



ADVENTURERS LEAGUE



WEAKNESS OF ROCK

MICKEY TAN

Adventure Designer

Adventure Code: HULB03-01

Optimized For: APL 14



Something stirs in the Hulburg mines. It would be nice to know what, but it would be nicer if it would stop collapsing parts of the mines and leaving catatonic miners. This could be the end of Hulburg's windfall unless someone finds a way to stop it. Part 1 of the Obsidian Stone trilogy.

A four-hour adventure for 11th - 16th level characters

Development and Editing: Pieter Sleijpen and Shawn Merwin

Cartography: Jay Africa

Proofing and Layout: Encoded Designs

Playtesters: David Villareal, Wes McCann, Buddy Arnold and Tim Cheng

Organized Play: Chris Lindsay

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

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

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Welcome to *Weakness of Rock*, a Convention Created Content D&D Adventurers League™ adventure, part of the official D&D Adventurers League™ organized play system Tomb of Annihilation™ storyline season.

This adventure is designed for three to seven 11th - 16th level characters, and is optimized for five characters with an average party level (APL) of 14. Characters outside this level range cannot participate in this adventure.

ADJUSTING THIS ADVENTURE

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

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

DETERMINING PARTY STRENGTH

Party Composition Party	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

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

BEFORE PLAY AT THE TABLE

Before you start play, consider the following:

- Read through the adventure, taking notes of anything you'd like to highlight or remind yourself of 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. Become familiar with the adventure's appendices and handouts.

- Gather any resources you'd like to use to aid you in running this adventure--such as notecards, a DM screen, miniatures, and battlemaps.
- Ask the players to provide you with relevant character information, such as name, race, class, and level; passive Wisdom (Perception), and anything specified as notable by the adventure (such as backgrounds, traits, flaws, etc.)

PLAYING THE DUNGEON MASTER

You have the most important role—facilitating the enjoyment of the game for the players. You provide the narrative and bring the words on these pages to life. To facilitate this, keep in mind the following:

You're Empowered. Make decisions about how the group interacts with the adventure; adjusting or improvising is encouraged, so long as you maintain the adventure's spirit. This doesn't allow you to implement house rules or change those of the Adventurers League, however; they should be consistent in this regard.

Challenge Your Players. Gauge the experience level of your players (not the characters), try to feel out (or ask) what they like in a game, and attempt to deliver the experience they're after. Everyone should have the opportunity to shine.

Keep the Adventure Moving. When the game starts to get bogged down, feel free to provide hints and clues to your players so they can attempt to solve puzzles, engage in combat, and roleplay interactions without getting too frustrated over a lack of information. This gives players "little victories" for figuring out good choices from clues. Watch for stalling--play loses momentum when this happens. At the same time, make sure that players don't finish too early; provide them with a full play experience.

*Rocks, rocks, so many pretty rocks.
Dark and smooth.
Watch them draw out the real you.*

—Danatar Ahrehdsen

HULBURG TODAY

Over the centuries Hulburg was plundered and razed many times, but each time industrious folk have returned to rebuild atop its ruins. Remnants of its previous incarnations still exist beneath the surface of the current remains as a disjointed collection of old sewers, passageways, and even the buried foundations and basements of destroyed buildings.

While small in comparison to its former size, modern-day Hulburg is no exception to this cycle of rebirth. Today, the town consists mainly of three distinct areas: Tent City, the Harbor District, and Hulmaster Manor.

A map can be found in Appendix II.

TENT CITY

The bulk of the town rests atop a tall plateau on the northern banks of the Moonsea with the heights of Thar rising to the north. A steep and rocky hill blocks expansion to the east, and the stony cliffs along the Moonsea lie to the south.

Known by Hulburg's residents as Tent City, the plateau is home to a haphazard collection of large canvas tents and makeshift wooden buildings. This fledgling residential district lies near the center of the plateau and it stands upon the ruins of a former fortress. It contains a large natural well and several older defenses constructed at the height of Hulburg's former glory. Several miles of unoccupied ruins surround the area.

Many residents of Tent City work in Lord Eorl Hulmaster's gem mine, which is located in the hills to the northeast of the town. The remaining residents survive by plying common trades to support the miners or working as dockhands in the Harbor District. Life in Tent City is rough, with most people living in poverty. These conditions breed crime and violence, but Lord Hulmaster's small force of guards and Hulburg's larger gangs manage to keep the town from falling into complete lawlessness.

HARBOR DISTRICT

The lifeline of Hulburg is its harbor, which lies to the south of Tent City along the northern shore of the Moonsea. A large, rocky bluff separates it from Tent City, and travel between the two districts is limited to a steep man-made trail that traverses the stony face of the slope. Laborers, called hoppers, carry loads of ore and other supplies up and down the trail, which can be treacherous in poor weather.

Warehouses and rows of docks make up the bulk of the Harbor District, but the area is also home to a tariff office, guard post, and many other smaller businesses built to service ships and their crews. The district has seen recent investments by Lord Eorl Hulmaster, making it opulent in comparison to Tent City. Consequently, few tents and temporary structures lie within its palisades. A handful of successful merchants, traders, and ship captains live here, but even these individuals live a modest lifestyle in comparison to other towns and cities in the Moonsea region.

HULMASTER MANOR

Lord Eorl Hulmaster's manor lies a short thirty-minute walk to the northwest of Tent City on the outskirts of the ruins of old Hulburg. The current lord and his trusted retainers live in a small wooden fortress that backs up to a tall bluff. Residents of Hulburg jokingly (and never in the presence of the lord or his retainers) refer to the structure as the Hedge Lord's Manor.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Hulburg has seen much in the way of activity in recent times, and this continues to be the case as word spreads of a new source of income: tar stones. These black sticky gemstones have multiple magical properties and uses, and while not particularly common, there are enough to offer the promise of profit.

There used to be a mind flayer colony deep below Hulburg, but none of its residents have shown themselves in centuries. The few who remember it consider it long destroyed. While the colony is currently dormant, its guardian is very much active.

The guardian, an alhoon named Berach, remained outside of the colony, watching the surroundings for dangers while it studied ways to prolong its life. It enhanced its studies with the use of a potent drug of its own development: tar stones.

Tar Stones are small black crystalline stones that are somewhat sticky to the touch. They are filled with emotional energy that powers their magical properties.

Unfortunately, the alhoon's supply of this drug is running low and it needs replenishment. The alhoon can make more, but for this it needs strong emotions to be sucked into the empty stones scattered across underground caverns. To make this happen, Berach has targeted the mines and miners of Hulburg.

Berach's actions are drawing the attention of the authorities and through them the characters.

NPC SUMMARY

The following NPCs and locations feature prominently in this adventure.

Faylin Greenbaum (FAY-lin Green-BAUM). In spite of her half-elven heritage, Faylin is neither slender nor graceful. While the thirty-two-year-old's dusty blond hair, blue-gray eyes, and stout build are rather plain, her true beauty lies on the inside.

Faylin oversees Hulburg's mine. Lord Hulmaster pays her a pittance of her actual worth, but she cares little for money. Her heart lies with the town's miners and other working-class residents. She spends her free time and money repairing tents, serving meals, and performing other tasks to improve the living conditions in Tent City.

Faylin holds no particular religious devotion. While she admires Jarus Grainger for his dedication to Tyr, she prefers to rely on her own hard work and compassion to make Hulburg a better place to live.

Danatar Ahrehdsen (DAH-n uh-tahr AH-red-sehn). Danatar comes across as jovial if a little doddering. He is always willing to share his knowledge and almost always manages to do so without becoming pedantic.

SERIES

HULB3-1 Weakness of Rock is the first part in the Obsidian Stone trilogy, in which the characters deal with the machinations of the alhoon, Berach. The second part is *HULB3-2 Dead Canaries* and deals more with Danatar and his investigations into the tar stones. In the third part, *HULB3-3 Darkest Vein*, the PCs can finally put an end to Berach.

It is assumed the characters play the trilogy in order. If PCs played the other parts before this one, assume this is a flashback. Alternatively, you can make adjustments to make it more like a cleanup after having first dealt with Berach.

ADVENTURE OVERVIEW

The adventure is broken down into 6 parts:

Introduction. Faylin Greenbaum of the Hulburg Mining Company needs people to find the missing miners in Mine Area 51. Recently the mine's harvest has been very lucrative. A vein of tar stones, prized by jewelers with extraordinary capacity for magic consumption, has been found. But last night the crew that went to Area 51 has not come back. A cave-in has prevented any rescue attempts and Faylin is desperate.

Part 1: Rock of Wrath. Circumventing the cave-in to get to the catatonic miners, tar stones are first encountered. But before finding out what is going on, rumblings occur and an enraged purple worm who has been infected with a tar stone it consumed lashes out to destroy and satisfy its voracious appetite.

Part 2: Rock of Hope. At the end of the purple worm encounter, Danatar Ahrehdsen, a traveling wizard who has been researching these tar stones, arrives. He thinks he might be able to awaken the miners who have been effected by the tar stones. But he needs the Alabaster Stones of Ahrehd (he named them after himself) that are only found in the Flooded Forest. He can hold open a portal to a site near the Flooded Forest (not close to Hulburg) for only an hour.

Part 3: Rock of Envy. Danatar discovers another ingredient needed for the cure – a strange kelp that can only be found in deep waters off the shores of Hulburg. The PCs must travel to the kelp beds and find this rare kelp before they destroy each other.

Part 4: Rock of Discovery. The PCs are sent by Danatar to track down the source of the stones as he has discovered their dangerous power. The trail leads them to a cabal of mind flayers who Berach has awakened to help him harness the power of the tar stones, to aid his mission of guarding the colony and who wish to join the alhoon in undeath to do so.

Conclusion. Thwarting the cabal, they learn more about the plans of the alhoon. Danatar creates the potion to awaken the miners in the coma.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

We need you again. The call for help goes out to those adventurers who have helped Hulburg in the past. Despite its recent economic boom, there are problems in the mines that need to be addressed. The PCs are asked by Lord Hulmaster to see Faylin Greenbaum at the mines.

For fame and glory. Experienced adventurers are needed to help with the problem in the mines. Success would help the pocketbook and enhance the reputation.

Lord's Alliance or Order of the Gauntlet. The stop of production at the mines is bad for business and makes the natives restless. Your factions ask you to do whatever is necessary to get the mine back on track.

Zhentarim. Your faction thinks this is a great opportunity to negotiate with Faylin for a "special discount" for the tar stones. They want you to help her with the problem with the mines, but only if she agrees to a 10% discount.

Emerald Enclave. Your faction is concerned that the tar stones they have been finding in the mines are unnatural. Also, the protector of the forest, Brightstar Moonsilver, has gone missing and they believe this has something to do with the stones.

DM'S NOTE

There is a **DM Handout** that is to be filled out in character introduction to keep track of the effects of the tar stones on the final battle, as they are sucking the emotions from the players and NPCs throughout the whole adventure.

Ask lots of questions during character introductions to find out the motives and emotions of the PCs to really tailor the adventure to them.



INTRODUCTION

Expected Duration: 15 minutes

The adventure begins with the adventurers arriving at the mining office to meet Faylin Greenbaum.

You enter the office of Faylin Greenbaum and see a despondent miner with his head buried in his hands sitting with his back to the door and a half-elven woman standing over him with her hand on his shoulder.

"It's okay Grafton. Help is on the way. We will be able to wake them up. Just you see. Look, see what I mean," Faylin says as she turns to greet you.

The office has the production schedule written on the board. The large desk in the middle of the room has layers of maps of different sections of the mines.

ROLEPLAYING FAYLIN GREENBAUM

In spite of her half-elven heritage, Faylin is neither slender nor graceful. While the thirty-two-year-old's dusty blond hair, blue-gray eyes, and stout build are rather plain, her true beauty lies on the inside.

Faylin oversees Hulburg's mine. Lord Hulmaster pays her a pittance of her actual worth, but she cares little for money. Her heart lies with the town's miners and other working-class residents. She spends her free time and money repairing tents, serving meals, and performing other tasks to improve the living conditions in Tent City.

Faylin holds no particular religious devotion. While she admires Jarus Grainger for his dedication to Tyr, she prefers to rely on her own hard work and compassion to make Hulburg a better place to live.

Quote: "It is up to each individual to help out others. If you don't do it, who will."

HALTING THE BOOM

Faylin explains to the adventurers how the mines have recently experiencing great expansion due to the discovery of the tar stones. But yesterday, a group of miners slipped into a coma while handling the stones in the mine where they were discovered, causing a halt in all mining operations as no miner wants to work until they are assured of their safety.

This work stoppage has her boss, Lord Hulmaster, beside himself because he knows that for every hour the mine is not operational, it is costing him money.

This is what Faylin knows:

- The trio of miners were excavating in mining area C. But they failed to check in at the end of the shift.
- When the next shift came, they found the miners collapsed on ground with their cache of tar stones in the cart.
- Our mining nurse, Gerta, was notified, but nothing she did seemed to have any effect. She recommended not moving them because of this and has been there caring for them ever since.
- Mining area C is one of the newly excavated parts of the mines and has been very rich in tar stones since it opened.
- If a PC asks for a discount for the Zhents, she is willing to give the 10% discount for solving her problem.
- Faylin is authorized to offer 500 gp per PC to help.

After answering any questions, she sends Grafton to escort the PCs to mining area C. If any of the PCs played *HULB1-2 Hulburg Burning*, he is grateful for their help and chats them up. Otherwise he picks the most charismatic of the group to talk to.

"I am so glad you are here. It has been a rough time with company C in a coma. Those guys are like family to me. I just happened to have taken the day off to spend time with my girl for her birthday and I come back to this."

Grafton proceeds to tell the adventurers about each of the miners of company C.

- **Jothar** is his best friend. One thing that scared him and made him mad was fire. His parents died in a fire that burned down his house when he was a teenager.
- **Burt** is a perfectionist. He always has to have everything done the right way - his way. If it wasn't, he would start yelling at anyone that caused it to go wrong.
- **Killenbrew** loves to eat and eats constantly. If he doesn't have his food, he gets hangry.

As Grafton finishes talking about his fellow miners, they reach the destination of the comatose group.



PART 1. ROCK OF WRATH

Expected Duration: 50 minutes

Rounding the bend in the tunnel, you enter the part of the tunnel known as mining area C. A dwarven female with auburn hair is tending to the comatose miners who are lying unconscious on the ground.

"Gerta, how are the boys doing?" Grufton cries out.

"Same," Gerta replies.

Gerta has been watching the miners since they were found. She has tried all types of healing remedies, potions and spells but to no avail. She is grateful that help has arrived.

GENERAL FEATURES

The tunnel area has the following general features:

Terrain. The cavern is 10 feet wide in this area. The floor here is dirt and is more or less level.

Weather. The air here is humid and warm. The walls are damp from the humidity.

Light. There is no light here save for that which the characters brought with them and the lantern that Gerta holds.

Smells and Sounds. The silence in this section of the tunnels is deafening.

Before looking at the bodies, a rumbling is heard and the ground begins to shake. In an instant, a gigantic purple worm with black tarred teeth and black stones encrusted on its skin bursts through the wall.

The **purple worm** has been burrowing through tar stones and become infected with the emotional energies that have been coursing through them.

The worm is angry and bursts through the wall, attacking the closest adventurer it can reach. Dusts of tar stones scatter across the adventurers and each one must make a DC 18 Wisdom saving throw. Any adventurer with a **dark gift** from the *Curse of Strahd* makes this saving throw at disadvantage as the tar stones are enhanced by them. On a failure, mark the tar stone box on the **DM Handout** and describe the energies leaving the PC and flowing to the veins of tar stones in the cave. They make this saving throw at the start of their turn while the purple worm is alive, as it creates a whole lot of tar stone debris.

As the combat ensues, the purple worm acts with anger over the emotions of the comatose NPCs.

- It is initially scared of fire then retaliates violently against it.
- If it misses, it thrashes in anger.
- It uses Hangry Bite at every opportunity because it hasn't eaten in a while.

The odd behavior of the purple worm should give the adventurers the first clue of how the tar stones are linked to emotions.

ADJUSTING THIS ENCOUNTER

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

- **Very Weak:** The **purple worm** has 50 less hit points.
- **Weak:** The **purple worm** has 25 less hit points.
- **Strong:** The **purple worm** has 100 more hit points.
- **Very Strong:** Add a second **purple worm**.

TREASURE

Cutting open the worm reveals the contents of its stomach — assorted precious metals worth 500 gp.

DEVELOPMENT

Once the combat is over, Faylin arrives with Danatar.

Faylin arrives on the scene with another man who is in a brown robe with a satchel overflowing with books and a notebook with pencil in hand.

"This is Danatar Ahrehdsen and I think he can shed some light on what is going on with these tar stones," says Faylin.

ROLEPLAYING DANATAR AHREHDSSEN

Danatar comes across as jovial if a little doddering. He is always willing to share his knowledge and almost always manages to do so without becoming pedantic.

Quote: "What a great discovery. Let me write it down."

This is what Danatar knows.

- The tar stones are linked to emotions and draw the power of emotions to fuel their magic.
- Tar stones are normally linked to a central hub that is drawing the linked tar stones.
- If someone's emotions are particularly strong, drawing them out of could leave them in a coma.
- Danatar has been working on a cure for those adversely effected by the tar stones, but it has to be done quickly or he fears the effect might be permanent.
- He needs help getting the ingredients — the Alabaster Stones of Ahrehd and the Kelp of Danatar.
- The one instance of Alabaster Stones of Ahrehd that Danatar knows of are found in the Flooded Forest. Danatar can open a portal for one hour. They can be found in the coldest part of the forest.
- The Kelp of Danatar can be found a couple miles off the shore of Hulburg at night near the kelp beds the fisherman troll. It is orange in color and is illuminated by the moon for only 30 seconds a night. Otherwise, it is indistinguishable from other kelp.

When the PCs are ready, Danatar opens the portal. It stays open for an hour. If the adventurers are not back by then, it closes and they have to find their own way back.



PART 2: ROCK OF HOPE

Expected Duration: 60 minutes

Stepping through the portal you find yourself in a forest that appears to have grown out of a swamp. The water you step into is only a foot deep, but the dark patches you can see show signs of deeper water ahead.

Mosquitos and other insects buzz around you, and the humidity is palpable.

A DC 15 Survival check points the adventurers in the direction of the colder part of the forest that is about a mile away from the portal.

GENERAL FEATURES

The forest area has the following general features:

Terrain. The forest is a swamp and movement is halved unless you have a swim speed or swamp walk. It is also uneven, with depths of up to 10 feet. The island with the hut can be traversed at normal speed.

Weather. The air here is humid and warm. But as the adventurers get closer to the hag's lair, it gets colder.

Light. The trees shade the ground from direct sunlight, so it is dimly lit.

Smells and Sounds. Insects and movement throughout the forest are muffled by the swamp, but the smell of wet grass is undeniable.

The temperature seems to drop as you get closer to your

destination. There is a clearing ahead with a ramshackle hut on an island in the swamp.

Surrounding the house, large cow-like creatures covered with frost wander around grazing on the frost-covered weeds that pierce the swamp water. Six trees surround the clearing, providing a canopy of shade 20 feet above the water's surface. Gertrude, one of the two **bheur hags**, is standing guard

on her broom 15 feet up in one of the trees. She notices the adventurers and doesn't immediately attack if she or her pets (five **winter catoblepas**) are not threatened. Once spotted on a DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check, she flies up 15 feet high 20 feet away and address the party.

A blue-skinned old woman dressed in rags flies up from a tree on

a broom and speaks, "Helga (and Olga for very strong parties), we have company. What brings you to our humble abode?" Gertrude loves visitors and enjoys conversation. She is willing to barter with the PCs for locks of their hair and

other personal items that are dear to them. She trades any one of her trinkets that are worth 10 gp or less.

She is even willing to trade any number of alabaster stones (there are 3 in the swamp by the catoblepas that they have

hidden for safe keeping) for an adventurer left behind to stay with them. She starts with asking them to stay permanently but is willing to negotiate to have their faithful service for a week.

If any adventurer stays with the hags, they are not allowed to participate in the rest of the adventure and receive a special boon, **Hanging with the Hags**, found at the end of the adventure.

At any hostile or deceptive action the hags attack along with their pets.

TACTICS

The hags try to isolate any adventurers like paladins who give out saving throw bonuses or clerics who heal, encasing them with *wall of ice* while another hag uses *cone of cold* on as many other adventurers it can affect to soften them up for their pets.

The catoblepas have been trained to focus attacks to get one enemy down at a time and move to focus their *death ray*.

Once an adventurer dies, one of the hags flies down to use *maddening feast* to start eating. The catoblepas are not affected as this is commonplace for them.

Sinkholes. The hags have made these sinkholes all around the clearing. The catoblepas know where they are and since they are large, they can balance on the edges. Roll a d6 and on a 6, they encounter a sinkhole. Mark this on the map for future reference. The adventurer must make a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw or fall prone in the water.

ADJUSTING THIS ENCOUNTER

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

- **Very Weak:** Remove two **catoblepas**.
- **Weak:** Remove one **catoblepas**.
- **Strong:** Add one **catoblepas**.
- **Very Strong:** Add Olga, another **bheur hag**. This means they get the hag coven spellcasting ability found on page 176 of the *Monster Manual*.

TREASURE

In the hags' hut amidst a lot of worthless sentimental trinkets there is a bowl worth 1,000 gp.

DEVELOPMENT

Once the combat is over, the adventurers have time to search to find the alabaster stones and the bowl in the hags' hut, then get back to the portal.

Danatar closes the portal behind the PCs and says that he is close to pinpointing where all the emotions are going. He implores the PCs to go get the kelp as the comatose miners are weakening as he speaks. The kelp will reveal itself when the full moon is the brightest, but only for about half a minute.



PART 3: ROCK OF ENVY

Expected Duration: 60 minutes

The adventurers can find a fisherman who knows about the kelp beds and can take them out. The fisherman sizes up the adventurers and asks for 100 gp each, seeing the equipment they wear.

He is willing to go as low as 5 gp each but needs a DC 16 Charisma (Persuasion) check for each offer to come down from his 100 gp. He knows that the rest of the fisherman are already out on the water and he was taking a day off.

Adventurers may take any measures to help deal with the water and darkness below. When they start swimming, read the box text below:

As the full moon is near its zenith, the kelp bed responds with rhythmic swaying resembling a dance, revealing a patch of orange kelp at the ocean's bottom in the middle of the kelp bed.

As you make your way through the kelp bed towards the Kelp of Danatar, the rhythmic dance of the kelp is mesmerizing.

The kelp bed's dance of the moon creates an enchantment effect. This is the defense mechanism of the Kelp of Danatar and lasts for the 30 seconds that the kelp is visible. Every adventurer needs to make a DC 23 Intelligence saving throw. On a failure, the adventurers are under the *kelp of envy* effect (see sidebar).

Use the DM Handout to pair up the PCs up with their rival. If there is an odd number who fail the saving throw, you can put them in a group of three. If just one fails, he is envious of all and attacks the closest adventurer.

Adventurers not under the kelp of envy effect can use an action to make a DC 21 Wisdom (Survival) check to grant a PC under the effect an automatic success on their next saving throw to end the effect.

It takes the adventurers 2 rounds to swim to the Kelp of Danatar from the surface or one round from the kelp beds. It takes an action to harvest one batch of the kelp. Three batches are needed to save all three miners. The adventurers have 5 rounds to harvest the three batches before the Kelp of Danatar are no longer able to be distinguished from other kelp.

KELP OF ENVY

The adventurers are under a charm effect that causes them to feel intense envy. This envy makes an adventurer use all their actions to attack the person envied.

At the end of their turn, the character can make a DC 21 Wisdom saving throw. At the end of the round, a PC that makes their saving throw is no longer under the kelp of envy effect. The DC for the saving throw decreases by 2 on each consecutive round. If an adventurer is unconscious, the effect ends on them and they begin to drown. The rival adventurer gets paired up with another adventurer under the effect.

Underwater Combat. When making a *melee weapon attack*, a creature that doesn't have a swimming speed has disadvantage on the attack roll unless the weapon is a dagger, javelin, shortsword, spear, or trident.

A *ranged weapon attack* automatically misses a target beyond the weapon's normal range. Even against a target within normal range, the attack roll has disadvantage unless the weapon is a crossbow, a net, or a weapon that is thrown like a javelin (including a spear, trident, or dart).

Creatures and objects that are fully immersed in water have resistance to fire damage.

Light. The glow from the Kelp of Danatar provides dim light to the area while it is glowing. Then the ocean becomes dark save whatever light the adventurers bring with them.

TREASURE

At the ocean's bottom near the Kelp of Danatar, there is a musical jewelry box that has drifted to the kelp beds from a nearby sunken ship. It is worth 100 gp.

DEVELOPMENT

For each batch of kelp harvested, a revitalizing potion can be made to wake up the comatose miners.

"I now have the ingredients to awaken the miners, but I have made another discovery of great concern. I have located the apex of the emotional energies that have been drawing the emotions from the tar stones.

I fear that the emotional energy is being used for a nefarious purpose. While I finish the revitalizing concoction, go to the apex and stop the energy harvest or more innocents will suffer."

Danatar gives the adventurers a map to a cave deeper in the mines where he suspects the emotional energies are flowing to.



PART 4: ROCK OF DESPAIR

Expected Duration: 75 minutes

Arriving at the cave opening, there is a disturbing sight. Black veins of energy ripple through the cavern walls as creatures with tentacles around their mouths bath in the black energy.

Four piles of tar stones are 10 feet away from the corners of an altar. On the altar, a bound unicorn serves as a focus for some sort of twisted ritual. The unicorn screams in pain as it reaches out telepathically to you for help.

The ritual is channeling all the emotional energies it has received from the tar stones. The ritual is also drawing the life force out of the unicorn for fuel. Four **mind flayer arcanists** and one **ulitharid** are overseeing the ritual.

As long as the piles of tar stones are funneling the energy to the altar, the unicorn loses 5 hit points at the end of each round for each active pile of tar stones. The unicorn starts with 40 hit points. Emerald Enclave members recognize the unicorn as Brightstar Moonsilver, the protector of the local forest that they were sent to rescue.

Adventurers can sever the tar stone link to the altar by making a DC 23 Arcana or Religion check while adjacent to a pile. They also can make a DC 23 Athletics check to push over the pile of tar stones, but doing so causes the emotional energies in the stones to explode and the adventurer takes 20 hit points of necrotic damage.

If the unicorn dies, the ritual is fully powered and all mind flayers and the ulitharid immediately regain 20 hit points.

GENERAL FEATURES

The cavern area has the following general features:

Terrain. The ceiling of the cavern is 10 feet high

Weather. The cavern is hot and humid.

Light. The black energy provides dim light to the cavern.

Smells and Sounds. Burning tar and the crackling of energy fill the cavern.

TACTICS

The mind flayers use *wall of force* to divide the adventurers and keep them away from the ritual. The ulitharid uses *dominate monster* to get an adventurer to fight for them. After using *mind blast*, the mind flayers and ulitharid can't help themselves and use *extract brains* to start their feast.

Use **DM's Handout 1** to total the amount of failed saves of the adventurers in the first encounter. The mind flayers and ulitharid can use these failed saves to recharge a power or heal 10 hit points.

ADJUSTING THIS ENCOUNTER

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

- **Very Weak:** Remove one **mind flayer arcanist**.
- **Weak:** Remove the *jealous stones* power.
- **Strong:** Make all recharge powers recharge on 4-6.
- **Very Strong:** Add one **mind flayer arcanist**.

TREASURE

One of the mind flayers carries a *potion of speed* on him. The ulitharid carries a pouch of diamonds worth 600 gp.

DEVELOPMENT

If Brightstar is saved, he is grateful. Adventurers who are lawful good receive the story award **Gratitude of Brightstar Moonsilver**.

CONCLUSION

Estimated Duration: 10 minutes

Danatar has made the revitalizing potions for the miners and is administering them when the adventurers return. Faylin is watching with great concern for her miners. Danatar is very interested to find out what the adventurers have discovered with the tar stone energies.

Danatar is sobered by the news and addresses the PCs.

"Though we have struck a blow to nefarious machinations at work with the tar stones, the work you have done here today has led me to believe that there is more at hand than just random tar stones appearing and a cabal of mind flayers seeking power. I urge you to remain in Hulburg as your services may be called upon again soon."

Danatar is grateful for the help of the adventurers and offers them a tome from his collection, a *Manual of Quickness of Action*. Faylin pays the adventurers the agreed to fee of 500 gp per PC.

REWARDS

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

EXPERIENCE (Min/Max XP: 11,250/15,000)

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

Combat Awards

Name of Foe	XP Per Foe
Purple worm	13,000
Catoblepas	1,800
Bheur hag	2,900
Mind flayer arcanist	3,900
Ulitharid	5,000

Non-Combat Awards

Task or Accomplishment	XP Per Char
Heal the catatonic miners	450 (per miner)
Retrieve the alabaster stones	300 (per stone)
Collect the orange kelp	300 (per batch)
Rescue Brightstar Moonsilver	2,600

TREASURE

The characters receive the following treasure, divided up amongst the party. Treasure is divided as evenly as possible. Gold piece values listed for sellable gear are calculated at their selling price, not their purchase price.

Treasure Awards

Item Name	GP Value
Faylin's reward	500 per PC
Assorted gems from worm	500
Bowl of the hags	1000
Musical jewelry box	100
Pouch of diamonds	600

Consumable magic items should be divided up however the group sees fit. If more than one character is interested in a specific consumable magic item, the DM can determine who gets it randomly should the group be unable to decide.

Permanent magic items are divided according to a system detailed in the *D&D Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide*.

MANUAL OF QUICKNESS OF ACTION

Wondrous Item, very rare

This book contains coordination and balance exercises, and its words are charged with magic. If you spend 48 hours over a period of 6 days or fewer studying the book's contents and practicing its guidelines, your Dexterity score increases by 2, as does your maximum for that score. The manual then loses its magic, but regains it in a century.

POTION OF SPEED

Potion, very rare

When you drink this potion, you gain the effect of the haste spell for 1 minute (no concentration required). The potion's yellow fluid is streaked with black and swirls on its own.

PLAYER REWARDS

For completing this mission, the characters earn downtime and renown as described in the *D&D Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide* (ALDMG).

STORY AWARD

During the course of this adventure, the characters may earn the following story awards:

Hanging with the Hags. Your time with the hags has had a profound effect on you and they have given you special boon. More information can be found in **Player Handout 1**.

Gratitude of Brightstar Moonsilver. For rescuing Brightstar, he is grateful and will serve as a mount for lawful good adventurers for three adventures. More information can be found in **Player Handout 1**.

DM REWARDS

In exchange for running this adventure, you earn DM Rewards as described in the *D&D Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide* (ALDMG).

APPENDIX: NPC / MONSTER STATISTICS

PURPLE WORM

Gargantuan monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 247 (15d10 + 90)

Speed 50 ft., burrow 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
28 (+9)	7 (-2)	22 (+6)	1 (-5)	8 (-1)	4 (-3)

Saving Throws Con +11, Wis +4

Senses blindsight 30 ft., tremorsense 60 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages -

Challenge 15 (13,000 XP)

Tunneler. The worm can burrow through solid rock at half its speed and leaves a 10-foot-diameter tunnel in its wake.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The worm makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its stinger.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target.

Hit: 22 (3d8 + 9) piercing damage. If the target is a Large or smaller creature, it must succeed on a DC 19 Dexterity saving throw or be swallowed by the worm. A swallowed creature is blinded and restrained, it has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the worm, and it takes 21 (6d6) acid damage at the start of each of the worm's turns.

If the worm takes 30 damage or more on a single turn from a creature inside it, the worm must succeed on a DC 21 Constitution saving throw at the end of that turn or regurgitate all swallowed creatures, which fall prone in a space within 10 feet of the worm. If the worm dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape from the corpse by using 20 feet of movement, exiting prone.

Tail Stinger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 19 (3d6 + 9) piercing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 19 Constitution saving throw, taking 42 (12d6) poison damage on a failed save or half as much damage on a successful one.

ENCRUSTED AND ENRAGED

Encrusted Resilience The worm has 100 temporary hit points and cannot be stunned.

Explosive Anger The worm has +2 to hit and advantage on attack rolls doing an extra 10 damage on each attack. The worm's speeds increase by 20 feet. The worm grants combat advantage because of its reckless state.

Hangry Bite (Recharge 5-6). When damaged, the worm uses its reaction to make a bite attack against the nearest creature.

CATOBLEPAS

Large monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 84 (8d10 + 40)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	12 (+1)	21 (+5)	3 (-4)	14 (+2)	8 (-1)

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages -

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Keen Smell. The catoblepas has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks based on smell.

Stench. Any creature other than a catoblepas that starts its turn within 10 feet of the catoblepas must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the start of the creature's next turn. On a successful saving throw, the creature is immune to the stench of any catoblepas for 1 hour.

ACTIONS

Tail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target.

Hit: 21 (5d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or be stunned until the start of the catoblepas's next turn.

Death Ray (Recharge 5-6). The catoblepas targets a creature that it can see within 30 feet of it. The target must make a DC 16 Constitution saving throw, taking 36 (8d8) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. If the saving throw fails by 5 or more, the target instead takes 64 necrotic damage. The target dies if reduced to 0 hit points by this ray.

WINTER CATOBLEPAS

Damage Resistance cold

BHEUR HAG

Medium fey, chaotic evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 91 (14d8 + 28)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Wis +4

Skills Nature +4, Perception +4, Stealth +6, Survival +4

Damage Immunities cold

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages Auran, Common, Giant

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Graystaff Magic. The hag carries a graystaff, a length of gray wood that is focus for her inner power. She can ride the staff as if it were a broom of flying. While holding the staff, she can cast additional spells with her Innate Spellcasting trait (these spells are marked with an asterisk). If the staff is lost or destroyed, the hag must craft another one, which takes a year and a day. Only a bheur hag can use a graystaff.

Ice Walk. The hag can move across and climb icy surfaces without needing to make an ability check. Additionally, difficult terrain composed of ice or snow doesn't cost her extra movement.

Innate Spellcasting. The hag's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). She can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components.

At will: *hold person**, *ray of frost*

3/day each: *cone of cold**, *ice storm**, *wall of ice**

1/day: *control weather*

ACTIONS

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d8 + 1) bludgeoning damage plus 3 (1d6) cold damage.

Maddening Feast. The hag feasts on the corpse of an enemy within 5 feet of her that died within the last minute. Each creature of the hag's choice within 60 feet of her must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened of her for 1 minute. While frightened this way, a creature is incapacitated, can't understand what others say, can't read, and speaks only in gibberish; the DM controls the creature's movement, which is erratic. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a creature's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the creature is immune to the hag's Maddening Feast for the next 24 hours.

POWER OF THE STONES

Subtle Stones (Recharge 4-6) The ulitharid casts a spell without verbal or somatic components, so it can't be counterspelled.

Angry Stones The ulitharid has +2 to hit and advantage on attack rolls doing an extra 10 damage on each attack. The ulitharid grants combat advantage because of its reckless state.

Jealous Stones (Recharge 5-6) When attacked, the ulitharid can use his reaction to make the attacker make a DC 18 Constitution saving throw or target the closest ally. If no ally is within reach, the attacker loses his attack action.

Despairing Stones (Recharge 5-6) As a bonus action, the ulitharid causes one creature it can see to make a DC 18 Intelligence saving throw. On a failure, the creature has disadvantage on all attack rolls until the end of its next turn.

ULITHARID

Large aberration, lawful evil

Armor Class 15 (breastplate)

Hit Points 127 (17d10 + 34)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)	21 (+5)	19 (+4)	21 (+5)

Saving Throws Int +9, Wis +8, Cha +9

Skills Arcana +9, Insight +8, Perception +8, Stealth +5

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 18

Languages Deep Speech, Undercommon, telepathy 2 miles

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Creature Sense. The ulitharid is aware of the presence of creatures within 2 miles of it that have an Intelligence score of 4 or higher. It knows the distance and direction of each creature, as well as each creature's Intelligence score, but can't sense anything else about it. A creature protected by a mind blank spell, a nondetection spell, or similar magic can't be perceived in this manner.

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

Innate Spellcasting (Psionics). The ulitharid's innate spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 17). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components.

At will: *detect thoughts*, *levitate*

1/day each: *confusion*, *dominate monster*, *eyebite*, *feeble-mind*, *mass suggestion*, *plane shift (self only)*, *project image*, *scrying*, *telekinesis*

ACTIONS

Tentacles. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 27 (4d10 + 5) psychic damage. If the target is Large or smaller, it is grappled (escape DC 14) and must succeed on a DC 17 Intelligence saving throw or be stunned until this grapple ends.

Extract Brain. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one incapacitated creature grappled by the ulitharid. *Hit:* 55 (10d10) piercing damage. If this damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, the ulitharid kills the target by extracting and devouring its brain.

Mind Blast (Recharge 5-6). The ulitharid magically emits psychic energy in a 60-foot cone. Each creature in that area must succeed on a DC 17 Intelligence saving throw or take 31 (4d12 + 5) psychic damage and be stunned for 1 minute. A target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

MIND FLAYER ARCANIST

Medium aberration, lawful evil

Armor Class 15 (breastplate)

Hit Points 71 (13d8 + 34)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	19 (+4)	17 (+3)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Int +7, Wis +6, Cha +6

Skills Arcana +7, Deception +6, Insight +6, Perception +6, Stealth +4

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages Deep Speech, Undercommon, telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

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

Innate Spellcasting (Psionics). The mind flayer's innate spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 15). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components.

At will: *detect thoughts*, *levitate*

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

Spellcasting. The mind flayer is a 10th-level spellcaster.

Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). The mind flayer has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *blade ward*, *dancing lights*, *mage hand*, *shocking grasp*

1st level (4 slots): *detect magic*, *disguise self*, *shield*, *sleep*

2nd level (3 slots): *blur*, *invisibility*, *ray of enfeeblement*

3rd level (3 slots): *clairvoyance*, *lightning bolt*, *sending*

4th level (3 slots): *confusion*, *hallucinatory terrain*

5th level (2 slots): *telekinesis*, *wall of force*

ACTIONS

Tentacles. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 27 (4d10 + 5) psychic damage. If the target is Large or smaller, it is grappled (escape DC 15) and must succeed on a DC 15 Intelligence saving throw or be stunned until this grapple ends.

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

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

POWER OF THE STONES

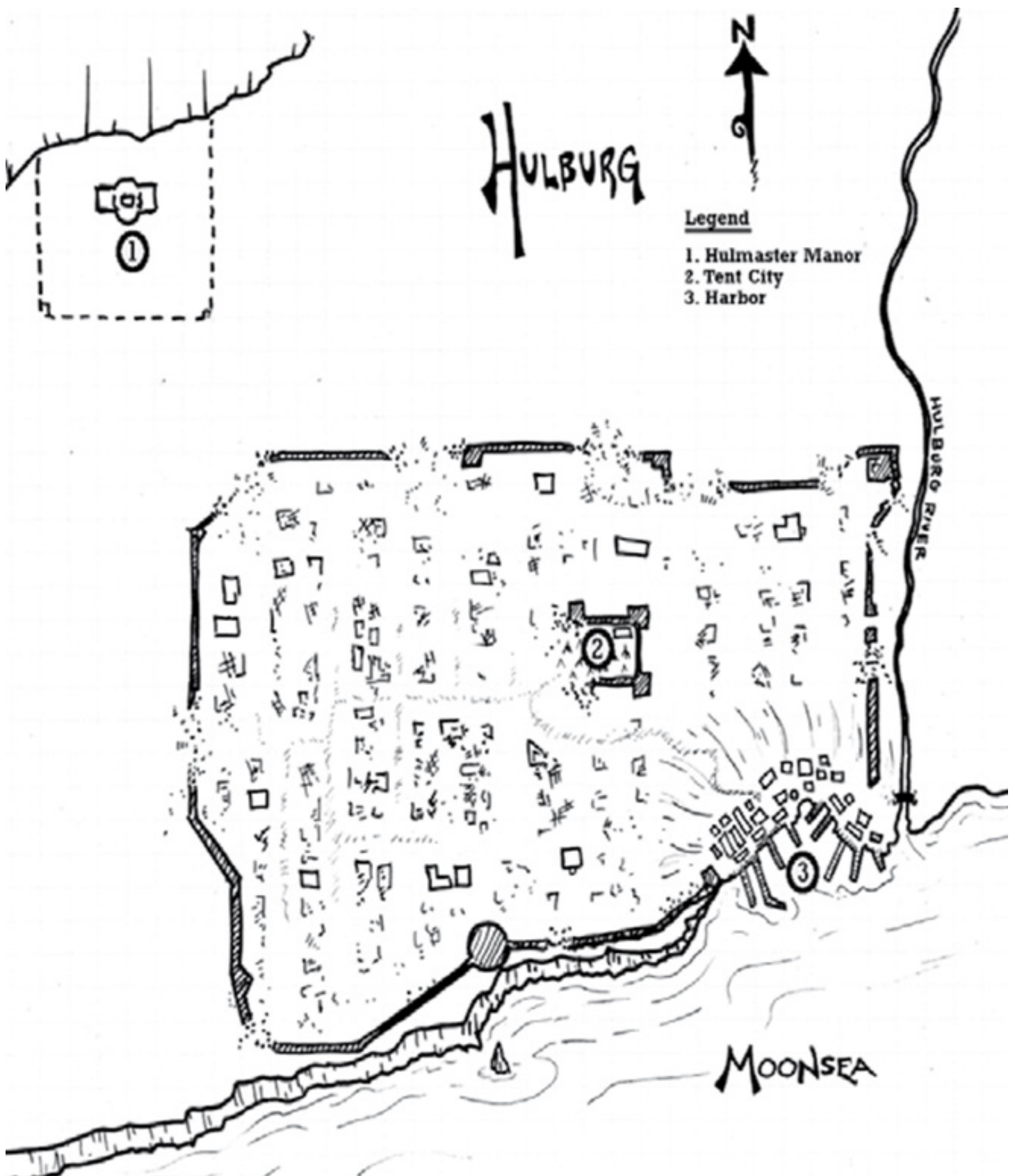
Subtle Stones (Recharge 4-6) The mind flayer casts a spell without verbal or somatic components, so it can't be counterspelled.

Angry Stones The mind flayer has +2 to hit and advantage on attack rolls doing an extra 10 damage on each attack. The mind flayer grants combat advantage because of its reckless state.

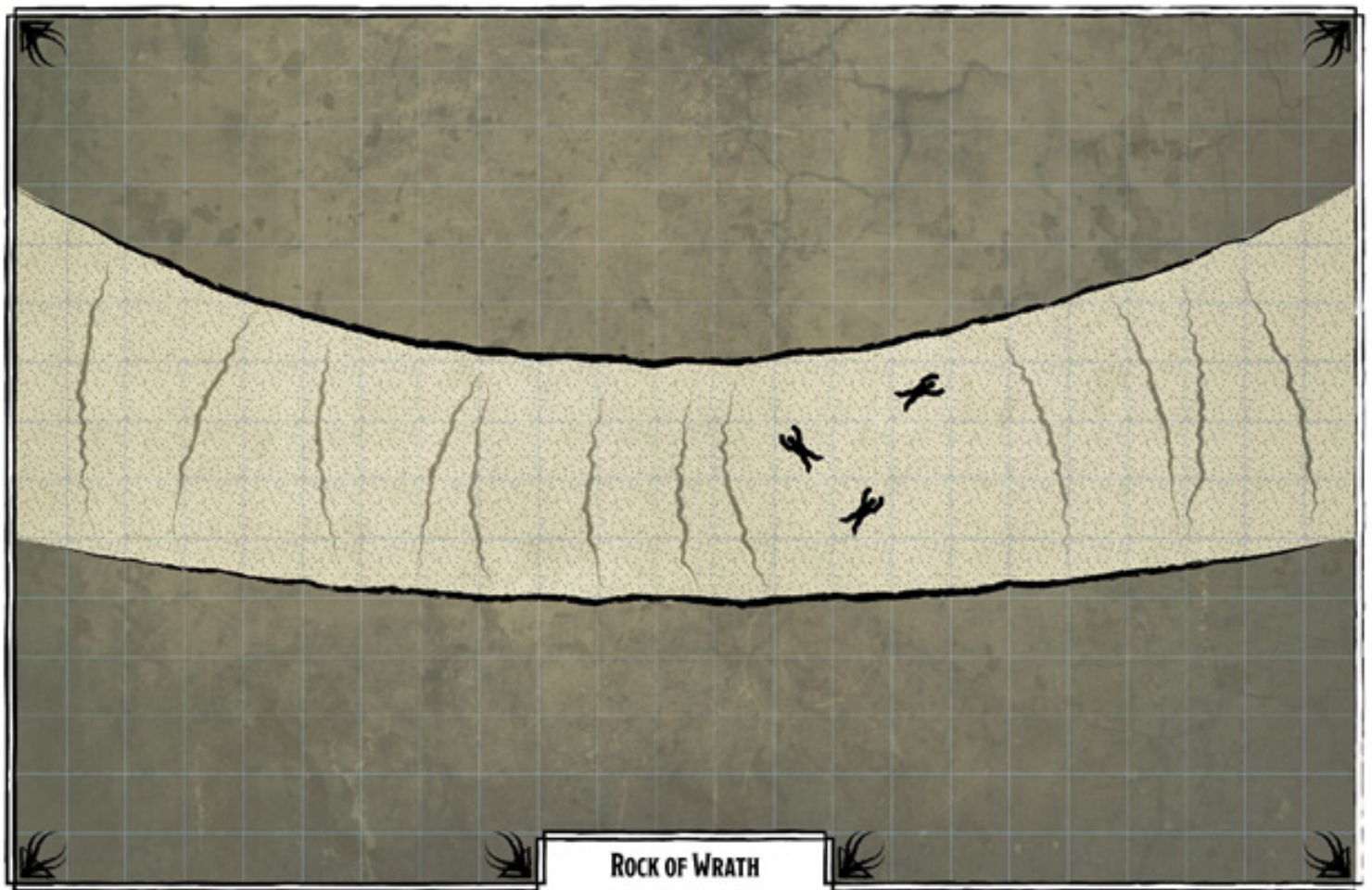
Jealous Stones (Recharge 5-6) When attacked, the mind flayer can use his reaction to make the attacker make a DC 18 Constitution saving throw or target the closest ally. If no ally is within reach, the attacker loses his attack action.

Despairing Stones (Recharge 5-6) As a bonus action, the mind flayer causes one creature it can see to make a DC 18 Intelligence saving throw. On a failure, the creature has disadvantage on all attack rolls until the end of its next turn.

APPENDIX II: HULBURG



MAP: ROCK OF WRATH



MAP: ROCK OF HOPE



MAP: ROCK OF DESPAIR



DM HANDOUT

	PC	Faction	Background	Emotional Triggers	Failed Tar Saves	Rival
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						

PLAYER HANDOUT 1: STORY AWARDS

During the course of this adventure, the characters may earn the following story awards. If you are printing these out for your characters, print as many as you may need to ensure that any eligible character receives a copy:

HANGING WITH THE HAGS

Your time with the hags has had a profound effect on you and they have given you a special boon. Once per adventure, you can gain advantage on a d20 roll. Doing so allows the hags to impose disadvantage on a d20 roll later in the adventure at the discretion of the DM.

GRATITUDE OF BRIGHTSTAR MOONSILVER

For rescuing Brightstar, he is grateful and will serve as a mount for lawful good adventurers for three adventures. His stats are the standard unicorn stats found on page 294 of the *Monster Manual*.

PLAYER HANDOUT 2: MAGIC ITEM

During the course of this adventure, the characters may find the following permanent magic item:

MANUAL OF QUICKNESS OF ACTION

Wondrous Item, very rare

This book contains coordination and balance exercises, and its words are charged with magic. If you spend 48 hours over a period of 6 days or fewer studying the book's contents and practicing its guidelines, your Dexterity score increases by 2, as does your maximum for that score. The manual then loses its magic, but regains it in a century.

This item can be found in the *Dungeon Masters Guide*.