



EDICTS OF NEUTRALITY

With land trade threatened, the city of Melvaunt is relying on sea trade to get goods into and out of the city. An island rises out of the Moonsea just outside of Melvaunt Harbor, and initial exploration indicates the island is a threat. The origins and nature of the island must be ascertained before trade is shut down completely.

A 4-hour adventure for 1st-4th level characters

DEREK MYERS
Adventure Designer

Adventure Code: CORE 2-3

Producer: Baldman Games

Core Administrator: Shawn Merwin

Development, Editing and Layout: Encoded Designs

Cartography: Jay Africa

Organized Play: Chris Lindsay

D&D Adventurers League Wizards Team: Adam Lee, Chris Lindsay, Matt Sernett

D&D Adventurers League Administrators: Robert Adducci, Bill Benham, Travis Woodall, Claire Hoffman, Greg Marks, Alan Patrick

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.

Introduction

Welcome to *Edicts of Neutrality*, a D&D Adventurers League adventure.

This adventure is designed for **three to seven 1st - 4th level characters**, and is optimized for **five 4th level characters**.

The adventure is set in the Moonsea region of the Forgotten Realms, in and around the city of Melvaunt.

The D&D Adventurers League

This adventure is official for D&D Adventurers League play. The D&D Adventurers League is the official organized play system for DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®. Players can create characters and participate in any adventure allowed as a part of the D&D Adventurers League. As they adventure, players track their characters' experience, treasure, and other rewards, and can take those characters through other adventures that continues their story.

If you're running this adventure as a part of a store event or at certain conventions, you'll need a DCI number. This number is your official Wizards of the Coast organized play identifier. If you don't have a number, you can obtain one at a store event. Check with your organizer for details.

D&D Adventurers League play is broken up into storyline seasons. When players create characters, they attach those characters to a storyline season, which determines what rules they're allowed to use to create and advance their characters. Players can continue to play their characters after the storyline season has finished, possibly participating in a second or third storyline with those same characters. A character's level is the only limitation for adventure play. A player cannot use a character of a level higher or lower than the level range of a D&D Adventurers League adventure.

For more information on playing, running games as a Dungeon Master, and organizing games for the D&D Adventurers League, please visit the D&D Adventurers League home at:

www.dndadventurersleague.org

Preparing the Adventure

Before you show up to Dungeon Master this adventure for a group of players, you should do the following to prepare.

- Make sure to have a copy of the most current version of the *D&D Basic Rules* or the *Player's Handbook*.
- Read through the adventure, taking notes of anything you'd like to highlight or remind yourself while running the adventure, such as a way you'd like to portray an NPC or a tactic you'd like to use in a combat.
- Get familiar with the monster statistics in the Appendix.
- Gather together any resources you'd like to use to aid you in running this adventure--such as notecards, a DM screen, miniatures, and battlemaps.
- If you know the composition of the group beforehand, you can make adjustments as noted throughout the adventure.

Before Play at the Table

Ask the players to provide you with relevant character information:

- Character name and level
- Character race and class
- Passive Wisdom (Perception)—the most common passive ability check
- Anything notable as specified by the adventure (such as backgrounds, traits, flaws, etc.)

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

Ensure that each player has an official adventure logsheet for his or her character (if not, get one from the organizer). The player fills out the adventure name, session number, date, and your name and DCI number. In addition, the player also fills in the starting values for experience, gold, downtime, renown, and number of permanent magic items. He or she fill in the other values and write notes at the conclusion of the session. Each player is responsible for maintaining an accurate logsheet.

If you have time, you can do a quick scan of a player's character sheet to ensure that nothing looks out of order. If you see magic items of very high rarities or strange arrays of ability scores, you can ask players to provide documentation for the irregularities. If they cannot, feel free to restrict item use or ask them to use a standard ability score array. Point players to the *D&D Adventurers League Player's Guide* for reference.

If players wish to spend downtime days and it's the beginning of an adventure or episode, they can declare their activity and spend the days now. Alternatively, they can do so at the end of the adventure or episode. Players should select their characters' spells and other daily options prior to the start of the adventure, unless the adventure specifies otherwise. Feel free to reread the adventure description to help give players hints about what they might face.

Adjusting the Adventure

Throughout this adventure, you may see sidebars to help make adjustments for smaller/larger groups, and characters of higher/lower levels than the optimized group. Most of the time, this is used for combat encounters.

You may adjust the adventure beyond the guidelines given. For example, if you're playing with a group of inexperienced players, you might want to make the adventure a little easier; for very experienced players, you may want to make it a little harder. Therefore, five categories of party strength have been created for you to use as a guide. Feel free to use a different adjustment during the adventure if the recommended party strength feels off for the group.

This adventure is **optimized for a party of five 4th-level characters**. To figure out whether you need to adjust the adventure, do the following:

- Add up the total levels of all the characters
- Divide the total by the number of characters
- Round fractions of .5 or greater up; round fractions of less than .5 down

You've now determined the **average party level (APL)** for the adventure. To figure out the **party strength** for the adventure, consult the following table:

Determining Party Strength

Party Composition	Party Strength
3-4 characters, APL less than	Very Weak

3-4 characters, APL equivalent	Weak
3-4 characters, APL greater than	Average
5 characters, APL less than	Weak
5 characters, APL equivalent	Average
5 characters, APL greater than	Strong
6-7 characters, APL less than	Average
6-7 characters, APL equivalent	Strong
6-7 characters, APL greater than	Very Strong

Running the Adventure

As the Dungeon Master of the session, you have the most important role in facilitating the enjoyment of the game for the players. You help guide the narrative and bring the words on these pages to life. The outcome of a fun game session often creates stories that live well beyond the play at the table. Always follow this golden rule when you DM for a group:

Make decisions and adjudications that enhance the fun of the adventure when possible.

To reinforce this golden rule, keep in mind the following:

- You are empowered to make adjustments to the adventure and make decisions about how the group interacts with the world of this adventure. Doing so is especially important and applicable outside of combat, but feel free to adjust the adventure for groups that are having too easy or too hard of a time.
- Don't make the adventure too easy or too difficult for a group. Never being challenged makes for a boring game and being overwhelmed makes for a frustrating one. Gauge the experience of the players (not the characters) with the game, try to feel out (or ask) what they like in a game, and attempt to give each of them the experience they're after when they play D&D. Give everyone a chance to shine.
- Be mindful of pacing, and keep the game session moving along appropriately. Watch for stalling, since play loses momentum when this happens. At the same time, make sure that the players don't finish too early; provide them with a full play experience. Try to be aware of running long or short. Adjust the pacing accordingly.
- Read-aloud text is just a suggestion; feel free to modify the text as you see fit, especially when dialogue is present.
- Give the players appropriate hints so they can make informed choices about how to proceed.

Players should be given clues and hints when appropriate so they can tackle puzzles, combat, and interactions without getting frustrated over lack of information. Doing so helps to encourage immersion in the adventure and gives players “little victories” for figuring out good choices from clues.

In short, being the DM isn’t about following the adventure’s text word-for-word; it’s about facilitating a fun, challenging game environment for the players. The *Dungeon Master’s Guide™* has more information on the art of running a D&D game.

Downtime and Lifestyle

At the beginning of each play session, players must declare whether or not they are spending any days of downtime. The player records the downtime spent on the adventure logsheet. The following options are available to players during downtime (see the D&D basic rules or the *D&D Adventurers League Player’s Guide* for more information):

- Catching up
- Crafting (exception: multiple characters cannot commit to crafting a single item)
- Practicing a profession
- Recuperating
- Spellcasting services
- Training

Other downtime options might be available during adventures or unlocked through play, including faction-specific activities.

In addition, whenever a character spends downtime days, that character also spends the requisite expense for his or her lifestyle. Costs are per day, so a character that spends ten days of downtime also spends ten days of expenses maintaining his or her lifestyle. Some downtime activities help with lifestyle expenses or add lifestyle expenses.

Spellcasting Services

Any settlement the size of a town or larger can provide some spellcasting services. Characters need to be able to travel to the settlement to obtain these services.

Spell services generally available include healing and recovery spells, as well as information-gathering spells. Other spell services might be available as specified in the adventure. The number of spells available to be cast as a service is limited to a

maximum of three per day total, unless otherwise noted.

Spellcasting Services

Spell	Cost
<i>Cure wounds (1st level)</i>	10 gp
<i>Identify</i>	20 gp
<i>Lesser restoration</i>	40 gp
<i>Prayer of healing (2nd level)</i>	40 gp
<i>Remove curse</i>	90 gp
<i>Speak with dead</i>	90 gp
<i>Divination</i>	210 gp
<i>Greater restoration</i>	450 gp
<i>Raise dead</i>	1,250 gp

Acolyte Background

A character possessing the acolyte background requesting spellcasting services at a temple of his or her faith may request **one spell per day** from the Spellcasting Services table for free. The only cost paid for the spell is the base price for the consumed material component, if any.

Disease, Death, and Recovery

Sometimes bad things happen, and characters get poisoned, diseased, or are killed. Since you might not have the same characters return from session to session, here are the rules when bad things happen to characters.

Disease, Poison, and Other Debilitating Effects

A character still affected by diseases, poisons, and other similar effects at the conclusion of an adventure can spend downtime days recuperating until such time as he or she resolves the effect to its conclusion (see the recuperating activity in the *D&D Basic Rules*).

If a character doesn’t resolve the effect between sessions, that character begins the next session still affected by the debilitating effect.

Death

A character who is killed during the course of the adventure has a few options at the end of the session (or whenever arriving back in civilization) if no one in the adventuring party has immediate access to a *raise dead* or *revivify* spell, or similar magic. A character subject to a *raise dead* spell is affected negatively until all long rests have been completed during an adventure. Alternatively, each downtime day spent after *raise dead* reduces the penalty to attack rolls, saving throws, and ability checks by 1, in

addition to any other benefits the downtime activity might provide.

Create a New 1st-Level Character. If the dead character is unwilling or unable to exercise any of the other options, the player creates a new character. The new character does not have any items or rewards possessed by the dead character.

Dead Character Pays for Raise Dead. If the character's body is recoverable (it's not missing any vital organs and is mostly whole) and the player would like the character to be returned to life, the party can take the body back to civilization and use the dead character's funds to pay for a *raise dead* spell. A *raise dead* spell cast in this manner costs the character 1,250 gp.

Character's Party Pays for Raise Dead. As above, except that some or all of the 1,250 gp for the *raise dead* spell is paid for by the party at the end of the session. Other characters are under no obligation to spend their funds to bring back a dead party member.

Faction Charity. If the character is of level 1 to 4 and a member of a faction, the dead character's body can be returned to civilization and a patron from the faction ensures that he or she receives a *raise dead* spell. However, any character invoking this charity forfeits all experience and rewards from that session (both those earned prior to and after death during that session) and cannot replay that episode or adventure with that character again. Once a character reaches 5th level, this option is no longer available.

The Situation in Melvaunt

The walls of Melvaunt resemble Swiss cheese, but the city still stands. While the Orc Baron of Thar and his forces assaulted the city, a portal that was part of a modron plot to take over Melvaunt was miraculously moved outside the walls by a brave group of adventurers with the assistance of Truushee the Sage. That portal unleashed the modron legion into the orc forces just after the marauders breached the city walls in several locations. The ensuing battle between the orcs and modrons allowed the forces of Melvaunt to successfully defend the city.

In the aftermath of the battle, Melvaunt is in turmoil politically. The City Watch has been depleted, with many of their best and brightest killed in the recent events. The people of Melvaunt have hastily patched up the walls and are doing their best to repair them to their former strength. Beyond

the walls, bands of orcs and modrons still roam the area, occasionally attacking the weak spots. While the orcs and modrons are no longer a threat to the city itself, citizens and travelers in the area have been killed. Occasionally groups of modrons, trapped away from their home, still attempt to follow their last orders of taking over Melvaunt. A pentadrone called "Sleepie" (SL33P13-773P) has broken away from the modron collective and is assisting the City Watch in dealing with the modrons in the area.

Then there are the Lords. Political power has a way of moving hands in the wake of disastrous events. The Lord of Keys and The Lord of Waves have declared themselves the temporary rulers of Melvaunt, but murmurs are already starting to cascade around the Merchant's Council. Is this just a temporary situation or a power play by the two Lords to wrest all the power and wealth of Melvaunt for themselves? To make matters worse, a Red Wizard of Thay was killed during the recent events, and the Red Wizards don't approve of their own being killed. An emissary of the Red Wizards has been sent to determine what happened and who might be to blame.

While Melvaunt has dodged the executioner's axe this time, the city's head still looks like it might be on the chopping block.

Adventure Background

As more chaos energy infuses the land around Melvaunt, strange happenings continue. Now an island has mysteriously appeared in the harbor outside of Melvaunt, threatening sea trade, just as the roving bands of modrons and orcs threaten land routes.

Followers of Cyric have received visions of these occurrences, bringing them to Melvaunt to seek out their destinies in service to their mad deity. On the island, priests of Cyric plan to use souls bound by the mad god into weapons to fuel a ritual that will bring an avatar of Cyric into the world.

A team of soldiers goes to the island, but the guardians of the place kill all but their leader. He swims back to Melvaunt, barely alive, and asks the adventurers to quickly investigate.

Overview

This adventure is divided into multiple parts.

Part 1. The adventurers come upon Xavier Deveno, a naval officer whose patrol was attacked as they

investigated the island. He begs the adventurers to quickly go to the island.

Part 2. Arriving on the island, the adventures are attacked by guardians of the beach. They find a cavern that leads to passages beneath the island.

Part 3. The adventurers come across some of the lost souls that the cult of Cyric hoped to use to fuel their ritual.

Parts 4 and 5. The adventurers learn more about the lost souls and the ritual the followers of Cyric hope to perform.

Part 6. The adventurers can interrupt the summoning of the avatar of Cyric before it is completed.

Part 7. With their mission (hopefully) successful, the adventurers must decide what to do with the lost souls and then collect their reward.

Adventure Hooks

This adventure does not rely on previous adventures to get into the action. The adventures happen upon Xavier Deveno, and they can either respond to his plea for help or not.

Designer's Notes

Who's Your Deity?

At the beginning of the adventure, ask all the players to indicate if their character worships any particular deity. Characters playing clerics, paladins, or characters with the Acolyte background must declare a deity before the adventure begins. Other characters are not required to do so, but it might behoove them, as characters who worship a particular deity may gain special benefits during this adventure. Encourage them to pick one if they haven't already.

A list of Forgotten Realms' deities can be found in the Player's Handbook in Appendix B or the Sword Coast Adventurers Guide in Chapter 1.

Part 1: Trouble in the Water

Expected Duration: 15 minutes

When the players are ready to begin, read the following. Change as needed to fit the party:

The Giant Jinx is a dock-side tavern where the patrons bet on anything from the flip of a coin to the last man standing in a bar brawl. So when a halfling named Marnus and a dwarf named Agarak decided to see who could drink more in the name of their respective races, a lot of money exchanged hands. No one could have predicted that the aroma from your meals would cause one of the participants to throw up. And no one could have predicted that your party would have to defend themselves against angry gamblers who lost a small fortune by betting against the wrong short race.

When the brawl ended you were none the worse for wear, but the proprietor of the Giant Jinx insisted you leave and not come back for at least a month. As you exited the premises you could hear people betting on when you'd actually return, if at all.

With the night still young and nothing but free time on your hands, you are a party in search of a new watering hole or some other distraction to occupy your time this evening. While walking along the docks, you hear a deep male voice call out for help from the water. It would seem your sudden ejection from the Giant Jinx put you in the right place at the right time; almost as if the gods wanted you here at this exact moment.

The adventurers see a man in a naval uniform clinging to the edge of the docks, barely able to keep his head above water. When pulled from the water, he is obviously badly wounded and suffering from exhaustion.

He is grateful for their assistance, but he insists they help him get to the Tower of the High Sails immediately so he can report back to The High Sail.

Intelligence (Medicine) DC 12: His wounds are fresh and without medical attention possibly life-threatening. If the check succeeds by 5 or more the adventurers notice markings near his wounds that would indicate he'd been grabbed and crushed, not attacked with weapons.

Intelligence (Medicine) DC 10: The adventurers can bandage the wounds and stabilize him. If the adventurers use a healer's kit, they gain advantage on the roll. If they administer any magical healing, he automatically stabilizes.

Intelligence (History) DC 10: Based on what's left of his uniform, he's a lieutenant in the Melvaunt navy. You don't reach his position without a lot of experience at sea and in combat. Whatever did this to him must have been powerful.

As the adventurers administer aid to the wounded man, he tells them his name is **Xavier Deveno**. Read the following:

The man you pulled from the water is freezing, exhausted, and wounded. As you try to help him he rambles on. "They're dead. My men are all dead," he says. "It was awful. They didn't stand a chance."

"I took a squad of new recruits in a long boat to check out the island that appeared in the harbor. We were ordered to circle around it, look for any signs of inhabitants, and return. I told them there wasn't any real danger. This was just a chance to give the rookies some time at sea. I should have trusted my gut. I should have known there was danger."

"When we approached the island, something attacked our vessel from beneath the waves. We took on water fast, so I ordered the men to abandon ship and swim for shore. Setting foot on the island was the beginning of the end. Giant crabs swarmed the beach along with a monstrous aquatic crustacean. We fought valiantly, killing one of the giants and badly wounding the other, but their numbers quickly overwhelmed us."

"I watched as my men were slaughtered. I couldn't save them. I jumped back in the water and swam for the harbor. I was the only one who managed to get away."

He pauses to catch his breath. His shivering continues and he looks like he's about to pass out. "We weren't alone on the island. During the battle I saw ghastly men with white eyes lurking in the shadows. I think they might have been controlling the creatures, forcing them to attack us."

"Before we left Melvaunt I'd heard rumors that a cult of Cyric had gone to the island, but I dismissed the talk. I now wish I'd listened more carefully. Those eyes, those white eyes pierced the darkness like stars at night. It was unnatural. I've never seen anything so terrible. The High Sail must be told what happened. We must return to the island."

The scene on the dock does not go unnoticed as a pair of sailors recognizes the wounded man's uniform. They rush to help, addressing him as Lieutenant. He commands them to go to the Tower

of the High Sail and get a medic. They obey without hesitation.

“This failure will haunt me. It will ruin the names of the men who sailed with me to that island. They deserved a better fate.”

He looks to the stars momentarily, closes his eyes, and then in a moment of complete clarity opens his eyes again and addresses you. “I don’t believe in coincidence. I believe that the gods put you in this place at this time for a reason. I’m in no shape to return to the island, but you are. Would you be willing to go to the island? If any of my men live, they’ll be wounded and need aid. And if they’re all dead someone must retrieve the remains so they can receive a proper burial.”

“More importantly someone needs to find the white-eyed men and stop them. Cyric’s agents must be stopped. Will you do it? Will you help the weak and wounded, and oppose the agents of evil?”

Due to his grievous wounds and his exhaustion he is in no shape to accompany them on this journey, no matter how much healing the adventurers may be able to provide.

“When I tell the High Sail what happened he will eventually send more sailors to the island to investigate, but knowing him and the politics involved, it will likely take days. If my men live they need help now.”

“We fought and wounded those monsters. If you head there now you’d have a good chance of killing the monsters and eliminating that threat this very night. You’d be heroes! And the Melvaunt navy would be obligated to compensate you for this service. I’d see to that personally.”

Assuming the adventurers agree to head to the island, Lt. Deveno tells them where they can find a man named Jorvens, who will take them to the island.

“Tell him ‘The fire burns underwater,’ and he’ll know I sent you. He’ll bring you wherever you ask him to, and he won’t ask questions. Thank you and may the gods smile upon you.”

The sailors return, accompanied by four other men in naval uniforms, one of whom is clearly a medic. They thank you for your assistance and tell you they’ll take it from here. They administer first aid and provide Lt. Deveno with a healing potion if he still needs it. If the adventurers used healing magic on Deveno, he gives them the *potion of healing* instead as an aid on their mission.

The adventurers can accompany them as far as the Tower of High Sails but are not allowed to enter. The adventurers have no problem finding Jorvens, and as long as they use the phrase Lt. Deveno provided, they can leave for the island as soon as they’re ready.

There is ample time for the adventurers to purchase any standard equipment they feel they may need for their quest.

Part 2: Monsters on the Shore

Expected Duration: 45 minutes

Jorvens is a quiet, competent sailor. When you told him what you needed, he made his boat available to you without question or hesitation. By the time you've finished your preparations, he's ready to cast off as the sun is cresting the eastern horizon.

The journey across the bay to the island was quick and uneventful. As you approach the shore, Jorvens tells you after he drops you on the island he's returning to port. He'll come back for you tomorrow at first light. Hopefully you don't get into too much trouble in just one day.

If the adventurers ask Jorvens to take them around the island he is willing to do so. They don't spot any signs of life or monsters. They are not attacked. The island isn't very large. Where the rocky edges of the island meet the water it is quite steep and would be nearly impossible to climb from the water onto the rocks without getting crushed by the waves pounding the island.

There seems to be only one spot where it's possible to gain access to the island: a small shoreline with a beach of small crushed rocks and pebbles. Jorvens gets about 50 feet from the shore and tells the adventurers they'll have to wade the rest of the way. He's concerned that the bottom of his boat may scrape against unseen rocks below the water. Try as they might, the adventurers are unable to convince him to get any closer to shore. If they threaten violence, he reminds them that Lt. Deveno is a powerful man in Melvaunt and wouldn't like it if his friend were to be harmed.

The adventurers easily wade to shore safely. Read the following when they get to shore:

The rising sun casts long dark shadows across the beach. Debris from Lt. Deveno's ship has washed up on shore. In the center of the beach is the carcass of large, dead crab-like monster. There are no signs of any of the sailors.

Allow each adventurer to take one round of actions when they arrive on the beach. Most likely they'll want to explore the area. See **Exploring the Beach** below.

After they all take one turn the wounded **chuul** and two **giant crabs** emerge from the water to attack the party, triggering initiative. Read:

Your trip to the shore did not go unnoticed. A giant crustacean, similar to the dead one lying on the beach, emerges from the water and approaches. Trailing behind it are two giant crabs. You notice that the large creature is wounded, as there are signs of cracks and breaks in its hard outer shell, and one of its large pincers hangs limply at its side. It is aggressive and moves to attack.

General Features

Light. The adventurers arrive shortly after dawn so there is daylight, but there are also long shadows cast on the beach.

Smells. The beach smells of salt water and rotting fish as the dead chuul has started to decompose. Once the sun rises, the smell will become even more pungent.

Terrain.

- **Beach.** The sandy beach does not impede movement.
- **Rocks on the beach.** There are three large rocks on the north end of the beach. They are about 5 ft. tall and 5 ft. around. These are big enough to climb (no check required) or hide behind. Large creatures must squeeze to move between them.
- **Large Rocks.** There are large rocky outcroppings at the north and south end of the beach. They are 10 ft. high and can be climbed. They are slick and sharp so climbing requires a DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check to climb. Once on top of the rocky area, an adventurer must make an immediate DC 10 Dexterity save or slip and fall. An adventurer who falls suffers 1d6 piercing and bludgeoning damage from the sharp rocks and the impact.

A cavern entrance is difficult to spot in the morning shade. Adventurers only see it if they move within 20 ft. of the opening, or if they spot it during their one round of investigation. It is unguarded, and adventurers can enter without hindrance if they notice it.

Tactics

The chuul is wounded and slow out of the water. See **Adjusting the Encounter** below for more details. If a chuul poisons an adventurer, it immediately drops that adventurer and moves on to another victim.

The chuul tries to stay within 20 ft. of the shoreline. If the adventurers flee, the chuul only remains on the beach for two rounds. If attacked from range, it returns to the water. If left alone, it dodges for two rounds and then returns to the water. The giant crabs flee if the chuul leaves.

Clever adventurers may realize the chuul won't venture too far from the safety of the water. Reward clever tactics. Award full XP for defeating the chuul and giant crabs if the adventurers take advantage of the situation and head into the cavern without killing them.

ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

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

- **Very weak party:** Reduce the **chuul's** hit points to 33. It only gets one pincer attack that deals 1d6+2 damage. Its tentacle no longer contains poison. Add two **giant crabs**.
- **Weak party:** Reduce the **chuul's** hit points to 43. It only gets one pincer attack that deals 1d6+2 damage. Its tentacle recharges its poison on a 6. Add one **giant crab**.
- **Average party:** Reduce the **chuul's** hit points to 53. It only gets one pincer attack. Its tentacle recharges its poison on a 5-6.
- **Strong party:** Reduce the **chuul's** hit points to 53. It only gets one pincer attack. Its tentacle recharges its poison on a 4-6. Add one **giant crab**.
- **Very strong party:** Reduce the **chuul's** hit points to 53. It only gets one pincer attack. Its tentacle recharges its poison on a 3-6. Add two **giant crabs**.

Searching the Beach

Searching the beach reveals the following details.

Intelligence (Investigation) DC 10: An adventurer who heads inland notices numerous mounds tucked safely away from the shore. They don't look like they formed naturally.

Wisdom (Survival) DC 10: Tracks on the beach that lead away from the shore. The tracks show humanoids wearing boots have walked into and out of the cavern and along the secluded area of the beach.

Wisdom (Survival) DC 10: Signs of the fight between the sailors and the monsters are present. There is fresh blood on the beach but no bodies.

Wisdom (Perception) DC 10: There are weapons and spent ammunition on the beach, but nothing that's still usable.

Wisdom (Perception) DC 12: An adventurer who declares they're watching the water for approaching monsters spots the chuul as it nears. Adventurers gain +2 to their initiative.

Wisdom (Perception) DC 12: A character searching the southern end of the beach spots the cavern entrance. It's masked by the morning shadows and otherwise unnoticeable.

When the adventurers move to the southern end of the beach read the following.

You notice the entrance to a cavern. This must be where the white-eyed creatures Lt. Deveno spoke of stood when the sailors fought. There is no sign of them now.

Just past the cavern on the beach there are numerous mounds of dirt. They look out of place.

Intelligence (Investigate) DC 10: On top of each mound a symbol has been drawn in the sand. Each mound has one of four different symbols drawn on it.

Intelligence (Religion) DC 10: These are burial mounds.

Intelligence (Religion) DC 12: The symbols on the mounds are those of various deities, both good and evil. If the check succeeds by 5 or more the adventurers can identify the symbols as those of Lathander, Shar, Leira, and Helm. Clerics, paladins, and characters with the Acolyte background automatically know this information and do not have to make the check.

The remains of Lt. Deveno's men are buried beneath the mounds. Each was laid to rest with care and precision. Limbs that were severed or torn off during combat have been buried with the bodies. When the adventurers are ready to enter the cave, proceed to

Part 3: Strangers in the Cavern.

Each PC earns 25 XP if they show reverence and respect for the bodies of the fallen sailors. They can earn this reward if they dig up the bodies, but they should do so with care and replace the bodies when they are done.

Part 3: Strangers in the Caverns

Expected Duration: 30 minutes

When the adventurers enter the cavern, read:

The temperature drops sharply once you venture more than 20 ft. into the cavern. The passage slopes noticeably downward, and after another 30 ft. it forks in two directions.

General Features

Light: The passage is dark and adventurers will need to generate their own light source if one is required.

Terrain: The passages are only 5 ft. wide and 5 ft. high, so adventurers will need to travel single file.

Once inside the tunnel the adventurers can make the following checks.

Wisdom (Survival) DC 10: The adventurers notice signs of tracks going into and out of the tunnel. Numerous humanoid wearing boots came this way. If the check succeeds by 5 or more they can determine that tracks are less than one day old.

Intelligence (Investigation) DC 10: There is no sign of blood anywhere inside the passage. None of the wounded sailors came this way or were carried this way.

The caverns veer off in different directions with offshoots every 30-50 feet. If the adventurers are trying to follow the tracks, they quickly discover that it doesn't help them. The tracks lead down most of the passages. Some passages are dead ends and in many instances the tracks go to the end and then turn around, almost as if the person who made them was unsure of where they were going.

DM's Note: A map of the passages is not provided. If the characters want to try and create a map or mark their course, allow them to do so, but don't belabour the point. Maps are only provided for key areas of the tunnels and caverns.

After wandering the passages for about 20-30 minutes you hear the sounds of combat from the passage ahead.

When you round the bend you see four humanoids fighting shadows. Before you can pick a side, or even call out to the combatants, one of the humanoids holds up a disk shaped like a sun and shouts, "Be gone! May the sun's light destroy you!" As the disk briefly radiates a bright flash of light, the shadows cringe and flee, flying away down another passage to the safety of the darkness.

With the shadows banished for the time being, one of the humanoids turns and notices the party. The strangers call out to you, "Come forth from the darkness. It's safe now. The foul undead are gone."

The strangers provide assurances that they won't harm the adventurers. When they get within 10 ft. of the strangers, they immediately realize all the humanoids have white eyes.

When asked to identify themselves, the strangers cannot. They don't know who they are, where they came from, or why they're here. Aside from their white eyes they all have one other thing in common: they all have holy symbols prominently displayed on their persons.

Intelligence (Religion) DC 10: Each symbol is that of a prominent deity. Clerics, paladins, and characters with the Acolyte background automatically know this information and do not have to make the check. Adventurers who make the check and succeed by 5 or more also know the deity's exact alignment.

- **Lathander:** God of dawn, spring, and birth (Neutral Good)
- **Shar:** Goddess of darkness, night, caverns, and dungeons (Neutral Evil)
- **Helm:** God of vigilance and protection (Lawful Neutral)
- **Leira:** Goddess of illusions and deception (Chaotic Neutral)

The two males wear the symbols of Lathander and Shar, while the two females wear symbols of Helm and Leira.

Intelligence (History) DC 18: The white-eyed strangers are champions of their faith who died decades ago. Clerics, paladins, and characters with the Acolyte background who worship any of the four deities represented automatically know the identity of the hero associated with their faith and do not have to make the check. See **Appendix 1** for more details on these NPCs.

Wisdom (Insight) DC 10: These strangers are being truthful about their predicament. Success by 5 or more also reveals that they are all ill at ease about their own lack of knowledge but confident in their own abilities.

Charisma (Persuasion) DC 10: An adventurer can explain what the holy symbols represent and educate them on the edicts of their respective faiths. If they identified their true identity, the characters can reveal that information to them as well. Success by 5 more makes all subsequent Charisma checks to interact with them easier and made with advantage.

Wisdom (Medicine) or Investigation

(Intelligence) DC 10: None of the four white-eyed strangers are alive. Yet they don't seem to be undead either. None of them were affected when the shadows were turned.

Intelligence (Religion) DC 15: **This check should be made only after it's discovered that the white-eyed strangers are not alive.** Clerics and paladins proficient in Religion or characters with the Acolyte background make this check with advantage. The humanoids are neither living nor dead. They died but their souls have not been able to pass beyond the physical realm upon their deaths. They are living souls given physical form.

If the strangers cannot be identified they will respond to the names of their deities once the adventurers identify the symbols.

They share the following information with the party:

- They remember waking up a few days ago in cages with others like themselves. There were 16 prisoners – eight men and eight women. Each cage held four prisoners, two men and two women.
- They were guarded by shadows like the ones that just fled. The shadows took orders from humans dressed in purple and black. The humans spoke of their deity: Cyric.
- Despite not knowing who they are, the white-eyed strangers all instinctively know that Cyric is evil and they must oppose his followers.
- Yesterday the cultists of Cyric opened the cages and took prisoners from two cells, four men and four women. After they left, Shar managed to get the shadow guards close together and Lathander used his holy symbol to turn them. Helm and Leira worked together to force open their cage. Before they could free the other prisoners, the cultists returned to investigate the noise. These four fled.

- They wandered the maze of caverns for hours and were attacked by shadows numerous times.
- They eventually found their way to the surface. When they reached the beach, the chuul and giant crabs defeated the last of the sailors. Before the creatures could consume the bodies or drag them out to sea, the four souls scared them off.
- They sailors were all dead, so the souls gathered the remains, performed last rites, and buried the bodies.
- They could have tried to leave the island, but they felt compelled to stay. Each felt they had a task to complete here before they could leave. They felt they must confront the cultists. So they rested on the beach and at dawn headed back into the tunnels.
- Despite their aimless wandering the day before, they're confident they can lead the party to the area where the cultists are gathered. Together they may be able to defeat Cyric's followers, free the others, and leave the island.

Part 4: Scared of Your Own Shadow

Expected Duration: 45 minutes

When the adventurers move into the passages with the souls, read:

Navigating the caverns is difficult. Following the tracks of the living souls isn't very helpful since they were wandering throughout the caverns for hours before the party encountered them.

The passage you're moving through curves to the right and as you round the bend the passage widens briefly in two spots.

The soul of Shar suddenly calls out to the party, "We're not alone; the shadows are near. I can feel them."

Before the adventurers can take any actions six **shadows** attack.

Two shadows attempt to hide in the cracks of the alcoves the party is passing. They were aware of the party's approach and had ample time to hide in the cracks and shadows. Roll their initial Stealth check with advantage. The shadows have surprise if their Dexterity (Stealth) check exceeds any adventurer's Passive Perception. Adventurers who detect the shadows can act normally during the first round. Four other shadows attack the procession – two from the front and two from the rear. These shadows made no attempt to hide.

The souls have faced the shadows before but only a few at a time. The only way they'll defeat this many and avoid capture is to ensure the adventurers are victorious. The Souls use the Help action to assist the adventurers during the combat. The souls use the **commoner** statistics but they have an improved AC and weapons (already noted in the stat blocks).

General Features

Light. The passages are completely dark unless the adventurers provide their own light source.

Terrain. The passages here are 10 ft. wide and ceiling height varies from 6-8 ft.

Tactics

The two hidden shadows attack the adventurers during the first round (possibly with advantage because the adventurers were surprised). In the second round, all six shadows work together.

- Two shadows block the passage so that the adventurers cannot advance. They attack the lead adventurers, but remain side-by-side.
- Two shadows attack random adventurers within reach.
- Two shadows attack the living souls.

The shadows never focus on the same target, preferring to attack different foes and weaken everybody.

ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

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

- **Very weak party:** Reduce each **shadow's** hit points to 8.
- **Weak party:** Reduce each **shadow's** hit points to 12.
- **Strong party:** Increase each **shadow's** hit points to 20.
- **Very strong party:** Increase each **shadow's** hit points to 24.

If a shadow successfully strikes a soul, the soul winces in pain. Do not track the souls' hit points. Instead when a soul is hit, it must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw. Success means nothing harmful happens, while failure results in the soul becoming incorporeal. When that happens read the following:

As a shadow's claws rake deeply into the soul of Leira's champion, there is a flash of light and her physical body becomes incorporeal. The soul looks at you as its ghost-like form is drawn away down the passage. You see the horror on its face as if it realizes that something terrible is about to happen to it. As the soul is pulled more rapidly away from you, it yells "HEEEEEELP!"

The other souls fighting beside you seemed frightened by their friend's fate. "We must follow her. She's being pulled back to the cages. We cannot allow the cultists to imprison her again."

Before you can give chase, another shadow tries to strike a deadly blow against one of the adventurers. The living soul of Helm's champion blocks the attack with his body, protecting you but suffering the full force of the shadow's attack in the process. The shadow's dark claws rip through the soul, destroying it. Again, there is a brief flash as the soul's body becomes incorporeal and is pulled away down the passage.

The shadows try to block your passage so that you cannot follow the souls as they are being forcefully returned to the cultists.

Getting Past the Shadows

The adventurers have 5 rounds to catch up to the incorporeal souls before they are pulled away from them. The shadows do whatever they can to slow down or stop the adventurers.

The shadows were instructed to find the escaped living souls and strike them down, which forces them back to their cages. They were also told to stop any strangers from finding the cultists.

The shadows engage the party in combat, preferring to attack the living souls whenever they can. Two shadows always stand side by side to prevent anyone from getting past them in the maze of tunnels.

When a shadow is destroyed or whenever an adventurer manages to get past them, the shadows reposition themselves ahead of the adventurers to block their progress.

There are cracks all along the walls in the tunnels. The shadows can enter the cracks in the walls and travel parallel to the corridors undetected. This allows them to get around adventurers without provoking too many opportunity attacks.

Although a map of this section of the tunnels is provided, it may be easier to forego the maze map and just focus on the immediate section the adventurers are in. The passages are a honeycomb of twists and turns. Following the souls is difficult, which is why they have to pursue within 5 rounds.

If the shadows manage to delay the adventurers for 5 full rounds, the party is too far away from the incorporeal souls to follow them back to the cages. On the shadows' turn in round 6, they disengage, move into the cracks in the walls, and disappear.

The Living Souls

The souls have a fly speed of 30 ft and dash every round. The souls are incorporeal and cannot be stopped or slowed by physical barriers. They have resistance to all damage and cannot be harmed. Reward creativity if the adventurers can think of ways to slow down the souls.

Forced Movement

The easiest way to ensure the flying souls don't get too far ahead of the adventurers is for them to simply force their way past the shadows. The adventurers can try to move the shadows out of their path by forcefully moving them. This can be accomplished by using spells (such as Thunderwave) and class abilities (such as a fighter's Pushing Attack Maneuver) that push creatures. All characters can take shove actions. See Shoving a Creature in the Player's Handbook, pg. 195 (copied in the sidebar below).

The shadows contest shoves using their Dexterity (Acrobatics) which is only +2.

Shoving a Creature

Using the Attack action, you can make a special melee attack to shove a creature, either to knock it prone or push it away from you. If you're able to make multiple attacks with the Attack action, this attack replaces one of them.

The target of your shove must be no more than one size larger than you, and it must be within your reach. You make a Strength (Athletics) check contested by the target's Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check (the target chooses the ability to use). If you win the contest, you either knock the target prone or push it 5 feet away from you.

Remember that shoving an enemy does not provoke an opportunity attack, but if an enemy is pushed and then an adventurer tries to move past the enemy, they will provoke an opportunity attack from that enemy.

At the end of round 5, or when the adventurers defeat all the shadows, proceed to **Part 5: Caged Souls**.

Part 5: Caged Souls

Expected Duration: 30 minutes

If the adventurers managed to get past the shadows and follow the incorporeal souls back to the cages by the end of round 5, proceed to **You Found It** below.

If the adventurers were not able to get past the shadows by the end of round 5, they were unable to follow the incorporeal souls and got lost in their haste to keep up. Proceed to **You're Lost** below.

Lost adventurers may ask any remaining souls still with the party which way to go. Remaining souls are distraught and distracted from the recent combat and are unable to provide directions with certainty. The adventurers may suggest destroying a soul deliberately to create a new incorporeal essence, thereby giving the party a new soul to follow.

The souls are reluctant to allow this but can be convinced of the value of doing this with a successful DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check. Reward good roleplaying and rational arguments the players make to support this plan.

Any attempts to convince the souls using Charisma (Deception) or Charisma (Intimidation) automatically fail unless the die roll is a natural 20.

If a soul agrees to be destroyed, the same thing happens as before. The body is destroyed, there is a brief flash, and the incorporeal essence is pulled away. The adventurers have no difficulty following it this time and no additional shadows appear. Proceed to **You Found It** below.

You Found It

You've reached your destination. You managed to follow the soul despite the shadows' attempts to stop you. The passage opens into a larger cavern, approximately 40 ft. wide and 60 ft. long, with another passage leading out of this chamber on the opposite side.

The room contains four cages, each large enough to hold four prisoners. All of the cages are empty except one. On the floor of the closest cage you see the newly reformed physical bodies of the souls that were destroyed by the shadows a few minutes earlier lying unconscious on the floor.

On the far end of the chamber you see numerous boxes, barrels, and sacks placed neatly against the cavern wall. In front of that are two humans dressed in purple and black robes. Two shadows stand beside them.

The return of the soul a moment earlier has alerted the two **acolytes**. The acolytes were told that the souls would return if the shadows caught them. They did not expect for real people to appear as well. They are not prepared to battle the adventurers, but the two **shadows** are there to assist.

Tactics

The acolytes begin dodging when the adventurers enter the room. They command the shadows to kill the intruders. The acolytes fight for one round, using Sacred Flame and targeting the adventurers wearing the heaviest armor.

As soon as they take damage they surrender if given the opportunity to do so. If one of the acolytes is killed or knocked unconscious, the adventurers have advantage on any Charisma check made to convince the other acolyte to surrender.

The shadows fight to the death. If any of the shadows the adventurers faced in the last encounter fled, then these are the same shadows. Adjust hit points to reflect whatever damage they may have already sustained.

When the fighting ends, the adventurers can freely **Search the Chamber** and **Interrogate the Prisoners** if any acolytes are still alive. See below.

ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

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

- **Very weak party:** Reduce each **shadow's** hit points to 8.
- **Weak party:** Reduce each **shadow's** hit points to 12.
- **Strong party:** Increase each **shadow's** hit points to 20.
- **Very strong party:** Increase each **shadow's** hit points to 24.

You're Lost

If the adventurers were unable to follow the souls destroyed by the shadows in the previous encounter, read:

You let the soul get too far ahead of you and you were unable to follow it. You wander the tunnels for almost 10 minutes before you finally arrived at your destination.

The passage opens to a larger cavern approximately 40 ft wide and 60 ft long with another passage leading out of this chamber on the opposite side.

The room contains four cages, each large enough to hold four prisoners. All of the cages are empty. On the far end of the chamber you see numerous boxes, barrels, and sacks placed neatly against the cavern wall.

Although no one is in this chamber now, you get the distinct impression that if you'd gotten here sooner someone would have been.

The souls returned to their cage a few minutes before the adventurers arrived. The bodies rematerialized and fell limp to the floor. Two acolytes that were on guard here collected the unconscious bodies and carried them off to the Ritual Chamber.

The good news is that the acolytes don't know the adventurers are on the island so they made no effort to hide anything they left behind. The adventurers are free to begin **Searching the Chamber**.

General Features

Light. The cavern is lit by torches crudely affixed to the cavern walls.

Cages. The four cages are exactly the same. The lock on one is damaged.

Summoning Symbol. An eight-pointed star is drawn on the ground in the centre of this chamber. The cages are located at the star's longest points. In the centre of the star a skull is drawn on the ground.

Searching the Chamber

Intelligence (Religion) DC 10: The symbol on the floor is that of Cyric, the deity of lies, madness, strife, and deceit (Chaotic Evil).

Intelligence (Religion) or Intelligence (Arcana) DC 12: This symbol is part of a summoning and binding ritual. The souls in the cages were likely bound to remain prisoners within until the summoner released them or the sigil was broken.

Intelligence (Investigation) DC 12: The sigil was disrupted near the cell with the broken lock. This could explain how the souls were able to escape.

The boxes, barrels and sacks contain provisions and survival gear. There's enough here to sustain a dozen humans for two weeks. There are also numerous packs that contain personal items.

In eight of the packs the adventurers find unholy scripture dedicated to Cyric. In one of those packs the adventurers discover a book bound in purple vellum. On its cover is a symbol of Cyric similar to the one etched on the floor. Any good aligned character who opens the book takes 1d6 psychic damage unless they say a prayer in praise of Cyric before they open it.

Inside the book are numerous sermons dedicated to Cyric. It is one of the most horrific and disturbing things any of the adventurers have ever read. Some blasphemies cannot be unheard or unseen.

While reading through the book the adventurers find illustrations of a room like the one they're standing in now. Further reading reveals that this is part of a special ritual that will grant Cyric's most faithful servants the Dark Sun's blessing.

It will take the adventurers an hour to read enough of the unholy book to fully understand what's going on. See **Deciphering the Ritual** below. This can be done during a short rest.

Interrogating the Prisoners

Acolytes that were captured reveal everything they know with a simple DC 10 Charisma (Intimidation) or Charisma (Persuasion) check. Unfortunately, they are the lowest ranking cultists here and are quite clueless.

- They only recently became followers of Cyric. They came to Melvaunt because leaders from their cult claimed that Melvaunt was about to play an important role in Cyric's plans.
- The priests of Cyric had visions that an island would appear in the harbor and they were to conduct an ancient ritual here once it did.
- They had lookouts watching the bay, and on a moonless night the island rose from the sea floor. As soon as it did the cultists were ready. They had boats prepared to ferry them across to the island and within an hour they'd landed 12 cultists.
- The chuuls and giant crabs tried to attack the boats, but the pilots managed to get away from the coastline without incident. The cultists ignored the monsters and ventured into the caves.
- It took a while for the priests to find the right cavern, but eventually they found this room. They spent hours carving the sigil into the floor and

then began the ritual. Before they began they placed weapons on the floor of each cage; two swords and two daggers in each. When it ended a soul emerged from each blade.

- The next day the priests found another chamber where they started the whole thing all over again. This time the sigil they carved was twice the size.
- Yesterday the priests had the acolytes escort the prisoners from this room to the room where they're preparing to do the next ritual.
- That's when four souls escaped. The priests were furious. They instructed the shadows to find the escapees and return them here. The acolytes were told to stay here until the souls returned. They haven't been allowed back into the larger chamber since the souls escaped yesterday, so they don't know what's going on now.
- These acolytes realize that they've become part of something terrible and evil and they want out. They beg the adventurers to help them get off the island and back to the mainland.
- They won't leave this room or participate in any combat. However, they are willing to draw the adventurers a rough map of the larger summoning chamber and provide directions on how to get there.

Interrogating the Souls

Any souls that still accompany the characters confirm the following information.

- This was the place where they first woke up.
- Many cultists came and went from this room. It seemed that they were looking for another chamber in which to complete another ritual. It sounded like they found what they were looking for yesterday.
- The priests ordered the acolytes and shadows to bring the prisoners to the new chamber where the ritual was to take place. That's when these souls made their escape.

The characters can take a short rest before moving on. If they try to take a long rest they are attacked by shadows every 90 minutes.

Deciphering the Ritual

The cultists use the souls of Cyric's enemies to empower the ritual. These living souls are the physical manifestations of each deity's most faithful followers. In life, each was a devout cleric or paladin who wronged Cyric in some way. All were killed by a

devout follower of Cyric using a special ritualistic blade that trapped their soul.

Cyric's faithful have been collecting these souls for decades. The ritual required a series of events to take place before it could begin. For the past few months Cyric's most devout followers had prophetic dreams which led them to Melvaunt. The emergence of this island meant the time was right to perform the Dark Sun's blessing.

First the cultists had to release the trapped souls. They've completed that part already. Second they had to place the souls in a very specific arrangement around the symbol of Cyric. When they did, eight of Cyric's most faithful servants would recite the ritual. The ceremony would create a dark pillar that would siphon the divine essence of the captured souls and allow Cyric to manipulate it.

The souls need to be arranged in key positions based on their alignment, but the ritual doesn't provide specific details on this part. When done correctly the cultists could manipulate the powers of good and evil, law and chaos, to mask their own evil hearts. Once shielded they could commit unspeakable acts of evil in Cyric's name and remain undetected. The souls will be utterly and permanently destroyed if the ritual succeeds.

Once these details are discovered, the souls present begin to regain their memories. Hearing the details of the ritual seemed to trigger their memories like an instinctual reaction to danger. They begin to catch glimpses of their own past again. They understand who they are and what's at stake if they fail.

Disrupting the Ritual

Based on what the adventurers learn from reading Cyric's unholy book, they can disrupt the ritual in the following ways.

- Kill or knock out the cultists performing the ritual.
- Move the cultists off of their designated spots on the star symbol.
- Move the living souls off of the star symbol.
- Kill the living souls. See **Killing the Living Souls** below.
- Heal the souls. Any healing magic provided to a soul insulates them from the draining effect for one round per level of the spell cast or one round if a *potion of healing* is administered.
- Cast a Silence spell.

Killing the Living Souls

Killing the living souls isn't easy. The adventurers already witnessed what happens when the soul's body is killed: they return to their cages.

Now that the souls are beginning to remember their pasts and their religious teachings, they can explain how to put the souls to rest permanently, thereby denying the cultists the life-forces they need to complete their ritual and ensuring that these champions of the faith are allowed to pass on to the afterlife.

If none of the souls are present, then a cleric, paladin, or any adventurer who is proficient in Religion or who has the Acolyte background must make a successful DC 20 Intelligence (Religion) check to gain this information.

The only way to destroy the souls permanently is to recite a blessing of their faith before taking an action that reduces them to 0 hit points. Characters can make a DC 15 Intelligence (Religion) check (no action) on their turn to recall the appropriate prayer. Each adventurer can only make one such check each round, and the player must declare what deity/faith they're trying to remember. Once a prayer is remembered and recited aloud, all other adventurers capable of hearing can repeat the prayer without making a new check.

Characters who worship a deity represented here automatically know the prayer for their own faith.

Characters with the Acolyte background or proficiency in Religion have advantage on all Intelligence (Religion) checks to remember the prayer.

If any of the souls are present, the adventurers may suggest killing them now. The souls are agreeable to this but would prefer to stay and help if they can.

After the adventurers have completed their short rest they should proceed to **Part 6: The Ritual Chamber**.

Treasure

The Cyric unholy manuscript could be sold to a scholar or collector for 100 gp. It could be sold by an evil character to an evil-aligned church for 200 gp. If brought to a good-aligned church they would gladly destroy the foul text free of charge.

If the adventurers destroy the Cyric unholy manuscript immediately or if they agree to bring it to a church where it can be destroyed, award each adventurer 50 XP.

If the adventurers decide to bring the Cyric unholy manuscript to a good-aligned church where it can be studied and/or destroyed, award each adventurer 100 XP.

Part 6: The Summoning Chamber

Expected Duration: 60 minutes

The adventurers will arrive at the Summoning Chamber from different entry points depending on what happened in Part 4.

If the adventurers made it to the chamber of caged souls before the acolytes left, and they were able to interrogate them, they are told how to approach from the south passage.

If the characters did not make it to the chamber of caged souls before the acolytes left, they approach from the northwest passage.

Northwest Passage

If the adventurers approach from the northwest, read:

Voices echo faintly from the tunnel ahead of you. The path widens, and as you round the next bend you see a dim light emanating in the distance. Continuing onward toward the light you come to a large cavern.

The cavern is dimly lit by torches affixed to the wall around the chamber. The voices you're hearing are numerous people speaking together as one. Based on the blasphemy they're reciting, these are Cyric's faithful.

As you take in the entire chamber, you recognize the eight-pointed star with a skull in the center etched on the floor as a symbol of Cyric. It's similar to the one in the previous room but much larger.

At each of the star's eight points, humans dressed in purple and black are chanting as they perform the ritual.

At the lower vertices of the star's points, eight living souls stand frozen. Eight shadows stand outside of the star near the cultists. They're watching the ritual and the room, but do not seem to be part of the ritual itself.

A pillar of shadowy darkness originates from the skull symbol at the center of the star. Dark tendrils reach out and wrap themselves around the living souls as the cultists continue their chanting. Each time a cultist recites their prayer, the nearest soul fades momentarily and the dark pillar pulses with power.

Have all adventurers make a DC 15 Intelligence (Religion) check. Characters trained in Religion or

who have the Ritual Caster feat/ability make the check with advantage. Success reveals that the voices are indeed in the midst of performing a ritual, and from the sound of it the ritual is reaching a crescendo. If the adventurers plan to interfere or stop the ritual, they don't have a lot of time.

If the adventurers remain quiet and out of sight, no enemies approach them until they advance. They can attempt a DC 10 group Dexterity (Stealth) check to gain surprise when they enter the chamber. If the check fails, the two closest shadows move toward the adventurers to confront them. When the adventurers enter the chamber or engage any cultists or living souls participating in the ritual, proceed to **Stop the Unbelievers** below.

South Passage

If the adventurers approach from the south, read:

Voices echo faintly from the tunnel ahead of you. The path widens, and as you round the next bend you see a dim light emanating in the distance. Continuing onward toward the light you come to a large cavern.

The cavern is dimly lit by torches affixed to the wall around the chamber. The voices you're hearing are numerous people speaking together as one. Based on the blasphemy they're reciting, these are Cyric's faithful.

As you take in the entire chamber, you recognize the eight-pointed star with a skull in the center etched on the floor as a symbol of Cyric. It's similar to the one in the previous room but much larger.

At each of the star's eight points, humans dressed in purple and black are chanting as they perform the ritual.

At the lower vertices of the star's points, eight living souls stand frozen. Eight shadows stand outside of the star near the cultists. They're watching the ritual and the room, but do not seem to be part of the ritual itself.

A pillar of shadowy darkness originates from the skull symbol at the center of the star. Dark tendrils reach out and wrap themselves around the living souls as the cultists continue their chanting. Each time a cultist recites their prayer, the nearest soul fades momentarily and the dark pillar pulses with power.

There is a cage to your left in an alcove to the northwest, similar to the ones you saw in the last chamber. There are four more living souls trapped inside. Standing in front of the cage are two acolytes dressed like the ones you recently faced. They are completely fascinated by the spectacle and don't immediately notice you when you enter the chamber.

Have all adventurers make a DC 15 Intelligence (Religion) check. Characters trained in Religion or who have the Ritual Caster feat/ability make the check with advantage. Success reveals that the voices are indeed in the midst of performing a ritual, and from the sound of it the ritual is reaching a crescendo. If the adventurers plan to interfere or stop the ritual, they don't have a lot of time.

Because the adventurers approach from the south passage, their presence isn't initially considered problematic. The shadows have been told not worry about anyone entering the chamber from this passage, and the cultists are too busy performing the ritual to notice. Until the adventurers do something to draw attention to themselves, they remain undetected.

If the adventurers remain quiet and out of sight, no enemies approach them until they advance. They can attempt a DC 10 group Dexterity (Stealth) check to gain surprise when they enter the chamber. If the check fails, the two closest shadows move toward the adventurers to confront them.

If the adventurers wait, the acolytes guarding the cage spot them at the beginning of round three. They command the shadows to attack and then cast Sacred Flame on the adventurers from a safe distance. If the adventurers move towards the cage, move towards the ritual area, or attack anyone, the cultists move into action. Proceed to **Stop the Unbelievers** below.

Stop the Unbelievers

Once the adventurers make their presence known, the cultists performing the ritual realize something's amiss and act accordingly.

General Features

Light. The cavern is dimly lit by torches crudely affixed to the cavern walls.

Summoning Symbol. An eight-pointed star is drawn on the ground in the center of this chamber. In the center of the star a skull is drawn on the ground.

Dark Pillar. Emanating from the skull on the floor is a pillar of darkness. It blocks line of sight and line of effect. Adventurers who move into the pillar of darkness take 2d6 psychic damage when they enter and 1d6 psychic damage at the beginning of each turn they're inside. The souls, shadows, and cultists are immune to these effects.

Cage. The cages seem to be identical to the cages the adventurers discovered in the previous chamber.

Living Souls. The souls are positioned around the dark pillar in a very specific order based on their

deity's alignment and the soul's gender. See **Appendix 1** for the exact positioning.

Participating in the ritual are 4 **priests** (all female) and 4 **cult fanatics** (all male).

Once the cultists realize the adventurers are in the room, 1 priest and 1 cult fanatic break away from their spots in the ritual star and attack the adventurers. The remaining cultists work diligently to complete the ritual. Read:

Two cultists break away from the ritual to engage you directly. "Brothers and sisters, the ritual nears completion. We are moments away from receiving the Dark Sun's blessing. Focus on the goal while we take care of these unbelievers."

The remaining 3 priests and 3 cult fanatics continue with the ritual and do not engage in combat initially. Each time a cult fanatic is dropped to 0 hit points, another breaks away from the ritual to engage the adventurers. None of the other priests stop their part of the ritual, even if they're attacked directly. There should never be more than 2 cultists engaging the party directly. They believe that there is a greater reward coming to them when the ritual is completed, so they remain focused at all costs.

See **Completing the Ritual** below.

Tactics

The priest moves into melee and attacks a spellcaster or an unarmored hero if possible. She casts Spiritual Weapon in the first round as a bonus action and uses it to attack a different opponent than the one she's adjacent to. Each time she hits with a melee attack, she uses her Divine Eminence and expends a level 1 spell slot.

The cult fanatic casts Spiritual Weapon during the first round and then targets the adventurer wearing the heaviest armor with Sacred Flame. In round 2 he casts Shield of Faith. In round 3 he moves into melee and casts Inflict Wounds.

The cultists don't like each other. The cult fanatics and priests don't help each other, and target different adventurers whenever possible.

Only two shadows engage the party initially. The others stay near the priests participating in the ritual, acting as bodyguards. At the beginning of each subsequent round, another shadow will join the combat if a) a shadow was destroyed, b) it sustained any damage in the previous round, or c) a priest or cult fanatic was killed or knocked unconscious.

Clever players may realize that if they focus their efforts and take the cultists and shadows out one by one, the combat will likely be a lot easier for them.

ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

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

	shadow HP	cult fanatic HP	priest HP	# of Prayers required
Very weak party	8	23	17	30
Weak party	12	28	22	25
Average party	16	33	27	20
Strong party	20	38	37	18
Very strong party	24	43	47	16

Completing the Ritual

For the ritual to be completed at this point, the cultists need to complete 20 successful prayers. For each priest or cult fanatic to complete a prayer on their turn the following conditions must be met:

- The cultist must spend an action to recite the prayer aloud.
- The cultist must be standing on one of the vertices of the eight-pointed star.
- Each time a prayer is recited, it drains the essence of one of the living-souls. Each soul can only be tapped in this way once per round, and only while they're at their designated point of the star. All souls recharge at the beginning of each new round.
- If the adventurers cast a Silence spell, it makes the prayers less effective. The DM must roll a die for each cultist reciting a prayer in silence – if the result is odd the prayer was successful despite the silence, if the result is even the prayer was unsuccessful.

The adventurers can interfere or attempt to disrupt the ritual based on the information they learned in the previous encounter.

Living Souls as Allies

It is possible that some living souls still accompanying the party. They can participate in the combat, providing the Help action to the adventurers. The souls always go last in the initiative order.

Any souls that the adventurers free from the ritual are too weak to provide any assistance. However, when a soul is removed from the ritual star, the link to Cyric is broken and radiant energy comes pouring back into the soul. An adventurer adjacent to the soul regains 10 hit points. If more than one PC is adjacent when this happens, the players can decide who gets the healing.

The Outcome of the Ritual

If the cultists complete the ritual, read:

As the final blasphemous prayer to Cyric is spoken, magical darkness emanates from the skull etched on the floor. The living souls are absorbed into the pillar of darkness. Dark finger-like tendrils reach out from the pillar and wrap themselves around the cultists still standing on the eight-pointed star. The cultists make no sounds and seem pleased to be engulfed by the darkness.

The skull etched on the floor moves and speaks in a raspy voice "Let my most faithful be masked from all prying eyes. They will follow my edicts and do as I command without fear of detection. Now go forth and do as evil demands. The Dark Sun protects you." The dark tendrils withdraw and the skull becomes an etching on the floor once again. The cultists have vanished, along with any remaining shadows.

The cultists cannot complete the ritual if they are all killed or knocked unconscious, or if all the souls are removed from the ritual star. When this happens read the following:

The skull etched on the floor moves and speaks in a raspy voice "You were among my most faithful. I offered you my dark blessing and you failed. Feel my wrath." The pillar of darkness vanishes. The skull becomes an etching on the floor once again and any remaining shadows disappear. The living souls who were part of the ritual are hurled away from the ritual star. A few seconds later they awaken and stand up.

The blasphemous ritual is broken. The followers of Cyric failed to complete whatever task their dark lord bade of them. The threat has subsided and the realms are safe once again from the forces of evil, due in no small part to your actions here today.

Any remaining cultists attempt to flee. They do not engage in melee, preferring to disengage, dash, or dodge. If they manage to escape the chamber, they know the path through the maze of tunnels to escape. Unless pursued they get away. If captured, they realize they're outmatched and do not resist, nor do they talk, despite attempts to convince them to do otherwise.

Any acolytes beg the adventurers for forgiveness and agree to do anything they ask if they'll just get them back to the city and away from the cultists.

Treasure

The cultists are not carrying any treasure or material wealth. However, near the cage are the 16 ceremonial weapons that once imprisoned the souls. The magic is gone, but the blades could be sold for 50 gp each. There is also a total of 200 gp in mixed coins and small gems.

Part 7: The Aftermath

Expected Duration: 15 minutes

Any living souls remaining in the chamber after the ritual is completed or foiled immediately regain all knowledge they possessed in life. They know who they are and who they worship. They thank the adventurers for their help.

Each soul has been trapped for a long time and each wishes to pass on to the next life. They tell the adventurers that to pass on they must be slain. The souls recite the necessary prayer before having an adventurer destroy their form. Each disappears when struck.

If the ritual was stopped, each adventurer gains the story award **Friend of the Gods**.

When the adventurers return to the surface they are greeted by Lt. Deveno and a dozen sailors. When Lt. Deveno told his superiors that adventurers went to the island to clean up the navy's mess, it spurred the High Sail into action. He ordered a contingent of sailors to go to the island and seize control by any means necessary. He doesn't want the event of the past day to become public, so he's agreed to pay the adventurers a handsome reward for their actions, provided they give a detailed accounting of what happened and then promptly forget everything they did.

The sailors accompanying Lt. Deveno retrieve the bodies of their fallen comrades and return the remains to their families.

Once back in Melvaunt if the adventurers provide a detailed description of what happened they are each rewarded with 100 gp and the gratitude of The High Sail.

Rewards

Make sure to note their rewards on their adventure logsheets. Give your name and DCI number (if applicable) so players can record who ran the session.

Experience

Total up all combat experience earned for defeated foes, and divide by the number of characters present in combat. For non-combat experience, the rewards are listed per character. Give all characters in the party non-combat experience awards unless otherwise noted.

Combat Rewards

Name of Foes	XP per Foe
Wounded Chuul	550
Giant Crab	25
Shadow	100
Acolyte	50
Priest	450
Cult Fanatic	450

Non-Combat Rewards

Task or Accomplishment	XP per Character
Showing respect to the buried dead	25
Each Acolyte captured	25
Destroying Cyric's Bible	50
Giving Cyric's Bible to a good aligned church	100
Donating part of the treasure to the families of the fallen sailors' families	50

The minimum total award for each character participating in this adventure is **1275** experience points.

The maximum total award for each character participating in this adventure is **1700** experience points.

Treasure

Treasure Awarded

Item Name	GP Value
Cultists' wealth	200
Cyric's Bible	100 or 200
Cyric's Ceremonial Blades	50 each (800 total)
The High Sail's Reward	100 per character

Downtime

Each character receives **10 downtime days** at the conclusion of this adventure.

Renown

All faction members earn **one point of renown** for participating in this adventure.

Story Awards

The characters have the opportunity to earn the following story award during the course of play.

Favor of the Gods. For their part in stopping Cyric's ritual and for allowing the trapped souls to achieve final rest, the adventurers gain the Favor of the Gods. During future adventures if they visit a church during play and make a donation equal to 10 gp x their level they gain inspiration. They can earn inspiration this way four times before they lose this boon.

DM Rewards

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

Appendix 1

Deities & Souls

CELL #1

Lathander (NG) Dawn, Renewal Soul's real name: Quinn Blake Human (M), short, heavy, short fair hair A man of the people and a teacher to all. Quinn was the pillar of his community; promoting prosperity and helping the people achieve it. When Cyric's minions attacked his town with an undead army, he rallied the people and led them to victory. His heroics encouraged a generation of heroes who battled and defeated Cyric's forces. Prayer: "When the dawn comes the sun's light will vanquish what hides in darkness."	Helm (LN) Vigilance, Protection Soul's real name: Jess Dovill Human (F), tall, strong, short fair hair. Lieutenant of the guard for a noble family, Jess performed her duty without fault for years. When the family's youngest son was kidnapped and eventually killed, she swore to destroy those responsible – agents of Cyric. After she caught and killed the kidnappers she felt it her duty to protect everyone from the evils of Cyric. She captured or killed more of Cyric's agents and priests than any of Helms faithful. Prayer: "One must be ever vigilant, ever aware, and ever prepared for one's enemies."
Leira (CN) Illusions, Deception Soul's real name: Neelia Ghostah Human (F), short, confident smile, long dark hair A great illusionist and con artist, Neelia duped many of Cyric's followers into believing that she was Cyric's mortal offspring. Once bamboozled, she manipulated her marks into exposing their faith to Cyric publically. In all cases the marks were imprisoned or executed. Prayer: "Never trust the world around you; your senses can be manipulated by illusion as easily as I've manipulated these words."	Shar (NE) Darkness, Secrets, Loss Soul's real name: Dirk Noj Human (M), tall, average build, bald head with short goatee. One of the most despicable men to ever walk the Realms, Dirk was a remarkable assassin. Under the cover of darkness, he struck against Shar's enemies. He never took payment for killing Cyric priests. He believed any act that provided so much pleasure must be a blessing of Shar herself – he considered it a privilege to receive these contracts against Cyric. Prayer: "In the darkness good and evil can do what is necessary without the judgment of watchful eyes upon them."

CELL #2

Mystra (NG) Magic Soul's real name: Xushu Ranno Human (F), average height, wise blue eyes, long dark hair Xushu dedicated her life to uncovering new magic that would help make the average man's life easier. She discovered vile texts sacred to Cyric's faithful and manipulated and transformed the harmful effects into tremendously positive magic. Prayer: "The weave allows even the humblest individual to make the impossible possible."	Kelemvor (LN) Death Soul's real name: Rak Grebmann Human (M), short, skinny, long dark hair. A former Cyric cultist himself, Rak had a gift for finding and converting Cyric's most faithful to Kelemvor teachings. Prayer: "Death is but an inevitable step along a greater path."
Mask (CN) Thieves Soul's real name: Kave S'rem Human (M), average height and build, medium-length light-brown hair. Unassuming and forgettable, Kave was a remarkable pick pocket and social chameleon. He stole a powerful relic from the cult of Cyric and turned it over to the church of Lathander to ensure it was destroyed – just for the challenge and the fun of it. Prayer: "Ownership is fluid; it should reflect one's desire, not one's needs."	Auril (NE) Winter Soul's real name: Aureen Flynn Human (F), mature, heavy, white/silver hair Outcast from her own people, Aureen preached of Auril to barbarian tribes in the frigid north. By following these teachings, the tribes flourished. When agents of Cyric stole offerings to Auril entire tribes were killed by fierce winter storms. Afterwards Aureen ensured none of Cyric's agents ever had safe passage through the north during winter months again. Prayer: "Winter's chill brings darkness that makes us yearn for yesterday."

CELL #3

Selûne (CG) Moon Soul's real name: Zhinou Human (M), slight build, short bristly dark hair. Lycanthrope hunter who sought to cure those inflicted rather than kill them. Husband to a werewolf who renounced Cyric and helped Zhinou find and destroy others of her kind. Prayer: "When in darkness, look up and the moon will show you the path."	Ilmater (LG) Suffering, Martyrdom, Perseverance Soul's real name: Hawn Lorker Human (F), short, average build, dark hair The epitome of self-sacrifice, Hawn allowed herself to be captured by a cult of Cyric to save others. She withstood torture and torment for years before escaping. She then roused an army and made it her life's mission to wipe out Cyric's followers and ensure no one else ever suffered her fate. Prayer: "We sacrifice our own well-being freely so others will not have to enduring the evils of the world."
Talona (CE) Poison, Disease Soul's real name: Lady Beller Human (F), short, loud, overweight, long dark hair. Words that spouted from Lady Beller's mouth were a social disease. Uncouth and unfiltered, her words were poison. She revealed secrets and ruined reputations without any forethought. Her direct nature was appreciated by some, until they too became victims of her jabs and revelations. She caused one of Cyric's strongest underground churches in Neverwinter to be discovered and destroyed. Prayer: "Disease and sickness are required to thin the herds and demonstrate that poison affects kings and beggars alike."	Bane (LE) Tyranny Soul's real name: Krag of the Southern Lands Human (M), large and stocky, short red hair. The real power behind a noble family of Athkatla in Amn for decades, Krag plotted and schemed his way to power and never let anyone get in his way. His most notable victory was the utter disgrace and destruction of a noble family of Cyric cultists that had been in power for over a century. Prayer: "The strong have a right and a duty to rule over the weak."

CELL #4

Sune (CG) Love, Beauty Soul's real name: Mela'Kai Half-Elf (F), light skin and fiery red hair, exceptionally beautiful. Mela'Kai spent her life helping former evil doers who turned over a new leaf to lead good lives, especially former Cyric cultists. Her lessons of love and forgiveness were so moving that even the most hardened criminals would reconsider their choices and turn to a life filled with goodness and love. Prayer: "Love one and all as you would love yourself."	Torm (LG) Duty, Loyalty Soul's real name: Heath Tenesen Human (M), tall, skinny, muscular, dark hair. Heath began life as a diplomat and politician. He sought to make the world better by using the laws to ferret out corruption among the upper classes and nobility. His vigilance to acquire iron-clad evidence to make convictions resulted in Cyric's agents being exposed and removed from key positions in five major cities. Prayer: "It is one's duty to find the truth and expose those who seek to subvert it for their own gains."
Talos (CE) Storms Soul's real name: Ray Quinpar Human (M), tall, overweight, covered in tattoos, long unkempt hair and beard A fierce pirate and seaman, Ray lived for the storms and the seas. He delighted in attacking and sinking ships, even if it meant the death of the crew and the loss of bounty. He deliberately targeted any ship bearing a flag or symbols of Cyric. Prayer: "The perfect storm that will destroy everything in its path; be like the storm."	Lolth (LE) Spiders Soul's real name: Petulance Drow Elf (F), tall, slender, bald Feared and hated among the Drow, she epitomized the very essence of her race. She demanded respect and obedience. Foolishly, agents of Cyric who'd enjoyed a beneficial alliance with Petulance tried to kill her. She unleashed her wrath and her house upon Cyric's faithful. Cyric's priests have since avoided all contact with any Drow. Prayer: "Death is strong, but Lolth is stronger."

NEUTRALITY OF THE LIVING SOULS

CHAOTIC GOOD Selûne (M) Sune (F)	NEUTRAL GOOD Lathander (M) Mystra (F)	LAWFUL GOOD Ilmater (F) Torm (M)
CHAOTIC NEUTRAL Mask (M) Leira (F)		LAWFUL NEUTRAL Helm (F) Kelemvor (M)
CHAOTIC EVIL Talona (F) Talos (M)	NEUTRAL EVIL Auril (F) Shar (M)	LAWFUL EVIL Bane (M) Lolth (F)

The living souls representing the deities listed in bold text are the ones positioned around the pillar of darkness in Part 6.

Monsters

Chuul

Large Aberration, chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 93 (11d10 + 33)

Speed 20 ft., swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	5 (–3)	11 (+0)	5 (–3)

Skills Perception +4

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages understands Deep Speech but can't speak

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Amphibious. The chuul can breathe air and water.

Sense Magic. The chuul senses magic within 120 feet of it at will. This trait will otherwise work like the *detect magic* spell but isn't itself magical.

Actions

Multiattack. The chuul makes two pincer attacks. If the chuul is grappling a creature, the chuul can also use its tentacles.

Pincer. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage. The target is grappled (escape DC 14) if it is a Large or smaller creature and the chuul doesn't have two other creatures grappled.

Tentacles. One creature grappled by the chuul must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 minute. Until this poison ends, the target is paralyzed. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the poison on itself on a success.

Giant Crab

Medium beast, unaligned

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 13 (3d8)

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	15 (+2)	11 (+0)	1 (–5)	9 (–1)	3 (–4)

Skills Stealth +4

Senses blindsight 30 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages —

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Amphibious. The crab can breathe air and water.

Actions

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 11). The crab has two claws, each of which can grapple only one target.

Shadow

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 16 (3d8 + 3)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (–2)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	6 (–2)	10 (+0)	8 (–1)

Skills Stealth +4 (+6 in dim light or darkness)

Damage Vulnerabilities radiant

Damage Resistances acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages —

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Amorphous. The shadow can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

Shadow Stealth. While in dim light or darkness, the shadow can take the Hide action as a bonus action.

Sunlight Weakness. While in sunlight, the shadow has disadvantage on attack rolls, ability checks, and saving throws.

Actions

Strength Drain. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) necrotic damage, and the target's Strength score is reduced by 1d4. The target dies if this reduces its Strength to 0. Otherwise, the reduction lasts until the target finishes a short or long rest.

If a non-evil humanoid dies from this attack, a new shadow rises from the corpse 1d4 hours later.

Living Soul (Commoner)

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 16 (breast plate, shield)

Hit Points 4 (1d8)

Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft. (only while incorporeal)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 0 (10 XP)

Actions

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d8) slashing damage, or 6 (1d10) slashing damage if used with two hands.

Acolyte

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 10

Hit Points 9 (2d8)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Medicine +4, Religion +2

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Spellcasting. The Acolyte is a 1st-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). He has the following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *light, sacred flame, thaumaturgy*
1st level (3 slots): *bless, cure wounds, sanctuary*

Actions

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

Cult Fanatic

Medium humanoid (any race), any non-good alignment

Armor Class 13 (leather armor)

Hit Points 33 (6d8 + 6)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Deception +4, Persuasion +4, Religion +2

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Dark Devotion. The fanatic has advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened.

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

Cantrips (at will): *light, sacred flame, thaumaturgy*
1st level (4 slots): *command, inflict wounds, shield of faith*
2nd level (3 slots): *hold person, spiritual weapon*

Actions

Multiattack. The fanatic makes two melee attacks.

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

Priest

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 13 (chain shirt)

Hit Points 27 (5d8 + 5)

Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)

Skills Medicine +7, Persuasion +3, Religion +4

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages any two languages

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Divine Eminence. As a bonus action, the priest can expend a spell slot to cause its melee weapon attacks to magically deal an extra 10 (3d6) radiant damage to a target on a hit. This benefit lasts until the end of the turn. If the priest expends a spell slot of 2nd level or higher, the extra damage increases by 1d6 for each level above 1st.

Spellcasting. The priest is a 5th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). The priest has the following cleric spells prepared:

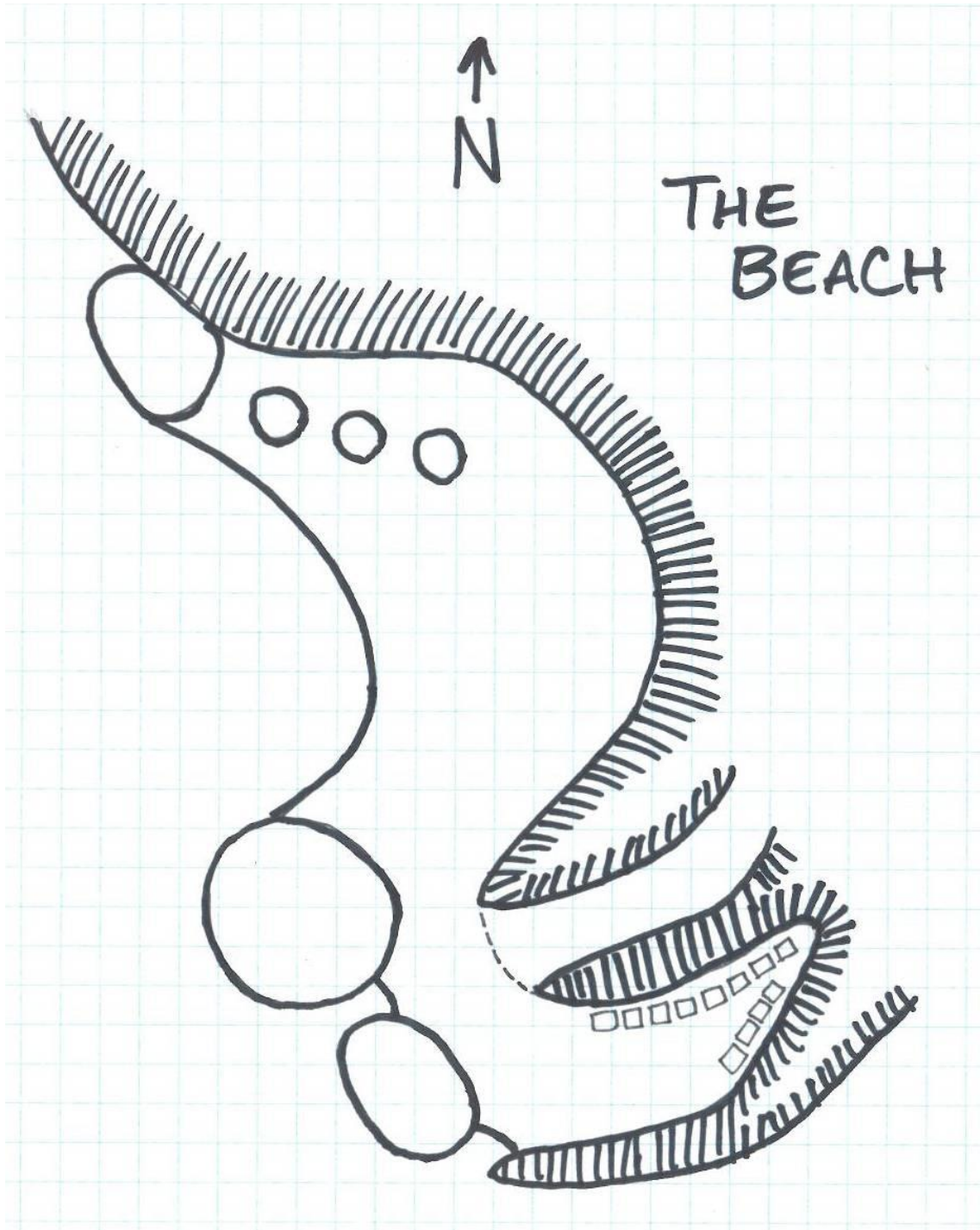
Cantrips (at will): *light, sacred flame, thaumaturgy*
1st level (4 slots): *cure wounds, guiding bolt, sanctuary*
2nd level (3 slots): *lesser restoration, spiritual weapon*
3rd level (2 slots): *dispel magic, spirit guardians*

Actions

Short Sword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d6) slashing damage.

Maps

Map #1 – The Beach



Map #2 – The Maze

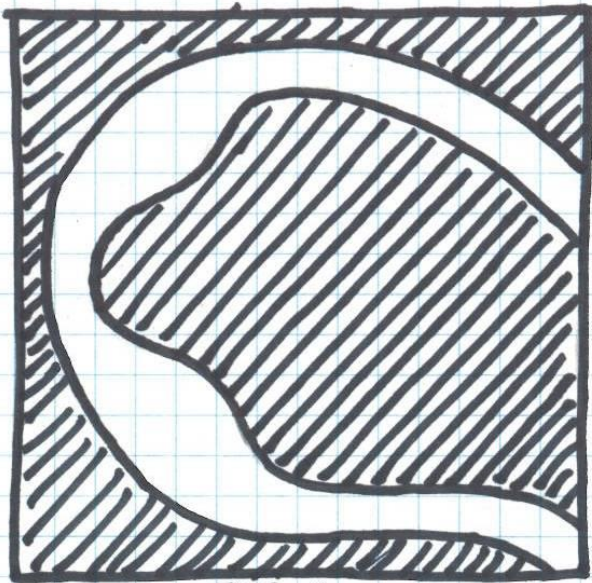


FIG. 1



THE MAZE

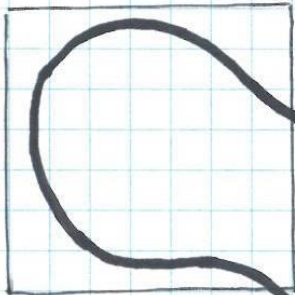
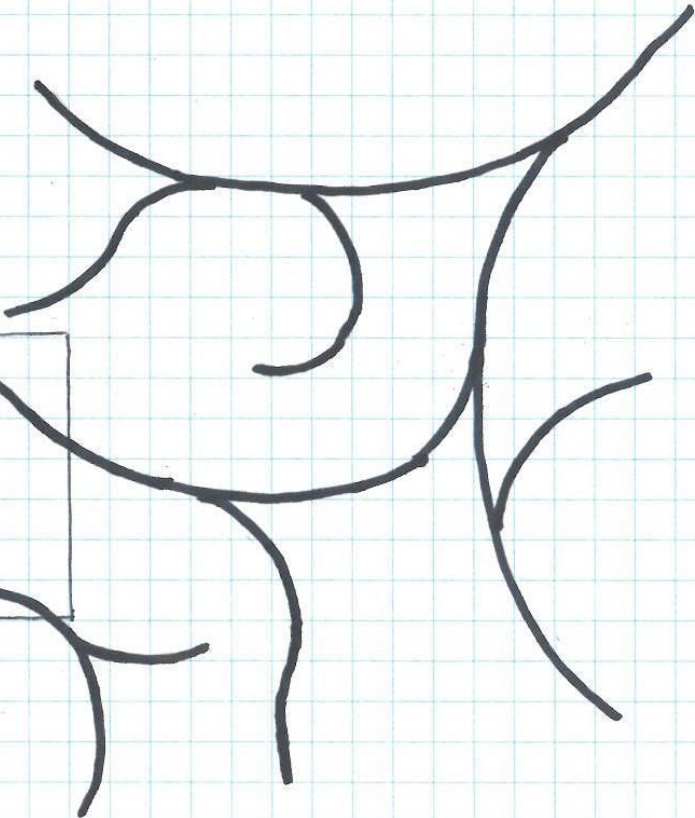
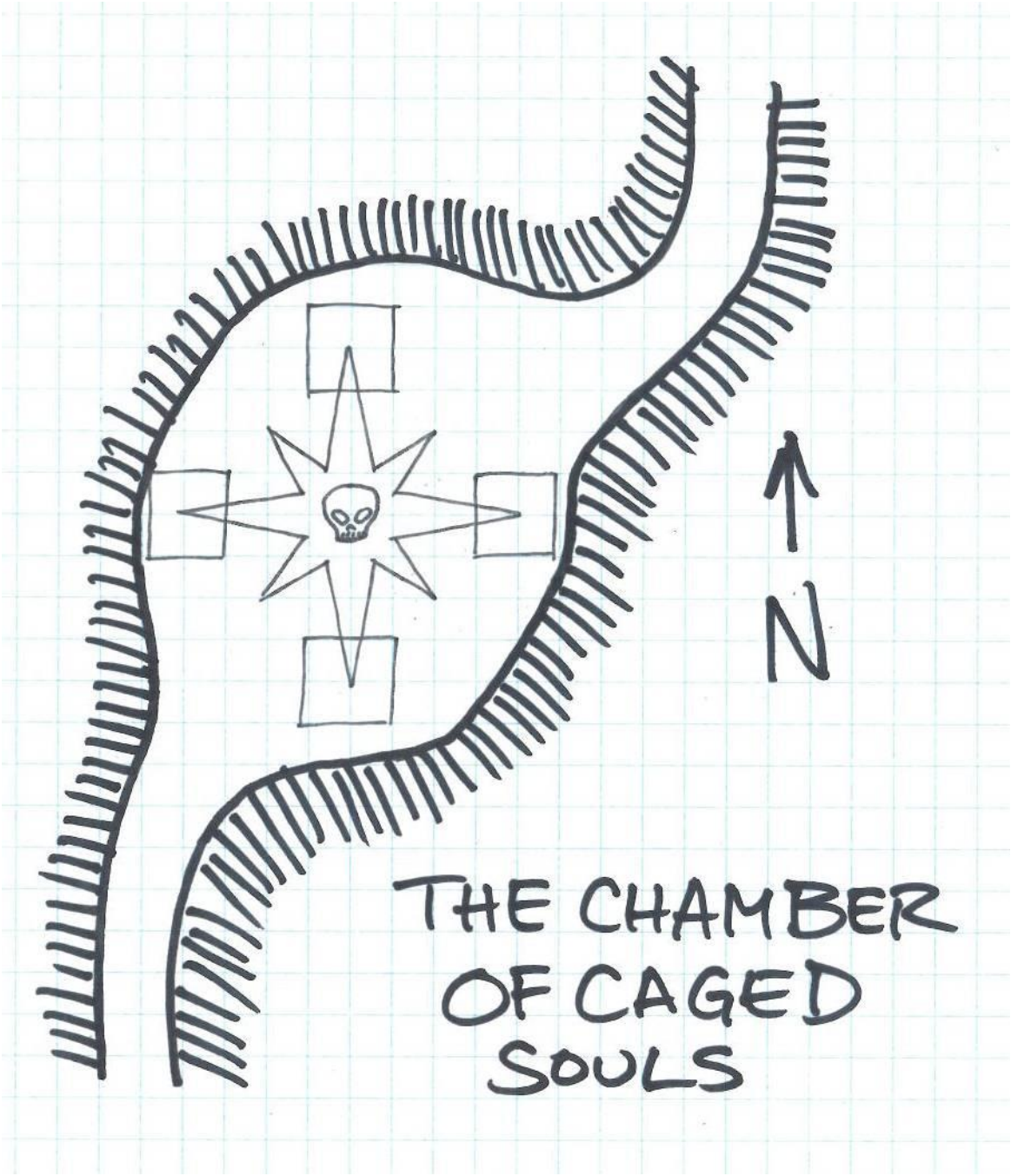


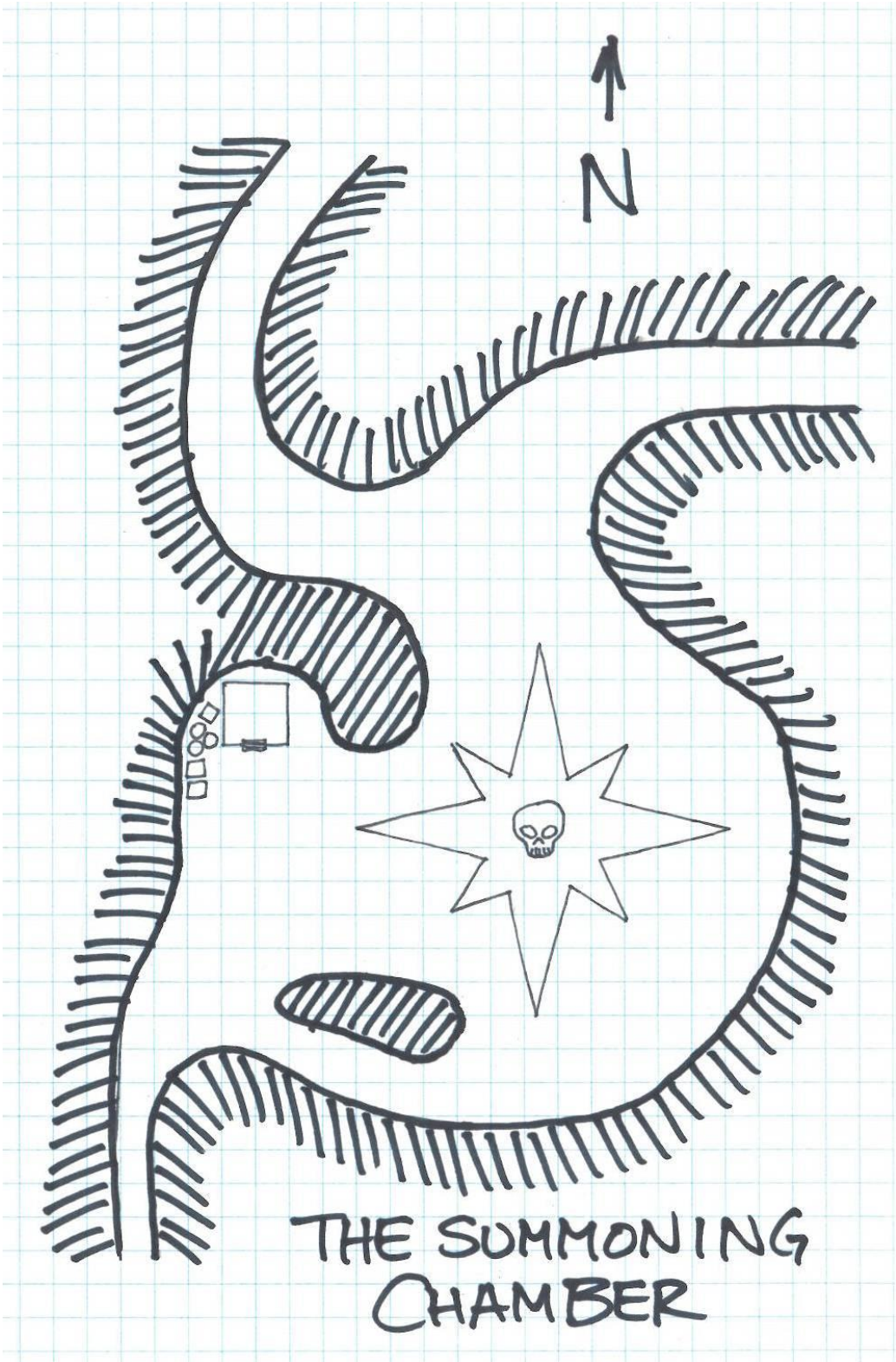
FIG. 1



Map #3 – The Chamber of Caged Souls



Map #4 – The Summoning Chamber (Players' Copy)



Map #4 – The Summoning Chamber (DM's Copy)

