony is a towering illithid, its mass of tentacles reaching to the ground. You feel a presence subtly enter your mind like a light caress on the back of your neck. The illithid's tentacles twitch as the floor and walls shudder, reverberating with psionic power. Another force invades your thoughts, this one akin to a club over the head. "Kill them, you fools, and the world's riches are yours!"

This is Psytatosk's laboratory, where it conducts psychic experiments on a variety of subjects, all in an attempt to learn more about the ancient Illithid Empire. The large domed structure will serve as its brine pool after it evolves into an elder brain. The walls in this chamber are 30 feet tall.

Creatures. Psytatosk, an ulitharid (VGtM p175), is on the balcony 15 feet above the ground, overlooking the laboratory. There

are no stairs or ladders leading to the balcony, but the pillars can be climbed with a successful **DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check**. An assistant, a **mind flayer** (MM p222) armed with a mind lash, is on the ground floor, whipping the **aboleth** through its psionic cage. Add the following Action to the mind flayer's stat block:

Mind Lash. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 2 (1d4) slashing damage plus 5 (2d4) psychic damage. Any creature that takes psychic damage from the mind lash must also succeed on a **DC 15 Wisdom saving throw** or have disadvantage on Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma saving throws for 1 minute. The creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Psyatosk's most prized thralls, 3 **duergar** (MM p122), stand guard on the ground floor. Each duergar has a black iron spike, like those found in area 4, driven into the base of their skull. If a character spends an action and succeeds on a **DC 16 Strength check** to remove the spike, the duergar is incapacitated until the end of their next turn. While the spikes are in place, the duergar are immune to the illithids' Mind Blast as well as the aboleth's Enslave ability.

Jooloch, an **aboleth** (MM p13), is captured in a psionic cage like the one found in Area 4. This cage, however, is maintained by Psyatosk's own psionic energy and counts as a 9th-level spell for the purposes of *dispel magic*. The aboleth cannot make tentacle attacks outside of the cage.

Make the following changes to Jooloch's stat block:

- It currently has 35 hit points.
- Remove all Legendary and Lair Actions.

Tactics. Psyatosk attempts to keep the characters at bay using Mind Blast and telekinesis. If a character makes it onto the balcony, the ulitharid uses levitate to float above combat. If a character is psionically weakened by the mind lash, Psyatosk attacks them, attempting to

extract their brain.

The mind flayer assistant uses Mind Blast and attacks with their mind lash, weakening targets for Psyatosk. It attempts to dominate particularly oafish characters.

The duergar Enlarge themselves and engage in melee combat, protecting their illithid masters.

The mind flayer and duergar fight to the death and pursue the characters. Psyatosk plane shifts to the Astral Plane if brought below 15 hit points.

Unlikely Ally. Jooloch telepathically contacts the characters when they enter, promising great wealth if they help the aboleth. If they respond, Jooloch tempts them with their greatest desires, using its Probing Telepathy trait. It says that it cannot feel the duergar's minds and the illithid are too strong to enslave. If it were able to sense the duergar, it could turn them against their masters.

If the characters remove the iron spikes from a duergar, Jooloch uses Enslave on it. The duergar automatically fail their saving throw versus this effect.

Treasure. Psyatosk carries a key to Area 4. It also carries a small round stone made up of a series of interlocking circles, which moves independently. The item is called *The Unbroken Circle of Zerthimon*, and serves as the githzerai's religious text. Within the teachings are several magical inscriptions written in Gith. These inscriptions function as spell scrolls, including: *sanctuary*, *lesser restoration*, *see invisibility*, and *mind blank*. It also contains a *scroll of protection against aberrations*.

The assistant carries a key to Area 3A. The mind lash is worth 200 gp to the right buyer.

Developments. If Psyatosk was able to plane shift to safety, it abandons its pursuits in Undermountain but becomes obsessed with the characters, vows to consume



each of their brains, and becomes a recurring villain.

If Arwah is present, she requests The Unbroken Circle of Zerthimon; it was her master's text from which she was taught.

If the characters attempt to help Jooloch and do not kill the aboleth, it sends a minion to the characters in two days. Ask a player who was helpful to the aboleth which *Rare* magic item they would like from the Dungeon Master's Guide. The minion delivers the item alongside a giant pearl worth 900 gp.

Adjusting this Encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak:** Remove 1 duergar and reduce the mind flayer's hit points by 20. Reduce Psytatosk's hit points by 40 and reduce all of its DCs to 15.
- **Weak:** Remove 1 duergar and reduce the mind flayer's hit points by 20. Reduce Psytatosk's hit points by 40
- **Strong:** Add 1 duergar.
- **Very Strong:** Add 1 duergar and increase the mind flayer's hit points by 20.

7. Trash Collection

As you peer down the chute, a strong acrid odor wafts up, cinging your nostrils. The smell of decay stands in stark contrast to the pristine lair. Blood, bile, and a thick ooze coat the chute.

Several locations in the enclave contain trash chutes that lead to this refuse pit. Each chute is sloped, leading 80 feet down, and slick with blood, ooze, and other fluids. If the characters climb down the chutes, they must succeed on a **DC 14 Strength (Athletics) check**. If a character fails, they slip and roll down the chute, taking 10 (3d6) bludgeoning damage, landing prone in the pit. If a character falls, the sounds can be heard in any room with a trash chute, potentially alerting enemies. Anchoring a rope at the top of the chute grants advantage on this ability check.

The refuse pit is filled with nearly 2 feet of standing water. The area counts as difficult terrain for creatures

without a swim speed.

Creatures. The illithids' strange experiments produce equally strange and dangerous byproducts. 2 **gibbering mouther**s (MM p157), spawned from the terrified psychic resonance of the illithids' victims, are in the pit, waiting to devour a new failed experiment.

Treasure. If the characters search the area and succeed on a **DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check**, they find a bandolier of potions, including: 3 *potions of healing*, a *potion of poison resistance*, a *potion of water breathing*, and a *potion of heroism*. They also find a *ring of spell storing*. It is currently storing *mirror image* and *shield*.

Adjusting this Encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

Very Weak and Weak: Reduce the gibbering mouters' hit points by 15 each.

Strong and Very Strong: Add 1 gibbering mouter.



MIND FLAYER PSIONIC WARRIOR

Medium aberration, lawful evil

Armor Class 16 (breastplate)

Hit Points 104 (16d10+16)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	19 (+4)	17 (+3)	17 (+3)

Saves Dex +6, Int +7, Wis +6

Skills Acrobatics +6, Arcana +7, Deception +6, Insight +6, Perception +6, Stealth +6

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages Deep Speech, Telepathy 120 ft., Undercommon

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Magic Resistance. The mind flayer has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Innate Spellcasting (Psionics): The mind flayer is an 8th-level spellcaster. Its innate spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 15). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *detect thoughts, levitate*

1/day each: *dominate monster, plane shift (self only)*

Spellcasting (Psionics): The mind flayer is an 8th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). It can cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *guidance, mage hand, true strike, vicious mockery*

1st level (4 slots): *charm person, command, sanctuary, shield*

2nd level (3 slots): *crown of madness, phantasmal force, see invisibility*

3rd level (3 slots): *clairvoyance, fear, haste*

4th level (2 slots): *compulsion, confusion*

Actions

Multiattack. The mind flayer makes three attacks with its mind blade.

Mind Blade. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d6 + 3) slashing damage plus 7 (2d6) psychic damage.

Tentacles. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 15 (2d10 + 4) psychic damage. If the target is Medium or smaller, it is grappled (escape DC 15) and must succeed on a DC 15 Intelligence saving throw or be stunned until this grapple ends.

Extract Brain. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one incapacitated humanoid grappled by the mind flayer. Hit: The target takes 55 (10d10) piercing damage. If this damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, the mind flayer kills the target by extracting and devouring its brain.

Mind Blast (Recharge 5–6). The mind flayer magically emits psychic energy in a 60-foot cone. Each creature in that area must succeed on a DC 15 Intelligence saving throw or take 22 (4d8 + 4) psychic damage and be stunned for 1 minute. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

THE HUNGER OF ABBATHOR

The adventure location is designed for 4-6 characters of level 9 (Tier 2, APL 9).

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The vast Melairkyn clan empire that spanned Undermountain was ultimately brought down by delving too deep. The Melairkyn dwarves opened up caverns in the Underdark that led drow, duergar and other beasts from the Night Below to their tunnels.

The empire didn't fall immediately. It took decades of violent war, where the dwarves slowly lost ground and the invaders fortified and settled in. During those early incursions, the duergar made heavy sorties into the lower levels, broke into deep vaults, and carried off untold treasures. In an effort to appease Abbathor, the priesthood commissioned the construction of the Hunger of Abbathor, a shrine and offering altar to their avaricious god, using the slave labour of thousands of captured Melairkyn dwarves.

ADVENTURE OVERVIEW

The characters enter the shrine and run afoul of the gargantuan gelatinous cube that hibernates here.

If the heroes reach the balcony and activate the gong there, they awaken the spirits of slaves and defenders alike.. Discussion with the ghosts may reveal the history of the shrine, if the characters are inclined to converse.

Approaching the statue allows internal access into the head chamber, through the mouth (or the concealed entrance in the helmet), and traversing the chute reveals the partially collapsed treasure room and its glittering guardian.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Discovery by Chance....

The adventurers may simply stumble onto the shrine as part of their travels within the halls of Undermountain.

The Temple of Dumathoin

If the adventurers have completed the Temple of Dumathoin adventure in this book, they may have discerned clues as to the shrine's location from the library

there, or gained insight via the use of the Altar.

The Lost Treasure

Rumours circulate through the taverns of Skullport about a lost duergar treasure repository. Skilled investigation might piece together enough landmarks in Undermountain to lead characters to the shrine.

The Hunger of Abbathor

General Features

Terrain. The entire complex is worked stone.

Light. There is no light anywhere except Area 4 where the *dim light* shed by the great statue's eyes is visible. However if the characters activate the gong, Area 4 is bathed in *bright light* and areas 2 and 3 become dim. Area 5 is brightly lit, and area 6 is dark.

Ceiling Height. Each area has its height stated under the descriptions as all are different.

Sounds. Soft, mournful howling echoes through the entire complex. It might just be the wind through the great chasm, but it carries a tangible sense of melancholy and aching loss.

Unhallowed. Undead of dwarven origin cannot be turned or affected by Channel Divinity abilities within the complex.

1. Great Portals

A pair of gargantuan iron doors block the corridor here, each standing fully twenty feet high and ten wide. The faces of each are etched with intricate, blocky patterns reminiscent of a maze, and symbols of a dripping dagger dominate the centre of each.

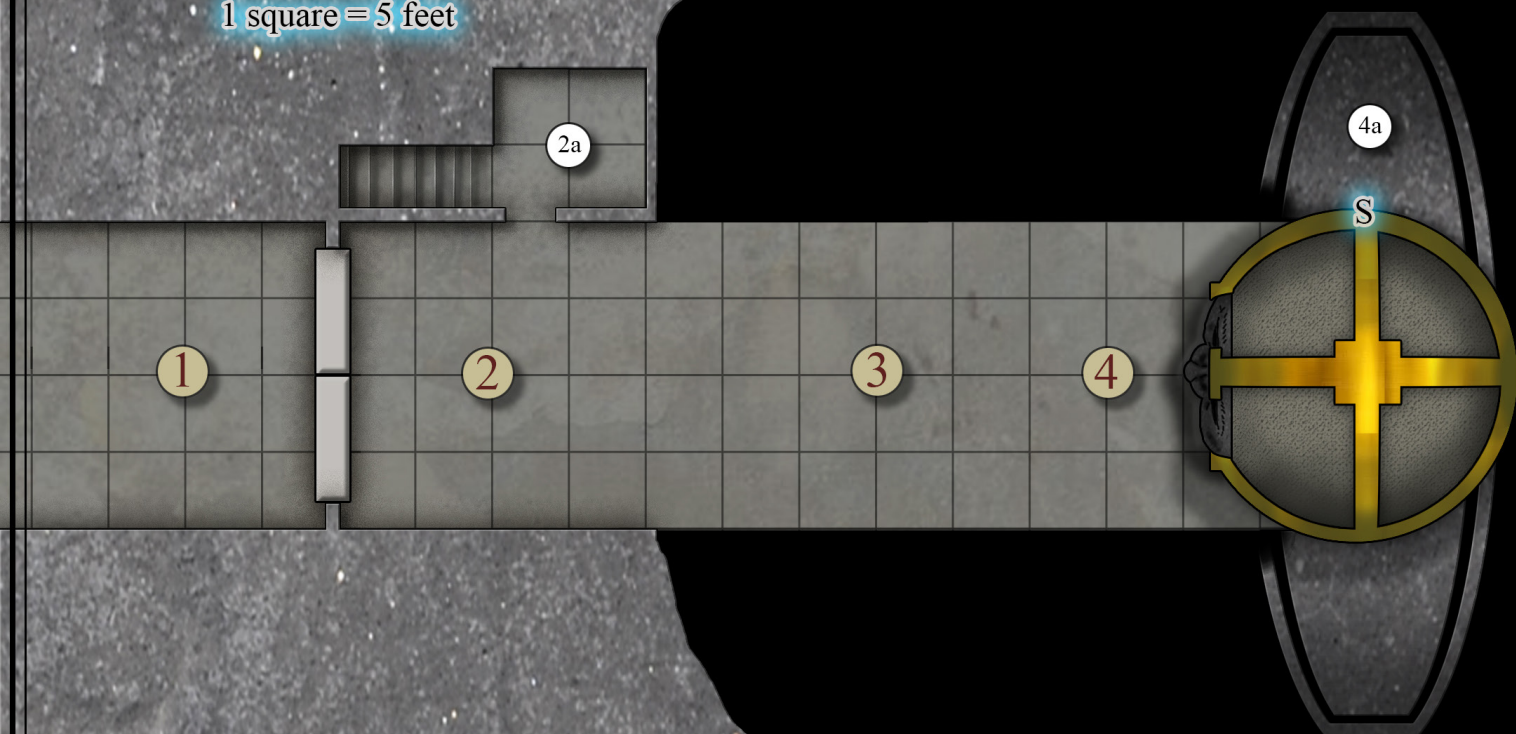
Above the great portal, a half dozen arrow slits pierce the angled stone wall above, though nothing can be seen beyond them.

The corridor is 30 feet high here. The arrow slits are 1 foot wide and will not allow passage to characters unless they possess unusual magical means, such as gaseous form or teleportation.

Despite the formidable-looking gates, they open inward easily and silently if touched, courtesy of cunning counterweights concealed in the walls. If not wedged open, they swing closed of their own accord after a

THE HUNGER OF ABBATHOR

1 square = 5 feet



minute, but are as easy to open from either side.

2. First Look

Beyond the gates the tunnel continues for a short distance before expanding into a massive chasm. The floor continues as an open bridge across the wide gap to an immense dwarven head carved from stone, hellish light spilling from its eyes and open mouth.

Just to your north is an archway leading away into darkness, and above you is an open balcony that opens on the level of the arrow slits you saw before, as near as you can tell.

The corridor is 30 feet high here, until it reaches the chasm. The archway to the north leads on to a dark chamber.

Development. If the characters proceed to Area 3 without examining Area 2A, the gelatinous cube from Area 2A squeezes out behind them, spans the entire bridge (20 feet across) and attempts to engulf them once the easy escape route has been cut off, pressing them toward the great statue.

2a. Antechamber

An archway leads into a dark, empty chamber that is twice as tall as it is wide.

A set of stairs to your left ascends to the balcony level above.

The chamber is a 10-foot by 10-foot square with a 20-foot-high ceiling. The entire space is filled with a **gargantuan gelatinous cube** (see below).

Remembering that this area is dark (which doesn't allow for perception checks unless the characters carry their own light source), the characters may not see the creature. Even darkvision (which treats darkness as dim light) incurs disadvantage to Perception checks if no light source is present.

If the characters are perceptive (**passive**

Perception 15) or thoroughly investigate before advancing (**DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check**), they will notice an odd distortion in the air and a few objects seemingly floating in the middle of this distortion. The "distortion" is the **gargantuan gelatinous cube**.

Once the cube is dealt with, the characters can discover that internally it held the bones of numerous dead dwarves, some iron brackets and lanterns, a few corroded axe heads, crossbow arms and bolt heads, and a scattering of coins: 14gp, 27sp and 54cp.

Adjusting this Encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak:** Reduce the hit points of the cube by 50, and the ability save DCs by 2
- **Weak:** Reduce the hit points of the cube by 30
- **Strong:** Increase the hit points of the cube by 30
- **Very Strong:** Increase hit points to maximum (288) and increase ability save DCs by 1

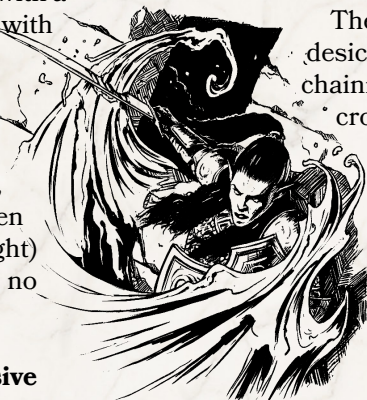
2b. Balcony

A ten-foot-wide balcony overlooks the bridge on one side via an open railing, and the great portals through the arrow slits on the other.

A brass gong rests against the south wall, suspended by iron chains. Across the floor are a number of desiccated dwarven corpses, their weapons and armour dull with a layer of dust.

There are five corpses here, long dead and desiccated with age. Each wears serviceable chainmail, and has a battleaxe and heavy crossbow (with 20 bolts), but the wood is so aged that any of these weapons has a 50% chance of breaking each time they are used. Each corpse shows no signs of what killed it, and do not detect as undead or the like.

A search near the gong reveals a brass striker, and it and the gong itself are in



good condition. The gong is not magical, but if it is struck, the sound reverberates throughout the area, acting as both an alarm and a call to the spirits of the dead that are still connected to this place. Read or paraphrase the following:

As the brassy sound of the gong reverberates throughout the area, pale ghostly spirits begin to fade into view. A few at first, then suddenly hundreds, these shades resemble the spirits of dwarves. They slowly drift around the chasm as if lost or confused, filling the area with a mournful wail that can no longer be mistaken for rushing wind.

Six spirits break off from the rest and move with purpose toward the balcony. One halts near you, its ghostly form showing the disapproving visage of a dwarf in ethereal finery—the robes and symbol of Abbathor adorn its spectral form. The other five enter the corpses, which shudder and lurch to their feet, empty eyes burning with eldritch fire

The spirits cannot be affected in any way until they enter the corpses. They then rise as **deathlock wights** (MTof p129) and attack the characters. The sixth spirit is the ghost of Averbrel, a priest of Abbathor. Unless attacked (or otherwise affected by abilities) he simply watches the combat, and if the characters prevail he lets out a long sigh of resignation.

If questioned, Averbrel sermonizes about the history of the temple, the glory days of the duergar invasion, and the slow decline of the Melairkyn dwarves. He can recount the hundreds of slaves captured and worked to death to build this shrine, and the blessings they received from Abbathor as they poured tribute into its jaws. He will disclose there is a treasure chamber far below, but NOT the existence of the secret door to access it or the treasure guardian. Eventually he'll ramble off into vague half remembered stories and fade away.

Adjusting this Encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak:** Replace deathlock wights with standard wights (MM p300)
- **Weak:** Reduce the hit points of each deathlock wight by 10
- **Strong:** The deathlock wights have maximum hit points (55)
- **Very Strong:** Replace one of the wights with a deathlock mastermind

3. The Bridge

The wide stone bridge stretches forth into the vast chasm, reaching out to the gargantuan statue of Abbathor.

The vastness of the chasm—of which you can see neither the bottom nor the far side—and the lack of railings makes the span feel flimsy despite its sturdy construction.

Ahead, the huge visage of Abbathor glares at you with a hungry expression, the light emanating from its eyes and mouth giving it an imposing demeanor.

If the gong at Area 2B has been struck, add the following:

Translucent spirits drift aimlessly around the chasm. As you begin to cross the bridge they drift over, observing you from a distance. They all appear to be gaunt dwarves with melancholy expressions, their soulless gazes following your progress impassively.

The bridge is structurally sound, but the lack of rails and the intimidating effect from the statue combines to create a sense of confusion and vertigo. Each character on the bridge or statue (Areas 3, 4 and 4A) must make a **DC 17 Wisdom saving throw** or suffer the effects of a *bane* spell. A successful save makes the character immune for 24 hours. If affected, a character remains so until they leave the area, but upon returning a new save is required.

The chasm is around 250 feet across at this point, and several miles in length and depth. Peering over the edge characters can see the body of the statue disappear into the darkness. If they possess extraordinary means of discernment, the statue is 250 feet tall, and stands on a massive pillar that reaches several miles downward, not meeting anything else until it reaches a river at the chasm's base. Around 300 feet down and on the rear of the pillar is access to Area 6 and 6A. Attempting to climb the statue requires a **DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check**.

4. The Hunger

The enormous face glares down at you, its cunningly wrought, stony expression conveying contempt, avarice, and endless hunger, as if the uncaring deity could consume the earth itself.

The open eyes seem to be formed of crystal, allowing the illumination from inside to spill forth, while the open maw has a deep angled chute, presumably where offerings are made.

The mouth rests just above ground level, and the chute within is 5 feet high with an open top and a slick surface, angled at 35 degrees downward. It ends in a vertical shaft. A chamber can be seen at the level of the top of the chute. Anyone attempting to use the chute to gain entry must make a **DC 17 Dexterity check** or slip on the slick surface, sliding into the 300 foot drop to Area 6 (and likely death if they have no way to arrest their fall, taking 1d6 bludgeoning damage for every 10 feet fallen, to a maximum of 20d6).

The crystal eyes are 10 feet above the bridge level and cannot be damaged, but they can be used to view Area 5 in enough detail to use teleportation-type abilities to enter.

4a. Secret Door

If the characters climb onto the northernmost pauldron (requiring a **DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check**), they may be able to find a secret door set into the side of the helmet that gives safe access to Area 5. The door is cunningly wrought, and requires a **DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check** to discover.

5. The Head Chamber

The chamber is bathed in an orange glow that has no specific source you can discern.

Carvings so intricate they are almost imperceptible line every inch of the inner surfaces of this chamber. The snaking designs are difficult to follow without becoming disoriented.

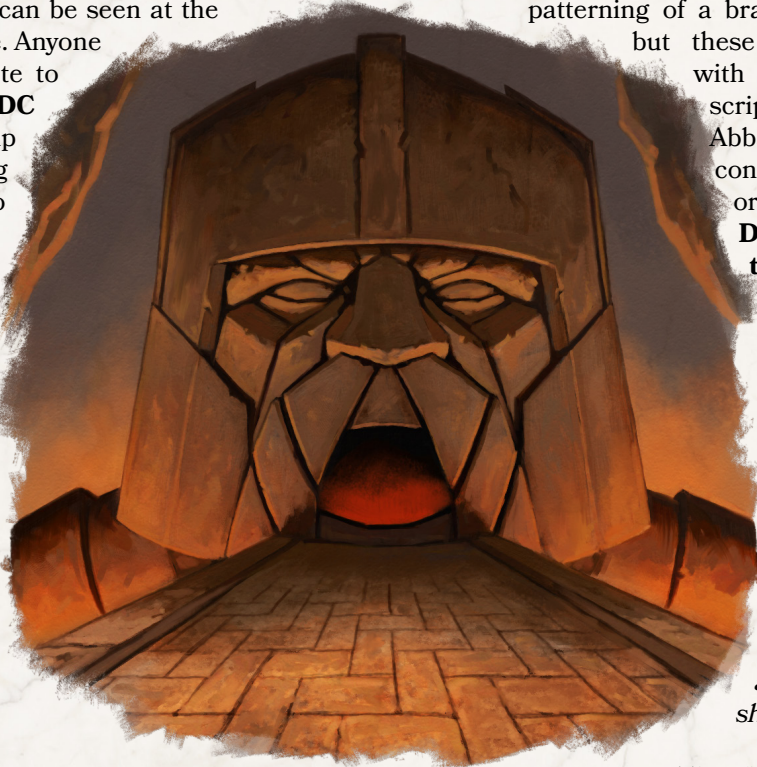
In the center of the room a cylindrical shaft disappears into darkness. It is fed on one side by a deep, angled chute.

On a closer examination, the carvings mimic the patterning of a brain, with lines and ridges, but these in turn are embedded with dwarven runes that recite scripture of the church of Abbathor. Anyone praying, or contemplating the pattern or scripture, must make a **DC 15 Charisma saving throw**. Success grants the character insight into the nature of avarice, allowing advantage on attack rolls and saving throws against the treasure golem in Area 6. Failure means that the character is consumed by greed, and gains the following Flaw:

Greed – *I am more deserving of wealth than any other. What I want, I should have.*

The flaw can only be removed with a *remove curse* or *wish* spell.

The chute is detailed in Area 4, and the shaft plunges 300 feet to Area 6. The room, chute, and shaft are all smooth-sided, offering no options for securing ropes or climbing gear. A creature can climb the shaft on a successful **DC 20 Strength (Athletics) check**. Failure results in a fall of 300 foot drop to Area 6, taking 20d6 bludgeoning damage unless they have a way to arrest the plummet.



6. The Treasury

The shaft pierces the ceiling of a domed chamber at its apex, leaving a gap of 30 feet to the floor below.

At some point in time a section of the chamber collapsed, leaving half the chamber open and exposed to the vast openness of the chasm. A scattering of glittering coins and gems fills the intact section of the chamber.

Across a 20 foot gap, a broken bridge reaches out to the far wall of the rift.

The intact areas of the chamber are 30 feet high and 30 feet in diameter.

Anyone exiting the shaft in motion and not otherwise tethered—including under a feather fall effect or a ‘controlled’ drop from the bottom of the shaft—must make a **DC 14 Dexterity saving throw** or slide off the exposed edge on landing, falling out into the chasm and the several mile drop to the river below. Anyone falling completely uncontrolled at high speed makes this saving throw at disadvantage. Characters that have safe footing in the chamber may attempt to save a falling character by making an attack roll against their AC. Success indicates that the falling character has been secured.

The treasure scattered across the room includes 9694 gp, 12567sp and 27901cp, as well as 134 gems of varying value (121x 50gp gems, 7x 100gp gems, 4x 200gp gems, 1x 500gp gem and 1x 1000gp gem). There are also 23 trinket or art objects (worth 50gp each), as well as a *potion of superior healing* (in a metal vial), a *scroll of protection from fiends* (in a bone scroll tube), a *cloak of protection* and an *ioun stone of awareness*.

If any of the treasure is picked up, the majority of the coins and gems coalesce into a treasure golem (see Appendix) that seeks to destroy the thieves.

Development. For every round of combat in Area 6 roll 1d4x100. This is the value in gold pieces of treasure lost as a result of damage or loss over the edge of the precipice. At your discretion, clever methods of preventing loss (such as putting up a wall of force) can reduce this by up to half. In any case, fighting the treasure golem destroys some of the treasure. Exactly how much is up to you.

Adjusting this Encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak:** Reduce the hit points of the treasure golem by 50, and the ability save DCs by 2
- **Weak:** Reduce the hit points of the golem by 30
- **Strong:** Increase the hit points of the golem by 30
- **Very Strong:** Increase hit points to maximum (255) and increase ability save DCs by 1

6a. The Broken Span

20 feet from the edge of Area 6 is the sheared-off remains of a bridge span that once connected to the treasure chamber. The span reaches to the other side of the chasm—around 100 feet at this point—then enters the wall to lead deeper into another level of Undermountain.



GARGANTUAN GELATINOUS CUBE

Gargantuan ooze, unaligned

Armor Class 6

Hit Points 200 (16d10+128)

Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	3 (-4)	28 (+8)	1 (-5)	6 (-2)	1 (-5)

Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, prone

Senses blindsight 120 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 8

Languages -

Challenge 9 (35,000 XP)

Amorphous. The cube can move through a space as narrow as 1 foot wide without squeezing.

Ooze Cube. The cube takes up its entire space (10'x10'x20'). Other creatures can enter the cube's space, but a creature that does so is subject to the cube's Engulf and has disadvantage on the saving throw.

Creatures inside the cube can be seen but have total cover.

A creature within 5 feet of the cube can take an action to pull a creature or object out of the cube. Doing so requires a successful DC 16 Strength Check, and the creature making the attempt takes 20 (6d6) acid damage.

The cube can hold 2 large creatures, 4 large creatures or up to 16 medium or smaller creatures inside it at a time.

Transparent. Even when the cube is in plain sight, it takes a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check to spot a cube that has neither moved nor attacked. A creature that tries to enter the cube's space while unaware of the cube is surprised by the cube.

Actions

Multiattack. The cube makes 2 pseudopod attacks and an Engulf action.

Pseudopod. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 10 ft, one target. Hit: 21 (6d6) acid damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 16) and restrained until the grapple ends. At the beginning of its turn a grappled creature takes 21 (6d6) acid damage.

Engulf. The cube moves up to its speed. While doing so, it can enter the Huge or smaller creature's space, the creature must make a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw.

On a successful save, the creature can choose to be pushed 5 feet back or to the side of the cube. A creature that chooses not to be pushed back suffers the consequences of a failed saving throw.

On a failed save, the cube enters the creature's space, and the creature takes 21 (6d6) acid damage and is engulfed. The engulfed creature can't breathe, is restrained, and takes 35 (10d6) acid damage at the start of each of the cube's turns. When the cube moves, the engulfed creature moves with it.

An engulfed creature can try to escape by taking an action to make a DC 16 Strength check. On a success, the creature escapes and enters a space of its choice within 5 feet of the cube.

TREASURE GOLEM

Large construct, unaligned

Armor Class 18 (Dex, natural armor)

Hit Points 178 (17d10+85)

Speed 30 ft., Fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	14 (+2)	20 (+5)	3 (-4)	11 (+0)	1 (-5)

Damage Immunities poison, psychic; bludgeoning, piercing and slashing from non magical weapons that aren't adamantine

Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralysed, petrified, poisoned, prone

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages understands Undercommon but can't speak

Challenge 10 (5,900 XP)

Hoard Bound. The golem is bound to its treasure. It cannot be banished or otherwise moved from the plane its hoard exists on, and it can unerringly track every single coin or object taken from its hoard.

Immutable Form. The golem is immune to any spell or effect that would alter its form.

Magic Resistance. The mind flayer has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Magic Weapons. The golems weapon attacks are magical.

Actions

Multiattack. The golem makes 2 slam attacks or two treasure spray attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 19 (3d8+6) bludgeoning damage.

Treasure Spray. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, range 40/80, one target. Hit: 19 (3d8+6) bludgeoning damage.

All that Glitters (Recharge 5-6). The golem can generate a hypnotic pattern effect in a 30 foot cube centred on itself (which it is immune). Any creature in the area that sees the pattern must make a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the creature becomes charmed for the duration, becoming incapacitated and has a speed of 0. The effect lasts for 1 minute. A target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on a success. The effect ends if the creature takes damage, or another creature spends an action to shake the creature out of its stupor.



MOLTHGLOR'S GARDEN

The adventure location is designed for 4-6 characters of level 12 (Tier 3, APL 12).

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The hidden garden is home to a powerful Mind Flayer Arcanist (MM p222) named Molthglor. Removed from the hivemind of mind flayers deep within the Underdark, Molthglor ventured above ground, entering the Realms Above from the deep recesses of an abandoned mine in Chult. There he discovered a portal glimmering in the darkness of the mine, through which the mage could see nothing but a dank, stone-bricked dungeon room. Stepping through the portal to explore, Molthglor found a place to call home. It was not long before he discovered the area around the portal to be a side-chamber of the fabled Undermountain, the deadly dungeon of the mad mage Halaster Blackcloak located deep beneath Waterdeep. Not wanting to upset Halaster and his minions, Molthglor—an exile without a people—bowed before Halaster, pledging his life, power, and devotion to the mad mage's will. Molthglor now watches over the portal to Chult in this chamber for Halaster. Using illusionary magic to masquerade the room as a lush, enchanted garden, the mind flayer now preys on any wayward adventurers that happen to wander into his domain, whether from within Undermountain or through the portal from Chult.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Discovery by Chance....

The adventurers may simply stumble onto the shrine as part of their travels within the halls of Undermountain.

Sanctuary Rumors

Rumors circulate within Skullport of a sanctuary for weary adventurers somewhere in the dungeon. It is a garden hidden behind a carved wooden door, protected by a Unicorn.

Travellers from Chult

Traveling in the lands of Chult, the party come across a hidden portal, either within a small cave hidden beneath the jungle ferns, or deep within one of the abandoned mines of Chult. The portal leads into the portal chamber of Molthglor's Garden

Molthglor's Garden

General Features

Ceilings. The ceiling in the main chamber is 50 feet high. In the peripheral chambers, the ceiling is 12 feet in height. Corridors have a ceiling height of 10 feet.

Terrain Illusion. The garden terrain in this chamber is an illusion powered by Molthglor's casting of *hallucinatory terrain*. He refreshes the spell each day.

The garden appears absolutely real. Any creature who attempts to interact with the bushes, tree, or grass is no longer under the effect of the illusion. A successful **DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check** also reveals the illusion for what it is.

Upon any character's disbelief of the illusion, five **summoners** (Tomb of Annihilation p232) immediately try to surprise the characters, having hidden beneath the illusion. Molthglor joins the combat attacking with spells from his balcony when the illusion is broken.

Illusionary Curtain of Vines. Vines appear to grow along and hang from high on the northern wall of the main chamber. A successful **DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check** notices that these hang to conceal a room beyond. On a roll of **23 or higher**, the hero also notices a shadowy figure looming behind the curtain of vines. This is the mind flayer mage, Molthglor, working his magic.

Terrain Reality. Once the illusion is removed, the main chamber is a large, grimy, and empty place. It is a square dungeon chamber with two exits at ground level (the door on the western wall leading into Undermountain, and a cave entrance on the southern wall), and Molthglor's balcony high on the eastern wall. Rather than the illusionary giant apple tree, a large, slime-covered stone pillar stretches from the stone floor to the 50-foot high ceiling in the center of the main chamber.

1. Entrance from Undermountain

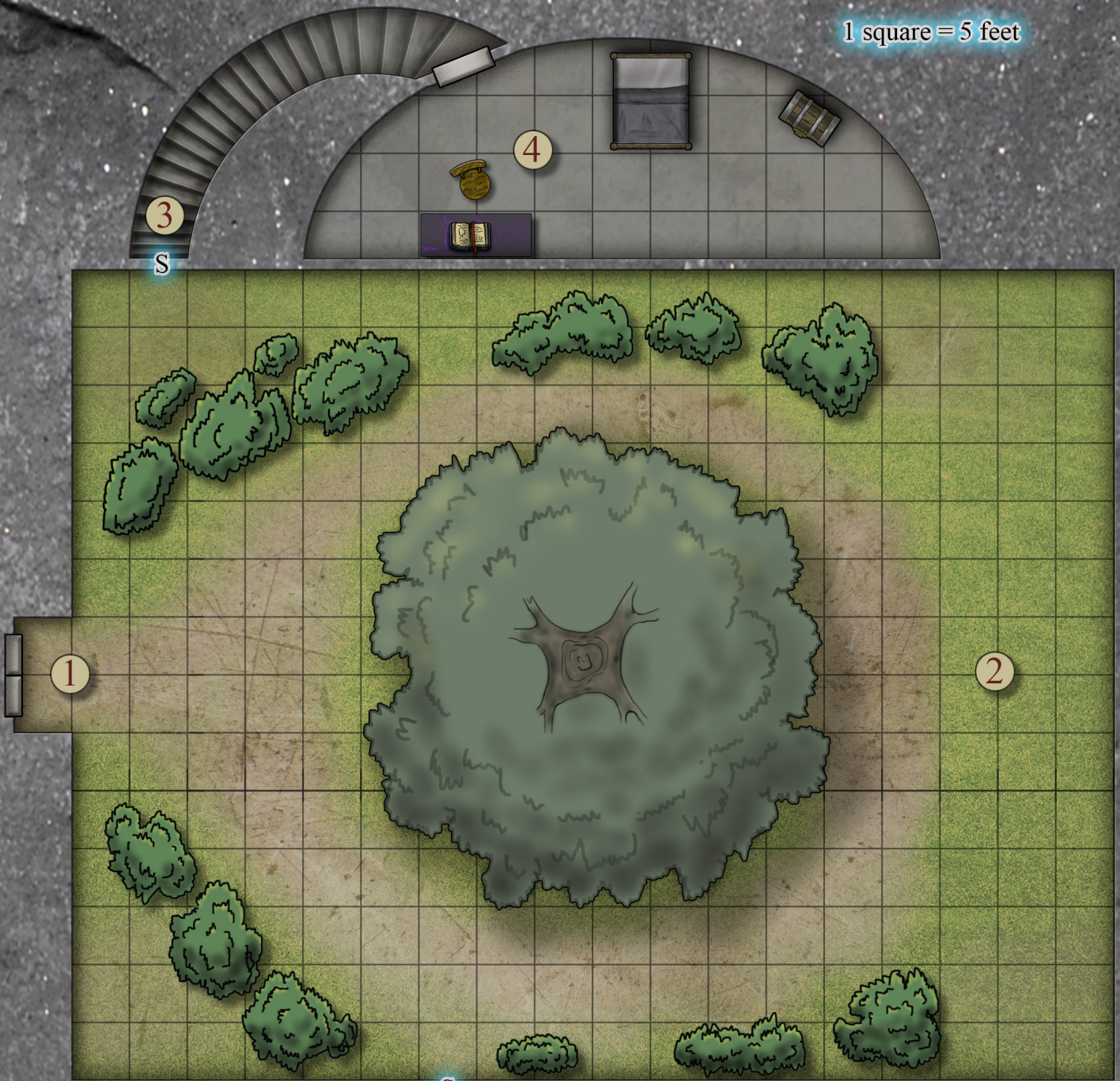
When the heroes enter through this door from the winding passages of Undermountain, read or paraphrase the following:

At this point, the mind flayer is hiding in the chamber on the eastern wall overlooking the garden.

As you look upon the room ahead, you see a sight you didn't expect in such a place as this. Green grass sprouts from the floor. Beautiful bushes of raindrop shaped leaves fill the area, and stand tall and strong around a large apple tree the center of the area. The tree has grown so high that it threatens to touch the 50-foot-high ceiling. The aroma of pollen, flowers, and the peacefulness of nature in springtime nourishes your senses. An overgrown forest track leads around each side of the giant apple tree, leading towards a heavenly glow at the opposite side of the beautiful garden.

MOLTHGLOR'S GARDEN

1 square = 5 feet



Stealthy Su-Monsters. Hiding behind the hallucinatory terrain are 5 **su-monsters** (Tomb of Annihilation p232) with a **Dexterity (Stealth)** roll of 20 against the opposed **passive Wisdom (Perception)** of the characters. They sit and wait for the characters to delve deeper into the “garden” until they attempt to **surprise** them.

Before any character can interact with the illusionary terrain, read or paraphrase the following:

Area 2. Unicorn Mound

You hear an angelic voice float over the serene garden from the radiant glow on the opposite side of the giant apple tree, it says, “Welcome to my home. You can be sure this is a place of peace—a place where those of you with good natures are invited to rejuvenate your weary and battered bodies. I have but one request: please do not touch my lovely garden else my fury will be unstoppable. So please stay to the path, follow it and join me in my sanctuary, as it is yours to share.”

As the characters move around the tree on the path, they see a beautiful and rare sight. Sitting atop a mound of grass rests a unicorn, bold and beautiful in its radiant power. She introduces herself as Heshna, and asks the party to tell her of their journey thus far. She offers a drink from a small pond of fresh water.

Allow the party to converse with Heshna for as long as the roleplay needs. Should a party member look more closely at her, a successful **DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation)** check realizes that Heshna is an illusion. The unicorn was conjured via the major image spell cast by Molthglor, for which he maintains concentration. Once revealed as an illusion, the mind flayer releases concentration and attacks the party.

Water. The water is indeed water, but the freshness of it is illusionary, and a **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception)** check sees past the illusion to notice the water is in fact stagnant and green. Any character who drinks this water must succeed on a **DC 15 Constitution saving throw**, becoming poisoned on

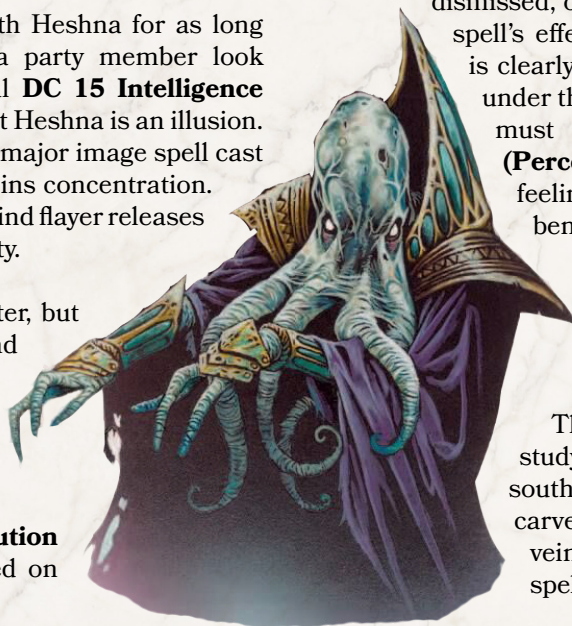


a failed save. If this happens, the illusion is dispelled, revealing the water’s true form.

Su-Monsters, Attack! Once the party has either seen through the illusions, or rests comfortably unaware, the five su-monsters attack, attempting to surprise the party. Molthglor also joins the combat in the first round, attacking with spells at range from his balcony. See **Stealthy Su-Monsters** in Area 1.

Area 3. Stairwell

The entrance to this stairwell is hidden behind Molthglor’s hallucinatory terrain, and looks like the rest of the stone walls of the chamber. Once the spell has been dismissed, or a character has seen through the spell’s effects, the entryway to this stairwell is clearly visible. To find the stairwell while under the effects of the illusion, a character must succeed on a **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception)** check, at which point feeling along the walls finds the hollow beneath the illusion.



Area 4. Molthglor’s Chamber

This is the bedding chamber and study for the mind flayer mage. In the south-west corner is a large study desk carved of black marble with deep purple veins running through it. An open spellbook sits on its surface. A large

wooden bed with black silk sheets is situated along the northern wall.

A balcony overlooks the illusionary garden. Every inch of the chamber can be seen from this viewpoint, apart from the area behind the giant apple tree/pillar. A large chest is against the eastern wall.

The Chest. This chest is unlocked, however Molthglor has inscribed a *glyph of warding* spell within the inside of the chest's lid. If the chest is opened, glyph breaks and triggers *explosive runes* which erupt with lightning in a 20-foot-radius sphere centered on the chest. Any creature caught in the area when the trap is triggered must make on a **DC 20 Dexterity saving throw**, taking 5d8 lightning damage on a failed save, and half as much damage on a successful one.

Safely Opening the Chest. To open the chest safely, a **DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check** reveals that the back of the chest has a hidden drawer which can be easily slid out giving access to the chest's treasure without triggering the glyph. Looking inside the chest from this angle also notices the glyph of warding that remains unbroken and stable until the lid is opened.

Treasure. The spellbook on top of the marble desk is Molthglor's, and contains all of the spells listed on his stat block. The treasure chest contains 3 gemstones - a tiger eye (10 gp), a blue quartz (10 gp) and a bloodstone (50 gp). There is also a *ring of mind shielding* (DMG p191).

Area 5. Portal to Chult

This is a permanent portal which acts as a dimensional gateway between this chamber and one of the many unnamed mines on Chult (your discretion). This room can act as a conduit between the Tomb of Annihilation and Dungeon of the Mad Mage hardcover adventure books.

SU-MONSTER

Medium monstrosity, chaotic evil

Armor Class 12
Hit Points 27 (5d8+5)
Speed 30 ft., Climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	9 (-1)	13 (+1)	9 (-1)

Skills Athletics +6, Perception +3
Senses passive Perception 13
Languages -
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Actions

Multiattack. The su-monster makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its claws..

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

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.
Hit: 7 (2d4+2) slashing damage., or 12 (4d4+2) slashing damage if the su-monster is hanging by its tail and all four of its limbs are free.

Psychic Crush (Recharge 5-6). The su-monster targets one creature it can see within 30 feet of it. The target must succeed on a DC 11 Wisdom saving throw or take 17 (5d6) psychic damage or be stunned for 1 minute. The stunned target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.



MOLTHGLOR'S GARDEN

1 square = 5 feet



SARGAUTH SANCTUARY

The adventure location is designed for 4-6 characters of level 12 (Tier 3, APL 12).

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

For a long time now, patient aboleths have watched Halaster's expansion of Undermountain with growing interest. They have built outposts on various levels of the dungeon in order to oversee the mad mage's movements, up to and including the city of Skullport.

In the lawless and chaotic Port of Shadows, strange sights and sudden disappearances are a daily occurrence. As yet, the aboleth incursion has drawn little notice, which serves the malevolent creatures well indeed.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Aboleth allies and slaves move about both within Skullport and its surrounding areas. Here are a few ways the party may arrive at the caves:

Shy and Aleyne

Aleyne (uh-layn) is part of a band of adventurers that recently went missing near Skullport. He has a friend named Shy within the city who has become desperately concerned for him. The last Shy knew, Aleyne was headed out to investigate the caves to the south-east of Skull Island.

Strange Sightings

Aboleth slaves can sometimes be spotted within the city wearing damp wrappings or soaked clothing to keep their skin moist. Closer inspection reveals discolored skin and odd mannerisms.

Pursuit

The party may stumble across the caves while attempting to evade pursuit. The cave's small entrance grants an easy method of escape from larger sailing vessels.

The Caves

The aboleth lair lies within a cave system to the south-east of Skull Island, near Skullport. It is easy enough for visitors to miss the entrance if they do not know what they are looking for; the crevice blends into the surrounding

cave walls and quickly curves away, allowing no light to enter or exit the main cavern.

It is assumed that the party approaches in a small boat. Adjust as appropriate if this is not the case: a large boat does not fit into the entrance, but the party may choose to fly or swim if they are able. Treat any vessel small enough to enter as a rowboat as per page 119 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, except that it is large enough to carry the entire party along with reasonable luggage. It can be rowed at a rate of 20 ft per round, assuming 2 people are rowing. If desired, allow a **Strength (Athletics) check** to make the boat move at a faster pace; a result of at least 15 allows them to move at 30 feet per round, and a result of at least 20 allows 40 feet of movement.

General Features

Sights. The aboleths have taken up residence in a natural cave system. The ceiling and walls are rough, uneven stone, smoothing slightly at the point where they meet the river. The water is dark and slightly oily. The cave system is dark except for the light sources specifically mentioned in the text.

Sounds. The motion of the river changes based on the size and shape of each section of the caves: in some places it is nearly still, while in others it bubbles along furiously. The differing rhythms echo chaotically across the space, confusing listening ears. In areas where the river quietens, the silence is instead filled with the sounds of dripping water and a strange hum so quiet it can barely be heard.

Smells. The cave air is stagnant and salty. Hovering beneath these scents is a fainter, less pleasant stench of oil and decaying fish.

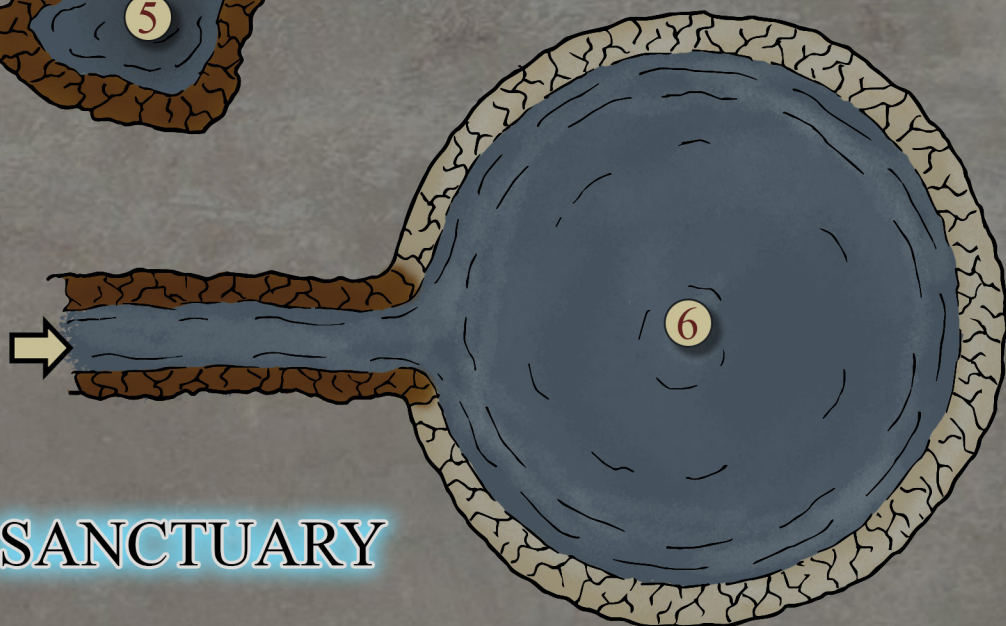
Touch and Taste. The temperature is moderate, including in the water, however the aboleth presence has further befouled the salty water of River Sargauth (see "Regional Effects" MM p14). Swimming through it feels like swimming in slime, with an additional touch of horror that goes beyond mere physical sensation. A creature can swim in the affected water for a number of minutes equal to its Constitution score before suffering any ill effects. For every ten minutes after this, a creature that is not allied with the aboleths must succeed on a **DC 13 Constitution saving throw** or take 1d4 psychic damage.

1. Entrance

The entrance is a narrow passageway with several sharp curves and a vicious current. Have whoever is rowing make a **DC 16 Strength (Athletics) check**, adding



TO RAPIDS



SARGAUTH SANCTUARY

their proficiency if they have experience with boats and granting advantage if at least one other character is assisting. On a success, they navigate the boat without incident. On a failure, it takes 4 (2d4) damage as it scrapes against the cave walls. If the boat is reduced to 0 hit points, it breaks apart and anyone inside falls into the water.

With one last abrupt turn, the crevice opens to a broad chamber filled with dark water. Five points of light mark the presence of boats floating on the surface of the subterranean lake: three at the center of the cavern and two further to the right, where another passageway continues into the darkness.

Four of the boats hold five **thugs** (MM p350) each. The remaining boat, placed near the center, holds four **thugs** and a **mage** (MM p337). All of the boats have the stats of a rowboat (DMG p119).

If the party have a light source of their own, they are spotted as soon as they enter the cavern. If not, the party can attempt a **DC 15 group Dexterity (Stealth) check** to avoid detection until they are within 60 feet of another boat. If at least one thug spots the party, they call out to alert the others.

The thugs were hired by Aleyne, an adventurer enslaved by an aboleth. Aleyne paid a generous hire fee, along with enough intimidation to earn the respect of the thugs without also earning their resentment. The thugs have two jobs: first, to scare off or fight any large groups that come through; and secondly, to demand a toll from any smaller groups. The mage, Illestra, was also hired by Aleyne, though she is less enthusiastic about her duty guarding this wretched, dismal lake. She does her best to blend in, and only involves herself if a fight breaks out which involves one or more spellcasters. Illestra is wearing a *cloak of the manta ray* (DMG p159).

If there are six or more characters in the party, the thugs refuse to let them pass without a fight. Otherwise, they demand a “scavengers fee” of 500 gp, which can be negotiated down to 200 gp with an opposed **Charisma (Persuasion) check** against

the thugs’ **Wisdom (Insight)**. The thugs do not know what is beyond this chamber, though they have seen various people enter. Most of those who enter either do not return, or are changed on their return. They know also that Aleyne is inside somewhere, but they haven’t seen him in days. Aleyne wears a cloak and a scarf around his face, both of which are constantly damp. This may have something to do with Aleyne’s skin condition.

Treasure. There is a total of 2,400 gp held on the boats, along with various mundane items. Illestra’s component pouch holds a pearl worth 100 gp and a diamond worth 500 gp. One of the thugs has a *dagger of venom* (DMG p161).

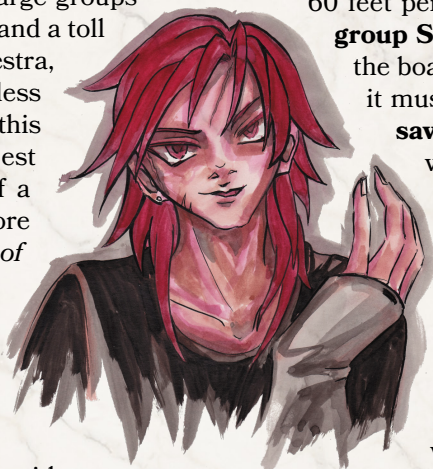
2. Rapids

A **kuo-toa** (MM p199) waits inside the passageway. As the party approaches, they see it survey the party and then begin to swim further into the caves. This kuo-toa has been enslaved by the aboleths and has little conscious thought of its own remaining. It has been ordered to lead the party into the caves, and it does not respond to questioning.

Progress is slow to begin, but your vessel soon picks up speed. The noise of the river grows louder and louder until you round a bend and peer down at a steep slope of churning rapids stretching down before you.

As the boat enters the rapids, it moves at a rate of 60 feet per round. The party must make a **DC 17 group Strength (Athletics) check**. On a failure, the boat takes 2d6 damage, and all creatures in it must immediately make a **DC 12 Dexterity saving throw** or be knocked prone – any who fail by more than 5 points are tossed from the boat. If the boat breaks apart, all passengers are flung into the water. A creature thrown from the boat takes 14 (4d6) bludgeoning damage as they are flung through the rapids and against the rocks.

The rapids continue for 200 feet. Half way down, characters looking ahead spot that the rapids end in a sudden drop. They have two rounds to act: ask for a snap decision

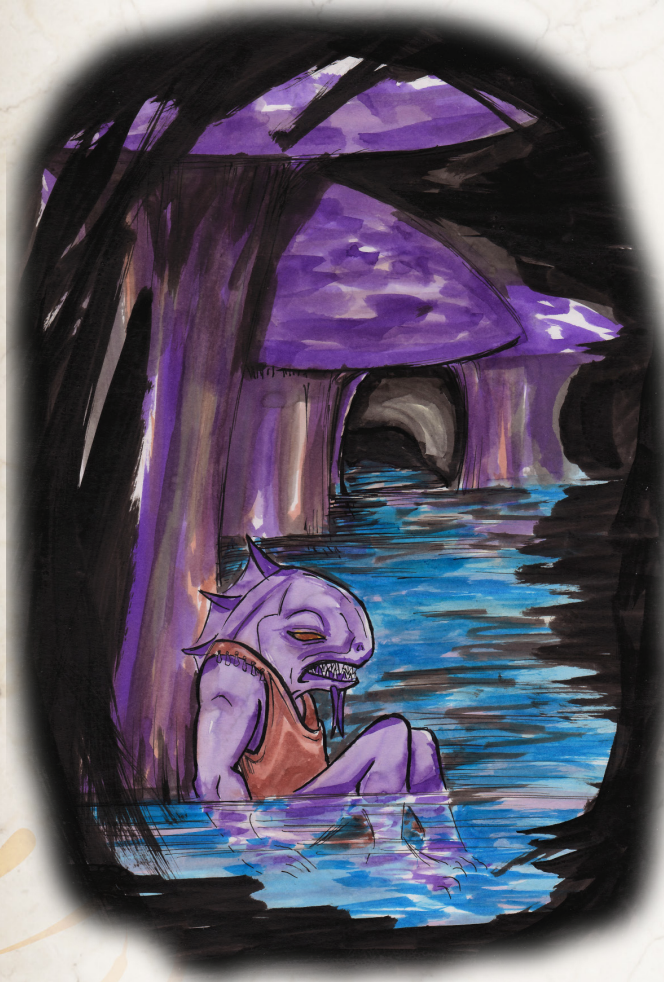


as there is no time to strategize. The following events occur unless heroes act to avoid them:

1. The boat continues on past the edge, slams into the opposite wall and is destroyed, dealing 7 (2d6) bludgeoning damage to anyone inside.
2. All characters, starting with any that were inside the boat, fall 20 feet and land in deep water.

The mouth of another cave opens before you, dotted with faint points of sickly green light.

If it was not stopped earlier, the heroes spot the kuo-toa from Area 3, swimming towards Area 4. The party see it turn towards the right. It is gone by the time they approach.



3. Mushroom Grove

A forest of gigantic mushrooms rise from the murky water, faintly lit by glimmering phosphorescent lichen. In between the immense stalks you spot tens of small, pale humanoids, floating serenely in the filthy water.

50 aboleth slaves are scattered throughout the cavern. Most are kuo-toa, but there are a few other humanoids from Skullport and its surrounds. You can add your own NPCs to this group if it makes sense for your table's story arc. All aboleth slaves in this area are tranquil and resigned. They react slowly and show no alarm, even if shaken or threatened. If a character speaks to them in a language they understand, they respond by inviting the party to lie down and enjoy their surroundings. If a slave is attacked and not killed in a single blow, they can make a **DC 14 Wisdom saving throw**: on a success, the aboleth's enslavement ends. Humanoid slaves awakened in this way are confused and distressed, while the kuo-toa slaves fly into a rage and attack, screeching, "You stole us from the blessed one!"

If the aboleths require healing, they draw from these slaves using their **Psychic Drain**. Freeing or killing the slaves prevents the aboleths from using this ability. If the party are aware that they face aboleths, a successful **DC 20 Intelligence (History) check** reveals this information.

Water Level. The water is shallower in this area, especially towards the edges of the cavern and pathways to Areas 4 and 5, where it is shallow enough to wade. In addition to these caverns, a few smaller tunnels carry the water deeper into Undermountain.

Treasure. Some of the slaves carry valuable items, and in addition, some of their material possessions are scattered around the room. If the party take time to search, they find the following: 543 gp, 123 sp, a *ring of water walking* (DMG p193), a *cap of water breathing* (DMG p157), an *oathbow* (DMG p183) and 3 *potions of healing* (DMG p187).

4. Meeting Chamber

As you glance into the cavern, you see something move: a gigantic, mottled green creature rises from the water. Its form is utterly alien—slimy and misshapen with rows of sharp teeth filling an oversized jaw.

A strange, sibilant voice sounds not in your ears but in your mind. Glancing over to your companions, you can tell that they hear it as well.

“Welcome, friends. You have travelled far, I see. What is it that you seek?”

The figure is an illusory copy, not the aboleth itself. See Regional Effects (MM p14) for details. It has been alerted to the party's presence through its kuo-toa spy and through all other the eyes in Area 3. If desired, allow the heroes to make **DC 17 Intelligence (History) checks** to see what they know about aboleths; the higher the result, the more they recall. Use the background information and statistics in the Monster Manual.

The aboleth speaks slowly and with leisure. It has lived for eons, with the memories of countless lives before it, and it holds no sense of urgency. If the party communicate

with the aboleth, use the following points to respond:

- *Who are you?* The aboleth's name is a jumble of telepathic images. It is amused, rather than offended, if the party provide a nickname for it.
- *What is this place?* “My companions and I reside in this place, as scouts for others of our kind. We have become curious about this mage, Halaster, and his kingdom. We desire to learn more.”
- *Where is Aleyne?* “Right beside me. Do you see him?” The aboleth shifts, and the party can see the figure of Aleyne. “Those who resist rarely resist for long. Yet I can offer much if you will serve willingly.”

The aboleth soon moves the conversation back to its own objectives: discovery of new information and the capture of new slaves. Through its telepathic probing, it has learned the desires of the party, and can begin to offer its assistance. Roleplay the interaction accordingly. The aboleth is not exactly charming, but its words are well-chosen.

Aleyne is also capable of responding to questioning, though he speaks minimally and with little emotion. See “Background” below, or the following points:

- *What are you doing here?* “My companions and I came here to investigate the caves.”



- *Where are your companions?* “Dead. I killed them all.”
- *Why did you do that?* “I don’t know.”
- *Shy is waiting for you.* Aleyne does not respond.

If the aboleth is either attacked or is unable to convince the party into an alliance, it disappears and sends Aleyne to attack. See below for Aleyne’s stats.

Background. Aleyne was once part of an adventuring party that set out to investigate the caves. He and his companions fell afoul of the aboleths, and while the others fought, Aleyne was caught by the aboleths’ magical enslavement and was forced to fight his own companions. He is firmly within their control now and has disadvantage on any saving throws to end the effect; what remains of his true personality is stricken with grief, guilt and madness, and he welcomes the loss of control that the aboleths offer him. He does however remember Shy (see Adventure Hooks): if she is with the party, or if they manage to capture and take him back to Skullport, he has advantage on these checks in her presence.

Tactics. Aleyne is a spellcaster and prefers to avoid melee range. He uses misty step to find a strategic position atop a mushroom in Area 3, and then casts at the party from a distance. He also has a *necklace of fireballs* (DMG p182) with 3 beads.

Development. As the fight continues, 4 **chuuls** (MM pg. 40) approach from Area 5 and attack the party.

Treasure. Aleyne has a *+1 rapier* along with 342 gp, 221 sp and 53 cp (and however many beads remain on his *necklace of fireballs*).

5. Final Threshold

The cave is empty and unremarkable, save for a slight glow from below: you can see tiny, luminescent creatures floating in the water, beckoning the way to the depths.

There is nothing of value within the cave itself. It merely holds a passageway to Area 6, where the aboleths reside. Thanks to the many eyes scattered around Area 3, those aboleths are immediately alerted if the party attempt to enter the passageway to their lair. If they have not yet

met the illusory aboleth from Area 4, it manifests behind them and calls out telepathically. If this interaction has already occurred, then there is no further reaction.

Area 6 is only accessible to those able to breathe underwater, either naturally or through magical means. The water is tainted by the aboleth presence (see Introduction), and this sensation grows worse as they enter the cave, indicating that the aboleth lair lies beyond. The party may still turn back if they wish.

The passageway continues for many minutes. Towards the bottom, luminescent grasses wave on the seafloor and the way begins to curve upwards again until the party arrive in Area 6.

6. Aboleth Lair

The natural cave walls give way to a structure that seems purely artificial, yet clearly untouched by humanoid hands. A broad circular chamber rises before you, built of some unknown pale material that glimmers with arcane light. Even as you pause to marvel at the construction, the shape of an aboleth rears up before you.

The area holds the ruins of an ancient, fallen aboleth dwelling, now connected to Undermountain via River Sargauth.

By the time the party have made it to this place, the aboleths are well aware of their presence. If the party approach with weapons drawn, the aboleths and their minions attempt to utterly crush the party. This is a deadly encounter unlikely to end well for characters below level 17.

Creatures. There are 2 aboleths (MM p13) and 20 chuuls (MM p40).

Tactics. The aboleths first target any spellcasters with their Enslave ability, then use their tentacles to deal with melee fighters and their Psychic Drain to heal any damage. If the damage becomes overwhelming, they hide behind the chuuls to heal themselves. They are not afraid of death (as they regenerate on the Elemental Plane of Water) but still flee if the situation becomes dire; it is inconvenient to lose their current position.

Development. Successfully casting *banishment* on an aboleth ends the charm effect on any number of affected creatures. If desired, any key NPCs you chose to include in this group may then decide to assist the party. The aboleths cannot use their Psychic Drain on creatures who are not charmed.

Treasure. The hall holds various ancient relics. Their true historical value is immeasurable, but even a fragment of the aboleth structure can sell for up to 5,000 gp if the right buyer is found.

ALEYNE

Medium humanoid (teifling), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 13 (16 with *mage armor*)

Hit Points 104 (16d8+32)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	11 (+0)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Int +8, Wis +4

Skills Acrobatics +7, Arcana +8, History +8, Perception +4, Persuasion +7

Damage Resistances fire

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages Common, Draconic, Infernal, Undercommon

Challenge 11 (7,200 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. Aleyne's spellcasting ability is Charisma. He can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *thaumaturgy*

1/day each: *hellish rebuke*, *darkness*

Magic Resistance. Aleyne has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Spellcasting. Aleyne is a 16th level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks). He has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *fire bolt*, *light*, *mage hand*, *message*, *prestidigitation*

1st level (4 slots): *detect magic*, *mage armor**, *magic missile*, *shield*

2nd level (3 slots): *alter self*, *crown of madness*, *mirror image*, *misty step*

3rd level (3 slots): *counterspell*, *fly*, *lightning bolt*

4th level (3 slots): *banishment*, *dimension door*

5th level (2 slots): *cone of cold*, *dominate person*

6th level (1 slot): *chain lightning*, *globe of invulnerability*

7th level (1 slot): *finger of death*, *teleport*

8th level (1 slot): *mindblank**

*Aleyne casts these spells on himself before combat.

Actions

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

CATHEDRAL OF BONES

The adventure location is designed for 4-6 characters of level 13 (Tier 3, APL 13).

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Varenius Helthon, also called The Black Baron, is a skull lord created by and devoted to the dead god Myrkul. The three souls that make up Varenius were all powerful followers of the Lord of Bones and each vied to become the god's herald. Myrkul was pleased with their eagerness, so he killed them all and bound their souls together, giving the creature a new name, Varenius. The Lord of the Dead cast Varenius into the Shadowfell, where he was ordered to forge his own domain and spread reverence to Myrkul.

After Myrkul's defeat at the hands of Mystra and Elminster atop Blackstaff Tower, Varenius vowed to find a way to return his lord to unlife. He came to Waterdeep, where he entreated with Halaster, knowing the Mad Mage is one of Toril's most powerful mages. Now, he supplies Halaster with undead minions to protect the halls of Undermountain. Varenius believes that allying with Halaster will provide him secret knowledge into how Myrkul died and a chance to strike at his dead lord's enemies.

ADVENTURE OVERVIEW

The characters discover a section of Undermountain controlled by a powerful skull lord. He has converted the area into profane temple to Myrkul. While exploring the area, the characters will learn more about the murderous cult of Myrkul and confront one of Undermountain's most powerful necromancers.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

The Shadows Have Claws

While recovering in The Yawning Portal or another Waterdhavian tavern, the characters overhear a group of young adventurers recounting their recent foray into Undermountain. They were assaulted from the shadows by an undead monstrosity with claws as large

as trolls. The party can lead the characters to where they believe the monster lairs: behind a door of bones.

Artisan's Brand

After battling a group of undead in the halls of Undermountain, the characters discover that each creature is branded with the same symbol: three conjoined humanoid skulls, the middle one wearing a jeweled crown.

The Cathedral

General Features

Sights, Sounds, and Smells. Tattered tapestries depicting Myrkul commanding undead hang from the walls. Black mold grows across the damp floor and walls.

There is a constant splatter of water against stone coming from below. In quiet moments the characters hear the soulless groan from a distant zombie.

The area smells of death and decay.

Doors and Walls. Unless noted otherwise, all doors are made from iron-reinforced wood (AC 16, 20 hit points). Doors are unlocked unless noted otherwise.

Unless noted otherwise, all walls are made from 5-foot thick smooth stone masonry (AC 17, 50 hit points per 5-foot cube) and are 10 feet tall.

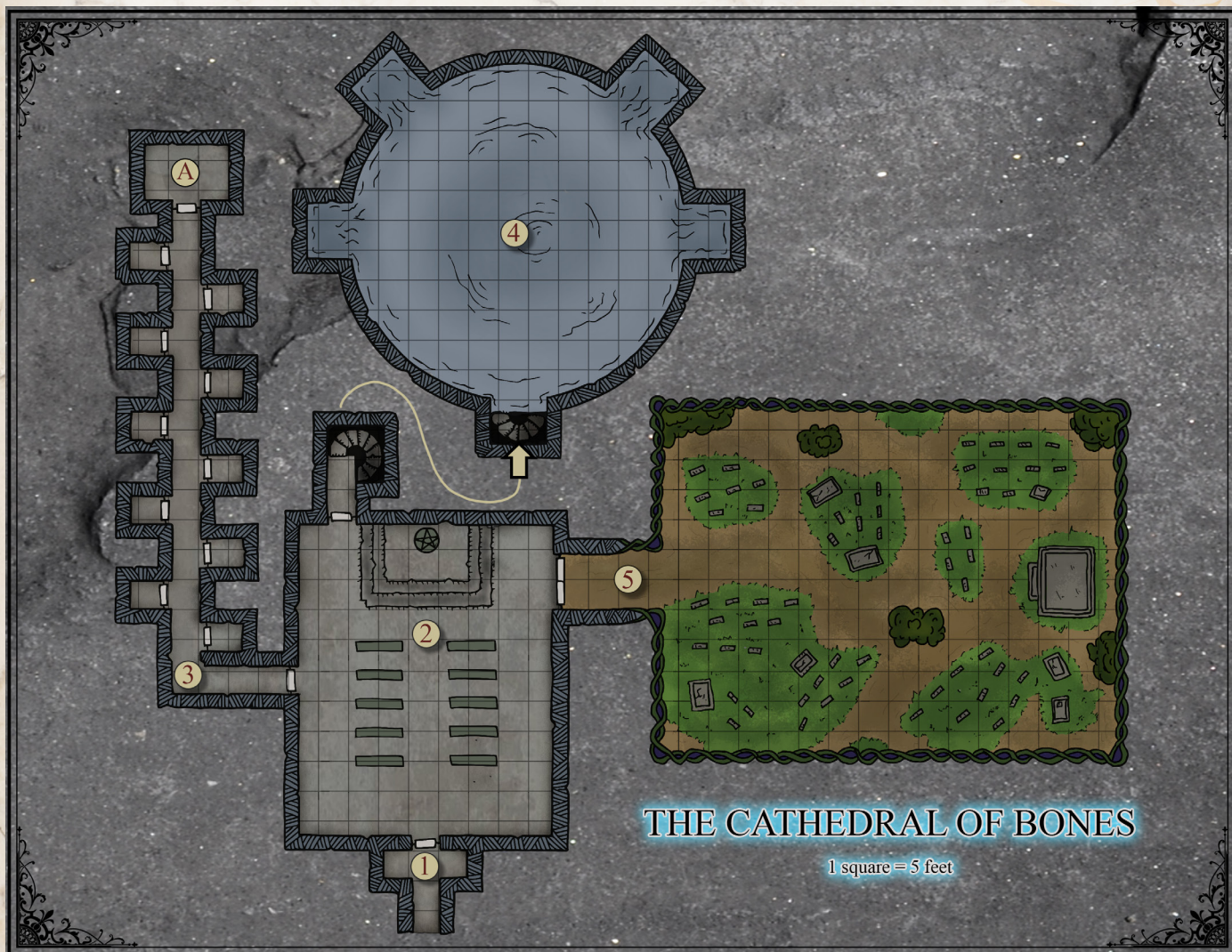
Lighting. Unless noted otherwise, the dungeon is dimly lit by candles ensconced in the walls.

1. The Door of the Dead

As the characters approach, read or summarize:

Standing alone at the end of the hall is an imposing bone door, a black gem the size of an ogre's hand set in the center. Upon closer inspection you realize the bones are not a door but a barricade; a monument to death eternal. Piles of polished skulls flank each side of the barricade. Skulls impaled on iron spikes glow with a dying green flame. The scene is a macabre painting.





Each bone in the barricade is etched in Abyssal, detailing how that individual met a violent end. The large onyx gem is Varenius' apprentice's failed phylactery (see Area 4 for more information). A *detect good and evil* spell or a paladin's Divine Sense feature reveal the gem is desecrated. The gem emits a magic aura of necromancy. Characters with a **passive Arcana of 13** or higher know that onyx is used in necromancy spells.

The door can only be opened by undead creatures. Any living creature who touches the barricade takes 11 (2d10) necrotic damage and must succeed a **DC 16 Constitution saving throw** or have its hit point maximum decreased by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The creature dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum

to 0. If this effect kills a creature, increase the damage of this effect by 1d10 for the next 24 hours for each creature slain.

If *dispel magic* is cast on the door (functions as a 5th-level spell), the magic is disabled for 1 hour and living creatures can open the door without ill effect during that time. If the gem is removed with either a successful **DC 18 Dexterity check using thieves' tools** or a **DC 18 Strength check**, the magic ends and the bones fall to the ground, revealing Area 2.

Creatures. The torches are actually 4 **flameskulls** (MM p134). They remain docile until a character touches or tampers with the door. Characters with a **passive Perception of 13** or higher are not surprised when they

attack. The flameskulls shout prayers to Myrkul as they attack. They pursue the characters up to 200 feet away from the door before returning to their post.

Treasure. The large onyx gemstone is worth 600 gp and weighs 35 pounds.

Developments. If there is combat near the door, Varenius, in Area 2, prepares by casting *mirror image* and then readying *cloudkill*.

Adjusting this Encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak:** Remove 1 Flameskull
- **Weak:** Reduce the flameskulls' hit points by 10 each.
- **Strong:** Increase the flameskulls' hit points by 10 each
- **Very Strong:** Add 1 flameskull and increase the flameskulls' hit points by 10 each

2. The Dread Sanctuary

As the characters enter, read or summarize:

A bone chandelier hangs from the ceiling of this dark sanctuary, the skulls thick with dried candle wax. Pews of knotted ebony adorned with fanged skulls stand as silent sentries along the nave. A dozen intact humanoid skeletons dressed in dark robes hang from the walls holding weapons, unholy symbols, and magical implements. Between each skeleton are worn tapestries depicting the conquests of a three-skulled skeleton.

The same three-skulled creature looms over a small altar draped in black linen. The three skulls twist unnaturally to peer at you. One cackles while the central skull smiles with a cold malignancy.

Varenius' captain, a vampiric cleric who resides in the Shadowfell, desecrated this area with a *hallow* spell (spell save DC 16), using the Fear extra effect.

If a character inspects the tapestries and succeeds a **DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check**, they surmise that the skull lord once had an apprentice, which he then killed.



Creatures. Varenius Helthon, a **skull lord** (MToF p230), is in the sanctuary praying to Myrkul. He attacks the characters on sight, pledging to turn their flesh into a monstrous creation.

Tactics. Varenius may have prepared actions (see Developments, above). He attacks using spells, reserving **finger of death** until an enemy is nearly dead.

The skull lord uses his Legendary Resistance to save against spells that would prevent or hinder him from casting spells, such as *feblemind* and *slow*.

Varenius uses **Legendary Actions** to summon 5 **skeletons** (MM p272). If he has 3 or more skeletons, he casts *cantrips* with **Legendary Actions**.

Varenius fights until brought to 60 or fewer hit points. Then he casts *dimension door*, teleporting to Area 5.

Treasure. Displayed on the altar are spells scrolls of animate dead and enervation (XGtE 155), written on flayed skin. There is also a curved bone dagger set with onyx and rubies worth 400 gp.

If the characters search the room with detect magic or a similar effect, they notice that one of the skeletons affixed to the wall holds a magic wand. It is a cursed wand of fear. See below for more information on the wand and its curse.

See Area 5 for Varenius' treasure.

Developments. If Varenius successfully retreats to Area 5, he drinks a necromantic potion, regaining 8d4 + 8 hit points. He orders his servant, a wraith (MM 302), to harass the intruders. The wraith uses hit-and-run tactics, making use of its Incorporeal Movement trait to retreat through walls, instead of engaging the characters outright. If brought to 30 or fewer hit points, the wraith retreats back to Area 5.

Adjusting this Encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak:** Reduce Varenius' hit points by 20 and decrease the hallow effect to DC 14.
- **Weak:** Reduce Varenius' hit points by 20.
- **Strong:** Increase Varenius' hit points by 30.
- **Very Strong:** Increase Varenius' hit points by 30 and increase the hallow effect to DC 17.

3. Cleaning Cells

As the characters enter, read or summarize:

A long hallway stretches out before you with five barred cells on either side. A sickening wet thud like a meat cleaver hacking through mutton pierces the silence. An acrid smell burns your senses.

These cells are used to prepare dead humanoids taken from Undermountain's halls for reanimation. Each body has its wounds stitched and crudely cared for to make a more perfect undead. Some corpses are flayed, their skin used for other creatures while the skeleton is reanimated.

The cell doors are locked. If a character succeeds a **DC 14 Dexterity check using thieves' tools** to pick the lock or **DC 20 Strength check** to force the door open, they can enter the cells. Forcing a door open creates enough noise to alert the zombies as well as the guards in Area 3A. Each door has AC 19 and 20 hit points.

Creatures. A **zombie** (MM p316) is in each cell, preparing a body for reanimation. The zombies cannot open the cell doors from inside. If the characters succeed on a **DC 8 Dexterity (Stealth) check**, they can move down the hall without being noticed. If the characters fail or do not use Stealth, the zombies stop working to grapple and attack the characters from between the bars. Both the zombies and the characters have half cover (+2 to AC and Dexterity saving throws) due to the doors.

Developments. If the zombies notice the characters, they make enough noise to alert the guards in Area 3A. The vampire spawn climb onto the ceiling and Hide from the characters, preparing to ambush the characters when they enter. If the characters do not enter within 2 minutes of the zombies attacking, the vampire spawn move into the hallway to attack.

If the characters make it to the door to Area 3A without being noticed and succeed on a **DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check**, they overhear creatures talking about needing to "unleash the apprentice for more bodies."

3A. Guard Room

This small room is used to oversee the zombies' and respond to any reanimation subjects who may not be quite dead yet.

Creatures. Two **vampire spawn** (MM p298), created by Varenius' captain, are in this room. They attack the characters on sight and pursue them throughout the dungeon.

Treasure. Several ledgers written in Abyssal detailing how many bodies have been processed lie open on the table. Some have a note that says “gathered by the apprentice.”

If the characters succeed a **DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check** while searching the room, they discover a false bottom in a desk drawer. Inside are several potions: *potion of hill giant's strength*, *potion of gaseous form*, and a *potion of mind reading*.

Adjusting this Encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak:** Remove 1 zombie and reduce the vampire spawns' hit points by 20 each.
- **Weak:** Reduce the vampire spawn's hit points by 15 each
- **Strong:** Increase the vampire spawns' hit points by 20 each.
- **Very Strong:** Add 1 vampire spawn and increase the vampire spawns' hit points by 20 each.

4. The Loathsome Apprentice

As the characters enter, read or summarize:

As you push the door open, the smell of old blood assaults your nose, leaving a sickly metallic taste in the back of your throat. A few steps down from the entrance you see a dismembered elf, his face twisted in a horrific death mask. The body ends at the waist, the legs accounted for in the blood and gore that covers the stairwell. The chamber below sounds almost peaceful as water steadily flows into a pool.

The door to this area is locked, requiring a successful **DC 16 Dexterity check using thieves' tools** to unlock or **DC 18 Strength check** to force open. If the characters force the door, the creatures below Hide and prepare an ambush.

The 10-foot-wide iron staircase spirals downward for 40 feet, leading to a drainage collection chamber. Water flows into this area from other locations within Undermountain, eventually draining out of the dungeon. The water collection chamber is filled with a foot of

stagnant water, creating difficult terrain for any creature without a swim speed. The four alcoves are steeply sloped and filled with 15 feet of water. Unless a character has a swim speed, they must succeed on a **DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check** to stay above water while in an alcove.

The stairs are slick with blood and gore from the recently slain elf. Unless the characters move at half speed along the stairs, they must succeed on a **DC 10 Dexterity saving throw** or fall down the stairs, taking 14 (4d6) bludgeoning damage from the fall and landing prone.

Creatures. Varenius' apprentice, now a **boneclaw** (MTof p121), and 5 **shadows** (MM p269) are in the water collection chamber. If they are alerted to the characters' presence, they Hide and prepare an ambush.

The boneclaw was once Varenius' apprentice, a powerful necromancer herself. She was close to completing the dark ritual required to become a lich, but Varenius, fearing she may overpower him in undeath, wove a powerful curse over her soul, weakening it just before transferring it to a phylactery – the onyx gem in Area 1.

The ritual failed and the apprentice died, but returned as a boneclaw bound to Varenius. Varenius despises



the creature, but understands its usefulness. The three souls within Varenius bicker over what to do with the monster. For now, Varenius feeds it troublesome adventurers.

Tactics. The boneclaw uses Shadow Stealth to Hide, gaining advantage on attacks. After grappling an opponent, it uses Shadow Jump, teleporting into an alcove.

The shadows attempt to draw the characters into the boneclaw's deadly reach. They swarm grappled characters, sensing an easy target.

Treasure. If the characters search the alcoves and succeed on a **DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check**, they find a dead adventurer carrying a *longbow +1*, 20 arrows +1, a *potion of greater healing*, and a coin purse containing 20 pp and 12 gp.

Developments. A character might recall the tapestries in Area 2 depicting the apprentice's death. At your discretion, you can remind them of this information if they succeed on a **DC 12 Intelligence check**. Alternatively, if the characters succeed on a **DC 16 Intelligence (Religion) check**, they know that boneclaws are bound to a master, whom they rarely abandon.

The characters can persuade the boneclaw to turn against its master with a successful **DC 20 Charisma (Deception or Persuasion) check**. If this occurs, the boneclaw gives them the command word to open the door in Area 5. After Varenius is slain, it wishes to return to the Shadowfell.

Adjusting this Encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak:** Remove 2 shadows and reduce the boneclaw's hit points by 30.
- **Weak:** Reduce the boneclaw's hit points by 30.
- **Strong:** Increase the boneclaw's grapple escape DC to 16.
- **Very Strong:** Add 1 shadow and increase the boneclaw's grapple escape DC to 16.

5. The Black Baron's Domain

As the characters approach the door, read or summarize:

This large door is made from a single polished bone. Due to its size, it must have been harvested from a giant or dragon. The door is intricately carved to depict a scene of a robed undead leading an army of skeletons. Behind them, a nameless city crumbles. There is an inscription in jagged, violent script along the frame.

The Abyssal inscription reads: Honor the Lord of Bones with a child and the way will open. Characters who pass a **DC 16 Intelligence (Religion) check** know the door depicts Myrkul creating undead for his legions.

The door emits an aura of abjuration and necromancy magic and can only be opened by casting *animate dead*, *create undead*; a similar effect that produces an undead creature; or by speaking the command word. If a character creates an undead creature within 10 feet of the door, they must make an opposed **Charisma ability check against Varenius**. If they fail, the undead creature is created as per the spell or effect, but is under Varenius' control.

As the characters enter, read or summarize:

You open the door to another, bleaker realm altogether. Small tombstones and obelisks rise from the dying grass in a small cemetery. Flowers are laid as offerings here and there, but they are weak and sickly; the air itself seems to drink light and color. The border of the cemetery is a twisted mess of wrought iron fence and gnarled trees. Although it is unremarkably decorated, your senses are drawn to a single mausoleum.

The chamber is enchanted with a permanent mirage arcane spell crafted to look like a small cemetery in the Shadowfell where Varenius last met with Myrkul before the god's defeat. The chamber's stone walls are impassable, even though the illusionary terrain may suggest otherwise. In addition to the illusionary terrain, nonmagical light sources only emit dim light in a 5-foot radius sphere, regardless of their normal statistics. The only real object in the room is the sarcophagus in the mausoleum along the eastern wall (see Treasure below for more information).

Creatures. Unless slain in Area 1, Varenius, a **skull lord** (MTof p230) is in the area preparing for the characters. He has summoned 5 **skeletons** (MM p272) using his Legendary Action. There are also 3 **ghouls** and a **ghast**

(MM p148) who serve as Varenius' personal servants. If the **wraith** (MM p302) released by Varenius was forced to retreat, it is in the area and has healed using Varenius' Master of the Grave trait.

Tactics. Varenius casts *fear* and stays at range attacking with damaging spells. If he is low on spell slots or forced into melee combat, Varenius casts *mirror image* and *haste* and attacks with his staff. Varenius uses his Legendary Action to summon more skeletons if he has fewer than 3 skeletons.

Varenius and his undead minions fight to the death.

Treasure. Varenius wears a gold crown inlaid with rubies and onyx worth 850 gp and gold and platinum rings worth 200 gp. He also carries a *scroll of protection against celestials*.

As the characters inspect the sarcophagus, read or summarize:

The lid of this sarcophagus depicts a human male clad in elegant but imposing plate mail gripping a longsword of ancient craftsmanship. The hilt of the sword terminates in a clawed skeletal hand gripping a cut gemstone.

The Sarcophagus of the Forgotten is a powerful magic item itself (see below for more information). Opening the sarcophagus requires a successful **DC 18 Strength check**. The sarcophagus' lid weighs 600 pounds. Inside is a headless humanoid skeleton wearing black *plate mail +1* and gripping a *nine-lives stealer* longsword with 5 charges remaining. If the sword is removed from the sarcophagus for longer than 24 hours, the sarcophagus loses its magical properties. The sarcophagus weighs 3,600 pounds and is impossible to move without magic, complicated machinery, or a large labor force.

Adjusting this Encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak:** Reduce Varenius' hit points by 20, remove 1 ghoul.
- **Weak:** Reduce Varenius' hit points by 20 and reduce the ghouls' and ghouls hit points by 10 each.
- **Strong:** Increase Varenius' hit points by 30 and increase the ghouls' and ghouls hit points by 10 each.
- **Very Strong:** Increase Varenius' hit points by 30, add 2 ghouls

Cursed Wand of Fear

Wand, rare (requires attunement)

The undead cleric of Myrkul who created this wand wove a curse to ensure no living creature could use the wand without joining Myrkul's ranks. The wand functions as a normal wand of fear (DMG 210) but carries the following curse.

Curse. After attuning to the wand, the wielder takes 1d6 necrotic damage whenever they finish a long rest. This damage cannot be reduced in any way. The wielder's hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. If this effect reduces the wielder's hit point maximum to 0, they die and rise as a wight in 24 hours.

Breaking the Curse. The curse is permanently removed from the item by submerging the wand in holy water for five days. Each day a creature must whisper a peaceful memory into the wand.

Sarcophagus of the Forgotten

Wondrous item, legendary

Myrkul's first order to Varenius was to bury each of the three bodies used to create the skull lord. This sarcophagus houses the remains of one of the cultists: a warlord whose name has been forgotten.

You can lay up to five Medium or Small humanoid corpses at the base of the sarcophagus. After chanting the prayer to Myrkul inscribed along the base of the sarcophagus, you choose to create up to 5 ghouls, 2 ghouls, or 2 wights. Each undead creature rises from one of the corpses near the sarcophagus and is under your control.

As a bonus action on each of your turns, you can mentally command any creature you animated with this item if the creature is within 120 feet of you (if you control multiple creatures, you can command any or all of them at the same time, issuing the same command to each one). You decide what action the creature will take and where it will move during its next turn, or you can issue a general command, such as to guard a particular chamber or corridor. If you issue no commands, the creature only defends itself against hostile creatures. Once given an order, the creature continues to follow it until its task is complete.

After using the sarcophagus in this way, it cannot be used again for 7 days.

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHIES

Phil Beckwith

Phil Beckwith is an IT Project Manager by day, owner of P.B. Publishing by night, known mostly for many bestselling and successful titles on the DMs Guild, including the highly rated horror adventure *The Haunt*, the 200 page hardcover tome *Adventure Anthology*, and a co-creator for the best-selling *Monsters of the Guild*. Follow him on Twitter @PBPublishing1.

Chris Bissette

Chris Bissette is an ENnie nominated writer and cartographer. His work can be found on the DMs Guild, DriveThruRPG, and LootTheRoom.uk. He is best known for *Breaker of Chains*. Find him on Twitter @pangalactic. He is probably standing behind you.

Alex Clippinger

Alex is a warlock living among us who has made a pact with whatever entity is responsible for puns and pop culture references. His work on the Guild includes *Faiths of the Forgotten Realms*, *The Faithful of Eberron*, and more. He can be found on Twitter at @Aclippinger or summoned in a pentagram using chicken blood and dad jokes

Elise Cretel

Elise Cretel works as a technical writer and editor in nuclear engineering by day and D&D Dungeon Master by night. Has played on a D&D podcast, D&D streams, and enjoys interviewing the RPG community. Favorite D&D class is Wizard and Psion. Also published through HitRecord productions. @DNDElise on Twitter.

Robert P Davis

R P Davis is a wordsmith and voice artist. He has been a tabletop gamer the entire time he's been sentient, and a role-playing addict for more than 30 years. In that time he's written countless things, from simple spell effects to campaign worlds to complete role-playing games. He has presented and participated in panels at sci-fi and fantasy conventions alongside such luminaries as Kenneth Hite and George R R Martin. He started writing for the Guild in August 2016, and is best known for *Mordenkainen's Lost Notebook* and *You Can Try - Tips on becoming a better DM*. Visit his website at www.r-p-davis.com or follow him on Twitter @WP2XX.

Ashley May

Ashley May is a writer who found ways to pursue her passions for worldbuilding, role-playing, and cooperative storytelling, all within Dungeons & Dragons. Her works can be found on dmsguild.com, and she is best known for *Festivals, Feasts, and Fairs*, a guide to turning your "pleasant downtime" into a fully interactive experience. She prefers to take small, neglected subjects, throw them under a microscope, and examine all of their facets in minute detail. You can follow her on Twitter at @AshleyMayWrites.

Luciella Scarlett

Luciella Elisabeth Scarlett is an aromantic and asexual author and illustrator based in Melbourne Australia, who obnoxiously publishes under a name the length of an entire alphabet. Her other RPG supplements can be found on dmsguild.com, and she is best known for her very silly dungeon crawl titled *Yeryl's Super Happy Fun Murder Dungeon*, in which a lonely beholder makes a misguided attempt to make some new friends. You can also follow her on Twitter or Facebook @luciellaes or at luciellaes.wordpress.com.

Christopher Walz

Christopher Walz is the best-selling creator of *The Midnight Revelry* and *An Ogre and His Cake*, a children's charity project, for the Dungeon Masters Guild. He began his journey through roleplaying games when he was 6 years old, looking at the pictures in his brother's *Monstrous Manual*. When he isn't writing or killing his players, he is trying to turn his son into a dungeon master and looking for trolls in the wilds of Central Kentucky. Follow him on Twitter @DMChristopherW.

Micah Watt

Owner of Pyromaniac Press, Micah is a successful Pathfinder and D&D 5e designer, known widely for his adventure path *What Lies Beyond Reason*, and the epic D&D 5e hardcover deity supplement *Faiths of the Forgotten Realms*. Visit www.pyromaniacpress.com, or find him on Facebook or Twitter @pyromaniacpress.