



A Light in the Dark

Reports are coming out of the conclusion of the death curse, and the defeat of the lich Acererak. Adventurers are no longer afraid to go into the night in search of fame and fortune. A wily antiquarian has gleaned the location of an item of particular value and unsurpassed rarity. The problem is, she is certain she isn't the first...or the last to learn of it. A race for riches and renown, who will be the ones to get there first and claim their prize?

A Four-Hour Adventure for 11th-16th Level Characters



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Introduction

Welcome to *A Light in the Dark*, a D&D Adventurers League™ adventure, part of the official D&D Adventurers League™ organized play system and the *Tomb of Annihilation*™ storyline season.

This adventure takes place in the Moonsea region of Faerun. Players will begin play arriving in the city of Mulmaster.

This adventure is designed for **three to seven 11th to 16th level characters** and is optimized for **five characters with an average party level (APL) of 13**. 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 Background

Several hundred years ago, a young green dragon by the name of **Zourunth** roamed the marshes of the Flooded Forest. Finding a place to lay claim to, and lair in, **Zourunth** hibernated for many months to connect with her new home. Unbeknown to her, she was connected with a portal to the Shadowfell and was spirited away. Upon the destruction of the necromantic artifact known as the Soulmonger, **Zourunth** was able to return to this plane along with her hoard. Including a massive gem, that continued to hold an essence of the plane in which she was given many a splendid gift. It is her most prized possession.

Over the past few weeks, **Zourunth** has cleverly “let word out” regarding her shadow-gem in hopes of drawing adventurers (and their treasure) to her lair to add to her amassing hoard.

Gedregthast is a commander and leader of a group of shadowvar (denizens of the Shadowfell) intent on keeping the gem in safe hands. Their intent is to use this gem as an anchor to connect their home and this realm, no safer place than in a dragon’s hoard!

Amerantha Everbright is a half-elf antiquarian who has gained a vast reputation for herself by hunting down artifacts and relics across the Moonsea and beyond. Several weeks ago, **Amerantha** and her associates at the **Old-World Society** confirmed (as best they can) the existence of an enormous gemstone, infused with the very essence of the Shadowfell itself. **Amerantha** is unaware of any owner of said gem, or that there may or may not be anything guarding it.

Location and NPC Summary

The following NPCs and locations feature prominently in this adventure.

Amerantha Everbright (A-muh-RAN-tha). Half-Elf antiquarian of middle age, is a constant seeker to one-up herself and her previous finds.

Zourunth (ZOR-oonth). Now an Adult Green Shadow dragon, Zourunth has come back from the Shadowfell changed forever. Using cunning and intelligence, she is a powerful foe against the players who hopes to amass great wealth and power.

Adventure Overview

A Light in the Dark is broken up into a linear 5-part adventure, some are very quick, and others take much longer. Be aware of any time constraints you

may have at the table you are playing at and adjust accordingly.

Part 1. A Request to Quest (15 minutes): The characters are contacted by the half-elf **Amerantha Everbright**, leader of the **Old-World Society** and contracted into locating and procuring a gem of unusually large size before anyone else can.

Part2. A Race for Riches (20 minutes): The adventurers find themselves in the flooded forest, hunting down the precious stone. Without the use of teleportation or scrying magic, they will have to use wit and wisdom to find it first. They can play it safe and go at a slow pace, or race headlong into the forest potentially wearing themselves out.

Part3. There Are Always Hurdles (130 minutes): The path through the forest is not always an easy one. Here, the players find themselves inside a cavern where they believe the gem to be located. However, before they can extract the stone, their competitors arrive.

Part4. The Showdown (60 minutes): After the difficult defeat of strange, other-worldly enemies, the adventurers find themselves face to face with **Zourunth** herself, she promises not to go down easily.

Part5. Not What We Expected (15 minutes): The adult green shadow dragon **Zourunth** defeated, and their counterparts eliminated, the players take the stone back to **Amerantha**, only to find out it may go deeper than just a payday.

Adventure Hooks

Any of the following hooks can be used to bring the players into Mulmaster for this adventure.

With Friends Like You. The characters are contacted by a courier with an urgent message. Should they agree to meet with his employer, he will cast teleport on them to bring them to Mulmaster’s front gates.

Zhentarim (Faction Assignment). You receive a coded message from the Zhentarim officials detailing a mission of importance to your brothers and sisters. Let no one know of your mission, and treat this as high importance, you will be compensated well. Give any Zhentarim characters a copy of Handout 1.

Part 1. A Request to Quest

Estimated Duration: 15 minutes

The characters have accepted the invitation to meet with **Amerantha Everbright**, chairwoman in the **Old-World Society**. Upon entering the city, the characters are met with associates of The Cloaks, that advise the characters against casting arcane spells within city limits. If the player characters are members of appropriate rank within The Cloaks, this restriction is waived.

Once the characters meet with **Amerantha** and hear out her offer, they can decide whether or not to accept the task at hand. If they do, proceed to Part 2: A Race for Riches.

General Features

Mulmaster has the following general features:

Terrain. The inside of the city or Mulmaster is filled with the hustle and bustle of trade. Cobblestone streets fill the city and large crowds meet and disperse with relative quickness.

Weather. The morning has a thick overcast with dark clouds, obscuring most of the natural sunlight. It is chilly, but not enough to need winter furs. What is clear, is that a storm is on its way.

Light. *With the amount of storm-clouds looming overhead, natural sunlight is dimmed throughout this portion of the overall landscape.*

Smells and Sounds. Inside the tavern, it is warm and inviting, despite the gloom and chill outside. The smell of roasted meats and freshly prepared autumn vegetables and ale marry in way that makes one think, and feel, at home.

The light of the open hearth provides bright light for those inside the common room, and lanterns hang in the hallways of the upper floor.

Amerantha's Offer:

The players are ushered to an upstairs suite, in the waiting room the players can meet each other and talk if they wish.

You are ushered into a large sitting room. A Marvelous painting of a half elf woman with flowing golden hair and what appears to be archaeologist's tools protruding from her pocketed vest hangs over the mantle to the fireplace set against the southern wall.

Comfortable sitting chairs are arranged against opposite walls, and a large dining table with food and wine completes the furnishings of this room.

"Please, don't be shy. Have yourselves a good meal, and let's get right down to business, shall we?"

A half-elven woman matching the portrait enters the area from the back room and introduces herself as Amerantha.

Amerantha Everbright wants this request to be as humble as able, but negotiations over as quickly as possible to ensure that the party has the best chances of completion. She can provide the following information:

- **Amerantha** and her companions within the **Old-World Society** have confirmed rumors of a treasure of great rarity and value, a cut diamond the size of a halfling, with a smoky interior that seems to be made of shadowstuff.
- **The Old-World Society** is a group of antiquarians and archaeologists devoted to unearthing the secrets of the past, for prestige and profit.
- While they have been able to scry its general location, they cannot get a clear fix on the gem itself. The Flooded Forest is currently under a flux of the weave, hindering divination and teleportation magic.
- She cannot be certain that she is the only one to hear of its rumor or that others are not actively hunting the item itself.
- She offers the party members a small fortune of 4,000gp each as incentive to complete this task swiftly and quietly. Any additional finds will be the players to do with as they will, for she is only interested in the shadow-diamond.
- The oncoming storm has overcast the skies and it may be harder to search the dense forest, with the lack of light and constant rainfall the last few weeks. Heroes of their experience may have little to no trouble at all.
- This mission is of the upmost importance to her and wishes the party to leave as soon as they are able, providing a *Potion of Superior Healing* in case they run into trouble and are in need of healing.

If any character has a Passive 20 Wisdom (Perception) check, that character hears a floorboard creak just outside the door followed by movement going down the stairwell. The spy (**Gedreghast**) is under the effects of a non-detection spell. Once the sound has been made, he rushes down the stairs and starts to actively stealth to avoid detection. If the players pursue the sound they see a

full common room of the inn downstairs as the spy is leaving the front door (as an action **Gedreghast** casts *Seeming* after his movement to leave the establishment with an altered appearance). Remember no components are needed for innate casting. **Gedreghast** can be described to the players as a tall slender humanoid very similar to appearance as a Drow, save for his hair is shoulder-length and jet black, and he wears studded leather that is dirty with ash and dust, and a pristine curved dagger in a sheathe on his hip.

Roleplaying Amerantha

Amerantha is an outgoing and happy individual at every moment of the day. This trait does not make her naive or unwise, however. She understands what a find like this will do not only monetarily for herself and her organization, but also the historical and mystical properties of this gem are something to be documented and studied closely for preservation. She is fearful of too much faction involvement, assuming that they would take credit for her discovery, and is willing to do whatever it takes to ensure this missions success (even if she has to pay extra for it).

What the characters do now is up to them but remind them that time is of the essence (even if they did not hear the eaves-dropper). Allow the players to acquire any items they may need from town before venturing off.

Currently, due to the trapped essence of the Shadowfell within the shadow-diamond, the Weave is modified slightly in this area. The Flooded Forest blocks scrying and teleportation or conjuration magic on a large degree. Creatures attempting to teleport into or out of the forest, to conjure creatures or allies into the forest, or using scrying magic (legend lore, locate creature/object arcane eye, clairvoyance, or scry for example) on the flooded forest or any object/creature within must make a DC 17 ability check using their spellcasting ability. Those who fail, suffer 55 (10d10) necrotic damage and gain one level of exhaustion as the spell fails and a wave of necrotic shadows pulse around the caster. Those that pass the check take half damage, are not exhausted, and the spell functions as below:

- Scrying and Divination magic have partial effect, the character must make another caster level check for each round they concentrate on a spell from the school of divination, and the exact location of the diamond cannot be determined. The

characters do, however gain an automatic success on their search for each successful divination spell cast or each round spent concentrating specifically requesting the location of the diamond. For more information on this, see Part 2: A Race for Riches.

- Teleportation and Conjunction magic functions but teleports the character (or summoned creature) outside the northern end of The Flooded Forest. Teleportation magic cast inside the forest itself fails outright and will not teleport the character to the northern end of the forest. Specific spells do work for teleportation but require direct line of sight and a target of self to function (i.e. *Misty Step* or *Dimension Door* to a location you can see) (see Part 2: A Race for Riches.)

Part 2. A Race for Riches

Estimated Duration: 20 minutes

The characters have accepted the quest to hunt down the shadow-diamond and have a rough area to start their search. How the players locate the cavern is entirely up to them but some examples are given below to help guide their way through.

Once the characters set their pace, you will need to record their setbacks.

General Features

The pathway through The Flooded Forest has the following features:

Terrain. The terrain features thick brush, areas of water and marshlands, and few easy paths to cross. Overly thick walls of thorny vines create hazards and mazes as far as the eye can see.

Weather. The air here is thick and humid, albeit quite cool. Mist and fog hang low to the ground and the trees block most of the remaining sunlight from the overcast skies.

Light. The light here under the overcast skies and the thick fog along with the dense tree cover is dim light. Those without darkvision are at disadvantage on sight based checks.

Smells and Sounds. Musty, thick air is dense in the forest. With it brings a damp, musty smell that is offputting. No animal sounds can be heard which confirms a very unnatural presence is within the area.

If the players chose to travel to the forest by foot or horseback, it will take them roughly one day to reach the area. If instead they teleport or request such services of **Amerantha** that can be provided for the players. Accepting such transportation or doing so themselves provides them with a success in Part 3, reducing the amount of failures the adventurers have (minimum 0).

Forest Maze:

As the players reach the entrance to the forest, read the following aloud:

Entering the forest, you feel unnerved. Something is definitely not natural here. The fog is thicker, the trees and landscape seem to warp and change at a glance. Undoubtedly, the environment has been altered by whatever is affecting the weave within the forest.

At this point, ask the players to decide on a guide or leader throughout the exploration portion of the adventure. They can also choose to work as a team,

however this will adjust the challenges into GROUP checks, as opposed to one leader.

The alterations and challenges continue to worsen, the closer they get to the gem.

- The players must choose now to move at “Slow”, “Normal”, or “Fast” pace.
- Moving at a slow pace will grant the players advantage on their ability checks, however it counts as an automatic failure (setback) in Part 3.
- Moving at normal pace confers no penalty or bonus to the players, while moving at fast pace confers disadvantage on ability checks, but grants an automatic success (and thus a reduction in failures) in Part 3.
- If the characters successfully used divination magic to show the location of the cave (but not the gem itself) award each character 1 Inspiration that must be used during this section and be sure to notify them of the stipulation.
- The first 30 minutes that they are in the forest, and each hour thereafter, the party must succeed on a DC 18 Constitution saving throw as the necromantic energies sap them of their energy, those who fail gain a level of exhaustion in addition to the group losing time. Record this as a setback in Part 3.
- For each 30 minutes of investigating, have the party leader, or as a group make a DC 18 Wisdom (Survival) check or become lost for a time. A failed check leads to another 30 minutes lost as they backtrack and find their way. Record a failed roll as a setback in Part 3.

Setbacks: Record the number of failures (maximum 3) for Part 3. In addition to these, if the party **at any point** takes a short rest, which will count as an additional failure (advise the players a long rest is not advised and could cause automatic failure of the mission). After the party has successfully navigated the forest with a single survival check success, proceed to Part 3.

Tricks of the Trade:

Group Ability Checks. To make a group ability check, everyone in the group makes the ability check. If at least half the group succeeds, the whole group succeeds. Otherwise, the group fails.

Weather. The morning has a thick overcast with dark clouds, obscuring most of the natural sunlight. It is chilly, but not enough to need winter furs. What is clear, is that a storm is on its way.

Light. *With the amount of storm-clouds looming overhead, natural sunlight is dimmed throughout this portion of the overall landscape.*

Development

The intent of this section is to have one success in locating the cave entrance. Depending on previous attempts to divine the location some players may be at disadvantage. The first check the players will make is the DC 18 Constitution saving throw to avoid exhaustion followed by the DC 18 Wisdom (Survival) check. They can have up to 3 failures, or one success, whichever comes first. Once that condition is met, the players will find the entrance to the cave. The players have at worse 2 checks against exhaustion and 3 checks for survival. At best they will have 1 and 1 respectively.

After the players have made their first survival check attempt, read or paraphrase the following:

After half an hour of lost traveling, something peculiar sparks your interest. Fifty feet or so to the south you notice the edge of a fogbank seems to have ash within it, mixing with the remainder of the cloud and created this blackened form in the air.

Below it, the ground is dry and devoid of living foliage. Dried, crumbling, and dead. You are unsure as to if this is a desecrated area, or something else entirely.

The players can make an Intelligence (Arcana) DC 18 check to notice key similarities between this abnormality and the general environmental status of the Shadowfell.

Part 3. There are Always Hurdles

Estimated Duration: 130 minutes

The characters have located the entrance to a cavern, and are fairly certain this is where they need continue their search.

General Features

The Cavern of shadow has the following features:

Terrain. The inside of cavern ranges from natural rock formation to worked tunnels and stone. Each section will have detailed information if the terrain changes.

Light. The light inside the cave originates from phosphorescent lichen, providing dim light throughout the cavern system unless otherwise stated. Light sources due to being partially in the Shadowfell are reduced to half effectiveness.

Smells and Sounds. Inside the cavern lacks sound unless otherwise noted. Hollow echoes can be heard from the adventurer's footsteps.

Shade Explosion Traps. At the locations marked **T** on the map, are arcane runes visible only to those that can see the Ethereal Plane. After being passed over by a living creature who is not attuned to it, an explosion of necromantic energy erupts from the rune causing all living creatures within a 30-foot radius to make a DC 18 Constitution saving throw. Failure indicates the player takes 3d10 Necrotic damage and has their maximum hit points reduced by the same amount until they have taken a long rest. Success halves the damage and does not reduce maximum hit points. If the players can see the rune, casting a *Dispel Magic* targeting a 6th level spell will suppress the rune for 1d6+1 rounds. If the character has spent a week in the Shadowfell within the last 30 days, they do not trigger the traps and may pass freely.

Area 1. Entry Chamber

This small cave entrance is the beginning of Zourunth's lair. Due to her affinity to the Shadowfell, the natural rock has darkened in color over time. Read or paraphrase:

General Features

The lair has the following general features:

Terrain. The floor here is natural stone and is more or less level. The walls are unworked and bear a darker color than normal for this type of stone. All rooms in this cave are twenty feet tall, unless otherwise noted.

Smells and Sounds. The smell of death, mildew, the tang of acidity in the air. It is disturbingly quiet here.

As you pass through the cave mouth, you feel a rush of cold. Like an unnatural curtain of freezing air. The walls of this cavern seem to be worked (albeit spottily) and the eastern alcove is covered in dark, thorny vines. The northern end of this cavern houses a rather large pile of gold and gemstones intermixed with blood stained and destroyed adventuring gear.

This is the entrance to **Zourunth's** home. The entry chamber is housed to entice individuals in, rather than scaring them away. The lesser gemstones, destroyed gear, and bloodied gold coins would mar her pristine collection, and thus have been left in this entrance for eager treasure seekers to walk into.

Development

If the players wish to investigate the area, not finding the stone, allow them to make a Wisdom (Perception) check DC 18. Other skills may be used in place of this, as long as the reasoning is valid (such as investigation, survival, etc.) If successful, the players can note that the lichen in the thorns of the eastern wall seem to go deeper than the others, possibly this is not the end of the cave.

The thickets lining the walls can be moved through with every 1 foot a creature moves costing 4 feet of movement. The walls are 10 feet thick unless otherwise stated. A creature in the thickets must make a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw once each round it is in contact with the thickets or take 14 (4d6) piercing damage from the thorns. Each 10-foot cube has AC 5, 30 hit points, resistance to bludgeoning and piercing damage, vulnerability to fire damage, and immunity to psychic and thunder damage. These are a modified part of the regional effect of the dragon nesting here.

Development

From here, the characters proceed out of this room. However, the hallway out of this chamber has a cunningly disguised Enveloping Walls trap. If this trap is not located and bypassed, it will alert the creatures in Area 2.

Trap: Enveloping Walls

Simple trap, dangerous threat (levels 11-16)

The passageway through the thorns is magically trapped to ensnare the unwary. A 5-foot radius symbol is embedded 5 feet past the entrance, on all surfaces of this tunnel. Any creature that moves past this rune, and any others within a 20-foot radius suffer an explosion of thorns and are trapped.

Trigger. A creature passes within the area of the rune.

Effect. The triggering character is the target of the effect and all creatures within a 20-foot radius of the triggering character must make a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw or take 55 (10d10) Piercing damage and be restrained by the thorny vines. A successful saving throw halves the damage and negates the restrained condition.

A creature restrained by the vines can use its action to make a Strength or Dexterity check (its choice) against the same DC 17. On a success, it frees itself.

Countermeasures. A successful DC 18 Intelligence (Arcana) check identifies magical runes cleverly hidden in the floor and touching it or passing over it is likely to trigger some effect.

Detect Magic identifies an aura of transmutation magic. However, due to the vines blocking line of sight, this check is made at disadvantage (unless they are removed prior to passing). A successful *dispel magic* against a 6th level spell suppresses the symbol for 1d6+1 rounds. Teleporting past the symbol can bypass this trap.

XP Award

If the characters detect and avoid the wall trap, award each character 2,500 XP.

Treasure

The players upon investigating the small hoard can salvage up to 2,500 gp in gold and gems. The armor and equipment are unsalvageable. Additionally, the players can find a *Potion of Speed* at the bottom of the pile inside a locked, but un-trapped coffer (DC 20 Dexterity Thieves Tools check to open).

Area 2. Hall of Fallen Heroes

Passing through the wall of thorns, the players find themselves in this chamber, blood and bone litter the floor.

General Features

The hall has the following general features:

Weather. The air here is humid and cold. The walls are damp from the humidity and sport small patches of mold.

Smells and Sounds. Rotting corpses, mildew, and the tang of acidic air. Scratching of claws on stone, as well as no natural insect activity can be heard in this chamber.

Much like the chamber you encountered previously, this area is damp and cold, the stone more worked than previously.

You feel tired as you enter, as if you are becoming ill or drained of energy. The black thorns cover the stonework along the southern and eastern walls, save for an unworked stone hallway exiting north of this room.

Blood and pieces of humanoid corpses litter the floor here, hampered by cuts and scrapes from the thorn walls, along with abnormally large puncture wounds the size of spears in larger portions of what torsos you find remaining.

You may have the players attempt a DC 17 Intelligence (Arcana) check, on success the players can determine that the exhaustion is a draining effect similar to that of the plane of shadow.

Hidden in the room is a **Boneclaw** and four **Banshee** that lie in wait for new victims (Passive Perception DC 17). Once more than half the party enters the area, they attack hoping to gain advantage against the party. The **boneclaw** is cloaked in shadowstuffs

Adjusting this Encounter

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

- **Strong/Very Strong:** Remove the **Banshees** and add a second **Boneclaw**.

Treasure

The treasure that would normally be remaining on these bodies has been given to the lord of this domain and is included in the treasure at the end.

Additionally, a character that spends time searching the vines and succeeds on a DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) check discovers that the southern end of this room continues through to Area 6, some 20 feet of vines stands between them however.

Area 3. Corridor of Lost Hope

This hallway has been crafted by shadowmages from the Shadowfell to trap would be plunderers inside for an eternity of torment.

This area seems much different than others, with the absence of thorny vines instead shows a worked black stone similar to marble.

The entrance to this T-section of hallway has an archway as you enter. To the west, a black adamantine door sits shut 40 feet away from where you stand. Opposite it, to the east, stands a large statue of a robed man pointing his outstretched index finger towards the door.

There is a concealed door cleverly hidden opposite where the party enters this hallway. A successful DC 30 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals an outline of what appears to be a crease in the wall, outlining a door. If the players instead investigate the statue of the wizard, a successful DC 22 Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Perception) reveal there is a hinge cleverly hidden on the knuckle of the outstretched finger. This finger can be activated as a lever, opening the concealed door in the center of this T section.

The doorway is trapped with an **Endless Loop Gate** trap that affects players crossing into it. In addition to the **Shade Explosion** effect of crossing into this area for the first time. After opening the door, the player sees a long hallway (roughly 85 feet long) with another black metal door at the far end. The first time a player crosses the threshold of the door, that player must make a DC 20 Charisma saving throw or be trapped in this looped hallway. While inside this loop, the hallway in which they came from is gone, and once they open the door at the end of the hallway and step through they see themselves in an identical 85-foot-long hallway. A form of plane shift has been fashioned in this trap, which has been altered to send the participant to a demi plane of endless running. Possible countermeasures include a casting of the plane shift spell with a key to the prime material (shunting them to the entryway to the cavern), or by having someone cast a targeted Dispel Magic (targeting a 9th level spell) on the doorway. Characters outside this hallway can see the trapped character in this pocket dimension but do not have line of effect for the purposes of spell casting.

Trap: Endless Loop Gate

Simple trap, Deadly threat (levels 11-16)

The passageway in this hallway is magically trapped to entrap the unwary. On the inside of the door frame are arcane glyphs to transport the character to a demi-plane as a prison.

Trigger. A creature passes through the doorway.

Effect. The triggering character is the target of the effect and must make a DC 20 Charisma saving throw or be trapped in the demi plane. A successful saving throw means the character presses against the wall, unable to be transported or to see the trapped hallway. Other creatures can still see the trapped hallway but once the saving throw is made successfully, the character is immune to its effect for 24 hours, or until the trap is dispelled (see below).

Countermeasures. A successful DC 20 Intelligence (Arcana) check identifies magical runes cleverly hidden in the doorframe and that passing through the door will set the trap off. A successful *dispel magic* against a 9th level spell will dispel the trap and eject anyone caught within. Someone inside can escape via any form of planar travel (such as a *Plane Shift* spell keyed to the prime material) ejecting them to the entrance of the cavern.

A successful DC 20 Intelligence (Arcana) check or use of Detect Magic shows a strong aura of Conjunction (Teleportation) magic, in addition to another aura of Necromancy (for the explosion).

Development

Once the characters bypass the loop trap, or find the concealed door, they can continue to area 4.

Area 4. Pit of Shadows

This unassuming hallway is again, filled with a deadly trap for those who have not made this place home.

After a 15-foot long, 5-foot wide hallway, takes a direct 90 degree turn to the east. The features are similar to the previous hallway you just exited, however after 55 feet it takes a turn to the south.

Beneath this hallway is a large pit filled with a continuous seepage of Shadowfell into this plane. The effects of which are identical for those who fall in to an *Incendiary Cloud* spell, dealing necrotic damage instead of fire. The saving throw for this effect is a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw each round they end their turn in the cloud, as well as when they enter the cloud for the first time on any turn. On a

failure, the player takes 10d8 Necrotic damage, or half on a successful one. The cloud persists indefinitely and cannot be dispelled via Dispel Magic. Because of the nature of the cloud, it does not move and fills the entirety of the bottom of this hallway. The pit extends the full 55 feet across, but the opening only extends up to 20 feet at its most.

The players can spot the pit trap with a successful DC 17 Wisdom (Perception) check, or an Intelligence (Investigation). Holding the floor panels up and disarming the trap would require clever thinking on the player's part as a total of 4 sections of floor give away individually. A DC 17 Dexterity (Thieves Tools) check can secure the first plate, however each additional plate the party attempts to secure requires another check, with a cumulative +2 to its DC for Thieves Tools only. (17/19/21/23) If the check fails by 5 or more, all of the floor plates fall, and any player falls into the 20-foot pit who is standing on them, they must then make a saving throw against its effects.

Development

From here, the characters proceed Area 5 through an open doorway.

Area 5. A Candle in the Darkness.

Passing through the doorway leads to a large, empty room. Save for a small stand in the middle and a candle burning atop it. The entirety of this chamber was meant to again, weaken the resolve of would be dungeon delvers and thieves. Read or paraphrase:

This large chamber is void of all debris and articles, save for pedestal in the very center, and a lit candle atop it. The pedestal is a metallic statue of a predatory cat with interlinking plates and the candle rests atop it's head. There is a door opposite the one you entered into, that currently is closed.

You may have the players attempt a DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check, on success the players can see on the roof and walls there are words in common written in the marble walls. Provide the players a copy of **Player Handout 2**. After all the players enter this room, read the following:

As the last of you enters the room, the door behind you slams shut, and the candle in the center of the room begins to glow brighter. With the added illumination, you can see that the pedestal has an engraving along its edge in glowing runes stating:

"Provide me that which I seek."

This is a timed event, have each player roll for Initiative and give each player up to 10 seconds to determine what they will do. Having a timer for this event helps with the theme. After each player has had a turn to decide what to do, the encounter ends one of two ways.

Should the players learn of the riddle, and correctly cast a shadow over the candle (non-magical means are possible with a brighter light source and an object between them and the candle) or snuffing the candle out with a darkness spell the candle turns black and awakens the **Steel Predator** disguised as the pedestal at the end of that round. The candle is magical in nature, attempts to dispel the candle would succeed against a 7th level spell, however does not answer the riddle, by extinguishing the flame by hand or another source would result in the triggering event of a *Delayed Blast Fireball*

If the players do not successfully answer the riddle, the candle explodes in a *Delayed Blast Fireball* centered on its location, effecting the entire room (DC 18). Regardless of the outcome, after the Delayed Blast Fireball or the **Steel Predator** is defeated, both doors on opposite walls open once more.

Treasure

The awakened **Steel Predator** is destroyed upon its defeat and leaves no treasure behind.

Area 6. The Library

This set of two adjoining rooms serves as a resting place for those who have traveled across dimensions, currently it was used as a study for beings from the Shadowfell in hopes to learn more about their past and plans for the future. Read or paraphrase:

General Features

The library has the following general features:

Terrain. The floor here is polished and worked stone.

Weather. The air here is warm and inviting.

Light. This area is illuminated with torches in sconces, providing bright light throughout.

Smells and Sounds. The smell of dust clings heavily here as this area is quite old. The crackle of the torches echoes in an otherwise silent area.

These two adjoining rooms are fashioned into what appears to be a library of sorts. Complete with an oaken desk, comfortable armchair, and several old bookshelves. Tomes covering a wide range of knowledge can be seen and seem to have a specialized focus around the border planes and the rise of the Netherese empire.

The walls here bear tapestries and paintings of wizards engaging in spell duels and study lessons in grand halls. There is one book that is left open on the desk itself and seems to be more theory than magical practice.

In the eastern part of this room, there are two furnished beds sized for humanoids of medium size with footlockers.

Gedreghash, a Shadowvar Knight (statistics as a **Shadar-kai Soul Monger**, was here previously trying to research into ways of bringing back large portions of the Shadowfell and its citizens to the Material plane.

Characters may attempt a DC 18 Intelligence (Arcana) check to decipher that this tome theorizes a bleeding of one plane into another, using resonating tools in the same locations on multiple planes attempting to synchronize the two.

The players can spend time in this room reading through some of the tomes and advise them it will take 30 minutes or so to get a good grasp on the books here. If they choose to stay, add an additional count to the failure chart presented in Area 8. After

spending time reading through the tomes, one is written in Netherese and speaks of the history of someone by the name of **Telamont Tanthul**, and a city by the name of **Thultanthar**, floating on an inverted mountaintop. In -339 DR, **Telamont** (referred to in many of the passages as **Lord Shadow**) is described as an archmage of extraordinary power with a tall, athletic build, wearing dark armor with Netherese decorations. It states he had a purple robe over a draconic overmantle and at one point, had transported the entire city into the Shadowfell to avoid some kind of tragedy. If they do their research they have a more descript understanding of Netherese and gain advantage in Area 7 when attempting to investigate.

If the players do not read Netherese (from a story award or another source) or have access to comprehend languages via magic, they can attempt a DC 22 Intelligence (History) check to piece together an understanding of this story.

In addition to understanding the story, they understand basic physiology that the Shadowfell has on certain creatures infused with it, namely, a dislike or susceptibility to bright light as it hinders their ability to effectively fight. This information can greatly assist the players against **Zourunth**.

Treasure

If the players decide to collect the books for a private collector, they can fetch as much as 2,750gp.

Additionally, the players will find 2 scholars packs located in the footlockers, as well as rare spell components worth 1,250gp.

Development

From here, the characters proceed to Area 7 through a hallway to the east.

Area 7. Homage to Lord Shadow

This room was reserved to the memory of **Telamont**. It houses a clever, and very deadly trap for those who seek to steal other's possessions.

Entering into this large chamber, you see to the south a pair of black adamantine doors, adorned with engravings of wisps of smoke, and a pair of deep green eyes in its background sporting vertical slits. Similar to that of a serpent.

The center of this room is dominated by a statue of a tall man, robed in deep purple with draconic themed pauldrons. The statue depicts him with both hands raised, palms towards the sky and bears semblance to a wizard using somatic components to a spell being performed.

Near his feet rests a large, dust-covered spell tome with platinum latches and a lock across its top as well as an intricate staff topped with a large cut ruby. Both items do not appear to be a part of the statue, rather items laid at its foot.

To the north, there is a 10-foot wide section of black thorn walls that protrude slightly from the rest of the wall.

If the players decide to investigate the statue, or their surroundings,

The roof of this cavern is flat, not domed like you would expect. You can discern a latticework of black adamantine spanning its entirety.

The statue is surrounded by a translucent cylinder that completely encircles it from floor to ceiling.

This indeed, was a cleverly well done **Falling Roof Trap**. Have the players make a DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) check, with advantage if they studied in the Library. Success indicates that the tome and staff, while old and dust covered, have nothing to do with Netheril or have any similar markings whatsoever, making them seem out of place. Additionally, the cylinder in the middle is an oddity as it goes from floor to ceiling, rather than just encasing the statue. A DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check can see that the latticework is not imbedded in the ceiling, more so being supported against it.

The players can dispel the cylinder in one of two ways, via *Disintegrate* spell, much in the same way as with a *Wall of Force* or by dispelling it (a *Dispel Magic* targeting a 4th level spell). Upon doing so, however sets off the **trap**.

This **Falling Roof Trap** is designed to dispose of any who made it this far, or at least weaken them, while their coins and magical items remain intact for plundering. The latticework falls down covering the entire room, and gaps in the lattice work are only 1-foot square. The entire piece weighs over 5 tons and once it starts to fall, it hits the floor in the same round.

Each player must make a dexterity saving throw, DC 18 or take 10d10 bludgeoning damage as they rip through a small opening. Those that pass the saving throw take half damage. Characters smaller than small size, or those who have the ability to squeeze through 1" areas (such as a polymorphed player into a small animal, or a Druid Wildshaped into an air or water elemental for example) have advantage on the check, take no damage on a successful save, and only half on a failure. If this damage reduces a player to 0 hp, they are smashed to a pulp, and require a *True Resurrection* or a *Wish* to restore the character to life.

As the lattice falls, it crushes the statue, the tome, and the staff beneath it. The cylinder only has enough room for the statue itself, making it not a valid destination for spells like *Misty Step* or *Dimension Door* as players of small or larger size are unable to squeeze in the area. If somehow the players are able to achieve tiny size or smaller, there is enough room to be inside the cylinder to retrieve the items.

Development

At this point, the players have survived the traps of the lair, and are on to the final push. The spellbook is empty but can be used as a spellbook or sold for the base platinum in it, for 500gp. The staff can fetch 250gp to an art dealer and has a *Nystul's Magic Aura* cast upon it to fool others.

XP Award

If the characters detect and avoid the **Falling Roof Trap**, award each character 2,500 XP.

Area 8. There’s No Place like Home.

Passing through the doorway into Zourunth’s resting place. She has constructed most of her lair to be nothing but a death maze for would-be intruders. She has made an especially thick wall of thorns here upon seeing the teleportation runes, or hearing the party in her home, and now lies in wait in the southern corner of the room for the collision to begin.

This encounter will run differently depending on the number of failures in Part 2, as well as a possible addition in Part 3 in the Library or any rest that was taken and subtract the number of successes gained to achieve your final result. Read the first box text aloud to players and reference the chart below to determine where to go next. Read or paraphrase:

The exit from the previous room and entrance to this one inspires awe and wonder. The floor is made of the same polished black marble, swirled with dark wisps of grey. The floor expands out to a room 35-feet long, and 135-feet wide. The edges of the room do not have walls, but instead seem to fall into a darkened void. There is no ceiling here, and you cannot see out into the darkness to an end. Your stomachs turn as though you had been forcibly moved across to another realm. At the southern end of this floor, is a 60-foot-high domed wall of blackened thorns abnormally dense in nature.

Exiting the side of the floor has a base for the players to walk, however if the players begin their turn, or move into a square outside the mapped zone, they will be subjected to the **Shade Explosion** effect with no radius, only affecting that player, and treat this area as heavily obscured. The dome in the center of the room as well as the enclosure of the shadowstuffs is 60 feet around the area.

Refer to the chart below, determining how the encounter proceeds from here.

Failures-Successes	Effect
0	The players have beat their enemies here and have one round to prepare before they see glowing runes on the floor in the center of this room begin to illuminate. After one round of preparation, read section 8a.
1-2	The players arrive as the runic circle starts to illuminate. Read section 8a
3	Players arrive shortly after the enemies have arrived, they are preparing for combat against the players. Have the enemies make one movement or one action, but not both. Read section 8b.
4+	The players arrive at the end of the second round of enemies arriving. The enemies have one full round of activity to prepare for the adventures, and to hide in the room, Adventures with less than 20 passive perceptions are considered to have the surprised condition. Read section 8b.

8a. After the last of you enters the room, the door behind you slams shut and as you look up, a light appears and begins to build in the center of the floor. Slowly forming a circle of arcane runes.

Within a moment, several figures appear in the light. Slender and tall, these humanoids have features similar to that of elves, but from a much older time. They are cloaked in lightly obscuring shadows that cling to them like a fine mist. Two of these enemies wield long lengths of spiked chain, while one holds a curved dagger.

8b. After the last of you enters the room, the door behind you slams shut and several figures appear out of the void at the edges of the room, as a softening glow dies down from a runic circle in the center of the floor. Slender and tall, these humanoids have features similar to that of elves, but from a much older time. They are cloaked in lightly obscuring shadows that cling to them like a fine mist. Two of these enemies wield long lengths of spiked chain, while one holds a curved dagger.

You may have the players attempt a DC 18 Intelligence (Arcana) check, on success the players know that the runic circle is a teleportation effect on similar type to plane shift, but on a much stronger, and a very different level.

The players are now face to face with their competition, led by **Gedreghast** a **Shadowvar Knight (Shadar-kai Soul Monger)**, and to his sides stands two **Shadowvar Assassins (Shadar-kai Shadow Dancer)**. The enemies waste no time in taking care of the interlopers from this realm and charge in to attack. Take note, that since the shadowvar have been to the plane of shadow for more than a week in the last month, along with their immunity to necrotic damage, they are therefore immune to the damaging aspects of the void. The floor continues out seemingly endlessly but the map is dictating where the end of the clouds begin.

Adjusting this Encounter

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

- **Strong/Very Strong:** Add a **Shadowcaster (Shadar-kai Gloom Weaver)**

The Shadowvar here fight to the death. With the diamond acting as a synchronizing focus for the Shadowfell, they believe it can help in the blending of the planes and will do whatever it takes to keep this item safe.

Tricks of the Trade

After two full rounds of combat, proceed to Part 4, The Showdown. If the players have defeated the shadowvar within these two rounds, it provides them with a moment of reprieve, if not however,

they must hurry before they have another powerful enemy on their hands.

Strike as One. These enemies strike as a group to help take down stronger enemies first in swift fashion. They target players wearing heavy armor or wielding two handed weapons to ensure they can close the distance with casters afterwards.

Treasure

On the belt **Gedreghast**, hangs a stoppered brass bottle. This is an efreeti bottle and is described on **player handout 3**.

Development

At this point, if they players have fallen in battle to the **Shadowvar** enemies, proceed to Part 5: Not What We Expected, Defeat!

Part 4. The Showdown

Estimated Duration: 60 minutes

After 2 rounds of combat, read or paraphrase the following:

An ear-shattering roar erupts from within the vined dome. The thorns dance and move, slowly pulling back as if alive themselves. Something is coming out of its shell.... something BIG.

At this point, the players have two full rounds to prepare if they defeated the Shadowvar on their own, if not and are in need of assistance, they must survive another two rounds before **Zourunth** reveals herself. At that point, read the following to the players:

As the vines thin and pull back from their dense packing, you can distinctly see a pair of large green eyes staring back at you through the foliage. You realize now that these were not the eyes of a snake, but that of dragons.

With a crash, the remaining vines are blown open as an enormous green dragon with dark charcoal and green scales erupts from the dome, splintering thorns shower the floor. Unfurling its wings, you can see the same darkness cling to it, and its wings become translucent. She lowers her head to meet you and begins to grin.

"Take care, little ones, as you may fall into a hole seeking glory and gold, that you may never come back from. This is the home of **Zourunth, The Endless Shadow** and YOU are TRESPASSING!"

Zourunth emerges along with two **Allip** from her shell to dispose of the adventurers and keep her prized possession safe from the grubby hands of lesser beings. A few things to keep in mind:

- The terrain remains the same, and any creature pushed into the void continues to take damage as per the **Shade Explosion** effect.
- The ceiling of this area is effectively 60-feet high, before going into the void effect. Players take damage from this effect when they first enter the void on a turn, or when they begin their turn inside it.
- **Zourunth** uses this environment to her advantage, attempting to pin the adventurers to the walls, forcing them to

either run past her, or be forced into the void.

- The lighting in this room is dim light.

Adjusting this Encounter

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

- **Very Weak:** Remove one **Allip**
- **Strong/Very Strong:** Add a third **Allip**

Development

At this point, if they players have fallen in battle to **Zourunth**, proceed to Part 5: Not What We Expected, Defeat!

If the party is successful, after the final blow has been struck against **Zourunth**, the room begins to shake and crumble. The runic circle in the center of this room begins to grow in light, and a familiar voice calls out to the players:

As the final blow is delivered, and the great dragon's body begins to flail in death throws, the shadows in the void begin to dissipate.

Flickering softly like a candle in a storm, the arcane glyphs in the center of the room begin to illuminate with the familiar voice of Amerantha ringing through:

"Hurry heroes! My diviners have found you once again and we don't know how long we can keep the connection open! Grab the gem, run into the circle, and hold on tight!!"

Treasure

The players are able to stuff their bags and pockets with the horde from the dragon totaling 15,500 gp, safely gather the shadowdiamond and enter into the ring before the walls crumble, closing the caverns for good.

Part 5. Not What We Expected

Estimated Duration: 15 minutes

Success!

The players step through the portal and find themselves in the personal teleportation circle of **Amerantha Everbright** anxiously requesting the full story of what took place during their adventure.

Zhentarim Faction Assignment:

Allow any Zhentarim players who acquired the **Shadowgem** an opportunity to use the black blade to chip a small piece into a secret compartment within its hilt. Role-play is encouraged and die rolls are not necessarily needed. If the character cannot find a way to stay in the back of the group, etc. allow them to attempt a DC 15 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand or Stealth) check to do so without being spotted. This will complete the Zhentarim Assignment

After the players have informed her of their situation and what has transpired, **Amerantha** asks the players for the **Shadowgem** and hands it to her researchers for careful and immediate study. They place the gem in a clear protective container and begin a ritual to identify any additional properties of the gem.

After a few moments of well-deserved rest, both diviners look up to you with eyes widened, jaws slowly dropping. They quickly end their ritual and pull Amerantha aside speaking softly.

She turns to you, concern in her voice,
“This is more than just a relic I’m afraid...It appears as this gem also acts as a conduit for something beyond my contacts and powers to harness. It seems like this is but a piece in a much larger ritual, and I think we may have bitten off more than we can chew...”

Defeat!

Should the players have not defeated the **Shadowvar** enemies, or fallen in battle against **Zourunth**, The enemies have regrouped and taken the **Shadowgem** with them, furthering their plans. Players earn the **Ire of Everbright** story award for their failure. After reporting the failure to **Amerantha**, she shows her disapproval greatly and their story ends here.

Rewards

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

Experience

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

Combat Awards

Name of Foe	XP Per Foe
Zourunth (Adult green dragon)	13,000
Allip	1,800
Banshee	1,100
Bone Claw	8,400
Steel Predator	15,000
Gedregghost (Soul Monger)	7,200
Shadovar Assassin (Shadowdancer)	2,900
Shadowcaster (Gloom Weaver)	5,000

Non-Combat Awards

Task or Accomplishment	XP Per Character
Bypassed Vine ensnarement	2,500
Bypassed Falling Roof Trap	2,500

The **minimum** total award for each character participating in this adventure is 10,125 **experience points**.

The **maximum** total award for each character participating in this adventure is 13,500 **experience points**.

Treasure

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

Treasure Awards

Item Name	GP Value
Zourunth's Hoard	15,500gp
Platinum spellbook	500 gp
Ruby Staff	250 gp
Private Library books	2,750 gp
Rare spell components	1,250 gp
Entry chamber treasure	2,500 gp

Amerantha's reward

4,000 gp each

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

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

Efreeti Bottle

Wonderous Item, Very Rare

This painted brass bottle weighs 1 pound. When you use an action to remove the stopper, a cloud of thick smoke flows out of the bottle. At the end of your turn, the smoke disappears with a flash of harmless fire, and an **efreeti** appears in an unoccupied space within 30 feet of you. The first time the bottle is opened, the GM rolls to determine what happens. This item can be found in **Player Handout 3**.

Potion of Speed

Potion, very rare

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

Potion of Superior Healing

Potion, rare

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

Story Awards

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

Favor of Everbright. You have collected successfully the **Shadowgem** against all odds and have proven yourself to **Amerantha Everbright**. The Old-World Society will remember this, should you meet with them in the future. More information can be found in **Player Handout 2**.

Ire of Everbright. You have let the **Shadowgem** fall into the hands of your enemies, earning you the disapproval of **Amerantha Everbright**. The Old-World Society will remember this, should you meet with them in the future. More information can be found in **Player Handout 2**.

Renown

Each character receives **one renown** at the conclusion of this adventure.

Members of the Zhentarim that successfully take a piece of the **Shadowgem** for the faction and hide it inside the hidden hilt of the blade, earn **one additional renowned point**.

DM Reward

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

Appendix. NPC Summary

The following NPCs are featured prominently in this adventure:

Amerantha Everbright (A-muh-RAN-tha).

Amerantha Everbright is a half-elf antiquarian who has gained a vast reputation for herself by hunting down artifacts and relics across the Moonsea and beyond.

Zourunth (ZOR-oonth). Zourunth is a fairly new addition to the ranks of shadow dragons. After hibernation, she was taken away to the Shadowfell and transformed in her long period of sleep. Upon her return, she had noticed a change in her prized possession as well, the transformation of her diamond into one infused with the very plane itself.

Gedreghast (Ged-reh-gast). Gedreghast is a shadowwar knight, part of an organization on the Shadowfell obsessed with the history of Telamont and his teleportation of the City of Shade to the Shadowfell. This fringe group believes there is something truly powerful within the Shadowdiamond and it may be used in a ritual to bring the city of shade back to the prime material.

Appendix. Monster/NPC Statistics

Zourunth (Adult Green Shadow Dragon)

Huge dragon, lawful evil

Armor Class 19(Natural Armor)

Hit Points 207 (18d12+90)

Speed 40 ft., fly 80 ft., swim 40 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	12 (+1)	21 (+5)	18 (+4)	15 (+2)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Dex +6, Con +10, Wis +7, Cha +8

Skills Deception +8, Insight +7, Perception +12, Persuasion +8, Stealth +11

Damage Resistances Necrotic

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses blindsight 60ft. , darkvision 120 ft, passive perception 22

Languages Common, Draconic

Challenge 15 (13,000 XP)

Living Shadow. While in dim light or darkness, the dragon has resistance to damage that isn't force, psychic, or radiant.

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

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

Amphibious. The dragon can breathe air and water.

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). If the dragon fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

Actions

Multiattack. The dragon can use its Frightful Presence. It then makes three attacks; one with its bite and two with its claws.

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +11 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 17 (2d10+6) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) necrotic damage.

Claw. Melee Weapon Attack: +11 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 13 (2d6 + 6) slashing damage.

Tail. Melee Weapon Attack: +11 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. Hit: 15 (2d8+6) bludgeoning damage.

Frightful Presence. Each creature of the dragon's choice that is within 120 feet of the dragon and aware of it must succeed on a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened for 1 minute. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a creature's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the creature is immune to the dragon's Frightful Presence for the next 24 hours.

Shadow Breath (Recharge 5-6). The dragon exhales necrotic gas in a 90-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 18 Constitution saving throw, taking 56 (16d6) Necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. A humanoid reduced to 0 hit points by this damage dies, and an undead shadow rises from its corpse and acts immediately after the dragon in the initiative count. The shadow is under the dragon's control.

Lair Actions

On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), the dragon takes a lair action to cause one of the following effects; the dragon can't use the same effect two rounds in a row:

- Grasping roots and vines erupt in a 20-foot radius centered on a point on the ground that the dragon can see within 120 feet of it. That area becomes difficult terrain, and each creature there must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be restrained by the roots and vines. A creature can be freed if it or another creature takes an action to make a DC 15 Strength check and succeeds. The roots and vines wilt away when the dragon uses this lair action again or when the dragon dies.
- A wall of tangled brush bristling with thorns springs into existence on a solid surface within 120 feet of the dragon. The wall is up to 60 feet long, 10 feet high, and 5 feet thick, and blocks line of sight. When the wall appears, each creature in its area must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw. A creature that fails the save takes 18 (4d8) piercing damage and is pushed 5 feet out of the wall's space, appearing on whichever side of the wall it wants. A creature can move through the wall, albeit slowly and painfully. For every 1 foot a

creature travels through the wall, it must spend 4 feet of movement. Furthermore, a creature in the wall's space must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw once each round it's in contact with the wall, taking 18 (4d8) piercing damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. Each 10-foot section of wall has AC 5, 15 hit points, vulnerability to fire damage, resistance to bludgeoning and piercing damage, and immunity to psychic damage. The wall sinks back into the ground when the dragon uses this lair action again or when the dragon dies.

- **Magical fog billows** around one creature the dragon can see within 120 feet of it. The creature must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or be charmed by the dragon until initiative count 20 on the next round.

Legendary Actions

The dragon 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 dragon regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Detect. The dragon makes a Wisdom (Perception) check.

Tail Attack. The dragon makes a tail attack.

Wing Attack (Costs 2 Actions). The dragon beats its wings. Each creature within 15 feet of the dragon must succeed on a DC 19 Dexterity saving throw or take 13 (2d6+6) bludgeoning damage and be knocked prone. The dragon can then fly up to half its flying speed.

Allip

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 40 (9d8)

Speed 0 ft., fly 40 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	17 (+3)	10 (+0)	17 (+3)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws INT +6, WIS +5

Skills Perception +5, Stealth +6

Damage Resistances Acid, Fire, Lightning, Thunder; Bludgeoning, Piercing, and Slashing from Nonmagical Attacks.

Damage Immunities Cold, Necrotic, poison

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

Senses darkvision 60 ft, passive perception 15

Languages the languages it knew in life

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Incorporeal Movement. The allip can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

Actions

Maddening Touch. *Melee Spell Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (4d6+3) psychic damage.

Whispers of Madness. The allip chooses up to three creatures it can see within 60 feet of it. Each target must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw, or it takes 7 (1d8+3) psychic damage and must use its reaction to make a melee weapon attack against one creature of the allip's choice that the allip can see. Constructs and undead are immune to this effect.

Howling Babble (Recharge 6). Each creature within 30 feet of the allip that can hear it must make a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, a target takes 12 (2d8+3) psychic damage, and it is stunned until the end of its next turn. On a successful save, it takes half as much damage and isn't stunned. Constructs and undead are immune to this effect.

Banshee

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 12 (half plate)

Hit Points 58 (13d8)

Speed 40 ft., (hover), walking 0 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
1 (-5)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws WIS +2, CHA +5

Damage Resistances Acid, Fire, Lightning, Thunder; Bludgeoning, Piercing, and Slashing from Nonmagical Attacks.

Damage Immunities Cold, Necrotic, poison

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

Senses darkvision 60 ft, passive perception 10

Languages Common, Elvish

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Detect Life. The banshee can magically sense the presence of creatures up to 5 miles away that aren't undead or constructs. She knows the general direction they're in but not their exact locations.

Incorporeal Movement. The banshee can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. She takes 5 (1d10) force damage if she ends her turn inside an object.

Actions

Corrupting Touch. *Melee Spell Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (3d6+2) necrotic damage.

Horrifying Visage. Each non-undead creature within 60 feet of the banshee that can see her must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute. A frightened target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, with disadvantage if the banshee is within line of sight, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a target's saving throw is successful or the effects ends for it, the target is immune to the banshee's Horrifying Visage for the next 24 hours.

Wail (1/day). The banshee releases a mournful wail, provided that she isn't in sunlight. This wail has no effect on constructs and undead. All other creatures within 30 feet of her that can hear her must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, a creature

drops to 0 hit points. On a success, a creature takes 10 (3d6) psychic damage.

Boneclaw

Large undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 16(Natural)

Hit Points 127 (17d10 + 34)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)	9 (-1)

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

Skills Perception +6, Stealth +7

Damage Resistances Cold, Necrotic; Bludgeoning, Piercing, and Slashing from Nonmagical Attacks.

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft, passive perception 16

Languages Common, plus one language of its master

Challenge 12 (8,400 XP)

Rejuvenation. While its master lives, a destroyed boneclaw gains a new body in 1d10 hours, with all its hit points. The new body appears within 1 mile of the boneclaw's master.

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

Actions

Multiattack. The boneclaw makes two claw attacks.

Piercing Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 20 (3d10+4) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, the boneclaw can pull the target up to 10 feet toward itself, and the target is grappled (escape DC 14). The boneclaw has two claws. While a claw grapples a target, the claw can only attack that target.

Shadow Jump. If the boneclaw is in dim light or darkness, each creature of the boneclaw's choice within 5 feet of it must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or take 34 (5d12+2) necrotic damage.

The boneclaw then magically teleports up to 60 feet to an unoccupied space it can see. It can bring one creature it is grappling, teleporting that creature to an unoccupied space it can see within 5 feet of its

destination. The destination spaces of this teleportation must be in dim light or darkness.

Reactions

Deadly Reach. In response to a visible enemy moving into its reach, the boneclaw makes one claw attack against that enemy. If the attack hits, the boneclaw can make a second claw attack against the target.

Gedreghast (Soul Monger)

Medium humanoid (elf), neutral

Armor Class 15 (studded leather)

Hit Points 123 (19d8+38)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-4)	17 (+3)	14 (+2)	19 (+4)	15 (+2)	13 (+1)

Saving Throws Dex +7, Wis +7, Cha +5

Skills, Perception +7

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive perception 17

Languages Common, Elvish

Challenge 11 (7,200 XP)

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

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

At will: *chill touch* (3d8 damage), *poison spray* (3d12 damage).

1/day each: *bestow curse*, *chain lightning*, *finger of death*, *gaseous form*, *phantasmal killer*, *seeming*

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

Soul Thirst. When the soul monger reduces a creature to 0 hit points, the soul monger can gain temporary hit points equal to half the creature's hit point maximum. While the soul monger has temporary hit points from this ability, it has advantage on attack rolls.

Weight of Ages. Any beast or humanoid, other than shadar-kai, that starts its turn within 5 feet of the soul monger has its speed reduced by 20 feet until the start of that creature's next turn.

Actions

Multiattack. The soul monger makes two phantasmal dagger attacks.

Phantasmal Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (4d4 + 3) piercing damage plus 19 (3d12) necrotic damage, and the target has disadvantage on saving throws until the start of the soul monger's next turn.

Wave of Weariness (Recharge 4-6). The soul monger emits weariness in a 60-foot-cube. Each creature in that area must make a DC 16 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 45 (10d8) psychic damage and suffers 1 level of exhaustion. On a successful save, it takes 22 (5d8) psychic damage.

Shadovar Assassin (Shadow Dancer)

Medium humanoid (elf), neutral

Armor Class 15

Hit Points 71 (13d8+13)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Dex +6, Con +4

Skills. Stealth +6

Damage Immunities Necrotic

Condition Immunities Charmed, Exhaustion

Senses passive perception 11, darkvision 60'

Languages Common, Elvish

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

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

Shadow Jump. As a bonus action, the shadow dancer can teleport up to 30 feet to an unoccupied space it can see. Both the space it teleports from and the space it teleports to must be in dim light or darkness. The shadow dancer can use this ability between the weapon attacks of another action it takes.

Actions

Multiattack. The Shadow Dancer makes three spiked chain attacks.

Spiked Chain. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6+3) piercing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or suffer one additional effect of the shadow dancer's choice:

- The target is grappled (escape DC 14) if it is a Medium or smaller creature. Until the grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the shadow dancer can't grapple another target.
- The target is knocked prone.

The target takes 22 (4d10) necrotic damage.

Shadowcaster (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 passive perception 11, darkvision 60'

Languages Common, 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.

Steel Predator

Large construct, lawful evil

Armor Class 20 (Natural Armor)

Hit Points 207 (18d10+108)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
24 (+7)	17 (+3)	22 (+6)	4 (-3)	14 (+2)	6 (-2)

Skills Perception +7, Stealth +8, Survival +7

Damage Resistances Cold, Lightning, Necrotic, Thunder

Damage Immunities Poison, Psychic; Bludgeoning, Piercing, and Slashing from Nonmagical Attacks.

Condition Immunities Charmed, Exhaustion, Frightened, Paralyzed, Petrified, Poisoned, Stunned

Senses Blindsight 30 ft., Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 17

Languages Understands Modron and the language of its owner but can't speak.

Challenge 16 (15,000 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. The steel predator's innate spellcasting ability is Wisdom. The steel predator can innately cast the following spells, requiring no components:

3/day each: dimension door (self only), plane shift (self only)

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

Magic Weapons. The steel predator's weapon attacks are magical.

Actions

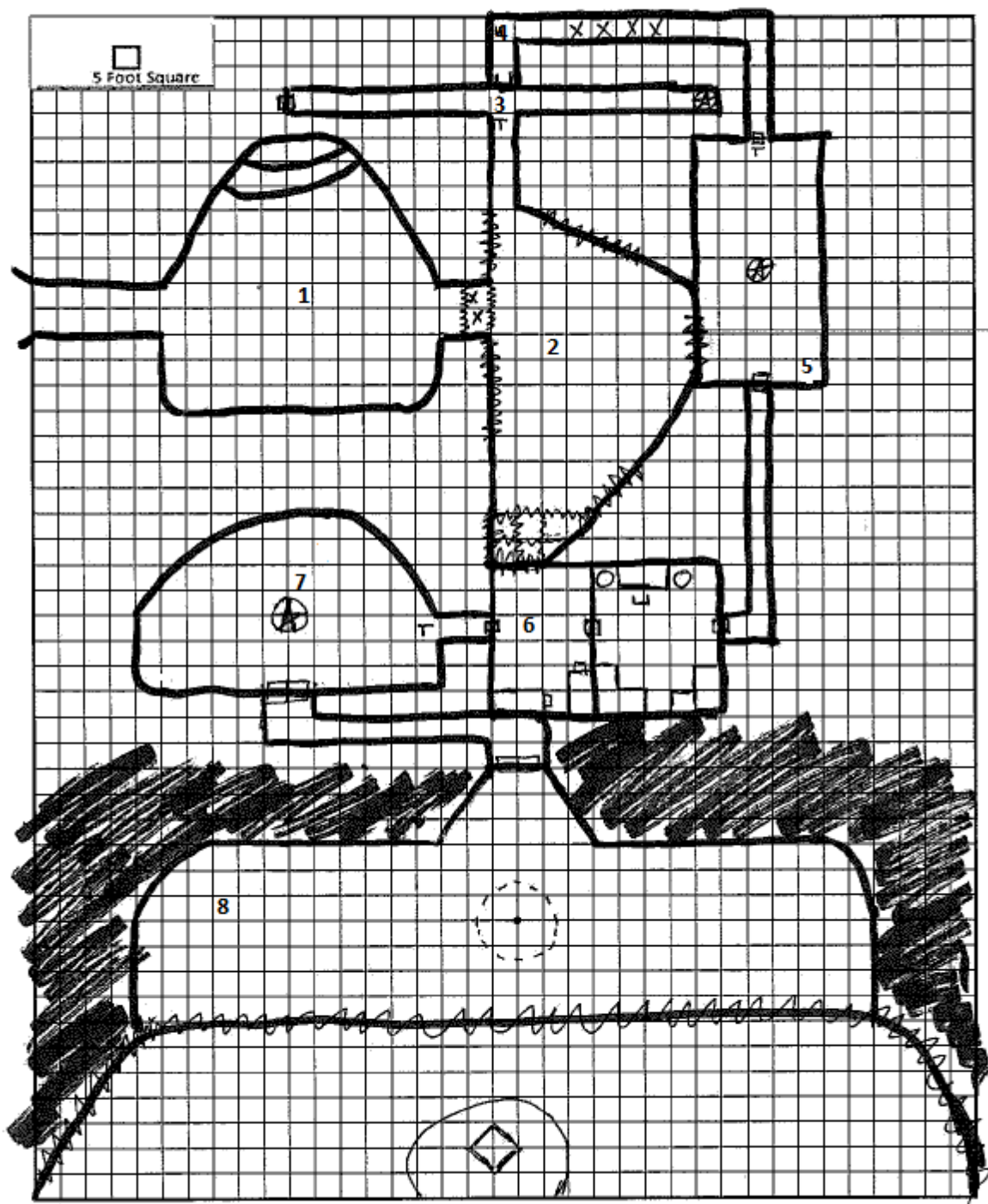
Multiattack. The steel predator makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its claw.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d6+7) piercing damage.

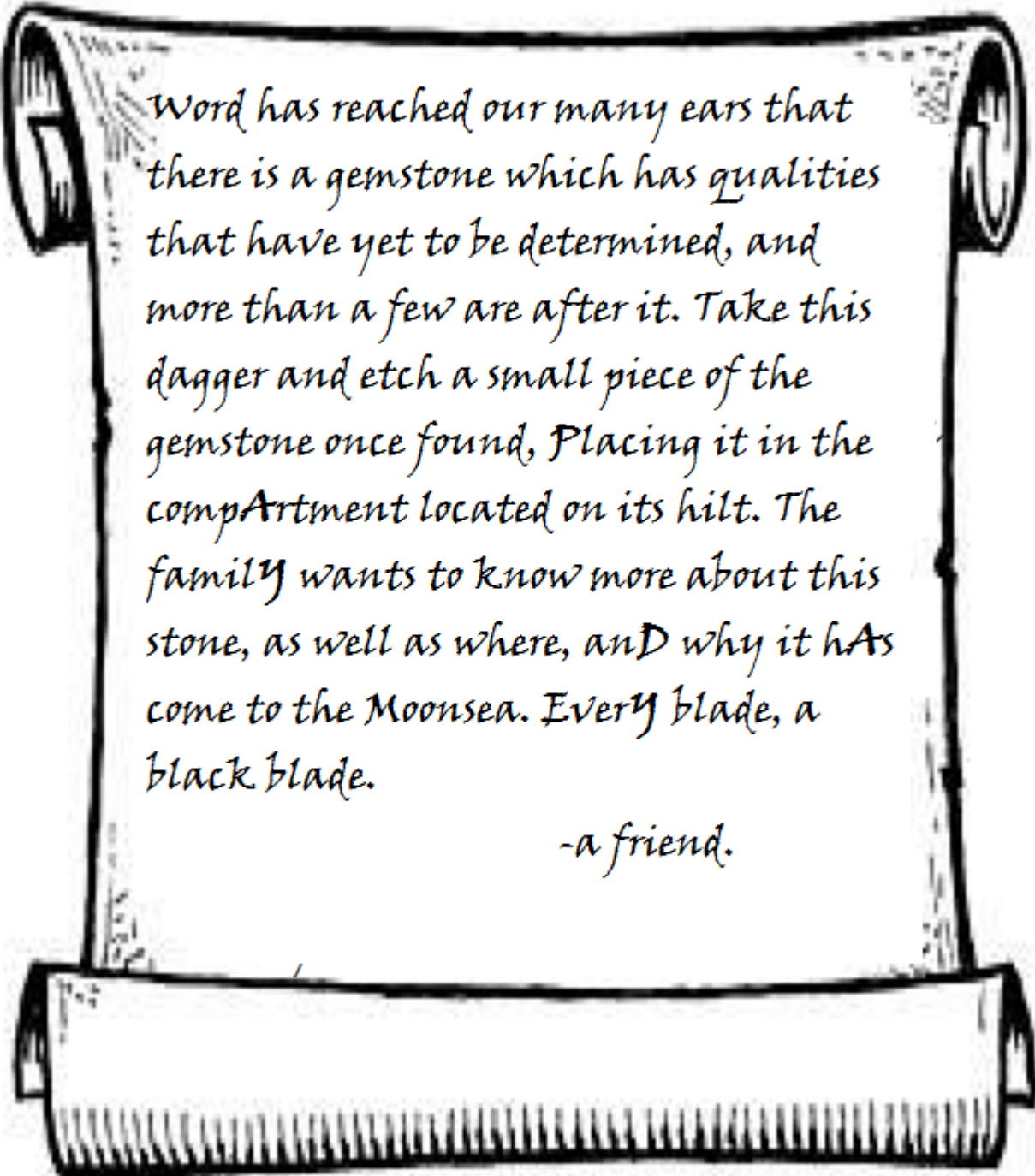
Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (2d8+7) slashing damage.

Stunning Roar (Recharge 5-6). The steel predator emits a roar in a 60-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 19 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 27 (5d10) thunder damage, drops everything it's holding, and is stunned for 1 minute. On a successful save, a creature takes half as much damage. The stunned creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Appendix. Map



Zhentarim Faction Assignment.

A hand-drawn scroll with a thick black border and a textured, slightly irregular edge. The scroll is unrolled, showing a large rectangular area of text. The text is written in a cursive, handwritten style. The scroll has small circular details at the top and bottom edges, suggesting where it might be tied or rolled up. The background of the scroll is white, and the text is black.

Word has reached our many ears that there is a gemstone which has qualities that have yet to be determined, and more than a few are after it. Take this dagger and etch a small piece of the gemstone once found, Placing it in the compartment located on its hilt. The family wants to know more about this stone, as well as where, and why it has come to the Moonsea. Every blade, a black blade.

-a friend.

Player Handout 1.

Only one color,
But not one size.

Stuck at the bottom,
And yet, I fly.

I live in the sun,
But not in the Rain.

Do no harm... And feel no pain.

Player Handout 2. Story Award

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

Favor of Everbright

You have collected successfully the **Shadowgem** against all odds and have proven yourself to **Amerantha Everbright**. The **Old-World Society** will remember this, should you meet with them in the future.

Ire of Everbright

You have let the **Shadowgem** fall into the hands of your enemies, earning you the disapproval of **Amerantha Everbright**. The **Old-World Society** will remember this, should you meet with them in the future.

Player Handout 3.

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

Efreeti Bottle

Wonderous Item, very rare

This painted brass bottle weighs 1 pound. When you use an action to remove the stopper, a cloud of thick smoke flows out of the bottle. At the end of your turn, the smoke disappears with a flash of harmless fire, and an **efreeti** appears in an unoccupied space within 30 feet of you. The first time the bottle is opened, the GM rolls to determine what happens.

D100

01-10	The efreeti attacks you. After fighting for 5 rounds, the efreeti disappears, and the bottle loses its magic.
11-90	The efreeti serves you for 1 hour, doing as you command. Then the efreeti returns to the bottle, and a new stopper contains it. The stopper can't be removed for 24 hours. The next two times the bottle is opened, the same effect occurs. If the bottle is opened a fourth time, the efreeti escapes and disappears, and the bottle loses its magic.
91-100	The efreeti can cast the <i>Wish</i> spell three times for you. It disappears when it grants the final <i>Wish</i> or after 1 hour, and the bottle loses its magic.

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