

SIX SWORDS UNBOUND

A 4-Hour Adventure for 5th-10th Level Characters



In an effort to secure a surface trade route, adventurers find themselves embroiled in the revenge schemes of a powerful drow exile. The chance to learn about the state of the Underdark and the fates of many innocents taken in surface raids is too valuable to pass up.

Yet the risk is clear, for what lies ahead is nothing short of an all-out assault on a drow manor.

This is the third adventure of the *Swords Below the Moonsea* saga.

By Andrew Bishkinskyi



Six Swords Unbound



Third adventure of the *Swords Below the Moonsea* saga

Adventure Code: CCC-HAL-03

Optimized For: APL 8

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Introduction

Welcome to *CCC-HAL-03 Six Swords Unbound*, a D&D Adventurers League™ adventure, part of the official D&D Adventurers League™ organized play system and Con Created Content Program.

This adventure takes place in the Moonsea region.

This adventure is designed for **three to seven 5th-10th level characters** and is optimized for **five characters with an average party level (APL) of 8**. 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	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. Familiarize yourself 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 the players don't finish too early; provide them with a full play experience.

Adventure Primer

"Without death, we'd be at a loss. It's the prospect of death that drives us to greatness."

- Hannibal Lecter

Adventure Background

The Swords Below the Moonsea Saga

The saga consists of three adventures, of which this is the concluding one. The first adventure in the series is CCC-PHA-01 *Six Summoned Swords* which serves a stand-alone prelude to the other two adventures. CCC-HAL-02 *Six Striking Swords* immediately precedes this adventure. It is not required or expected that players would have played that *Six Summoned Swords*, although doing so grants a measure of familiarity with some of the characters and storyline. While not required, it is recommended that players play through *Six Striking Swords* prior to playing this adventure. It is also possible to run the latter two adventures as one prolonged story over multiple sessions.

Events detailed in CCC-PHA-01 *Six Summoned Swords*.

Deception, betrayal and foul magic – these are the implements of the drow. When drow houses fight, these deadly tools become playthings in the arms of the power-hungry and the ambitious.

Deep in the Underdark, the Noble House Vith'tyl betrays and usurps the smaller House Axcelon, leaving only a single survivor of the bloodline.

The last of her house, Axcelia Axcelon flees. Desperate but not powerless, she performs a dangerous summoning ritual that calls forward the marilith demon S'sheneth'rah to serve her. Axcelia's binding ritual is interrupted by assassins of the House Vith'tyl led by Shintyrr Vith'tyl.

The marilith slaughters the assassins but Shintyrr manages to escape and eventually makes his way to the surface. Having hired a group of powerful adventurers, he attempts to return to the Underdark only to be ambushed and viciously killed by the demon.

With the binding ritual unfinished, Axcelia's control of the marilith is not complete. Instead, she and the demon end up in a half-bound state that strains their very sanities.

Being pursued by a House Vith'tyl war party lead by Shintyrr's sister Lemethra, Axcelia makes a last ditch attempt to complete the binding ritual and escapes to plot her revenge. [Adventurers were able to participate in the Axcelon-Vith'tyl confrontation in different ways, but all ended with Axcelia escaping – with or without the adventurers' help.]

Events detailed in CCC-HAL-02 *Six Striking Swords*.

Years later, adventurers are sent to discover the source of supernatural activity causing a trade stoppage on the route from Melvaunt to Glistar. They find that a powerful drow exile Axcelia Axcelon has taken up residence at a castle near the caravan route.

Paranoid and going slowly mad, the drow mage has constructed an elaborate series of magical defenses around the castle. Constructed over years, this *Chaos Web* is very potent and would take great effort to unravel without Axcelia's assistance.

The party meets Axcelia's half-drow ward Silver, who helps them gain an audience with Axcelia. Silver is concerned about Axcelia's well-being given the intense strain of being bound to the marilith demon and assists the party.

In negotiation, a deal is struck – Axcelia will leave the surface and ensure the removal of the web in return for assistance in getting revenge against House Vith'tyl – those responsible for the wholesale slaughter of her kin.

In order to take House Vith'tyl by surprise, Axcelia sends the adventurers to a secret Axcelon research facility where they find a unique teleportation amplifier which Axcelia believes can be used to overcome the effects of the Faerzress (underdark radiation) that otherwise prevents teleportation into drow cities.

Unbeknownst to the party, house Vith'tyl had set up a scrying sensor in the Axcelon archive and ambushes the party. With Axcelia's help, the party is able to escape having accomplished their mission.

In a secondary mission, the party is able to obtain a necessary component from the Vith'tyl grounds that will allow them to reliably teleport inside.

Current Situation (DM Only)

This adventure takes place immediately following *Six Striking Swords*. Once the party is teleported back to Axcelia's castle on the surface, the time has come to strike at the Vith'Tyl manor.

Location and NPC Summary

The following NPCs, locations and entities feature prominently in this adventure. Portrait cards for main NPCs are provided in **Appendix B**.

Houses and Organizations

Zethlentyn Protectorate. A geopolitical alliance of drow houses. The protectorate is religion-agnostic and allows houses of different faiths to co-operate in trade and mutual protection from external threats.

House Axcelon. A lower house of the Zethlentyn Protectorate. Worshipers of Lolth and until recently the purveyors of a large diamond mine, a joint-venture with House Vith'tyl.

House Vith'tyl. The 7th house of the Zethlentyn Protectorate. This house does not worship Lolth. They draw their power from summoning and/or enslaving devils.

The Sald'iar. The Sald'iar are the drow armed forces that serve the Protectorate itself. Members of the Sald'iar give up their house allegiances and names upon joining.

Axcelia Axcelon and Companions

Axcelia Axcelon (Axe-sell-ya). Female drow mage, last surviving member of House Axcelon. Worshiper of Lolth.

Silver. Young female apprentice of Axcelia, has drow features but pale white skin. Actually Axcelia's half-drow daughter. The two do not refer to each other in familial terms.

S'sheneth'rah (Shae-net-RAH). A marilith demon summoned by Axcelia.

House Vith'tyl

Lemethra Vith'tyl (Le-meth-ra). [Deceased] Female Drow War Priest originally sent with a war party to recover Axcelia after her brother Shintyrr's failure. May have been killed by the characters during *Six Summoned Swords*, otherwise was killed by Axcelia in a later confrontation.

Shintyrr Vith'tyl (Shin-teer). [Deceased] Male Drow Assassin of House Vith'tyl – brutally killed by S'sheneth'rah at Axcelia's bidding (during *Six Summoned Swords*)

Venthior Vith'tyl (Van-thee-or). Male Drow. Venthior is studious and ambitious. Rather than taking on infernal powers, he has been doing research focused on the Shadowfel. He enjoys illusions and deception and deploys dark powers that he's learned from the Shadar-Kai.

Esephile Vith'tyl (Eh-ze-fill-ee). Female Drow. Esephile is the least accomplished noble of house Vith'tyl. She is the house's spoiled socialite who prefers to use her looks and social connections to further her pursuits.

Summoner Aberteth (Aber-teth). Male Drow. The senior summoner of the House, Aberteth deals first hand with devils brought into service. He is always researching ways to summon new and more powerful fiends.

Qu'lith Del'Valsharess (Kew-leeth). Female Drow, leader of House Vith'tyl. Proud and methodical. It is Qu'lith's mysterious pact with the powers of the nine hells that allows House Vith'tyl to deal with devils. The Del'Valsharess title roughly translates to "of the Queen". Qu'lith has a particular disdain for the worshippers of Lolth, which is typically well-hidden.

Other Personages

Lieutenant Meroth (Meh-roth). Male drow. Imposing, experienced and entirely devoted to carrying out his duties. He in charge of the Sald'iar force dispatched to seal the Vith'tyl Manor.

Adventure Overview

Part 1. The adventures must decide on their priorities and assault plan on the Vith'tyl manor.

Part 2. The party is teleported into the Vith'tyl Manor, where they must make their way down.

Part 3. The party continues to the lower floor of the manor and a final confrontation with the Vith'tyl leadership and S'sheneth'rah.

Part 4. With the fate of House Vith'tyl decided, forces of the Protectorate seal the manor. One final choice remains to be made by the party.

Playing the Pillars

As an "all-out assault", this adventure is heavily **combat-** focused, with **exploration** mainly being presented in the form of traps. In order to engage players in **social Interaction**, it is important to give appropriate cues that some of the rooms feature more than just enemies. The two main **Social Interaction** encounters within the adventure are dealing with the slaves and negotiating with the black abishai. Finally, updates from Axcelia and the slow realization of just how far gone she is can make for good social context even if the group is taking a combat approach.

Adventure Hooks

Dark Elf Dealings [Characters that played *Six Striking Swords*]. During the events of *Six Striking Swords* adventurers made a deal with Axcelia Axcelon – a powerful drow mage residing on the surface – to assist her in visiting righteous vengeance upon the drow house that had destroyed her own. In exchange she would return to the Underdark and remove – or provide instructions for removing – the massive Chaos Web she has built on the surface for protection, but that is now creating problems for passers-by. **Appendix D** contains the tips that characters had received during that adventure. Referencing these is entirely optional.

End of the Bargain [Characters that have not played *Six Striking Swords*]. The general situation is the same as the hook above, however, in this case it was other characters – friends, companions or faction allies – that had struck the initial deal with Axcelia. For whatever fitting reasons, those adventurers are not able to hold up their end of the bargain and go through with the final assault. **Part 1** of the adventure gives some additional motivation ideas for why characters might go through with the mission. **Disappearances around the Moonsea.** The Moonsea is home to many dangers and disappearances of loved ones are an unfortunately common occurrence. In their travels, characters inevitably come across many "MISSING" posters with pictures or descriptions of lost loved ones. It's not uncommon for adventurers to make note of these. Characters that are prone to

making such notes would have made note of the poster in **Player Handout 2**.

Diamonds are for payment. Characters that participated in *Six Summoned Swords* found themselves having been ambushed by anonymous assassins at the end of that adventure. The only clue left by the assassins was that they had been paid in two small diamonds, worth 50g each. These diamonds were of the same colour and clarity as those that had been given to them by Shintyrr Vith'tyl prior to his death. During the events of *Six Striking Swords* Axcelia identified the diamonds as having come from the Axcelon mines –now controlled by House Vith'tyl. It is clear that House Vith'tyl did not take kindly to the adventurers' interference and wishes them dead.

Passage of Time

Due to the complex nature of the passage of time as it relates to individual adventurers in Adventurers League Play, it is purposely left ambiguous as to how much time has passed since Axcelia first reached the surface after the events of *Six Summoned Swords*. It has certainly been over two years and long enough for her existence to have been mostly forgotten in the Underdark, but no specifics should be used.

NPCs and Combat

While there are stat blocks provided for the friendly NPCs in the adventure, unless they are in confrontation with the players, it is recommended that their parts in battles are told as a story rather than played out with rolls and stats. This both simplifies combat and gives more play time to the players over the DM. Encounters assume that NPCs are not assisting the party unless stated.

Instant Adjustment: Silver travels with the party throughout this adventure. If the party finds themselves in a particularly overwhelming encounter, use Silver's spellcasting to help them out. She may also request brief aid from S'sheneth'rah, who would briefly teleport and make a pair of attacks.

Story Tracking from *Six Summoned Swords* and *Six Striking Swords*

If any of the adventurers have played one or both of the previous adventures in the series, make note of their story code from the adventure(s). Write all participants codes one underneath the other, so as to be able to easily spot differences. The keys to the letter codes are provided as **Appendix C** and the

adventure contains further specifics throughout as to where adjustments should be made.

Note that characters that have earned the ***Student of Swordplay*** and ***Tail to Tell*** temporary effects during *Six Summoned Swords* may continue taking advantage of those effects (and face the consequences as detailed in **Appendix C**).

Silver's Role in the Story (DM Only)

In order to help set up the narrative conclusion to the adventure, it's important to understand the goings-on behind the scenes.

Silver's goal is to save Axcelia from the Marilith. However, she is slowly realizing that Axcelia may be too far gone and that severing the bond might kill her. Silver makes a pact with S'sheneth'rah that if she is able to sever the marilith's bond with Axcelia, the marilith would leave Silver unharmed and be in her debt.

Severing the bond is extremely difficult, especially given that Axcelia's very life essence is tied to both S'sheneth'rah and her Guardian of Lolth. Several conditions would need to be met – Axcelia would need to be exerted and distracted, her guardian would need to be disabled and she would need the ceremonial dagger from the original binding – which Silver has managed to acquire.

As the events of this adventure proceed, Silver slowly realizes that Axcelia is indeed too far gone. She likely shares these concerns with the party, but begs them to carry on with the mission and leave Axcelia to her - at the very least, Silver wants Axcelia to get her vengeance before facing her ultimate fate.

Axcelia's Role in the Story (DM Only)

Now that Axcelia has been talked into taking on House Vith'tyl, she surrenders to all the rage and darkness that come from her bond with the Marilith. More and more of the fiend's mind seep into her subconscious.

She becomes more and more vicious as the assault goes on and once she destroys her arch-nemesis Qu'lith, she is fully gone.

The Vith'tyl Helltouched Drow

House Vith'tyl has a strong association with the powers of the Nine Hells and many – though not all – of their number draw their magical powers from these.

Other than slaves and devils, all members of House Vith'tyl are drow. For those enemies that do not already have the drow racial traits, the following should be added to their statistics:

- **Fey Ancestry.** The drow has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put the drow to sleep.
- **Senses.** Darkvision 120ft
- **Innate Spellcasting.** The drow's spellcasting ability is Charisma (Spell save DC 13). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:
At will: *dancing lights*
1/day each: *darkness*, *faerie fire*
- **Sunlight Sensitivity.** While in sunlight, the drow has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Whenever the enemy's name is listed as "Helltouched", the following adjustments should be made to their statistics:

- **Devil's Sight.** The Helltouched are able to see 120ft in magical and non-magical darkness.
- **Reduced Life.** The Helltouched have 10% less hitpoints. The 10% are taken off after any other encounter adjustments for party strength have been taken into consideration.
- **Devilish.** The Helltouched are susceptible to any abilities that affect fiends or devils such as divine smite. They are, however, native to the material plane and cannot be permanently banished.
- **Reduced Spell List.** (Helltouched Warlock only) Helltouched Warlocks do not have access to their *1/day spells* unless specifically noted.

Axcelia & Silver's Spell Lists

Axcelia and Silver are both multiclass spellcasters and as such, the base spell lists provided under their Archmage and Diviner stat blocks do not perfectly represent their capabilities. While they are not intended to be used as enemies for the party in this adventure, for the purposes of consistency, their prepared spell lists are provided below.

Axcelia Axcelon

Instead of regular Archmage spells, Axcelia's spell list is as follows:

Cantrips (at will): *chill touch*, *fire bolt*, *mage hand*, *prestidigitation*, *shocking grasp*
1st level (4 slots): *detect magic*, *shield*, *mage armor**, *magic missile*
2nd level (3 slots): *mirror image*, *misty step*, *silence*
3rd level (3 slots): *counterspell*, *lightning bolt*, *dispel magic*
4th level (3 slots): *banishment*, *vitriolic sphere*, *stoneskin**
5th level (3 slots): *wall of force*, *synaptic static*, *cloudkill*
6th level (1 slot): *globe of invulnerability*, *disintegrate*
7th level (1 slot): *teleport*
8th level (1 slot): *mind blank**, *telepathy*
9th level (1 slot): *power word kill*

Axcelia has prepared *power word kill* especially for Qu'lith and is unlikely to use it otherwise.

Axcelia's *contingency* is that if her *power word kill* is being counterspelled, she casts *globe of invulnerability* (thereby blocking any *counterspell* of level 5 or lower).

Silver

Instead of regular Diviner spells, Silver's spell list is as follows:

Cantrips (at will): *shocking grasp*, *frostbite*, *mage hand*, *message*, *true strike*
1st level (4 slots): *detect magic*, ** mage armor*, *healing word*, *cure wounds*
2nd level (3 slots): *detect thoughts*, ** mind spike*, ** scorching ray*, *mirror image*
3rd level (3 slots): *counterspell*, *dispel magic*, *lightning bolt*, *catnap*
4th level (3 slots): *arcane eye*, ** banishment*, *storm sphere*
5th level (2 slots): *Rary's telepathic bond*, ** greater restoration*, *mass cure wounds*, *wall of force*, *teleport*
6th level (1 slot): *chain lightning*, *true seeing**
7th level (1 slot): *delayed blast fireball*, *teleport*
8th level (1 slot): *telepathy*

Part 1. From the Surface with Hate

Estimated Duration: 15-20 minutes

Story Beat. The adventurers must formulate a plan for assaulting the Vith'tyl Manor.

You're going in!

See the **adventure hooks** section for details of how the adventurers ended up in the current situation.

In short, they're committed to helping the exile Drow mage Axcelia Axcelon attack the fortified manor of the opposing House Vith'tyl in order to exact her revenge. If the party is not fully onboard, the following motivating factors can help them embrace the task.

- **Axcelia's quest for vengeance is justified.** Drow politics aside, Axcelia's entire family was massacred, without provocation by House Vith'tyl, simply because they wanted to have full control of the diamond mines. What is sweeter than righteous vengeance?
- **Helping is the safest way to get rid of both Axcelia and the Marilith.** While Axcelia has not hurt anyone but trespassers on the surface, nobody actually wants a Drow Mage and her pet Marilith hanging around. Helping her get what she wants is helping her forever leave the surface.
- **Silver.** Axcelia's apprentice shares neither her cruelty nor bloodlust. She seems to genuinely want to help the adventurers and to save her matron from the madness and paranoia.
- **Slaves.** It's been confirmed that House Vith'tyl has slaves. At least some of them are from the surface. While it's a gamble as to whether they can be saved or even found, it's a noble quest to try!
- **Offense is the best defense.** If the adventurers have played either *Six Summoned Swords* or *Six Striking Swords*, they are being hunted by House Vith'tyl.
- **Treasure.** It's not unreasonable to expect that looting the manor of a Drow Noble House would yield quite some treasure. Axcelia even confirms the presence of a reliquary on the grounds.

Formulating a Plan

Axcelia draws for the characters a rough map of the manor (use **Player Handout 1** or roleplay Axcelia by drawing a version yourself – it's easy!) Depending on where the players got the teleport component during *Six Striking Swords* (**See Appendix C**), the party starts in one of four locations. If no one

participated in *Six Striking Swords*, determine the location at random and inform the party that this was where "other adventurers" obtained the item from. The location where the players actually end up is slightly different than expected. All locations are on the first (ground) floor of the manor.

- **Entry Point 1.** Walls or Tower (actually top of west tower). If the item is a piece of the wall, stone or something obtained from outside, the expected teleport location is the inside of that wall or tower.
- **Entry Point 2.** Offices (actually east office). If the item was obtained from one of the offices, the expected entry point is that office.
- **Entry Point 3.** First floor, west side (actually barracks). If the item was obtained somewhere on the west side of the first floor, the expected location will be that area.
- **Entry Point 4.** First floor, east side (actually the Dining Room). If the item was obtained somewhere on the east side (other than the east office), the expected entry point will be that area.

Points of Interest

Axcelia knows the general layout of the first (ground) floor, but does not know the layout of the lower floor. She has marked several key locations on the map for the players to review.

Not all the bullet points below need be communicated to the players, but they can be used to help flesh out whatever plan the characters are making.

Characters who played *Six Striking Swords* may have obtained additional info as per **Appendix C**.

Tricks of the Trade

The adventurers should be given some leeway to draw their own conclusions about the tactical importance of different areas. While there is a specific benefit or detriment associated with each location, there is no requirement for them to know these in advance. For example – the main benefit of attacking the barracks area is to take control of the armory, however, if players think that there is a benefit to cutting down enemy forces while they're surprised or in one place, this too is a valid reason to attack the area.

- **Armory & Barracks.** Axcelia has been to the armory and knows that it contains the majority of Vith'tyl arms. While guards and soldiers are likely to have some personal arms on them, this would certainly be a blow to the forces. A successful DC15 Intelligence (History) check reveals that the barracks are likely to contain a number of capable melee opponents.

- **East & West Towers.** The manor has two sets of towers. The large towers that are built of natural stalagmites and the smaller gate towers. Axcelia knows nothing about the towers. A successful DC15 Intelligence (History) check reveals that the gate towers are unlikely to be of strategic importance. The large towers, however, have a way down to the lower floor. A successful DC15 Intelligence (Nature) check reveals that due to their natural formation, this is unlikely.
- **High Nobles Area.** Axcelia has been to this area and knows that there are four rooms. One of them belongs to the leader of House Vith'tyl - Qu'lith Del'Valsharess. Another belongs to the Grand Summoner **Aberteth Vith'Tyl**. Killing Qu'lith is Axcelia's ultimate goal, though there is no guarantee that she is in her quarters. Cutting off Aberteth before he has a chance to rouse the devils may also be of benefit.
- **Offices.** Offices are likely to be least defended, but also least useful. They are conveniently located for arriving in, but have little tactical value.
- **Staircases.** Axcelia knows that the grand staircase is typically sealed and warded. The side stairs are used by staff and could be accessible.
- **What lies below?** While Axcelia doesn't know the layout of the lower level of the manor, she knows that it consists of a grand hall, slave quarters and "other areas". She believes that some devils are kept there. Those that participated in *Six Striking Swords* may have additional info on the lower floor.

Axcelia's Plan

Whatever the adventurers decide on, Axcelia insists that they attack in two separate groups, to ensure Qu'lith does not escape and that they're not overwhelmed by the Vith'tyl forces. If the defenders believe that there are multiple threats, they will be less organized. Facing them all at once is suicide. **By working toward both side staircases, the goal is to either flush Qu'lith out or to force her to make a stand below – all the while thinning out her forces.**

Axcelia will take her Guardian of Lolth and S'sheneth'rah with her. Silver will accompany the party and act as a communications conduit. If need be, S'sheneth'rah can teleport over to help.

Tricks of the Trade

If the party hasn't yet figured it out themselves, being free of Axcelia for a while is a blessing - as they are able to accomplish their own goals within the Manor.

"Team Axcelia" will take whichever side the adventurers do not choose. If it makes sense in conversation, allow the adventurers convince Axcelia as to why they should take a particular path.

Wait, we have allies!

If the adventurers had successfully rescued the trapped sister during *Six Striking Swords* OR if they possess a *Mark of the Sisterhood* story award, the three sisters (who are still camped outside the castle) can assist in the assault. They do not stay with the party, but, at DM discretion, either remove one first floor encounter from the players' path or intervene "just in the nick of time" to help defeat that encounter, then they leave.

Axcelia says that if the party encounters Qu'Lith, they must be careful – her power is great. However, they need only weaken Qu'lith as Axcelia has something special planned to overwhelm her defenses. (Note: If the party is already considering betraying or attacking Axcelia, give them an insight here, that if Axcelia does have something grand planned, they're better off letting it be used on Qu'Lith than on them.)

Axcelia's Faithful

Characters that had participated in *Six Summoned Swords* and sided with Axcelia are deemed more trustworthy (refer to **Appendix C**). She asks S'sheneth'rah to give them one of her swords. This is *The Sixth Sword* – a magical rapier. Its description can be found in **Player Handout 3**. (Otherwise, the sword may be obtained in another way later on.)

Weak or Very Weak Parties

Axcelia offers weaker parties a drink of an elixir that confers the same benefits as a *potion of poison resistance*.

When ready, Axcelia teleports the entire party and it's time to rumble. Players may ask about readying actions prior to the teleport. The teleport process would interfere with their ability to do this. They can however have their weapons out.

Resting

The goal of the assault is to take House Vith'tyl by surprise. If all goes well, the whole thing should be over in less than half an hour. As such, there will be no chance to take a proper rest. The party should be aware of this. Silver has the capability to provide the whole party with a rest via the Catnap spell.

Part 2: Manor Wrecker

Estimated Duration: 100 Minutes

Story Beat. The adventurers are teleported into the Vith'tyl Manor, where no quarter is given.

Timing Note

The exploration of the grounds can vary drastically due to paths taken and choices made. It's important to not only keep track of rounds spent (for purposes of alarm described below) but also of real time. To keep within a 4hr time limit, players should wrap up the ground floor by the 2hr mark of overall game time. This means that if Part 1 of the adventure took the intended 20 minutes, that there is 1h40min for part 2. If clearing this floor is running long, it is possible to shorten some parts of Part 3 to accommodate. Allow no more than 20 additional minutes for the ground floor if intending to shorten the bottom floor. If the players have placed a high priority on the rescue of slaves, do not extend ground floor time.

To adjust timing, simply remove some of the encounters as required – is not expected that a group clears every possible encounter. **Allow at least 1 hour for the final confrontation on the lower floor and subsequent resolution.**

Arrival

Regardless of the group's arrival position, it results in an encounter. When the party arrives, they realize that there is no sound in their area. A quick look at Axcelia reveals a bloodthirsty smile and she motions with a finger to her lips to indicate "shhh!" She has cast *silence*. She motions to the party and at the Vith'tyl forces in the room – so as to say – "these are yours, I'm off the other way." At this point she and S'sheneth'rah teleport away. If any sisters accompany the assault, they go off on their own (to reappear later)

At the end of the first round of combat – unless dispelled early – the silence ends and drow screams are heard from a distance – S'sheneth'rah and Axcelia are in combat and doing well.

Alarm

Unless something specific causes the house alarm to be activated earlier, it is activated at the end of the 15th round after the group's arrival. (If you wish to drop the group out of initiative after the first combat, estimate the approximate number of rounds they spend between encounters). You may wish to remind them that Axcelia is unlikely to be subtle, so the incursion won't go unnoticed for long. Although called an "alarm" for ease of reference, there is no

audible siren to notify everyone that it has gone off. Messages of raised alarm are being passed around quietly through preset signals. Characters have no way of knowing that the manor is roused other than by seeing that enemies are ready for them.

Simultaneous Assault

For every area cleared by adventurers, a different area of the manor is cleared by Axcelia. It is intended that the area with the same number is considered cleared – if adventurers clear A1, then B1 has been cleared by Axcelia. This is only relevant if the adventurers decide to double-back and check on Axcelia.

If adventurers choose an unusual path through the manor, it may be necessary to adjust which rooms are cleared so as to avoid the players facing too many encounters or spending too much time.

For example: if the party is running short on time by the time they get to the their staircase and an elite guard encounter still remains, they might find these guards having been killed by the sisters or that Axcelia's group had taken a detour and beat them here.

Drow Don't Swarm?

Unless otherwise noted, the encounters in each of the areas are self-contained and do not result in others coming to help. This is done to avoid overwhelming the party and for two story reasons:

The Vith'tyl drow are both proud and arrogant. To them, the reputation gained in being the one to defeat the intruders is something that keeps them from calling out for help or running.

As intended, the assault from within takes the manor by surprise. Remember that in real time, it has only been minutes if not seconds since the fighting began. Reinforcements take time.

Vith'tyl Manor – Special Features

Height. Unless noted most hallways and rooms are 10-15ft tall, with doorways being slightly smaller.

Teleportation. Vith'tyl manor is purposely build with Faerzress-infused materials and further enchanted. As such, the spells *dimension door* and *teleport* do not function in the manor. The "step" line of spells does function. A character can tell that these won't work without wasting them.

Grand Stair. The grand stair is tightly sealed and enchanted. It can't be accessed by any means from the ground floor.

Ground Floor – West Wing

West Wing Occupant List:

The details of encounters in each area and their behavior are provided hereafter. This list can be used to track which encounters have been dealt with.

- A1: 2 Guards (Drow Elite)
- A2: 1 Guard (Drow Elite)
- A3: 2 Bureaucrats (Drow bandit Captains)
- A4: none
- A5: none
- A6: 4 Guards (Drow Elite)
- A7: 4 Noble Guards (Helltouched Elite)
- A8: Master of Assassins
- A9: Grand Inquisitor
- A10: House Commander
- A11: none
- A12: none
- A13: none
- A14 or A15: 4 Slaves

A1 West Stalagmite Tower

Door. *The door to this tower is neither locked, nor trapped.*

This is a lookout tower mainly used to watch the outside. Two guards are typically on duty here. If the **alarm** has been raised, the tower is empty and guards are in the corridor. Otherwise:

Encounter: 2 Drow Elite

If either of the 2 drow survives long enough and is not incapacitated or silenced, the alarm is raised.

Very Weak – alive at end of 5 rounds

Weak – alive at end of 4 rounds.

Average – alive at end of 3 rounds.

Strong or Very Strong – alive at end of 2 rounds.

A2 West Guardpost Tower

Door. *The door to this tower is neither locked, nor trapped.*

This is a guard tower used to watch the courtyard. It's very tight and only allows for one person on duty. If the **alarm** has been raised, the tower is empty and guard is in the corridor. Otherwise:

Encounter: 1 Drow Elite

If the drow survives long enough and is not incapacitated or silenced, the alarm is raised, an alarm is raised.

Very Weak – alive at end of 4 rounds

Weak – alive at end of 3 rounds.

Average – alive at end of 2 rounds.

Strong or Very Strong – alive at end of 1 round.

A3 West Office

Doors. *The office areas have thin sliding doors (not marked on map) that are typically left in the open position to allow people going to and fro. The doors aren't sturdy and easy knocked out of the way.*

The west office mainly deals with internal House finances, including the slave trade. Regardless of the state of the manor, **two bureaucrats** (drow bandit captains) are stationed here. There is also a fat and lazy domesticated **bearcat** that knows and does absolutely nothing (use Wolf stat block in PHB if needed).

If the **alarm** has not yet been raised, the bureaucrats will try to bluff the party into sparing them by offering information – this actually is a delay tactic to allow the alarm to be raised. A successful DC15 Wisdom (Insight) or DC15 Charisma (Intimidation) reveals that they're doing nothing but stalling. Regardless of other checks, they will not reveal anything of use. The encounter contains 2 **drow bandit captains**.

Slave Ledger. A successful DC15 Intelligence (investigation) check by someone that speaks undercommon discovers an inventory book that includes, among other things – all slaves. Once discovered, a character may spend 30 seconds studying the ledger to confirm the presence of the two missing elves in inventory. (The 30 seconds are only relevant if the **alarm** has not yet been raised.)

A4 West Tower Corridors

If the **alarm** has not been raised or if the guards from A1 and A2 have been killed, the corridor is empty.

If the **alarm** has been raised, the guards (**drow elite**) from both towers (2 or 3 total) are in this corridor and have readied attacks with their crossbows for any enemies moving in.

A5 Training Hall

Doors. *The main double doors into the training hall are thick, open into the hall and are not locked.*

If the **alarm** has not been raised, the training hall is empty (see individual rooms).

If the **alarm** has been raised, the room has the **drow elite** from the barracks in it. The armory door is ajar – they had time to get into it. The elites are out in the training hall, but the House Commander (**Drow House Captain** or **Drow**

Warlord) starts in the armory. At some point – as the characters are engaging, they see the **Drow Grand Inquisitor**, with a large black lance bark some last second orders at the House Commander before disappearing (This is intended to let them know what they'll be facing later and that the lance is gone.)

Adjusting the Encounter

Very Weak: 2 Drow Elite, House Captain (The house captain starts in the armory and spends the first turn of combat finishing to put on her armor (AC14 without it). She spends the second turn of combat grabbing her weapons (does not attack). She joins the fray on round 3.

Weak: 2 Drow Elite, House Captain

Average: 4 Drow Elite, House Captain, Helltouched Drow Assassin

Strong: 4 Drow Elite, Drow Warlord, Helltouched Drow Assassin

Very Strong: 4 Drow Elite, Drow Warlord, Helltouched Drow Shadowblade

A6 Elite Barracks

Door. *The door opens into the barracks and is never locked.*

4 Drow Elite are typically quartered here – if faced on their own, this encounter does not change in difficulty.

If the **alarm** has been raised, the room is empty.

If the **alarm** has not been raised, a group Dexterity (stealth) check must be made that includes anyone that is present in the Training Hall (A5) area prior to entering. On a group result of 15 or higher, the group can surprise the drow in the barracks. On a group result of 12-16, there is no surprise for either side. On a group result of 11 or lower, the drow hear the party approaching and prepare. 3 of the drow will crouch behind bunks, getting half-cover and readying crossbow attacks. The 4th drow will climb up above the entrance door and will drop down on an unsuspecting character once the volley of shots goes off. These drow are well trained and move quietly. High perception many detect a shuffle, but not enough to determine what is inside.

The party may use some sort of diversion or ruse to lure the drow out into the hall. Unless the other rooms have been cleared, this will likely trigger the greater Training Hall encounter as described in A5. Reward the party for clever play by granting them an extra round or two before enemies from other rooms (as per A5) join in.

A7 Noble Guards Quarters

Doors. *The doors open into the room and are not locked on either side.*

If the **alarm** has been raised, the room is empty – these guards have orders to protect the west stair (A15) in the event of an incursion.

If the **alarm** has not been raised, the encounter is as follows:

Adjusting the Encounter

Very Weak or Weak: 2 Helltouched Drow Elite

Average: 3 Helltouched Drow Elite

Strong or Very Strong: 4 Helltouched Drow Elite

A8 Master of Assassins' Quarters

Doors. *The doors to the captain of assassins' quarters have locks but are not locked.*

The **Master of Assassins** takes pride in his work and almost dares someone to try and kill him. The doors hinges are purposely left unoiled and make a slight squeaking noise when opened by anyone other than the room's owner.

The Master of Assassins has had a nearly perfect decoy of himself made and places it into his own bed when sleeping alone. Using a non-magical optical illusion, he has installed an additional bunk 10 feet above the floor. The bottom of this bunk blends perfectly into the colour of the ceiling above it and is almost completely imperceptible. That is where he sleeps.

If the **alarm** has been raised and the party is Average or stronger, consider the room empty (no trap) and the occupant joins the main Training Area (A5) encounter there. If the group is Weak or Very weak, the encounter is the same as if the alarm had not been raised.

If the **alarm** has not been raised, the Master of Assassins is here sleeping. The squeak from either door opening wakes him and he prepares to ambush the party. He has a small mechanism that allows him to make the decoy below move slightly and then go still again. This is done to make anyone entering think that he's gone back to sleep.

If the decoy is struck by any attack that would deal damage to it, it releases a concentrated cloud of malice poison. Anyone within 10ft of the decoy when it triggers must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for 1 hour. The poisoned creature is blinded.

Once the trap is triggered, the assassin will use his innate darkness on the lower part of the room without revealing himself. He will then find the opportune moment to strike.

Adjusting the Encounter

Weak or Very Weak: Helltouched Drow Assassin
Average: Helltouched Drow Shadowblade
Strong or Very Strong: Helltouched Drow Shadowblade (210 Hitpoints)

A9 Inquisitor Quarters

Doors. *The doors to the Grand Inquisitor's quarters are locked (DC17 Thieves Tools). The doors are solid iron and would take a long time to break down.*

The House Vith'tyl Grand Inquisitor resides here. She is more than capable, but her greatest tool is imbuing a special lance with very power of death. The lance is stored at the armory. In the event of an **alarm**, the Grand Inquisitor immediately goes for the armory, to get the lance. She is not particularly interested in facing the attackers – there are guards for this. Her main motivation is to get downstairs away and protect the nobles.

If the **alarm** has been raised, the room is empty.

If the **alarm** has not been raised, the Inquisitor is here, without her lance. She is smart and her goal is not to face the intruders without her weapon. If she is able to get there, she tries to exit the room through the door leading to the **training area**. Her loud voice immediately raises the **alarm** as she does this. Trigger the encounter in **area A5** if she succeeds in either getting to that area or shouting. Once the encounter from A5 engages, the Inquisitor will try to move away from combat and get to the **armory** for her lance. If this path is sufficiently blocked, she will instead exit through either her own or the commander's room and leave the encounter. The commander and or guards will attempt to facilitate her escape by getting in the adventurers' way. Be sure to note whether the inquisitor escapes with or without getting her lance. If the inquisitor ends up fighting, she fights without her Death Lance ability.

TIP: Adding the inquisitor to the A5 encounter makes that encounter extremely deadly. Players may need some extra prompts to realize that the inquisitor is not really participating and that letting her go might be a good thing.

The inquisitor has a set of keys to the armory.

A10 Commander Quarters

Doors. *Both doors to the House Commander's quarters are locked (DC17 Thieves Tools). The doors are solid iron and would take a long time to break down.*

The House Commander resides in this large room.

If the **alarm** has been raised, the room is empty.

If the **alarm** has not been raised, the commander is here and engages the characters. Regardless of other timing, the **alarm** is raised at the end of the second round of this encounter and the additional monsters from the encounter in **A5** join the fray (no forces join if the guards from the **barracks** and the Master of Assassins have been killed). Until they join, the players face:

Very Weak: Drow House Captain (spends first available turn drawing weapons and taunting the players)
Weak: Drow House Captain
Average: Drow House Captain
Strong: Drow Warlord
Very Strong: Drow Warlord (alarm is instead raised at the end of the first round of the encounter and other forces join)

The House Commander has a set of keys to the armory.

A11 Armory

Door. *The elaborate armory door is made of adamantine and cannot be broken through.*

The door is only locked if the party has managed to get here without raising the **alarm**. Otherwise, either the House Commander or the Grand Inquisitor would have beaten the party here and left it opened for themselves and the guards.

The door has a mechanical lock comprised of 3 key holes with gold, silver and black trim respectively. The lock requires all 3 keys to be inserted, but only the gold and black to be turned simultaneously. Turning the silver key in tandem with any other key or keys results in all 3 keys getting pulled into the door – if a creature is holding on to the key while this happens, they may try to prevent the key from being pulled away. If they choose to do so, they must attempt a DC17 Strength (Athletics) check. If they succeed, they hold on to the key. If they fail by 5 or more, their finger gets jammed and cut as it's pulled in and the hole snaps shut. The pain is excruciating and the creature takes 2d10 bludgeoning damage and suffers one level of exhaustion due to the wound.

A successful DC17 Dexterity (Thieves Tools) check allows a character to simulate turning a key. 3 sets of Thieves Tools are required to set this up for all 3 holes.

If a character succeeds on the above Thieves Tools check, they may make an additional DC17 Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Perception) check. A success on this check tells them that the 3

mechanisms are connected. If the Thieves Tools check was performed on the Silver key hole, the character can also identify that this mechanism is different from the other others, though it's not possible to find out exactly how.

The armory contains a variety of mundane equipment, including plenty of ammunition and 6 **vials of poison**.

If the party got here ahead of the Grand Inquisitor, the room also contains an exquisite obsidian-tipped black lance (mundane). Recovering this prevents the inquisitor from using it in the final confrontation.

A12 West Wing Corridor

Door. *The door from the Guard Tower to the corridor is locked at all times (DC15 Thieves Tools).*

This corridor is empty at all times.

A13 War Room

Door. *Both sets of doors to the war room are ceremonial and have locks, but are not locked.*

The room is empty regardless of alarm state.

Contains Maps and things – includes maps for surface slave abductions and a rough schedule of best times to strike at different towns. A successful DC15 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals that there is intent to significantly increase the number of abductions on the surface. This information is of definite interest to surface powers.

DM Tip: The indication that House Vith'tyl intends to expand surface raids is intended to provide additional impetus for the adventurers to wipe them or help justify their attack here. If the party is in need of such a push, feel free to either give them the info without a check or even place them in a more convenient place for the party to find.

A14 Help Area

Door. *The door to this area is never locked.*

This is the servants (slaves) staging area on the ground floor. 4 slaves may be in this area. The slaves are well indoctrinated and loyal to House Vith'tyl. They have given up any hope of escape and believe that a much crueler fate than death awaits them if they are caught helping the intruders. Two of the slaves are cowardly and are like to hide or get out of the way rather than raising the **alarm**. The other two are intent on resisting and helping protect the Manor.

If the **alarm** has not been raised and the adventurers have not yet gone to area **A15**, there are 4 slaves are here. They are surprised to see the adventurers. Once their surprise wears off, two of the slaves will scream and raise the **alarm**. Prior to this, a successful DC15 Wisdom (Insight) reveals that two shifty slaves that are likely to raise the alarm.

The party can act while the slaves are surprised. A successful DC15 Charisma (any that makes sense) check on one of the shifty slaves prevents them from screaming. *Silence*, death, unconsciousness or restraints also do the trick.

If the **alarm** has been raised, all 4 of the slaves get makeshift weapons and set up an ambush for the party. They hide behind a corner in the room. Two throw knives as soon as the party is within range and the other two rush at the party trying to stab them in melee.

Encounter: 4 slaves (commoners – 2 drow, 1 human and 1 duergar).

A15 West Stair

Doors. *Doors to the West Stair are typically locked (DC15 Thieves Tools)*

If there **alarm** has been raised, the door is barricaded from within in addition to being locked. The barricade is actually a trap. Examining the door does not reveal anything out of sorts. Once the door is unlocked, it does not open and it is evident that it has been braced from the other side. A successful DC15 Strength (Athletics) check results in the door budging only slightly – much more strength or a perhaps a running start are required to open it. If more such pressure is applied, the guards inside quietly remove the brace, resulting in the effort forcing the pushing character to crash forward through the door and be attacked by the guards' readied attacks. The interior of the stairway is also subject to magical darkness having been cast by one of the guards.

Adjusting the Encounter
Very Weak or Weak: 2 Helltouched Drow Elite
Average: 3 Helltouched Drow Elite
Strong or Very Strong: 4 Helltouched Drow Elite

If the **alarm** has been not been raised, 4 slaves are here – at various intervals of the stairs – it should be just about impossible to stop them from raising the alarm if encountered here.

Once the **alarm** is raised, if they have not been killed in area **A7**, the noble guards (Helltouched Drow Elite) rush to this area and attack the characters.

West Wing Completion

If the party has cleared most of the West Wing, proceed to **Mopping Up the First Floor** section on Page 19.

Ground Floor – East Wing

East Wing Occupant List:

The details of encounters and their behavior are provided hereafter in the respective sections for each area. This list can be used to track which encounters have been dealt with.

- B1: 2 Guards (Drow Elite)
- B2: 1 Guard (Drow Elite)
- B3: 2 Bureaucrats (Drow Bandit Captains)
- B4: none
- B5: Esephile Vith'tyl + Devil
- B6: Empty
- B7: 4 Noble Guards (Helltouched Drow Elite)
- B8: Venthior Vith'tyl
- B9: Empty
- B10: Empty
- B11: n/a
- B12: none
- B13: n/a
- B14: Bodies of slaves (same area as A14)
- B15: n/a

B1 East Stalagmite Tower

Door. *The door to this tower is neither locked, nor trapped.*

This is a lookout tower mainly used to watch the outside. Two guards are typically on duty here. If the **alarm** has been raised, the tower is empty and guards are in the corridor. Otherwise:

Adjusting the Encounter
Encounter: 2 Drow Elite

If either of the 2 drow survives long enough and is not incapacitated or silenced, the alarm is raised.
Very Weak – alive at end of 5 rounds
Weak – alive at end of 4 rounds.
Average – alive at end of 3 rounds.
Strong or Very Strong – alive at end of 2 rounds.

B2 East Guardpost Tower

Door. *The door to this tower is neither locked, nor trapped.*

This is a guard tower used to watch the courtyard. It's very tight and only allows for one person on duty. If the alarm has been raised, the tower is empty and guard is in the corridor. Otherwise:

Encounter: 1 Drow Elite

If the drow survives long enough and is not incapacitated or silenced, the alarm is raised.

Very Weak – alive at end of 4 rounds

Weak – alive at end of 3 rounds.

Average – alive at end of 2 rounds.

Strong or Very Strong – alive at end of 1 round.

B3 East Office

Doors. *The office areas have thin sliding doors (not marked on map) that are typically left in the open position to allow people going to and fro. The doors aren't sturdy and easy knocked out of the way.*

The east office mainly deals with the mining operations concentrated at the VA Mining diamond mine. Regardless of the state of the manor, two bureaucrats (drow bandit captains) are stationed here.

If the alarm has not yet been raised, the bureaucrats will try to bluff the party into sparing them by offering information – this actually is a delay tactic to allow the alarm to be raised. A successful DC15 Wisdom (Insight) or DC15 Charisma (Intimidation) reveals that they're doing nothing but stalling. Regardless of other checks, they will not reveal anything of use. The encounter is as follows:

2 Drow Bandit Captains

Also in the room: A successful DC15 investigation check by someone that speaks undercommon discovers a mine operations journal. The journal is filled with a lot of mundane notes on the mine's fairly stable profitability. After the check has been successfully made, a character may choose to spend 30 seconds studying the ledger to find anything interesting. (The 30 seconds are only relevant if the alarm has not yet been raised.)

If the 30 seconds are spent, characters find little of import other than the mention of a rising number of slave deaths in the lower tunnels – no explanation is given, only the overseer's annoyance at training new slaves. Some slaves apparently also went missing, one of these is named Emertys (the name is not relevant to this adventure.)

The mining info is of interest to the Zhentarim.

B4 East Tower Corridors

if the alarm has not been raised or if the guards from B1 and B2 have been killed, the corridor is empty.

If the alarm has been raised, the Elites from both towers are in this corridor and have readied actions with their crossbows for any enemies moving in.

2 or 3 Drow Elite

B5 Noble Dining Area

Doors. The door leading from this room to the nobles area is locked (DC15 Thieves Tools). The door to the corridor is unlocked.

If this is the party's entry/teleport-in point, go straight to combat.

If the **alarm** has not been raised, Esephile Vith'tyl is here having a meal. She is being served by a scantily clad male drow slave. They are both facing the doors, so while they're not expecting an ambush, entering unseen and surprising them is extremely unlikely.

If the party does not immediately attack Esephile or if Esephile has higher initiative, she remains calm and seated. She addresses her slave "dahling, it seems we have unwelcome guests who mean us harm. Yet, what harm can come when I have your heart? I do have your heart, do I not?" At this, the slave approaches Esephile, bearing his chest to her. Suddenly, her hand – claw like – strikes into his chest and pulls out his still-beating heart. She turns to the party and says "see, we are not heartless after all!" She then squeezes the heart and a small pool of blood forms on the ground. She then says in infernal "Atheros, kill them for me," as a devilish creature appears and attacks the party. (See encounter below)

If the party attacks Esephile immediately or ahead of her turn in initiative, the slave will interpose himself and absorb all damage from the first attack or visible damage spell targeted at Esephile. This act leaves the slave in a dying state and on her turn, Esephile will reach into his chest, pull out his heart and smile mischievously. "A heart of darkness if you will!" as part of this action, she will innately cast darkness. Her devil joins combat during the next round with its own initiative.

The encounter consists of Esephile Vith'tyl (Helltouched Warlock of the Fiend) and the following:

Very Weak: 1 Barbed Devil (65hp)

Weak or Average: 1 Barbed Devil

Strong or Very Strong: 1 Bone Devil

If the **alarm** has been raised, Esephile has already killed her slave, summoned her devil, cast darkness in the room and signaled for half of the noble guards from B7 to move to this area to join them. If the guards have been killed, Esephile and her devil fight alone as per above.

The encounter consists of Esephile Vith'tyl (Helltouched Warlock of the Fiend) and the following:

Very Weak: 1 bearded devil and 1 noble guard (helltouched drow elite) - the guard starts in the corridor and joins the combat during the 3rd round.

Weak or Average: 1 bearded devil and 1 noble guard (helltouched drow elite)

Strong: 1 Barbed Devil, 1 Noble Guard

Very Strong: 2 **Barbed Devils** and 2 **Noble Guards**

B6 Esephile's Room

Door. The door to this room is locked (DC17 Thieves Tools).

As Esephile is in A5, her room is empty. Esephile has a number of fancy garments, jewelry and exotic toys.

B7 Noble Guards Station

Doors. Doors to the Noble Guards open into the room and are not locked.

If the **alarm** has been raised, the room is empty – these guards have orders to split up and protect the east stair (b15) and access to nobles areas (b5) in the event of an incursion.

If the **alarm** has not been raised, the encounter is as follows.

Very Weak or Weak: 2 Helltouched Drow Elite

Average: 3 Helltouched Drow Elite

Strong or Very Strong: 4 Helltouched Drow Elite

B8 Venthior's Room

Door. The door to this room is locked (DC17 Thieves tools).

Venthior Vith'tyl is a Vith'tyl arcanist that has been studying shadowfel. He favours illusion and enchantment magics. He had arcane eye cast outside the room and knows the party is coming. He has put up a minor illusion of himself hiding behind the bed in the room, but actually waits to ambush the party

invisible (and hidden – stealth 20) at the side of the entry door.

Adjusting the Encounter

This encounter consists of Venthior Vith'tyl (Drow Gloom Weaver) and the following adjustments:

Very Weak: there is no illusion and Venthior is not hidden.

Weak: no adjustments

Average: Venthior starts with level 5 *armor of agathys* cast on himself

Strong or Very Strong: Venthior starts with level 5 *armor of agathys* cast on himself, there is also 1 Barbed Devil in the room – seemingly protecting Venthior's illusion.

Hallway Tiles. Venthior knows the code to activate the tiles in the hallway. As a bonus action, he can cause either the gold tiles to become electrified OR the black tiles to emit a poisonous mist. Anyone standing on a gold tile when it's activated takes 2d8 lightning damage (no save) while anyone standing on a black tile when it's activated, must make a DC15 Constitution saving throw or take 2d8 poison damage. The tiles can be used repeatedly.

Diving. When a tile that a character is standing on activates, if there is an empty tile next to them that can accommodate their full size, they may use their reaction to attempt diving off the tile – a successful DC15 Dexterity saving throw results in them successfully moving to the other tile, landing prone and avoiding being subject to the effect of the tile.

B9 Summoner Aberteth's Room

Door. *The door this room is locked (DC17 Thieves Tools).*

House Vith'tyl's lead Summoner Aberteth Vith'tyl resides here. Aberteth has tiny servants that move undetected throughout the manor. One such brings him news of the infiltration before the **alarm** is raised. Rather than raising the **alarm**, his plan is to go to his summoning cells below and prepare some of his subjects for battle. He takes as much time as he can to take additional scrolls with him before using his secret staircase. If the party makes it to his door before the main **alarm** is raised, he gives up on collecting extra scrolls and rushes down below. Otherwise, he makes it down with his scrolls and the party is able to catch sounds of stone grinding before they go in and see one of the elaborate round carpets in the room finish settling down on the floor (to cover the secret stair).

If the party gets to the room after the **alarm** is raised, the room is entirely undisturbed.

The room is lavishly furnished, full of scrolls, books and other arcane trinkets. There are also quite a few oddball items such as body parts in various states of

preservation, odd metals and strange charms. A successful DC15 Intelligence (Arcana) or Wisdom (Religion) check confirms that these are various components for summoning spells. (Should the party inquire whether a specific component worth under 300g is present here, they're able to find ONE such component with a successful DC15 Wisdom (Perception) check.)

The room contains two Rugs of Smothering and a Mimic masquerading as a bookshelf. One of the rugs lies covering the secret door. These attack only if a character interacts with them.

If Aberteth didn't finish collecting his scrolls, the group finds a summoning book and two scrolls among the items he was preparing to take. The tome is written in Undercommon and contains information on a number of specific devils and their abilities. A character able to read Undercommon can spend 1 minute studying the tome. This provides them with full information on the abilities, spells, resistances and vulnerabilities of all devils found in this adventure. Additionally, they find an unfinished scroll of *gate* – this scroll is useless to the characters and cannot be completed. However, keeping it away from Aberteth is an obvious win.

If Aberteth took his things, the all that the party finds are two scrolls written in Undercommon. Reading the scrolls reveals that they are dismissal scrolls for devils summoned by Aberteth. It seems that that Aberteth had created these as a sort of personal failsafe. As an action, a character that can read and speak Undercommon is able to use one of these scrolls to immediately (permanently) dismiss any CR9 or lower devil summoned by Aberteth.

If the party finds the hidden door here and chooses to follow Aberteth down WITHOUT having dealt with BOTH Esephile and Venthior – Silver warns them – “Are you certain you wish to proceed? If we leave enemies in our wake, we'll be giving up any chance of respite!” (If they choose to proceed below from this point, there will be no chance for a rest of any kind. If the party attempts to Catnap, Esephile or Venthior (or both) will ambush them prior to it completing.

B10 Qu'lith's Room

Door. *The door to Qi'lith's room is locked (DC20 Thieves Tools and made of reinforced adamantine alloy). There is an arcane trap on the door.*

A passive perception of 15 is sufficient to notice that the ornate door has a variety of runes woven into the patterns. A successful DC17 arcana check

reveals that the runes are a trap, however, due to the winding nature of the many runes, the this check takes a full 2 minutes to complete – the party knows how long it will take to decipher the runes and may choose to come back to it. If the door is unlocked or opened without disarming the trap, it results in a *vitriolic sphere* being cast. The trap can be disarmed with a Dispel Magic spell that is sufficient to dispel a 4th level spell.

Qu'lith is long gone and the room is sparsely decorated, yet the few objects in it look to be of great value and good taste. The room contains a hidden staircase that has been camouflaged by powerful illusion magic. Detect Magic picks up illusion magic throughout the room. It seems that even some of the decorations in the room were creature through powerful illusion magic. Finding the stair takes a successful DC25 Perception check by someone that is actively Detecting Magic.

The stair if discovered can be activated tracing hidden rune (no further checks required). It leads to the secret corridor on the floor below. See **Mopping up the First Floor** if characters discover this.

B11 n/a

B12 East Wing Corridor

This corridor is empty of occupants, regardless of **alarm** status.

The floor of the corridor is made up for 5ft black and gold tiles decorated with black and gold patterns.

Detecting magic confirms that the glyphs are magical in nature and radiate evocation magic. A successful DC15 Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals that the glyphs are likely a trap and that each one can be individually dispelled (3rd level dispel magic is sufficient) or physically defaced. The nature of the trigger for the trap cannot be ascertained.

Defacing a glyph can be done using any sharp tools or a weapon. Due to the fact that the glyphs are worked into the stone tiles, a character must spend 1 minute prone on the tile, working with their chosen tools to complete the defacing on that individual tile. A character with the Stonecutting trait or using Masonry Tools with proficiency can complete the task in 30 seconds per tile.

Stepping on a tile does not trigger the trap. The tiles are keyed to specific key words known by the **4 nobles** of the nearby rooms.

B13 n/a

B14 Help Area

THIS IS THE SAME AREA AS A14!

Door. *The door to this area is never locked.*

If the party comes here from the East Side after the **alarm** has been raised, they find 4 dead bodies – ones of the slaves mention in A14. It's easy to tell that they were easily dispatched by S'sheneth'rah.

B15 East Stair

Doors. *Doors to the West Stair are typically locked (DC15, these are solid steel doors, difficult to break down.)*

If there **alarm** has been raised, the door is being held closed from within by the noble guards (if any survived to make it here). It may be possible for players to deceive the guards into letting them through the door. Otherwise, contested Strength (Athletic) checks are required, with the guards having advantage on their rolls.

Adjusting the Encounter

Very Weak or Weak: 1 Helltouched Drow Elite

Average: 2 Helltouched Drow Elite

Strong or Very Strong: 2 Helltouched Drow Elite

Mopping up the First floor

When the party is done with their last combat on the first floor, Silver receives a message from Axcelia that they've cleared their wing and are moving downstairs.

If the party wishes to "double-check" on empty areas, stress that time may be of the essence, however, nothing prevents the group from looking around. Any creature in the wing cleared by Axcelia and S'sheneth'rah is dead – this includes enemies, slaves, pets, devils and harmless insects that happened to be in the room when Axcelia got there. Feel free to play up the devastation left behind in Axcelia's wake – she is exacting her revenge brutally and without a second thought. Once done, the party can move on downstairs via one of available staircases. The Grand Stair remains inaccessible.

Resting

There is no opportunity to rest mid-assault. If the party is in desperate need, prior to moving downstairs Silver offers to cast an enhanced version of *catnap* on all members of the party. Those that agree receive the benefits of a **long rest**, although only 10 minutes pass.

The long rest granted by this special casting of *catnap* does not remove any detrimental effects typically removed by a long rest or allow characters to change prepared spells.

DM Tip: This a good time for the party to speak with Silver and learn some of her concerns and plans. Silver herself would initiate this conversation if the party does not.

In most circumstances Silver is firmly allied with the party, so long as they promise to allow Axcelia her vengeance and give Silver a chance to sever Axcelia's bond with the marilith. If they agree to allow these, she promises to do whatever is necessary beyond that – including dispelling the chaos web.

Note that while she is being fully honest about her intentions, she does not share the exact nature of her agreement with the marilith.

At this point, Silver still firmly believes that she can save Axcelia.

In short, Silver is asking that the characters focus on their mission and give her a chance to do what she needs. This chat is important as it helps set up the story finale/twist at the end.

For more on Silver's plans and role in the story, see page 6.

Part 3: Spectre of Vengeance

Estimated Duration: 60 minutes

Story Beat. The adventurers proceed to the lower level of the manor and must make a tactical decision.

DM Tip: It's strongly recommended that you review part 3C prior to starting the second floor. This can help you better manage the flow of events from clearing the floor and into the final battle.

Additionally, check the time. It is recommended that at least 60 minutes be left for the final confrontation. If time is running short, adjust or remove some of the encounters in the wings and allow the party to resolve these quicker.

Axcelia's breach of the Grand Chamber can be triggered at any time to direct them to the finale.

A Tactical Decision

Upon clearing one of the staircases to the lower level, the party receives an update from Axcelia through Silver. Qu'lith has apparently barricaded herself in the grand chamber with no way out. Axcelia has learned some of the lower floor's layout. The lower west wing mainly contains slave quarters and the lower east wing contains summoning chambers.

Axcelia is eager to strike and tells the group that she will cut her way to the main chamber. Silver chimes in that this is likely what Qu'lith wants and that reinforcements are likely to be rushing to the grand chamber from all areas. By cutting off the reinforcements before they fully mobilize, they may be able to improve their chances against Qu'lith.

The adventurers have a choice – go straight for the Grand Chamber, or pursue other avenues below. If they wish to go straight to the grand chamber, the quickest route is via the East Wing stair. Go to **Part 3C**.

If the adventurers want to pursue other tasks (whether to rescue slaves, look for treasure or tactical reasons), Axcelia says "perhaps isolating her will give her an idea of what I have felt like for all these years. Slay who you can, I will do the same – then make your way to the Grand Chamber!" If the adventurers are heading down into the lower West Wing, go to **part 3A**. If they are going to the lower East Wing, go to **part 3B**. As with the upper floor, Axcelia takes whoever side the players don't.

Part 3A: Lower West Wing

Story Beat. The lower west wing contains several rooms with slaves. Some of these slaves are very much broken and totally devout to their drow masters. Others have taken a path of less resistance.

If the desire exists, this section can present many great opportunities for social interaction.

The Slaves

Other than the holding cells, all rooms in this area are unlocked. A total of 20 slaves are located in the west wing. Slaves are categorized into three categories based on their disposition.

Fully hostile. These are fully indoctrinated slaves. They will attack their rescuers unless forcefully subdued or killed. They will prioritize attacking any rebellious slaves in the area for their betrayal.

Docile. These are broken slaves, who are too weak-willed to take a side. If a fully hostile slave is present and not subdued after a round of combat, these turn hostile, otherwise, they want to be left alone or can be convinced to follow the party's directions, so long as these aren't to participate in combat. (DC13 Charisma – Intimidation or Persuasion)

Rebellious. These slaves having been hoping for a chance like this and would rather die than remain slaves another day! These are immediately willing to go along with the party and even fight for them. A rebellious slave also prevents docile slaves from becoming hostile.

Slave details: 2 of the slaves are the missing elves, 2 more are other elves, 2 are drow, 4 are human, 4 are duergar, 3 are deep gnomes and the remaining 3 can be of any race – including those mentioned. They are located as follows:

C1- Kitchen: 6 (2 fully hostile, 2 docile, 2 rebellious)

C2- Laundry: 4 (1 fully hostile, 2 docile, 1 rebellious)

C3 -Forge: 2 (2 docile)

C4 - Masonry Workshop: 2 (1 fully hostile, 1 docile)

C5 - Holding Cells: 2 (1 rebellious)

C6 - Individual Rooms (all in separate rooms): 1 fully hostile, 2 sleeping (docile), Carric Firahel (hostile)

Social Possibilities

For a more socially involved experience, come up with simple backstories for the slaves – including their race, occupation and how long they've been in captivity.

The mechanics for slave interactions are merely a guideline. DMs are encouraged to allow social interactions between the party and the slave groups to organically dictate the resolution, regardless of checks and initial disposition.

The individual areas above do not contain anything of significance other than the typical items found in such places. Slave quarters have a number of simple bunks. There are no valuables in any of the above areas.

The Overseer and Guards (C7 and C8)

The slave overseer and guards emerge once the party enters into either of the corridors around the slaves' quarters. The overseer commands all slaves to come to his side. All hostile slaves obey his command, any docile slaves that had not been interacted with, do so as well. At this point, hostile slaves cannot be turned and docile slaves require a DC15 Charisma (Intimidation or Persuasion) check to disobey the order. Rebellious slaves are unaffected. (**Note:** these rules are being provided as a guideline, if playing through the adventure in a more social manner, this can be resolved via storytelling.)

Encounter:

There are no difficulty adjustments for this encounter.
Slave Overseer (Drow House Captain) + 2 Drow Elite

The slave overseer and his guards have a special ability – as a reaction, they can make one attack against a disobedient slave. They are ruthless and put down such slaves without a second thought. They do not target any slave that has any cover (this includes cover provided by player characters!)

Roleplaying the Missing Elves

The two abducted elves – Aelar and Carric Firahel have been enslaved for years. They were broken fairly early on and have served house Vith'tyl faithfully. During their indoctrination, they were each told that if one of them disobeys, that the other would be killed. As such, part of their obedience is the fear for the other's safety. Carric has become a pleasure slave to one of the Vith'tyl nobles and has been treated well and given better quarters. Over the years, he's grown accustomed to this life of "privilege".

His brother Aelar on the other hand has remained a laundry hand, working with a pair of recently taken humans. He is obedient enough for his brother's sake, but remains defiant at heart. He was recently rude to a guard and it was only his brother's good word that had him beaten and thrown into a cell rather than sent to the diamond mines.

Part 3B: Lower East Wing

The lower east wing consists of two main areas: the Nobles Area and the Summoning Area.

Areas D2-D4: Nobles Play Area

The nobles play area consists of pleasure rooms and the hidden reliquary. The pleasure rooms are unlocked, empty and contain no items of note, although signs of drow vanity and depravity are

present. D2 is a pleasure dungeon, D3 is a games room and D4 is a large bath.

Area D1 Reliquary

If the adventurers chose to pursue rescuing the slaves over looking for treasure, by the time they get to the reliquary, it has been found by S'sheneth'rah (no checks required) and mostly destroyed. None of the items below remain and art objects are all damaged.

- The reliquary can only be accessed through Qu'lith's secret passage. Qu'lith's secret passage itself is also hidden and can be accessed from two places on the lower level – fake wall in the pleasure dungeon(D2) and fake wall in the nobles area corridor (D12). Adventurers aren't necessarily expected to find the secret corridor, although if they've ascertained that one exists, they would have advantage on the check to find it. Finding the fake wall from either access point requires a DC20 Intelligence (Investigation) check. Once the wall is discovered, a DC17 Wisdom (Perception) check is required to spot a very well blended-in button that opens it.
- The reliquary door itself is guarded by an explosive *glyph of warding*. When triggered, the glyph erupts with magical energy in a 20-foot-radius sphere centered on the glyph. The sphere spreads around corners. Each creature in the area must make a DC15 Dexterity saving throw. A creature takes 5d8 acid, damage on a failed saving throw, or half as much damage on a successful one. The glyph can be disarmed with a Dispel Magic spell. It also has a standard lock (DC20 Thieves Tools).
- The reliquary contains a number of valuable art objects and a *scroll of banishment*. Also present objects that are peculiar but not overtly valuable. There is what looks to be a collection of small figurines of devils. A DC13 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals that there are likely of sentimental value – abnormally so, if they have been placed into such a safe hiding place.
- Additionally, there is a **dismissal scroll** for devils, although this one is special. It seems that Qu'lith wanted to be sure that Aberteth doesn't turn on her. Using this scroll and their action, a character that can read and speak Undercommon is able to immediately dismiss any CR15 or lower devil from the Vith'tyl manor. The devil returns to its home plane as though it had been banished using the *banishment* spell and does not return.

Area D5: Arcane Library

This room is unlocked and empty under most circumstances. If the party gets to his room on the ground floor before the alarm is raised and decides – despite Silver’s warning – to follow Aberteth down, they catch him here.

Encounter: Summoner Aberteth (Warlock of the Fiend)

There are no adjustments to this encounter if he is caught alone! (Tip: play this up as him being unprepared and without his protectors.)

Summoner Aberteth uses the Warlock of the Fiend stat block, with the following adjustments:

- Aberteth has Devil’s Sight.
- His 1/day spell list is instead replaced with the following: 1/day: Scatter, Power Word Pain, Mental Prison
- On his regular spell list, replace Flame Strike with Infernal Calling. (Note that if he’s caught alone, there is no time to have cast Infernal Calling)
- Devils summoned by Aberteth’s *Infernal Calling* are typically ones he has dealt with and generally obey his commands without checks.

Areas D6,D7,D8: Summoning Rooms

There are empty summoning rooms. They smell of sulfur and brimstone. Devils from these rooms have already been released and sent to aid Qu’lith.

Area D9: The Abishai

The 4th summoning room has a **Black Abishai** devil in it. It is contained within a magic circle. Aberteth summoned it as an experiment, but hasn’t been able to come to terms with it. It cannot break the circle. If the party speaks appropriate languages, they may be able to strike a deal with it. The manner of negotiation is up to the group.

The ONLY deal that the devil will agree to is a payment of 250-500g (it asks for 500) in exchange for helping the group defeat Aberteth (specifically) and then being set free on this plane. One other condition of the deal is that one member of the party must be willing to enter the magic circle alone to seal the deal in blood. When the person enters the circle, the devil makes one attack against them at advantage. If it hits, the deal is considered sealed. If the attack misses, the devil is impressed and allows the person to strike it, if the person hits, this draws blood and the deal is sealed. The devil will accompany the party and hold to its contract. It will

fight Aberteth and Aberteth only and departs once Aberteth is defeated.

Area D10: Summoner Aberteth’s Best

This summoning room has Summoner Aberteth along as a couple of his prize summons. They obey him without question.

The encounter features Summoner Aberteth after he’s had time to prepare.

Encounter Adjustment:

(Only) for the purposes of their abilities that require it, Merregons consider Aberteth an allied fiend.

Very Weak or Very Weak: Summoner Aberteth and 1 Spined Devil

Average: Summoner Aberteth and 2 Merregons.

Strong or Very Strong: Summoner Aberteth, 3 Merregons

Summoner Aberteth uses the Warlock of the Fiend stat block, with the following adjustments:

- Aberteth has Devil’s Sight.
- His 1/day spell list is instead replaced with the following: 1/day: Scatter, Power Word Pain, Mental Prison
- On his regular spell list, replace Flame Strike with Infernal Calling. (In this scenario, Infernal Calling has already been cast, hence his entourage)
- Devils summoned by Aberteth’s *Infernal Calling* are typically ones he has dealt with and generally obey his commands without checks.

Part 3C: The Fall of House Vith'tyl

Story Beat. Qu'lith is satisfied with her forces and invites the attackers to come face her in the grand chamber.

As the adventurers wrap up clearing one of the wings, read or paraphrase the following.

The sound of huge latches being undone and the heavy swing of huge doors catch your attention. A booming female voice calls out from seemingly everywhere at once. "Well, have you come to destroy a Drow House or to be a common looter, Axcelia? Was our ruthless efficiency in slaying each and every one of your pathetic brethren not lesson enough? Ah, yes, a mistake was –" Qu'lith's voice is interrupted by the sound of a massive explosion coming from the Grand Chamber. Silver's expression turns grim: "Axcelia is there. I sense nothing more than chaos and hate now. We must hurry."

If in the middle of an encounter, the party should wrap up their current encounter before proceeding.

Arriving in the Grand Hall, the party finds a scene of devastation (the devastation was caused by Axcelia's use of a concealed *meteor swarm* spell scroll – this scroll was only usable by Axcelia and is not available as treasure under any circumstances).

The view beyond the massive doors in the glorious round chamber reveals a scene of devastation. Parts of bodies lie scattered around the room – drow, slave and devil alike. Smoke billows from several holes in the pristine marble floor that looks like it had been struck by meteors.

On the near side of the chamber is the marilith S'sheneth'rah. Drenched head to toe, blood of all shades drips to the floor from her tail and swords – most of it doesn't it to be her own.

Beside her is Axcelia's badly damaged Guardian of Lolth. The drow mage herself is covered in dust, her clothing tattered in places, yet she stands tall and sports a fatalistic grin upon her face as her dark hands glow with the after-effects casting a powerful spell.

Across the room – standing among the limbs and blotches that remain of their companions — are the Vith'tyl forces. Chief among them is Qu'lith herself – a striking, ageless figure in all red armor with a devilish helm atop her shortly cropped head. She is unfazed by the destruction. "What business is any of this of yours?" she asks the party.

Depending on how the party responds and/or has proceeded through the Manor, Qu'lith will bargain accordingly. It's important to note that regardless of Axcelia's interruption, it is Qu'lith that gives the order for combat to start.

Roleplaying Qu'lith Del'Valsharess

Qu'lith Del'Valsharess is the head of House Vith'tyl. She is part of a secret sect of drow who have made a pact with the powers of the nine hells. The sealing of the deal goes back to a powerful drow who had called herself only "Valsharess", meaning "queen/ruler". While the Valsharess was defeated and her followers slaughtered, some survived and found new places where to follow in her footsteps. They call themselves the Scions of Valsharess and maintain the pact with infernal powers. Few aside from Qu'lith herself are aware of this history.

Qu'lith has built House Vith'tyl from the ground and has aggressively moved against the other houses of Zethlentyn. Wiping out House Axcelon had been a bold and risky move that elevated House Vith'tyl within the house power hierarchy.

Qu'lith is supremely confident and inspires undying devotion in her followers. Seeing Axcelia's power, she may realize that she had made a mistake, but her pride and confidence do not let her admit that a worshipper of Lolth and member of a lower house could possibly best her. She believes to the end that her infernal power will grant her victory.

Slaves.

If the party has the slaves with them – Qu'lith will indicate that they are welcome to take the slaves and leave. If they refuse, she orders some of her retinue to kill the slaves. If the party has Qu'lith's stash of personal figurines and threatens to destroy them, a successful DC15 Charisma (Intimidation) check forces her to agree to let the slaves go before attacking.

If the party had left the slaves in another part of the manor or did not go into the slave part, the slaves are held by the Vith'tyl forces and Qu'lith orders for them to be brought in. At this, a secret door opens and 10 slaves (others are dead) are brought in – this includes the two missing elves. She then offers the slaves as payment for the party to leave. If the party does not accept, she gives the command and 3 of the slaves are shot before combat starts. The figurine check works in this case as well.

It is not expected that the party accepts Qu'lith's terms to leave, as this would leave their overall mission of securing Axcelia's help aboveground failed. If they DO choose this option, Axcelia looks like she's ready to attack and says "betray me now and no one will make it out alive!" However, before

the party can do anything. Qu'lith interrupts: "Must this vile outcast ruin everything? So be it, kill everyone!" Axcelia then turns to the party with a "you see?" gesture and engages the Vith'tyl forces.

Revenge.

If the party is fully on board with Axcelia's revenge, there is nothing more to say and the fight is on.

Encounter Details

The fight consists of **Qu'lith** (Drow Favoured Consort), her lieutenants (unless killed), several summoned devils and 3 **drow** that are only present to mind/kill the slaves. Silver, Axcelia and S'sheneth'rah take on some of the combatants in order to balance out the fight (it's recommended that the NPCs and the combatants they're engaged with are all considered "out of the fight", so as not to waste time on non-player rolls – narrate their progress alongside the adventurers for an epic feel. From a technical perspective, Axcelia casts a Wall of Force to separate the two fighting forces from each other. In character this helps ward the party from Axcelia's and her own area of effect spells – for a time.)

Unless she was killed by the party, the Grand Inquisitor is present. If the party managed to cut off access to the armory, the Grand Inquisitor does not have the **Death Lance** ability. If the Grand Inquisitor was killed, replace by a **bone devil** (same HP adjustments apply).

Unless he was killed by the party, Summoner Aberteth (Warlock of the Fiend) is present. If Aberteth was killed, replace by a **bone devil** (same HP adjustments apply). If the party managed to retrieve Aberteth's unfinished spell scroll of *gate*, he begins with one spell slot spent. Regardless, his stats are amended as follows:

- Aberteth has Devil's Sight.
- Aberteth 1/day spell list is instead replaced with the following: 1/day: Scatter, Power Word Pain, Mental Prison

This encounter is adjusted in multiple ways in order to provide the same epic battle experience to parties of different strength. In cases where enemies start with drastically lowered HP, be sure to indicate that they seem to have taken quite some damage from Axcelia's *meteor swarm*. Where it makes narrative sense given the party's progress through the manor, Aberteth's and the Grand Inquisitor's places in the combat can be switched.

Adjusting the encounter:

- Very Weak: Qu'lith, Aberteth, Inquisitor and 4 **barbed devils**. Enemies other than Qu'lith start at 50% of their HP. Aberteth, Inquisitor and three of the devils fight Team Axcelia.

- Weak: Qu'lith, Aberteth, Inquisitor and 4 **barbed** devils. Enemies other than Qu'lith start at 50% of their HP. Inquisitor and three of the devils fight Team Axcelia.
- Average: Qu'lith, Aberteth, Inquisitor and 4 **Bone** devils. Enemies other than Qu'lith start at 75% of their HP. Aberteth and three of the devils fight Team Axcelia.
- Strong: Qu'lith, Aberteth, Inquisitor and 4 **bone devils**. Inquisitor and three of the devils fight Team Axcelia.
- Very Strong: Qu'lith, Aberteth, Inquisitor and 5 **bone devils**. Four of the devils fight Team Axcelia.

Qu'lith has Legendary Resistance (3/Day). If Qu'lith fails a saving throw, Qu'lith can choose to succeed instead. (Tactically, she is more likely to use this to resist debilitation or banishment spells rather than pure damage spells.)

Qu'lith also has a special life drain ability. If Qu'lith's health is reduced below 70 hitpoints (without killing her) and any of her allies are still alive, one of those allies is instantly killed and Qu'lith's health increases to 100hp as she drains them of their life force. (The targets for this are chosen from those that the party is engaged with.)

Optional Weaker Tactic: For a weak or very weak party, Qu'lith's spellcasting alone may be too much. Qu'lith's is arrogant enough that she may choose to save the bigger spells for Axcelia and deal with the party in melee.

Story Events

Several story-related events happen during this encounter and should be narrated as the action happens.

Event 1. Any time before Qu'lith drops below 175 hitpoints. Axcelia's guardian of Lolth is slain. Silver moves toward Axcelia and gives the party a knowing look. Axcelia is seen destroying guardian's killer.

Event 2. Any time before event 3. Silver is struck, knocked down, but shakes it off and gets up again. (If used, the *wall of force* between the parties drops, though the encounters are still considered separate.)

Event 3. Any time before Qu'lith drops below 150 hitpoints. Axcelia is struck by an enemy. She yelps out in pain and casts a spell – carelessly at her attacker – the spell inadvertently strikes the party (or Silver if the party is not close enough). *Fireball* or *lightning bolt* can be used for this and to calculate damage. If the party considers turning on Axcelia, point out that she's still fighting their enemies.

Event 4. When Qu'lith drops below 80hp. Can be triggered at 100hp for weaker parties. Read or paraphrase the following (mages may recognize that Axcelia casts *power word kill*):

The battle rages; you deal Qu'lith another blow, yet she lives. Cacophonous laughter begins to echo in the massive chamber. Axcelia is laughing. Her guardian is dead, her vestments are torn and blooded from the battle and a large gash is open above her eye. Yet her smile shines, contrasted by her dark skin. "You falter Qu'lith!" she says, "even one servant of the dark mother can bring your entire house to its knees. Imagine what we will do with my house restored! What we have done here is but the beginning. I have seen another world – a world ripe for the taking! I have seen too into the abyss and I have seen – her voice changes now to the marilith's hissing tone – I have sssseen sssuch sservants in the void, sssoo many more to cometo fighttt, , to feasst..."

Qu'lith – bloody yet defiant – responds with "It'll take more than this to bring down a Scion of Valsharess! I am not dead yet!"

Axcelia's smile turns cruel and knowing: "Oh, but you are. My companions have succeeded in their task of weakening you and now all that's left for you is to..." Axcelia pauses and all sound in the room becomes muffled, Qu'lith's expression turns to shock and with a crystal and final clarity, Axcelia utters a single arcane word of immense power. "Die!" she says and Qu'lith's body drops lifeless to the floor. She is dead.

Yet Axcelia's triumphant smile lasts only a moment as she suddenly stumbles and crumples to her knees. Standing behind Axcelia, holding a blood-drenched ceremonial dagger in her trembling hand is Silver.

She drops the dagger in time to catch Axcelia's faltering form. "Your revenge is at hand, matron and it is glorious! But this is the only way now. The bond is severed. You are free."

Axcelia raises a bloody hand from wound in her chest to Silver's pale-skinned face and whispers "Daughter... you are..." Her last words fade and she dies in Silver's arms.

Silver looks up at S'sheneth'rah and at you. "It is done now. All contracts fulfilled. All of us free."

Silver's Decision

Silver struck a deal with S'sheneth'rah that would allow the binding to be undone willingly in exchange for the marilith's freedom and a pact of peace. Silver knew that there was a risk to the matron's life, but by the end, she realized that Axcelia was too far gone and this was the only way to truly get rid of the marilith's corruptive influence.

With the drama over, the fight with the Vith'tyl forces can be called to an end (with Silver and S'sheneth'rah assisting in killing the rest of the Vith'tyl forces) or, if Qu'lith's death came very early

in the encounter, the remainder of the battle can be played out.

Once the Vith'tyl forces are dead and only Silver and S'sheneth'rah remain, read or paraphrase the following:

S'sheneth'rah looks at Silver and says "Ourrr pact isssssealed. I cannot harrmm you, norrr you me. Yet I can ssstill play withzss thessee – I have sssoo yearned to tear them apart. I can make you watch assss I kill them! Perhapsss you will break your pact to sssave them?" Silver looks to you and says "I am sorry. I cannot harm her now."

With that, S'sheneth'rah attacks the party. As of Axcelia's death, S'sheneth'rah is no longer planebound and can be banished as normal. She has no legendary resistance left and is down HP. Be sure to describe that she is in a weakened state.

If the party is extremely low on resources, Silver casts Mass Cure Wounds on them before combat begins but can do no more.

Encounter: S'sheneth'rah (Marilith)

- Very Weak: 75hp
- Weak 100hp
- Average: 125hp
- Strong: 150hp
- Very Strong: 175hp

The Sixth Sword – if it was not given to the party at the start of the adventure, one of S'sheneth'rah's swords is the magical rapier. Its bonuses apply to only one of her attacks (typically the sixth!) If it was given to the party, she wants it back and attacks its wielder. If its wielder is knocked unconscious, she takes the sword back and uses it. Note that S'sheneth'rah is too intelligent to mindlessly attack the same character if it is not a good combat tactic.

IMPORTANT:

Don't forget that any characters that had a social interaction (See **Appendix C**) with S'sheneth'rah during *Six Summoned Swords* now have to deal with the (unknown to them!) consequences of that choice.

Wrapping up the combat

As this combat happens, Zethlentyn troops (see **Part 4**) are storming the manor. Be ready to work that in to happen toward the end. If the situation looks dire for the party against S'sheneth'rah, consider having those troops arrive and put her down with an instantaneous volley of countless crossbow bolts, making an even more impressive entrance for them. (Don't take away the party's chance to defeat the marilith on their own if they are capable though!)

Part 4: Leave and Let Die?

Story Beat. The party must make one last choice.

As the combat wraps, sounds of countless booted footsteps are heard from above. Eventually the room is swarmed with a large number of well-armed drow in black armor – they are visibly different from the Vith'tyl forces and do not attack the party.

Their leader announces himself as a Lieutenant Meroth of the Sald'iar, the Zethlentyn Protectorate defense force. By Zethlentyn law, they are not to interfere with anything that happens on Vith'tyl grounds. However, a loose devil getting onto the street has them on alert and they're here to ensure that any threats to the Protectorate don't leave the grounds.

Meroth is composed and cold. He'd love nothing more than to kill all the surfacers, but the protectorate laws are clear on the matter and he is not allowed unless provoked.

Shortly after his introduction, one of Meroth's subordinates comes in with a report that the manor is clear and that no Vith'tyl noble survivors remain. To this, Meroth says "Very good, it's always easier when no survivors remain. Otherwise we get a mess." He looks at Axcelia's body – "my, my, that one sure did Lolth proud. Alas, not proud enough." As he's surveying the scene, he notices Silver and with a clear disdain says "and this filthy half-breed, she is one of you... adventurers... I suppose?"

Silver says nothing and remains still. She is afraid and uncertain as to what the Protectorate would do with her.

If the party reveals Silver's true identity, Meroth ponders the fact and informs the party that she is now in the Protectorate's custody. This is no longer negotiable.

If the party conceals Silver's identity, the characters involved in the conversation must pass a DC13 Charisma (Deception) check or Meroth grows more suspicious and asks more questions. A second check then may be attempted. If the second check also fails, the protectorate takes Silver into custody.

If Silver is taken into custody, she does not object. She hands one of the party a note "this is the promise fulfilled. You will be able to remove the Chaos Web with this." The note contains coordinates to a location nearby to Axcelia's surface castle. With that, she is escorted out.

Whether Silver is with the party or not, the characters – unable to teleport from where they are – are given a drow heavy escort down a path out of the Protectorate territory. They're allowed to take any loot or slaves that they rescued ("obtained" to the drow) during the mission. Shortly after, they are able to either teleport out or reach the surface via a known path.

If Silver is with the party, she promises that she will begin the dispelling of the Chaos Web immediately and indeed, in a few days the web is fully gone.

If Silver is not with the party, upon visiting the location in Silver's note, the party finds a buried cache, within it, is a carefully made copy of Axcelia's notes on the weaving of the Chaos Web. This information, in the hands of a powerful mage, allows for *Axcelia's Chaos Web* to be completely removed with minimal effort.

If the party rescued one or both of the elf siblings, their sister provides the party her gratitude and all the coin she had saved from years of work.

Epilogue: A Measure of Solace

Shortly after returning to the surface, one member of the party finds a small package on their person. One of the masked Sald'iar must have slipped this to them.

The package consists of a large flat coin that is wrapped in cloth. The coin is beautifully crafted with the image of a female form with a sword silhouetted against a large disc. This is the symbol of the drow goddess Eilistraee. The back of the coin has an unfamiliar sigil.

If either of the elves or Silver made it back with the party, they identify the sigil on the back of the coin as belonging to one of the noble houses of the Zethlentyn Protectorate.

On the cloth itself, written – crudely and quickly in common – are a date, time and coordinates which seem to be near to a small village not far from Phlan. The date is several tendays away and what one will find there remains to be seen.

This concludes the *Swords Below the Moonsea* saga. Adventures featuring the drow of the Zethlentyn Protectorate will continue with *The House of the Moon*.

Adventure Rewards

Advancement and Treasure Checkpoints

This is a 4 hour, Tier 2 adventure. As such, characters may receive up to 4 advancement and treasure checkpoints for completing this adventure. See the ALDMG (*Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide*) for more information. No additional checkpoints are granted for completing optional content.

Magic Item Unlock

With their actions in this adventure, characters may be able to unlock this magic item:

The Sixth Sword (+2 Rapier with Guardian minor property)

Weapon, rare

This is one of marilith S'Sheneth'rah's six swords. In battle she was known for her tactical superiority and quick striking. Through years of use, some of her essence became imbued into the sword's magic and it occasionally twitches at critical times to put itself to a ready and deadly position. As a result of this, the wielder gains a +2 bonus to initiative.

This item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. This item can be found in **Player Handout 3**.

Consumables

With their actions in this adventure, characters may be able to gain the following consumable:

Scroll of Banishment

Spell scroll, rare

This item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Story Awards

A Moon Coin and a Note. You've received a mysterious coin and note from an Eilistraee-worshipping house of the Zethlentyn Protectorate. Coordinates in the note refer to an aboveground location. Is this a meeting? The only certain thing is that someone in the Underdark has taken an interest in you.

This story award has no effect unless specifically referenced in another adventure.

DM Rewards

In exchange for running this adventure, you earn advancement and treasure checkpoints and downtime as though you played the adventure, but none of the other rewards listed above.

However, this adventure may qualify for rewards earned by completing DM Quests. See the ALDMG (*Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide*) for more information about DM Quests.

Monster/NPC Statistics

Axcelia Axcelon (Drow Archmage)

Medium humanoid (Elf), Lawful Evil

Armor Class 12 (15 with mage armor)

Hit Points 99 (18d8+18)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	20 (+5)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Int +9, Wis +6

Skills Arcana +13, History +13

Senses darkvision 120 ft, passive Perception 12

Damage Resistances damage from spells; non magical bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing (from stonewood)

Languages Undercommon, Common, Elvish, Abyssal, Infernal, Draconic

Challenge 12 (8,400 XP)

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

Spellcasting. Axcelia is an 18th-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks). She can cast **disguise self** and **invisibility** at will and has the following wizard spells prepared:

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

prestidigitation, *shocking grasp*

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

2nd level (3 slots): *detect thoughts*, *mirror image*, *misty step*

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

4th level (3 slots): *banishment*, *fire shield*, *stonewood**

5th level (3 slots): *cone of cold*, *screaming*, *wall of force*

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

7th level (1 slot): *teleport*

8th level (1 slot): *mind blank**

9th level (1 slot): *time stop*

* The archmage casts these spells on itself before combat

Actions

Dagger. Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

Source: *Monster Manual*

Adjustments

Axcelia's spell list differs from the one presented here. Refer to page 7 for her spell list.

Black Abishai

Medium fiend, lawful evil

Armor Class 15 (Natural)

Hit Points 58 (9d8 + 18)

Speed 30 ft., fly 40 ft.

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

Saving Throws DEX +6, WIS +6

Senses Darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 16

Skills Perception +6, Stealth +6

Damage Resistances Cold; Bludgeoning, Piercing, and Slashing from Nonmagical Attacks that aren't Silvered

Damage Immunities Acid, Fire, Poison

Condition Immunities Poisoned

Languages Draconic, Infernal telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Devil's Sight. Magical darkness doesn't impede the abishai's darkvision.

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

Magic Weapons. The abishai's weapon attacks are magical.

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

Actions

Multiattack. The abishai makes three attacks: two with its scimitar and one with its bite.

Scimitar. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d6 + 3) slashing damage.

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 8 (1d10 + 3) piercing damage plus 9 (2d8) acid damage.

Creeping Darkness (Recharge 6). The abishai casts darkness at a point within 120 feet of it, requiring no components. Wisdom is its spellcasting ability for this spell. While the spell persists, the abishai can move the area of darkness up to 60 feet as a bonus action.

Source: *Mordekainen's Tome of Foes*

Bureaucrat (Drow Bandit Captain)

Medium humanoid, any

Armor Class 15 (Studded Leather)

Hit Points 65 (10d8 + 20)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws STR +4, DEX +5, WIS +2

Skills Athletics +4, Deception +4

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Undercommon, common

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Actions

Multiattack. The captain makes three melee attacks: two with its scimitar and one with its dagger. Or the captain makes two ranged attacks with its daggers.

Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) slashing damage.

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage.

Reactions

Parry. The captain adds 2 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, the captain must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

Source: *Monster Manual*

Helltouched or Drow

Where the adventure calls for a Helltouched and/or Drow version of this monster, refer to page 7 for adjustments.

Bone Devil

Large fiend (devil), lawful evil

Armor Class 19 (natural armor)

Hit Points 142 (15d10+60)

Speed 40 ft., fly 40 ft.

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

Saving Throws Int +5, Wis +6, Cha +7

Skills Deception +7, Insight +6

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 9

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

Damage Immunities fire, poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Languages Infernal, telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 12 (8,400 XP)

Devil's Sight. Magical darkness doesn't impede the devil's darkvision.

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

Actions

Multiattack. The devil makes three attacks: two with its claws and one with its sting.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) slashing damage.

Sting. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) piercing damage plus 17 (5d6) poison damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Source: *Monster Manual*

Drow

Medium humanoid (elf), neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (chain shirt)

Hit Points 13 (3d8)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Perception +2, Stealth +4

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 12

Language Elvish, Undercommon

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Fey Ancestry. The drow has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put the drow to sleep.

Innate Spellcasting. The drow's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 11). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:
At will: dancing lights

1/day each: darkness, faerie fire

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in sunlight, the drow has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Actions

Shortsword. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

Hand Crossbow. Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 hour. If the saving throw fails by 5 or more, the target is also unconscious while poisoned in this way. The target wakes up if it takes damage or if another creature takes an action to shake it awake.

Source: *Monster Manual*

(Drow) Assassin

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

Armor Class 15 (Studded Leather)

Hit Points 78 (12d8 + 24)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws DEX +6, INT +4

Skills Acrobatics +6, Deception +3, Perception +3, Stealth +9

Damage Resistances Poison

Senses Passive Perception 13

Languages Thieves' cant plus any two languages

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Assassinate. During its first turn, the assassin has advantage on attack rolls against any creature that hasn't taken a turn. Any hit the assassin scores against a surprised creature is a critical hit.

Evasion. If the assassin is subjected to an effect that allows it to make a Dexterity saving throw to take only half damage, the assassin instead takes no damage if it succeeds on the saving throw, and only half damage if it fails.

Sneak Attack. Once per turn, the assassin deals an extra 14 (4d6) damage when it hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of the assassin that isn't incapacitated and the assassin doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

Actions

Multiattack. The assassin makes two shortsword attacks.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 24 (7d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Light Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 24 (7d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Source: *Monster Manual*

Helltouched or Drow

Where the adventure calls for a Helltouched and/or version of this monster, refer to page 7 for adjustments.

Drow Elite Warrior

Medium humanoid (Elf), neutral evil

Armor Class 18 (studded leather, shield)

Hit Points 71 (11d8+22)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (1)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Dex +7, Con +5, Wis +4

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +10

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception: 14

Languages Elvish, Undercommon

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Fey Ancestry. The drow has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put the drow to sleep.

Innate Spellcasting. The drow's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 12). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: dancing lights

1/day each: darkness, faerie fire, levitate (*self only*)

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in sunlight, the drow has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Actions

Multiattack. The drow makes two shortsword attacks.

Shortsword. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) poison damage.

Hand Crossbow. Ranged Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 hour. If the saving throw fails by 5 or more, the target is also unconscious while poisoned in this way. The target wakes up if it takes damage or if another creature takes an action to shake it awake.

Reactions

Parry. The drow adds 3 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, the drow must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

Source: *Monster Manual*

Helltouched

Where the adventure calls for a Helltouched version of this monster, refer to page 7 for adjustments.

Drow House Captain

Medium humanoid (Elf), neutral evil

Armor Class 16 (Chain Mail)

Hit Points 162 (25d8 + 50)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	19 (+4)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)

Saving Throws DEX +8, CON +6, WIS +6

Skills Perception +6, Stealth +8

Senses Darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages Elvish, Undercommon

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Battle Command. As a bonus action, the drow targets one ally he can see within 30 feet of him. If the target can see or hear the drow, the target can use its reaction to make one melee attack or to take the Dodge or Hide action.

Fey Ancestry. The drow has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put the drow to sleep.

Innate Spellcasting. The drow's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13). He can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *dancing lights*

1/day each: *darkness*, *faerie fire*, *levitate* (self only)

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in sunlight, the drow has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Actions

Multiattack. The drow makes three attacks: two with his scimitar and one with his whip or his hand crossbow.

Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d6 + 4) slashing damage plus 14 (4d6) poison damage.

Whip. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d4 + 4) slashing damage. If the target is an ally, it has advantage on attack rolls until the end of its next turn.

Hand Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 13

Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 hour. If the saving throw fails by 5 or more, the target is also unconscious while poisoned in this way. The target regains consciousness if it takes damage or if another creature takes an action to shake it.

Reactions

Parry. The drow adds 3 to his AC against one melee attack that would hit him. To do so, the drow must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

Source: *Mordekainen's Tome of Foes*

Helltouched

Where the adventure calls for a Helltouched version of this monster, refer to page 7 for adjustments.

Drow Inquisitor

Medium humanoid, neutral evil

Armor Class 16 (Breastplate)

Hit Points 143 (22d8 + 44)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	21 (+5)	20 (+5)

Saving Throws CON +7, WIS +10, CHA +10

Skills Insight +10, Perception +10, Religion +8, Stealth+7

Senses Darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 20

Condition Immunities Frightened

Languages Elvish, Undercommon

Challenge 14 (11,500 XP)

Discern Lie. The drow knows when she hears a creature speak a lie in a language she knows.

Fey Ancestry. The drow has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put the drow to sleep.

Innate Spellcasting. The drow's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 18). She can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *dancing lights, detect magic*

1/day each: *clairvoyance, darkness, detect thoughts, dispel magic, faerie fire, levitate* (self only), *suggestion*

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

Spellcasting. The drow is a 12th-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 18, +10 to hit with spell attacks). She has the following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *guidance, message, poison*

spray, resistance, thaumaturgy

1st level (4 slots): *bane, cure wounds, inflict wounds*

2nd level (3 slots): *blindness/deafness, silence, spiritual weapon*

3rd level (3 slots): *bestow curse, dispel magic, magic circle*

4th level (3 slots): *banishment, divination, freedom of movement*

5th level (2 slots): *contagion, dispel evil and good, insect plague*

6th level (1 slot): *harm, true seeing*

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in sunlight, the drow has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Actions

Multiattack. The drow makes three death lance attacks.

Death Lance. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 8 (1d6 + 5) piercing damage plus 18 (4d8) necrotic damage. The target's hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the necrotic damage it takes. This reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if its hit point maximum is reduced to 0.

Source: *Mordekainen's Tome of Foes*

Drow Shadowblade

Medium humanoid, neutral evil

Armor Class 17 (Studded Leather)

Hit Points 150 (20d8 + 60)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	21 (+5)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)

Saving Throws DEX +9, CON +7, WIS +6

Skills Perception +6, Stealth +9

Senses Darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages Elvish, Undercommon

Challenge 11 (7,200 XP)

Fey Ancestry. The drow has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put the drow to sleep.

Innate Spellcasting. The drow's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13). He can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *dancing lights*

1/day each: *darkness*, *faerie fire*, *levitate* (self only)

Shadow Step. While in dim light or darkness, the drow can teleport as a bonus action up to 60 feet to an unoccupied space it can see that is also in dim light or darkness. It then has advantage on the first melee attack it makes before the end of the turn.

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in sunlight, the drow has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Actions

Multiattack. The drow makes two attacks with its shadow sword. If either attack hits and the target is within 10 feet of a 5-foot cube of darkness created by the shadow sword on a previous turn, the drow can dismiss that darkness and cause the target to take 21 (6d6) necrotic damage. The drow can dismiss darkness in this way no more than once per turn.

Shadow Sword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d6 + 5) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) necrotic damage and 10 (3d6) poison damage. The drow can then fill an unoccupied 5-foot cube within 5 feet of the target with magical darkness, which remains for 1 minute.

Hand Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d6 + 5) piercing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 hour. If the saving throw fails by 5 or more, the target is also unconscious while poisoned in this way. The target regains consciousness if it takes damage or if another creature takes an action to shake it.

Source: *Mordekainen's Tome of Foes*

Helltouched

Where the adventure calls for a Helltouched version of this monster, refer to page 7 for adjustments.

(Drow) Warlord

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 18 (Plate)

Hit Points 229 (27d8 + 108)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws STR +9, DEX +7, CON +8

Skills Athletics +9, Intimidation +8, Perception +5, Persuasion +8

Senses Passive Perception 15

Languages any two languages

Challenge 12 (8,400 XP)

Indomitable (3/Day). The warlord can reroll a saving throw it fails. It must use the new roll.

Survivor. The warlord regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn if it has at least 1 hit point but fewer hit points than half its hit point maximum.

Actions

Multiattack. The warlord makes two weapon attacks.

Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6 + 5) slashing damage.

Shortbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

Legendary Actions

The warlord can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The warlord regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Weapon Attack. The warlord makes a weapon attack.

Command Ally. The warlord targets one ally it can see within 30 feet of it. If the target can see and hear the warlord, the target can make one weapon attack as a reaction and gains advantage on the attack roll.

Frighten Foe (Costs 2 Actions). The warlord targets one enemy it can see within 30 feet of it. If the target can see and hear it, the target must succeed on a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened until the end of warlord's next turn.

Drow

Where the adventure calls for a Drow version of this monster, refer to page 7 for adjustments.

Source: *Volo's Guide to Monsters*

Guardian of Lolth (Shield Guardian)

Large construct, unaligned

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 142 (15d10+60)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	8 (-1)	18 (+4)	7 (-2)	10 (0)	3 (-4)

Senses blindsight 10 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned

Languages understands commands given in any language but can't speak

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Bound. The shield guardian is magically bound to an amulet. As long as the guardian and its amulet are on the same plane of existence, the amulet's wearer can telepathically call the guardian to travel to it, and the guardian knows the distance and direction to the amulet. If the guardian is within 60 feet of the amulet's wearer, half of any damage the wearer takes (rounded up) is transferred to the guardian.

Regeneration. The shield guardian regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn if it has at least 1 hit point.

Spell Storing. A spellcaster who wears the shield guardian's amulet can cause the guardian to store one spell of 4th level or lower. To do so, the wearer must cast the spell on the guardian. The spell has no effect but is stored within the guardian. When commanded to do so by the wearer or when a situation arises that was predefined by the spellcaster, the guardian casts the stored spell with any parameters set by the original caster, requiring no components. When the spell is cast or a new spell is stored, any previously stored spell is lost. (Axcelia's Guardian has *dispel magic* stored.)

Actions

Multiattack. The guardian makes two fist attacks.

Fist. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

Reactions

Shield. When a creature makes an attack against the wearer of the guardian's amulet, the guardian grants a +2 bonus to the wearer's AC if the guardian is within 5 feet of the wearer.

Source: *Monster Manual*

Merregon

Medium fiend, lawful evil

Armor Class 16 (Natural)

Hit Points 45 (6d8 + 18)

Speed 30 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	14 (+2)	17 (+3)	6 (-2)	12 (+1)	8 (-1)

Senses Darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Damage Resistances Cold; Bludgeoning, Piercing, and Slashing from Nonmagical Attacks that aren't Silvered

Damage Immunities Fire, Poison

Condition Immunities Frightened, Poisoned

Languages understands Infernal but can't speak, telepathy 120 ft

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Devil's Sight. Magical darkness doesn't impede the merregon's darkvision.

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

Actions

Multiattack. The merregon makes two halberd attacks, or if an allied fiend of challenge rating 6 or higher is within 60 feet of it, the merregon makes three halberd attacks.

Halberd. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 9 (1d10 + 4) slashing damage.

Heavy Crossbow. Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d10 + 2) piercing damage.

Reactions

Loyal Bodyguard. When another fiend within 5 feet of the merregon is hit by an attack, the merregon causes itself to be hit instead.

Source: *Mordekainen's Tome of Foes*

Mimic

Medium monstrosity (shapechanger), neutral

Armor Class 12 (Natural Armor)

Hit Points 58 (9d8 + 18)

Speed 15 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)	5 (-3)	13 (+1)	8 (-1)

Skills Stealth +5

Senses Darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Damage Immunities Acid

Condition Immunities Prone

Languages --

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Shapechanger. The mimic can use its action to polymorph into an object or back into its true, amorphous form. Its statistics are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

Adhesive (Object Form Only). The mimic adheres to anything that touches it. A Huge or smaller creature adhered to the mimic is also grappled by it (escape DC 13). Ability checks made to escape this grapple have disadvantage.

False Appearance (Object Form Only). While the mimic remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from an ordinary object.

Grappler. The mimic has advantage on attack rolls against any creature grappled by it.

Actions

Pseudopod. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) bludgeoning damage. If the mimic is in object form, the target is subjected to its Adhesive trait.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage plus 4 (1d8) acid damage.

Source: *Monster Manual*

Qu'lith Del'Valsharess (Drow Favored Consort)

Medium humanoid, neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (18 With Mage Armor)

Hit Points 225 (30d8 + 90)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	20 (+5)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)	15 (+2)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws DEX +11, CON +9, CHA +10

Skills Acrobatics +11, Athletics +8, Perception +8, Stealth +11

Senses Darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages Elvish, Undercommon

Challenge 18 (20,000 XP)

Fey Ancestry. The drow has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put the drow to sleep.

Innate Spellcasting. The drow's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13). He can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *dancing lights*

1/day each: *darkness*, *faerie fire*, *levitate (self only)*

Spellcasting. The drow is a 11th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 18, +10 to hit with spell attacks). It has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *mage hand*, *message*, *poison spray*, *shocking grasp*, *ray of frost*

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

2nd level (3 slots): *gust of wind*, *invisibility*, *misty step*, *shatter*

3rd level (3 slots): *counterspell*, *fireball*, *haste*

4th level (3 slots): *dimension door*, *Otiluke's resilient sphere*

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

6th level (1 slot): *chain lightning*

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in sunlight, the drow has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

War Magic. When the drow uses its action to cast a spell, it can make one weapon attack as a bonus action.

Actions

Multiattack. The drow makes three scimitar attacks.

Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d6 + 5) slashing damage plus 18 (4d8) poison damage. In addition, the target has disadvantage on the next saving throw it makes against

a spell the drow casts before the end of the drow's next turn.

Hand Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d6 + 5) piercing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 hour. If the saving throw fails by 5 or more, the target is also unconscious while poisoned in this way. The target regains consciousness if it takes damage or if another creature takes an action to shake it.

Source: *Mordekainen's Tome of Foes*

Rug of Smothering

Large construct, unaligned

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 33 (6d10)

Speed 10 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	1 (-5)	3 (-4)	1 (-5)

Senses Blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 6

Damage Immunities Poison, Psychic

Condition Immunities Blinded, Charmed, Deafened, Frightened, Paralyzed, Petrified, Poisoned

Languages --

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Antimagic Susceptibility. The rug is incapacitated while in the area of an antimagic field. If targeted by dispel magic, the rug must succeed on a Constitution saving throw against the caster's spell save DC or fall unconscious for 1 minute.

Damage Transfer. While it is grappling a creature, the rug takes only half the damage dealt to it, and the creature grappled by the rug takes the other half.

False Appearance. While the rug remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a normal rug.

Actions

Smother. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one Medium or smaller creature. *Hit:* The creature is grappled (escape DC 13). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, blinded, and at risk of suffocating, and the rug can't smother another target. In addition, at the start of each of the target's turns, the target takes 10 (2d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

Source: *Monster Manual*

Silver (Diviner)

Medium humanoid (half-elf), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 12 (15 With Mage Armor)

Hit Points 67 (15d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)

Saving Throws INT +7, WIS +4

Skills Arcana +7, History +7

Senses Passive Perception 11

Languages any four languages

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Spellcasting. The diviner is a 15th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). The diviner has the following wizard spells prepared:

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

1st level (4 slots): *detect magic*, * *feather fall*, *mage armor*

2nd level (3 slots): *detect thoughts*, * *locate object*, * *scorching ray*

3rd level (3 slots): *clairvoyance*, * *fly*, *fireball*

4th level (3 slots): *arcane eye*, * *ice storm*, *stoneskin*

5th level (2 slots): *Rary's telepathic bond*, * *scrying**

6th level (1 slot): *mass suggestion*, *true seeing**

7th level (1 slot): *delayed blast fireball*, *teleport*

8th level (1 slot): *maze*

*Divination spell of 1st level or higher

Portent (Recharges after the Diviner Casts a Divination Spell of 1st Level or Higher). When the diviner or a creature it can see makes an attack roll, a saving throw, or an ability check, the diviner can roll a d20 and choose to use this roll in place of the attack roll, saving throw, or ability check.

Actions

Quarterstaff. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 (1d6 – 1) bludgeoning damage, or 3 (1d8 – 1) bludgeoning damage if used with two hands.

Source: *Volo's Guide to Monsters*

Adjustments

Silver's spell list differs from the one presented here. Refer to page 7 for her spell list.

Spined Devil

Small fiend (devil), lawful evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 22 (5d6+5)

Speed 20 ft., fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (0)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	11 (0)	14 (+2)	8 (-1)

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 12

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

Damage Immunities fire, poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Languages Infernal, telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Devil's Sight. Magical darkness doesn't impede the devil's darkvision.

Flyby. The devil doesn't provoke an opportunity attack when it flies out of an enemy's reach.

Limited Spines. The devil has twelve tail spines. Used spines regrow by the time the devil finishes a long rest.

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

Actions

Multiattack. The devil makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its fork or two with its tail spines.

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

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

Tail Spine. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 20/80 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage plus 3 (1d6) fire damage.

Source: *Monster Manual*

Slave (Commoner)

Medium humanoid, any

Armor Class 10

Hit Points 4 (1d8)

Speed 30 ft.

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

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

S'sheneth'rah (Marilith)

Large fiend (demon), chaotic evil

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 189 (18d10+90)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	20 (+5)	20 (+5)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	20 (+5)

Saving Throws Str +9, Con +10, Wis +8, Cha +10

Senses truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 13

Damage Resistances cold, fire, lightning, bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Languages Abyssal, telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 16 (15,000 XP)

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

Magic Weapons. The marilith's weapon attacks are magical.

Reactive. The marilith can take one reaction on every turn in combat.

Actions

Multiattack. The marilith can make seven attacks: six with its longswords and one with its tail.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) slashing damage.

Tail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 15 (2d10 + 4) bludgeoning damage. If the target is Medium or smaller, it is grappled (escape DC 19). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, the marilith can automatically hit the target with its tail, and the marilith can't make tail attacks against other targets.

Teleport. The marilith magically teleports, along with any equipment it is wearing or carrying, up to 120 feet to an unoccupied space it can see.

Reactions

Parry. The marilith adds 5 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, the marilith must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

Source: Monster Manual

Adjustments

Until the final encounter with her, S'sheneth'rah's "planebound" state prevents her from being dismissed from the material plane. She also has legendary resistance 3/day.

Venthior Vith'tyl (Drow Gloom Weaver)

Medium humanoid (elf), neutral

Armor Class 14 (17 With Mage Armor)

Hit Points 104 (16d8 + 32)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws DEX +8, CON +6

Damage Immunities Necrotic

Condition Immunities Charmed, Exhaustion

Senses Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 11

Languages Undercommon, Elvish

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Burden of Time. Beasts and humanoids, other than shadar-kai, have disadvantage on saving throws while within 10 feet of the gloom weaver.

Fey Ancestry. The gloom weaver has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put it to sleep.

Innate Spellcasting. The gloom weaver's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *arcane eye*, *mage armor*, *speak with dead*

1/day each: *arcane gate*, *bane*, *compulsion*, *confusion*, *true seeing*

Spellcasting. The gloom weaver is a 12th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks). It regains its expended spell slots when it finishes a short or long rest. It knows the following warlock spells:
Cantrips (at will): *chill touch* (3d8 damage), *eldritch blast* (3 beams, +4 bonus to each damage roll), *minor illusion*, *prestidigitation*
1st–5th level (3 5th-level slots): *armor of Agathys*, *blight*, *darkness*, *dream*, *invisibility*, *fear*, *hypnotic pattern*, *major image*, *contact other plane*, *vampiric touch*, *witch bolt*

Actions

Multiattack. The gloom weaver makes two spear attacks and casts one spell that takes 1 action to cast.

Shadow Spear. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage, or 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage if used with two hands, plus 26 (4d12) necrotic damage.

Reactions

Misty Escape (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). When the gloom weaver takes damage, it

turns invisible and teleports up to 60 feet to an unoccupied space it can see. It remains invisible until the start of its next turn or until it attacks or casts a spell.

Source: *Mordekainen's Tome of Foes*

Warlock of the Fiend

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 12 (15 with mage armor)

Hit Points 78 (12d8+24)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (0)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws: Wis +4, Cha +7

Skills: Arcana +4, Deception +7, Persuasion +7, Religion +4

Senses: darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Damage Resistances: slashing damage from nonmagical attacks not made with silvered weapons

Languages: any two languages (usually Abyssal or Infernal)

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

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

At will: *alter self*, *false life*, *levitate (self only)*, *mage armor (self only)*, *silent image*

Spellcasting. The warlock is a 17th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). It regains its expended spell slots when it finishes a short or long rest. It knows the following warlock spells:

Cantrips (at will): *eldritch blast*, *fire bolt*, *friends*, *mage hand*, *minor illusion*, *prestidigitation*, *shocking grasp*
1st-5th level (4 5th-level slots): *banishment*, *burning hands*, *flame strike*, *hellish rebuke*, *magic circle*, *scorching ray*, *scrying*, *stinking cloud*, *suggestion*, *wall of fire*

Dark One's Own Luck (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). When the warlock makes an ability check or saving throw, it can add a d10 to the roll. It can do this after the roll is made but before any of the roll's effects occur.

Actions

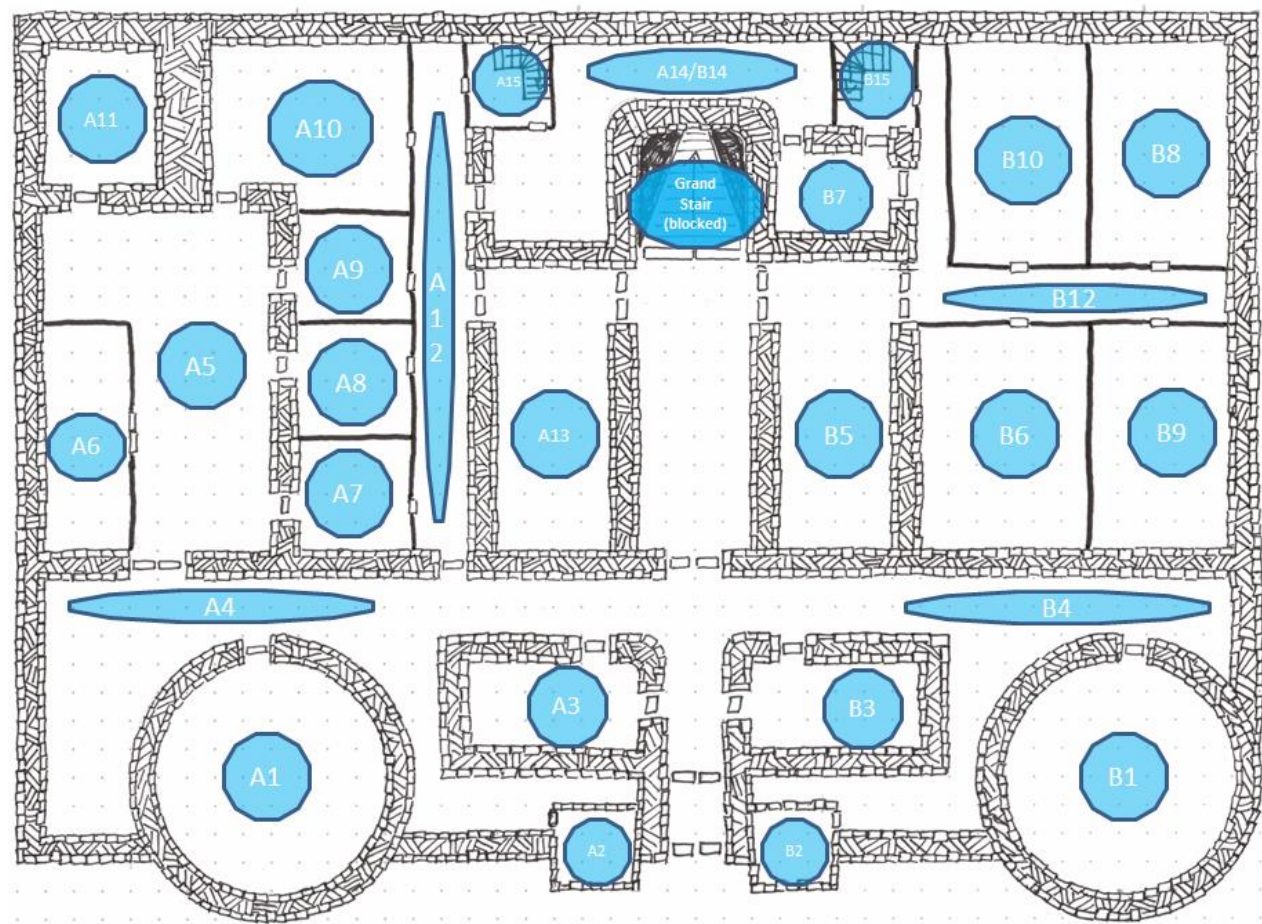
Mace. Melee Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage plus 10 (3d6) fire damage.

Source: Volo's Guide to Monsters

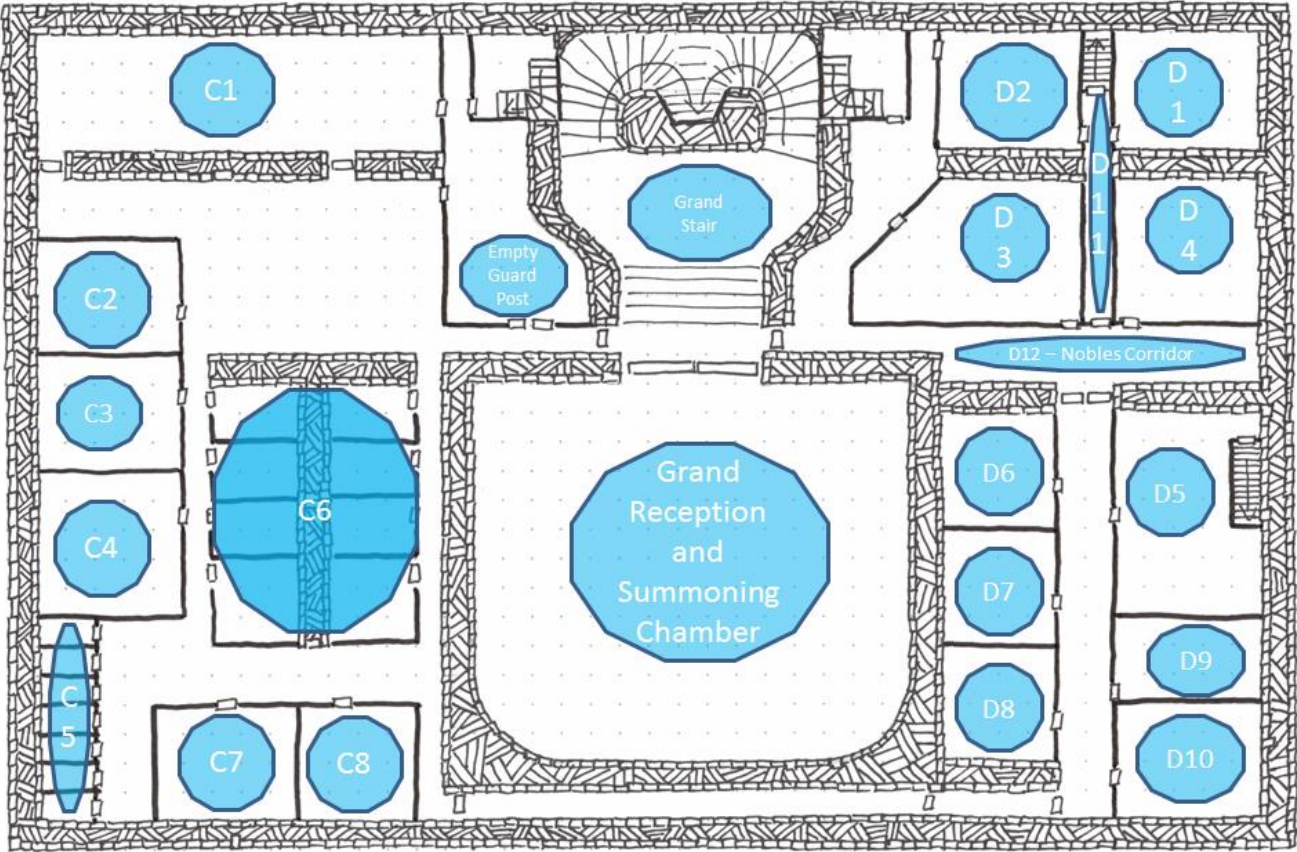
Helltouched and/or drow

Where the adventure calls for a Helltouched and/or drow version of this monster, refer to page 7 for adjustments.

Map 1: First (Ground) Floor



Map 2: Second (Lower) Floor



Appendix A. Location and NPC Summary

Location and NPC Summary

The following NPCs, locations and entities feature prominently in this adventure. Portrait cards for main NPCs are provided in **Appendix B**.

Houses and Organizations

Zethlentyn Protectorate. A geopolitical alliance of drow houses. The protectorate is religion-agnostic and allows houses of different faiths to co-operate in trade and mutual protection from external threats.

House Axcelon. A lower house of the Zethlentyn Protectorate. Worshipers of Lolth and until recently the purveyors of a large diamond mine, a joint-venture with House Vith'tyl.

House Vith'tyl. The 7th house of the Zethlentyn Protectorate. This house does not worship Lolth. They draw their power from summoning and/or enslaving devils.

The Sald'iar. The Sald'iar are the drow armed forces that serve the Protectorate itself. Members of the Sald'iar give up their house allegiances and names upon joining.

Axcelia Axcelon and Companions

Axcelia Axcelon (Axe-sell-ya). Female drow mage, last surviving member of House Axcelon. Worshiper of Lolth.

Silver. Young female apprentice of Axcelia, has drow features but pale white skin. Actually Axcelia's half-drow daughter. The two do not refer to each other in familial terms.

S'sheneth'rah (Shae-net-RAH). A marilith demon summoned by Axcelia.

House Vith'tyl

Lemethra Vith'tyl (Le-meth-ra). [Deceased] Female Drow War Priest originally sent with a war party to recover Axcelia after her brother Shintyrr's failure. May have been killed by the characters during *Six Summoned Swords*, otherwise was killed by Axcelia in a later confrontation.

Shintyrr Vith'tyl (Shin-teer). [Deceased] Male Drow Assassin of House Vith'tyl – brutally killed by S'sheneth'rah at Axcelia's bidding (during *Six Summoned Swords*)

Venthior Vith'tyl (Van-thee-or). Male Drow. Venthior is studious and ambitious. Rather than taking on infernal powers, he has been doing research focused on the Shadowfel. He enjoys illusions and deception and deploys dark powers that he's learned from the Shadar-Kai.

Esephile Vith'tyl (Eh-ze-fill-ee). Female Drow. Esephile is the least accomplished noble of house Vith'tyl. She is the house's spoiled socialite who prefers to use her looks and social connections to further her pursuits.

Summoner Aberteth (Aber-teth). Male Drow. The senior summoner of the House, Aberteth deals first hand with devils brought into service. He is always researching ways to summon new and more powerful fiends.

Qu'lith Del'Valsharess (Kew-leeth). Female Drow, leader of House Vith'tyl. Proud and methodical. It is Qu'lith's mysterious pact with the powers of the nine hells that allows House Vith'tyl to deal with devils. The Del'Valsharess title roughly translates to "of the Queen". Qu'lith has a particular disdain for the worshippers of Lolth, which is typically well-hidden.

Other Personages

Lieutenant Meroth (Meh-roth). Male drow. Imposing, experienced and entirely devoted to carrying out his duties. He is in charge of the Sald'iar force dispatched to seal the Vith'tyl Manor.

Appendix B. NPC Portrait Tent Cards

S'sheneth'rah is a Marilith. She was summoned into service by Axcelia, but the binding ritual was interrupted and she managed to get away. She is now in a conflicted "half-bound" state the result of which is similar to having dual personalities. The bound part of her tells her to serve Axcelia—to destroy all of the drow's enemies. She always hisses when she talks. A Marilith is an evil creature by nature, but also one that is brilliantly intelligent and a master tactician. She is unable to directly attack Axcelia but yearns to be free of the bond. During her attempt to free herself, S'sheneth'rah discovered that her life force is somehow bound to Axcelia's and that killing the drow mage might not work. Over the years spent on the surface, the contrast struggle for control with Axcelia has made S'sheneth'rah even more feral and desperate. Yet she obeys. Obeys and waits. Fate: S'sheneth'rah is an important NPC throughout all 3 parts of Swords Below the Moonssea and must survive to see the conclusion of Six Swords Unbound.

Roleplaying S'sheneth'rah



S'sheneth'rah
(shae-net-rah)

Axcelia Axcelon is a powerful Drow mage and a faithful servant of Lolth. Having been betrayed and seen her entire house slaughtered at the hands of House Vith'tyl, her sole drive in life is vengeance. Unable to fully bind the marilith S'sheneth'rah, Axcelia is beginning to lose her mind—or rather, her mind and S'sheneth'rah's are beginning to somehow meld, with unpredictable and dire results. She is far too proud to ever willingly sever the binding—not is she sure that it can even be done without killing herself in the process. Axcelia's calling in life is magic. She has always had a strong connection to the weave so learning and manipulating spells came easy. All that drove her up to the point her house fell was study and desire for stronger, more powerful magic. It was to this end that she had decided to give birth—not to a drow, but to something even more powerful—yes, even parenthood was a magic experiment to her and so was born her half-blood daughter. Hate as she may the surface world, Axcelia is fully in control of her new surroundings aboveground. She feels protected, but at the same time that old yearning for revenge is a powerful force. Important: Throughout the party's interactions with Axcelia, it is important to pepper in some mild hints of madness that is slowly taking her— it generally manifests in demonic utterances in Abyssal, eyes glowing or hissing. These signs are evidence of her consciousness being invaded more and more by the marilith. These signs should not be so extreme so as to totally alienate the party. Some suggestions are provided throughout. Fate: Axcelia is an important NPC throughout all 3 parts of Swords Below the Moonssea and must survive to see the conclusion of Six Swords Unbound.

Roleplaying Axcelia



Axcelia Axcelon
(axe-sell-ya)

Roleplaying Qu'lith Del'Valsharess



Qu'lith Del'Valsharess

. Qu'lith Del'Valsharess is the head of House Vith'tyl. She is part of a secret sect of drow who have made a pact with the powers of the nine hells. The sealing of the deal goes back to a powerful drow who had called herself only "Valsharess", meaning "queen/ruler". While the Valsharess was defeated and her followers slaughtered, some survived and found new places where to follow in her footsteps. They call themselves the Scions of Valsharess and maintain the pact with infernal powers. Few aside from Qu'lith herself are aware of this history. Qu'lith has built House Vith'tyl from the ground and has aggressively moved against the other houses of Zethlentyn. Wiping out House Axcelon had been a bold and risky move that elevated House Vith'tyl within the house power hierarchy. Qu'lith is supremely confident and inspires undying devotion in her followers. Seeing Axcellia's power, she may realize that she had made a mistake, but her pride and confidence do not let her admit that a worshipper of Lolth and member of a lower house could possibly best her. She believe to the end that her infernal power will grant her victory.

Roleplaying Silver



Silver

As seen from afar, one might easily assume that Silver's unmistakable waist-long, snowwhite mane of tangled hair belongs to a drow elf. Her thin, athletic frame is also of a match. It is the pale, almost white skin that gives the woman who calls herself Silver away as something less – or perhaps more – than a pureblood drow. Whether due to her clear youth or a face that is as yet not accustomed to deceit, the expressions of her sharp features also betray her as someone different. There is a curiosity and – if not kindness – perhaps a lack of cruelty about her. In truth, Silver's name is an unpronounceable string of harsh old undercommon syllables that roughly translates as "of all the goddesses". She calls herself "Silver" by choice. Silver serves as the apprentice and confidant to Axcellia Axcelon. These are Axcellia's terms and they are kind. Another, might use terms like "daughter" or "heir", but in Axcellia's mind Silver is but a coldly calculated "creation" that might one day become an achievement. Born with natural predisposition to magic, Silver loves the boundless possibilities and inherent mischief of magical powers. Having been subjected to Axcellia's increasing paranoia, Silver has begun to worry about the matron. It has become clear to her that Axcellia's bond with her demon is driving them both insane. Something must be done and soon. Silver sees the capable adventurers as an opportunity. Fate: Silver is a key NPC in this adventure and must survive.

. The two abducted elves – Aelar and Carric Firahel have been enslaved for years. They were broken fairly early on and have served house Vith'tyl faithfully. During their indoctrination, they were each told that if one of them disobeyed, that the other would be killed. As such, part of their obedience is the fear for the other's safety. Carric has become a pleasure slave to one of the Vith'tyl nobles and has been treated well and given better quarters. Over the years, he's grown accustomed to this life of "privilege".

Fate: The fate of Aelar and Carric Firahel is not of importance to anyone other than their sister Naivara, who begs any that would listen to help find them.

Roleplaying Carric Firahel



Carric Firahel

Aelar Firahel's fate has not been as fortunate as his brother's. He has remained a laundry hand, working with a pair of recently taken humans. He is obedient enough for his brother's sake, but remains defiant at heart. He was recently rude to a guard and it was only his brother's good word that had him beaten and thrown into a cell rather than sent to the diamond mines.

Fate: The fate of Aelar and Carric Firahel is not of importance to anyone other than their sister Naivara, who begs any that would listen to help find them.

Roleplaying Aelar Firahel



Aelar Firahel

. Meroth is capable, composed and cold. He'd love nothing more than to kill all the surfacers, but the protectorate laws are clear on the matter and he is not allowed to do so unless provoked.

By Zethlentyn law, the Sald'iar are not to interfere with anything that happens on Vith'tyl grounds. However, after a loose devil got out onto the street causing chaos, they've arrived to ensure that any threats to the Protectorate don't leave the grounds. It is also not uncommon for the Sald'iar to be called in to verify the destruction of a House, so that it could be considered official. Meroth grasps perfectly well what has happened here and has no love (few Drow do) for House Vith'tyl.

Meroth's only interest here is to have the matter closed as soon as possible, so that he could report back.

Fate: Attacking Meroth and his forces is certain death.

Roleplaying Lieutenant Meroth



Lieutenant Meroth
of the Sald'iar

Appendix C. Story Tracking Codes Reference

Based on their actions during *Six Summoned Swords*, and *Six Striking swords*, characters were given a story tracking code. The code from *Six Summoned Swords* is 3 letters and can be interpreted as follows:

First Letter – Fate of the Three Sisters:

- A – if the players treated peacefully with 3 sisters
- B – if the players fought, but did not kill the 3 sisters
- C – if the players killed any of the 3 sisters

Second Letter – Final Underdark Confrontation:

- A – if the players sided with Axcelia during the battle in Part 4.
- B – if the players sided with Lemethra (against Axcelia) during the battle in Part 4.
- C – if the players died, quit, or killed all the NPCs.

Third Letter – Interactions with S'sheneth'rah:

Note: this letter may be different for different members of the party.

- A – if the player did not participate in either interaction
- B – if the player gained the “Student of Swordplay” temporary effect.
- C – if the player gained the “Tail to Tell” temporary effect.

Important: Players should not be aware of the detrimental part of these effects unless they are triggered.

Student of Swodplay

- *[Revealed to player]* **Student of Swordplay**
S'sheneth'rah has taught you how to strike more effectively with your sword. When you make a one-handed attack with a sword and that attack does not have advantage, the next one-handed sword attack that you make during the same round has advantage. **This effect is active only in the *Swords Below the Moonsea* set of adventures.**
- *[NOT revealed to player]* **Master of Swordplay:**
Only a fool would use S'sheneth'rah's own tactics against her. If the Student of Swordplay ability is used against S'sheneth'rah, she uses one of her reactions to counter the attack – the attack against her automatically misses and she makes one melee attack versus the character, this attack

automatically hits, crits and does maximum damage. (The player must declare that the source of their advantage is the Student of Swordplay ability for this to trigger.)

Tail to Tell

- *[Revealed to Player]* **Tail to Tell:** Spending time in the company of a marilith has given you a certain appreciation of her. You gain inspiration. Additionally, whenever you see S'sheneth'rah in person and subsequently finish a short or long rest, you gain Inspiration at the end of that rest. If you already have inspiration, you instead gain inspiration at the end of the first turn after using it (once per rest). **This effect is active only in the *Swords Below the Moonsea* set of adventures.**
- *[NOT revealed to player]* **Crushing Disappointment:** S'sheneth'rah seems to have gained a specific familiarity with your physique. Her tail attacks against you have advantage and the DC to escape her grapple for you is DC25 rather than the regular DC19.

The code from *Six Striking Swords* is 2 or more letters and 1-4 numbers. Each letter after the first refers to a different object obtained. Each number refers to knowledge about a different location obtained.

First Letter – Rescue of the Trapped Sister

- A – if players rescued the trapped sister alive.
- B – if the trapped sister died.

Second Letter – Acquired Object's location. (add more than one letter if multiple fragments are obtained)

- A - Anywhere from the walls of the manor or one of the towers.
- B - One of the main floor offices.
- C - Any other location on the west side of the first floor.
- D - Any other location on the east side of the first floor.

Additional Numbers – Manor Locations

Discovered (Add one number for every location discovered)

- 1 - Armory.
- 2 – Nobles Pleasure Dungeon
- 3 - Slave quarters
- 4 – Summoning rooms

Appendix D. Contact Updates from *Six Striking Swords*

About this handout. These are the mission tips that had been provided to adventurers when first journeying to Thar to investigate what turned out to be Axcelia's castle.

Their use or mention in this adventure is entirely optional.

Balance (or any Emerald Enclave Faction Agent)

A missive from your acquaintance in the Emerald Enclave.

The corruption runs deep and must be undone. Those who speak to the elements report that the magic is very strong. If there is an opportunity to persuade the maker of the magic to unmake it, it must be taken. Else the chance may be lost.

Challenge/Achievement (or any Lords Alliance Faction Agent)

A missive from your employer.

Trade must flow. The last thing we need is a bunch of scared caravaners asking for danger pay and health insurance. If there are wards or magic traps they must be undone. If you can treat with whoever placed them, they may be persuaded to remove them. Surely there is something they want.

Exploration (or any Harpers Faction Agent)

A missive from your acquaintance in the Harpers.

We have heard song of the dark folk. The occupant of the castle is not unknown. She need not be your enemy. Helping her may yet show you new roads. Knowledge, after all, is the greater power.

Wealth (or any Zhentarim Faction Agent)

A missive from a shady acquaintance of yours.

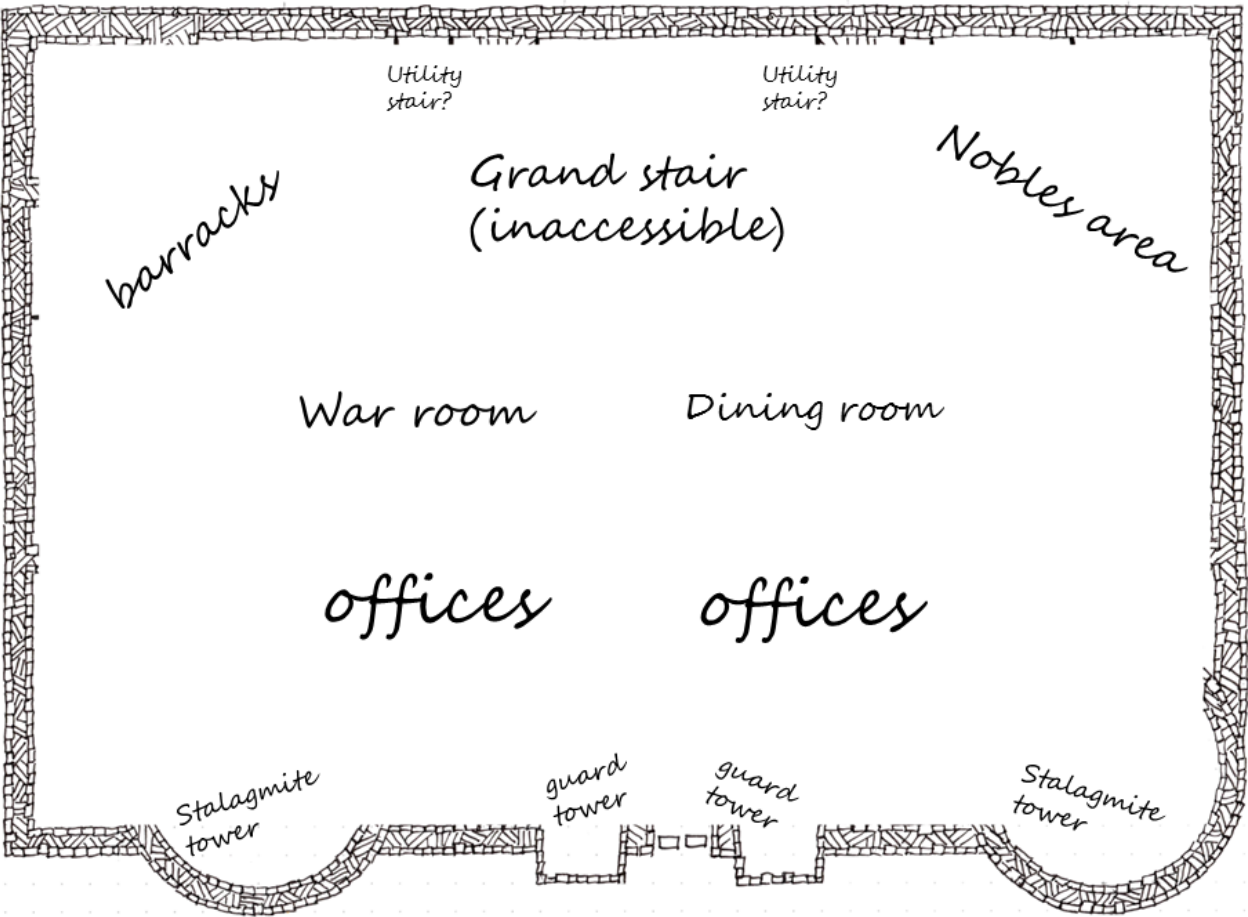
I hear that you weren't the first ones hired. The agents that were sent ahead have failed to make contact. Perhaps a more diplomatic approach is needed. Also, the diamonds are high quality. Their origin is certainly of interest to us all.

Greater Good (or any Order of the Gauntlet Faction Agent)

A missive from your adventurer acquaintance in the Order of the Gauntlet.

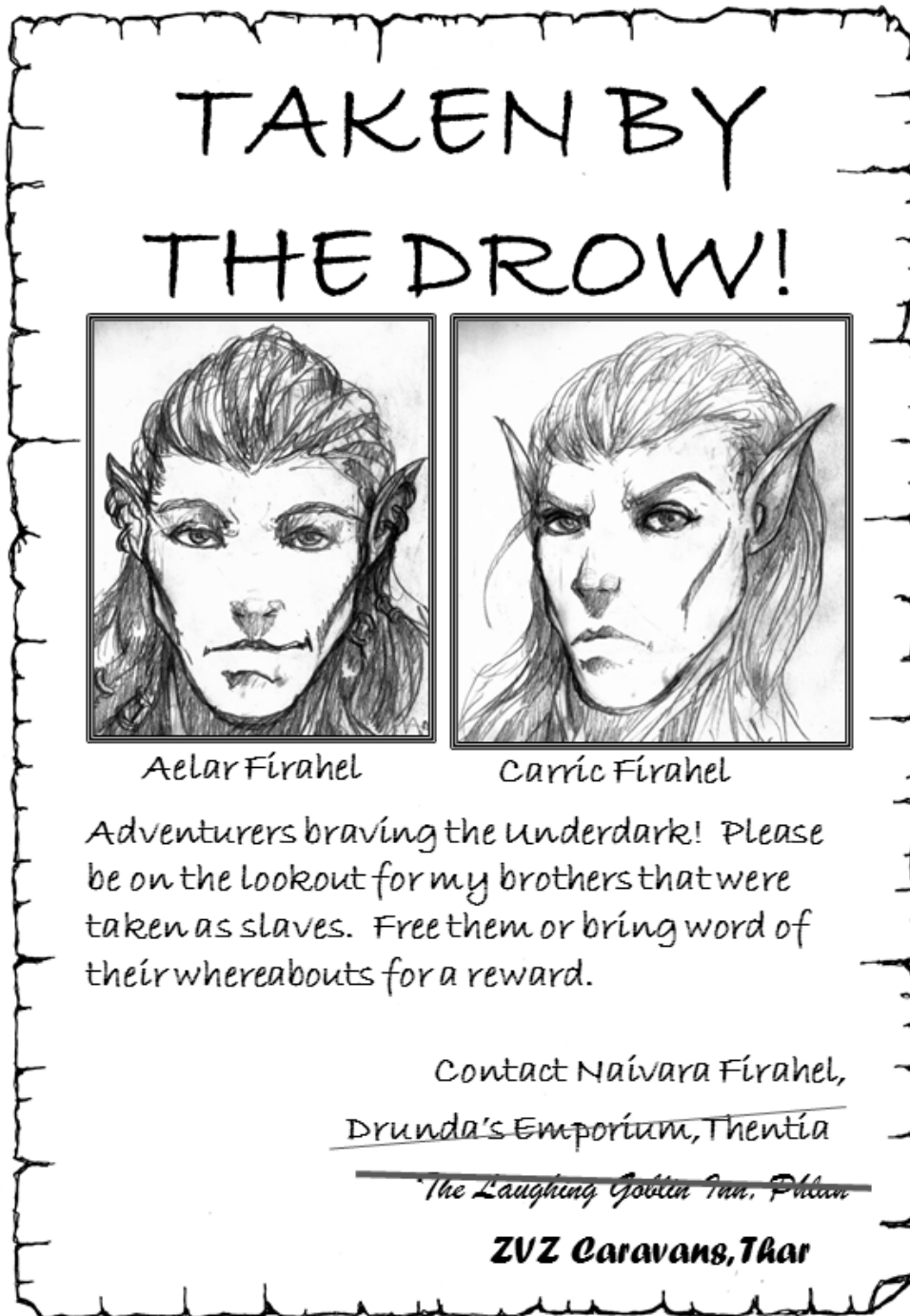
We have received word that the resident of the castle is a drow exile. The information such a person might possess could prove invaluable for rescuing some of the good people of the Moonsea that had been taken as slaves. Do what you can to learn about raiding parties and ways into the Underdark.

Player Handout 1. Axcelia's Map



Player Handout 2. Taken by the Drow Poster

Every town contains posters of missing loved ones. Few offer a reward, most aim to appeal to good nature and most lead nowhere. Still, people make them and sometimes adventurers pick them up and sometimes someone is even found. Making such posters is an act of hope in itself.



Player Handout 3. Magic Item

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

The Sixth Sword (+2 Rapier with Guardian minor property)

Weapon, rare

This is one of marilith S'Sheneth'Rah's six swords. In battle she was known for her tactical superiority and quick striking. Through years of use, some of her essence became imbued into the sword's magic and it occasionally twitches at critical times, bringing itself to a ready and deadly position. As a result of this, the wielder gains a +2 bonus to initiative.

This item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Player Handout 4. Story Award

During the course of this adventure, the characters may earn the following story award (only one award is earned, copies are provided for ease of printing):

A Moon Coin and a Note. You've received a mysterious coin and note from an Eilistraee-worshipping house of the Zethlentyn Protectorate. Coordinates in the note refer to an aboveground location. Is this a meeting? The only certain thing is that someone in the Underdark has taken an interest in you.

This story award has no effect unless specifically referenced in another adventure.

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