



RED WAR: HOUSEKEEPING

REDACTING MULMASTER



The dawn of the final day arrives: The Red War looms on the horizon, and nothing can stop what is to come. But in those early hours before carnage begins, a group of adventurers are tasked with a covert operation to remove sensitive information left behind by the factions and sow subterfuge. Will internal and external influences keep them from completing their missions?

A 4-6 Hour Adventure for Tier 3 Characters. Optimized for APL 13

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ADVENTURE PRIMER

*"Never let your sense of morals
prevent you from doing what is
right."*

- Isaac Asimov, *Foundation*

BACKGROUND

MULMASTER is a place of struggle and rebuilding. After the attacks from the **CULT OF ELEMENTAL EVIL**, the city struggled to repair itself until the **RED WIZARDS OF THAY (THAYANS)** came to help.

Members of the **FIVE MAJOR FACTIONS** in the region caused an uproar in recent tendays, calling for Thay to vacate the city and leave the elemental rifts that litter its streets alone. That has not come to pass, and the faction leaders are nervous.

With the Thayans tightening their grip on the city, the factions have called upon members and other adventurers to enter the city and retrieve sensitive information and informants. Sadly, unknown to anyone outside of the leaders of Thay, the Red War will commence this morning. Those who enter the city will contend with death and undeath to complete their mission and escape... Without being caught.

EPISODES

The adventure's story is spread over three **story episodes** that take approximately 4 hours to play. These episodes are introduced by a Call to Action Episode. The adventure also includes two 1-hour **bonus episodes** that can be played if time permits, that are introduced anywhere in the adventure.

If you're planning to play the entire adventure at once, you only need to introduce the **Call to Action** once. However, if you plan to play them over several sessions, you'll want to revisit the **Call to Action** each time you play.

- **Episode 1: Services Needed.** A few miles outside of Mulmaster, the characters meet with multiple faction agents and prepare for their excursion into Mulmaster. Their goal? Remove sensitive information and agents still in the city, and answer a family's plea for aid. This is the **Call to Action**.
- **Episode 2: An Oath, Taken.** Once inside the city walls, the characters soon become unwilling participants in the Red War. Allies can be found, and villain plans killed. This is **Story Objective A**.
- **Episode 3: The Final Gambit.** As the war continues to escalate, an escape must be made. If more can be done to secure and contain during their exit, so much the better. And what will become of sources not resolved? This is **Story Objective B**.

BONUS OBJECTIVES

However, this adventure also includes two, 1-hour bonus objectives that the characters can pursue if they have additional time to do so—earning additional **advancement and treasure checkpoints** in the process. These bonus objectives are found in this adventure's appendices, as follows:

- **Bonus Objective A: Cloaked Might.** The Brotherhood of the Cloak has been a constant in the city for generations, but during the Red War, remain silent. Resolve their silence for them. This bonus objective is found in **Appendix 4**.
- **Bonus Objective B: The Quiet Thayan.** While between locations, an undead songbird brings a message, and an opportunity. Those in line to be a tharchion are rare, and a turncoat even rarer. This bonus objective is found in **Appendix 5**.

EPISODE SEQUENCE

Depending on your time constraints, play style and environment, this adventure takes approximately two-to-four hours to play.

HOW WILL YOU PLAY?

The duration of your session depends on how much of this adventure you utilize. At the very least, your session will last approximately 4 **hours**. However, if you wish, you can provide a longer experience for your players by utilizing the **bonus objectives**.

Story Objectives Only. To complete both of the adventure's story objectives, the characters play in Episodes 1 through 3 in order.

Bonus Objectives. You can extend this adventure by **one- or two- hours** by utilizing the bonus objectives provided in the appendices. The timing of their placement in the adventure is such that they can be added at any point during Episode 2. Once in Episode 3, it is hard to smoothly add them in.

THE RED WAR, ONGOING EFFECTS, & MULMASTER

This adventure begins in the early hours of the Red War, with the full effects of the war taking effect partway into Episode 2, as described in said episode. The full details are in **Appendix 3**.

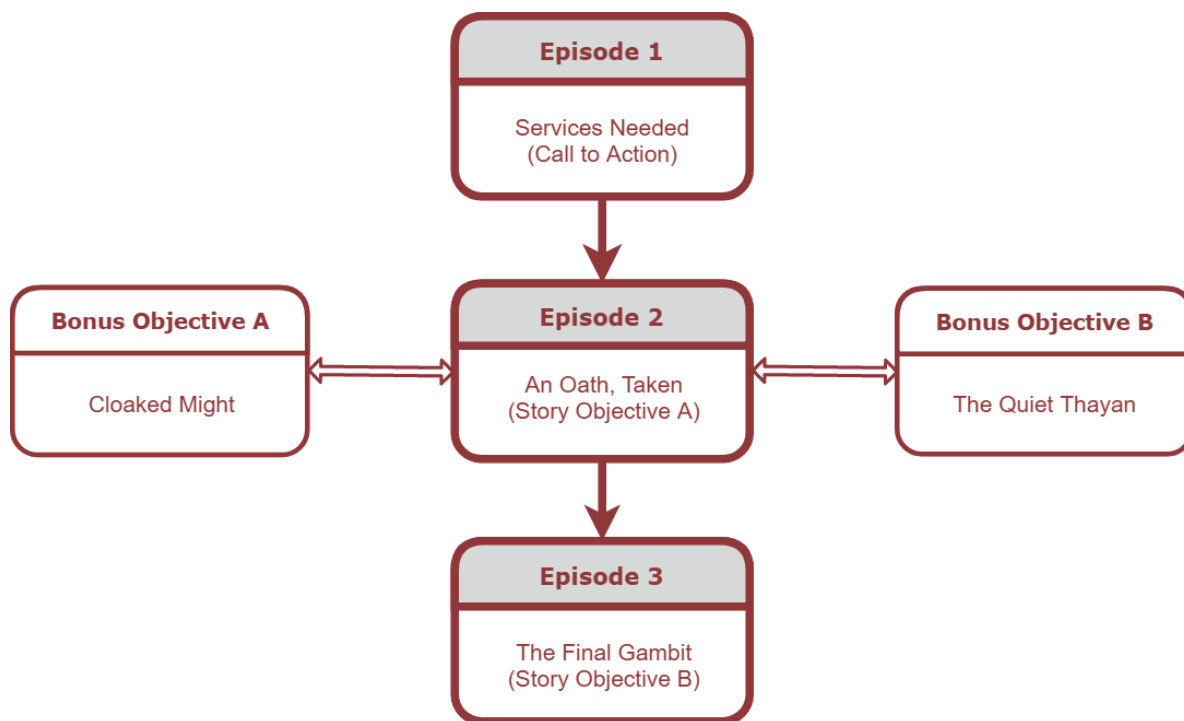
In addition, this adventure does not contain any pre-drawn maps. This is intentional, as player actions and the progression of the players will inevitably change the landscape of their encounters and battles. To help your overall awareness of the city, and to give a bird's eye view of locations called out in this adventure, please download the PDF "**City Guide: Mulmaster**" from the DM's Guild, which contains maps and city information, via the following link:

<https://www.dmsguild.com/product/202483/City-Guide-Mulmaster>

Sample locations from "City Guide: Mulmaster" will be provided for each scene, to help with preparation.

EPISODE FLOWCHART

This section provides a basic understanding of not only the flow of the adventure, but also the outline of the different paths that your players may take in reaching their stated objective.



EPISODE 1: SERVICES NEEDED (CALL TO ACTION)

Estimated Duration: 15 Minutes

SCENE A. DAWN OF THE FINAL DAY

Just a few miles outside of Mulmaster, the characters eat and prepare for one hour before daybreak in a *Mordenkainen's Magnificent Mansion*, other spells protecting those inside from being noticed.

The characters are here to receive the jobs and requests asked of them by the five major factions and the citizens of Mulmaster. The faction members present immediately share the following, as every faction is showing some of their hand:

PRESENT COMPANY.

Kresimira Simonov: Gives Player Handout 1 (**Damaran Human - She/Her - Harper**)

Objectives/Goals. The Harpers have long been an enemy of Thay, but with the escalations in Mulmaster they are looking to scrub a resource center clean before Thay hunts the factions down within. It was partially done by other Harpers, but they were killed before completing their duty.

What Does She Know? She knows that the Harpers once worked closely with various Thayan defectors. If persuaded or guilted, she will mention that she thought Syranna (see **Handout 1**) had died a few years ago. She fears the letter is a trick, or worse, and offers a *spell scroll of contingency*.

Adra Thalmiar:

(**High Elf - They/Them - Order of the Gauntlet**)

Objectives/Goals. The Gauntlet is aware of the evils that Thay has done over the years, and wish to cleanse it at the source, with civilians safe and plans ready. One of their best clerics recently went missing, and they would like his body and memories returned before they are used for ill. His worship of Lathander was inspiring.

What Do They Know? Adra has prepared a bountiful casting of *heroes' feast* for the adventurers, offering it in thanks for their service. They have also received visions of a captured celestial, blinding in its light, engulfed by worms. They do not know where the being is, but they fear the worst.

Menhet:

(**Fallen Aasimar - She/Her - Emerald Enclave**)

Objectives/Goals. The elemental rifts that plague the city are of the utmost importance to the Enclave, as the Enclave knows that war will arrive soon, and they will only grow. Elemental Evil cultists have stolen research on devastation orbs and how to

expedite their growth: This research and any created orbs must be purged.

What Does She Know? Menhet divulges that she just yesterday captured Elemental Evil cultists working on another earth devastation orb. Before being dispelled, she noticed it was very unstable.

Drake Hightower:

(**Chondathan Human - He/Him - Lords Alliance**)

Objectives/Goals. The Lords Alliance wishes for stability: The threat of war, lack of resources, and Mulmaster's position in the Moonsea, and the other factions' choice to push onward drags them to action. To top it off, a known "problem" from within the faction was captured and is being experimented on. They need Glurbuk the orc wizard back.

What Does He Know? Drake has a request from the Hightower family: His sister Mara, a spy, is at risk of discovery. The Alliance considers her non-vital, but his family wishes for her return. They offer to those who bring her back a Hightower signet ring marking them as allies of the family and the Alliance.

Idrex Berdrakoroohm:

(**Gold Dragonborn - He/Him - Zhentarim**)

Objectives/Goals. The Zhent Ghettos and their people are vital to the Zhentarim and are their number one priority. And seeing the other factions suffer for their hubris makes him smile, if it does not hurt the Black Network or its allies.

What Does He Know? Idrex knows more about the city than most, and if properly coerced he will show the most trusted character the hand sign needed to mark themselves as a Zhent sympathizer in Mulmaster. This should be given to another Zhentarim agent if possible, DM discretion.

TREASURE & REWARDS.

- **Magic Items.** Spell scroll of contingency.
- **Favors.** Hightower ally signet ring.

CALL TO ACTION

The overall objective of this adventure is as follows:

- The objective of this adventure is to resolve and remove any sensitive information that the Red Wizards of Thay may use while not being caught by them and help those in need within the city of Mulmaster. **Handout 2** gives a quick list of the faction requests for player visibility.

EPISODE 2: AN OATH, TAKEN (STORY OBJECTIVE A)

Estimated Duration: 120 Minutes

SETTING DESCRIPTION

The characters enter the city proper, concealing their intent and place in the war as they move to help those in need and complete their objectives. Both bonus objectives can be added in at any point after “Scene 2A: The Reprimand”.

PREREQUISITES

Accepting the requests of the Thayan spy, or accepting the job set forth by the factions, is the prerequisite to start Episode 2.

STORY OBJECTIVE A

The characters start to enter the city and are immediately embroiled in the war. They must stay clear of combat lest they fail or die, but fear and anger find them in the form of a confused Hawk.

AREA INFORMATION

This area features for the entirety of this adventure:

Dimensions & Terrain. The city is dozens of square miles in size, cobbled streets and stone buildings filling the spaces they can survive in.

Lighting. The early morning sun fills the sky until Scene 2A, when a dark unnatural storm fills the air and causes all areas to be dim light or darkness.

THE CHARACTERS ARE COMPETENT

This episode begins with the assumption that the characters are competent enough to enter the city of Mulmaster without causing a scene and continues this assumption between scenes. Allow them to roleplay or explain their plans, but this is not meant to be a resource drain or a big use of time. Now if the characters decide to go in attacking the city, then assume the worst of the Thayans and their reaction to the would-be attackers.

RESTING IN THIS ADVENTURE

Characters can take one short rest per **two** completed scenes. There is no time for a long rest.

PARTY STRENGTH: DEADLY

Many Adventurers League groups turn out to be stronger than the “Determining Party Strength” table would suggest. In such a case, the DM and players should feel empowered to raise the difficulty. To that end, a new party strength of “Deadly” has been added as an option for Very Strong parties whose players would like an additional challenge.

SCENE 2A. THE REPRIMAND

As the characters begin to look around the city, the morning becomes chaos as Szass Tam enacts his speech and activates everything in **Appendix 3**.

CREATURES/NPCs

As citizens try to flee, chaos and elemental energy begin to flow through the streets, and the Thayan army moves through Mulmaster. The characters are free to do any of the following Scenes, but once two hours of play have passed any objectives they do not complete will be considered a failure and they will move to Scene 3. Below are the Scenes in Episode 2, for your convenience:

2B – Forced Conscription. Mulmasterites and Thayan slaves are being bled dry to create fresh workers and soldiers. End their suffering. (Zhentarim Request)

2C – Glurbuk... Is. An orc wizard is suffering from Thayan experimentation and warping their environment because of it. Break Glurbuk free. (Lords Alliance Request)

2D – Lathander’s Disease. A powerful cleric serving Lathander was captured and has since been used for nefarious schemes. Recover the body. (Order of the Gauntlet Request)

2E – Broken Tower. The Lords Alliance spy Mara is on the brink of breaking from interrogation and needs to escape. Throw off her captors. (Hightower Family request)

If you are adding bonus objectives in this section, add an additional hour for each one before moving to Episode 3. Last, if players ask to do the Emerald Enclave or Harper request, here are two example reasons for not being able to complete them in Episode 2: The Emerald Enclave request cannot be found due to the Elemental Cultists hiding their trump card, and the Harper mission is in the middle of a large battle that should be avoided.

SZASS TAM’S SPEECH (FROM RED WAR EPIC)

Below is the declaration that Szass Tam makes to the city of Mulmaster, if you wish to say it to your players:

“Too long have you pushed, the ruinous, impulsive pests you are. You pained me in cursed jungle and you still pain me here. Today, I purge this city of you and everything here you care about. Mulmaster will burn, thousands will die, and the blood is on your hands!”

SCENE 2B. FORCED CONSCRIPTION

Mulmasterites and Thayan slaves are being bled dry to create fresh workers and soldiers. End their suffering. (Zhentarim Request)

AREA INFORMATION

See Page 6 for general information. For a city location suggestion, pick any building or street corner near the Traveler's Cloak Inn (Location 9 in "City Guide: Mulmaster").

CREATURES/NPCs

The situation for the **8 commoners** is dire, tied to the ground and walls and etched with magic sigils. **Two Thayan Mages** and a **Thayan Necromancer** stand nearby, working a necromantic ritual to kill the commoners and turn their bodies and souls into soldiers for the war effort. **One Zombie Beholder** floats above, watching over its masters.

Objectives/Goals. The Thayans want to bolster their forces to appease their leaders and ensure that no one crosses Thay again. Stopping would-be heroes would make this a good day, as would completing their ritual successfully. If the Thayans all die, the ritual stops.

Traps/Preparations. The Thayans have protected themselves during the ritual, with four previously cast *glyph of warding* spells strategically placed around the ritual area. Two contain a 5th level *counterspell* set to target any non-Thayan caster that casts a spell within 60 feet. The third contains a *hold monster* set to target anyone that strikes a Thayan with weapon or body within 90 feet. The fourth contains a *wall of force* that has already activated by the Thayans starting the ritual, though it has left an opening for their exit when the ritual is done.

DEVELOPMENT & REWARDS

What Do They Know? If a Thayan is captured, they are rather unwilling to help or provide information, preferring death over anything else. Not that death will keep them down for long.

The commoners are a different story. Each saved commoner is injured and has 4 levels of exhaustion, but they are still alive. They are beyond thankful but understand that they are more of a burden than a blessing. They will hide in a nearby building and pray for their safety and the safety of their saviors.

In addition, if more than half of the commoners are alive at the end of this scene, a small note ends up in the pocket of a character. It provides information on Thayan placements and other important intel. This gives one minor mechanical benefit at the DM's discretion, such as advantage on their next initiative roll. If all of the commoners die, this scene is a failure.

Syranna and the Hawks. If the characters bring up Syranna, or the letter sent to the factions from her, one of the surviving civilians will recall a group of Hawks that talked of a Syranna in the past tense. Her name was often said with reverence, though they do not know why.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak:** Remove one Thayan Mage.
- **Weak:** Remove one Thayan Mage, add one Greater Zombie
- **Strong:** Add one Zombie Beholder.
- **Very Strong:** Change Thayan Necromancer to Thayan Archmage, add one Zombie Beholder.
- **Deadly:** Change Thayan Necromancer to Thayan Archmage, change one Thayan Mage to Thayan Diviner, add one Zombie Beholder.

PLAYING THE PILLARS

COMBAT

On initiative count 20 of each round, one commoner dies per Thayan still alive. This triggers the ritual to create **undead creatures**, with the creature type changing depending on the number of dead. One dead commoner creates a **ghoul**, two dead create a **ghast**, and three dead create a **greater zombie**. These should not be cumulative.

EXPLORATION

The **chains** holding the commoners down look to be breakable (AC 15, 30 HP, Immune to Psychic Damage), and their locks are not high grade [DC 15 Dexterity (Thieves' Tools) skill check]. If they are not in the ritual, it cannot work. Last, the war has damaged some **buildings**, which can provide cover or be pushed over to do more damage.

SOCIAL

The Thayans holding the ritual are **terrified** of their superiors. Impersonating a superior or fellow Thayan might cause panic (DC 18) or force the Thayans to leave if they fear for things worse than death (DC 23). Last, some of the commoners are from the **Zhent Ghetto**, and showing the right hand-signals might embolden them to move and try to break free from their chains (also see What Do They Know at the end of this scene).

SCENE 2C. GLURBUK... Is.

An orc wizard is suffering from Thayan experimentation and warping their environment. Break Glurbuk free. (Lords Alliance Request)

AREA INFORMATION

See Page 6 for general information. For a location suggestion, a building next to the Shrine of Kyuss is ideal (Location 27 in “City Guide: Mulmaster”).

What Lies Within. Characters who try to enter the building must make a DC 21 Constitution saving throw as they are teleported to **Glurbuk’s** prison. Those who fail are blinded for one minute from the teleport, and those who succeed are not blinded.

Once in, any creature can begin to hear thousands of voices repeating “Glurbuk. Is.”, emanating from everywhere. A thrumming **black crystal** that seems to have a heartbeat lies in the center of an ever-rippling floor, a miniaturized orc wizard inside glowing like a dying star.

Area Effects. While a creature is within 120 feet of the black crystal, they can feel something wrong. Each creature not from the Far Realm has disadvantage on spell attacks and saving throws, and gains vulnerability to psychic and necrotic damage.

THE WRITHING BATTERY

The prison of Kyuss, the Worm that Walks. What Glurbuk is entombed in is just a small portion of a Battery, its effected muted. For more info, read Alan Patrick’s adventure “Those That Came Before”, available on the DM’s Guild.

CREATURES/NPCs

Glurbuk. The characters should quickly realize that the creature inside of the crystal is the orc wizard the Lords Alliance is looking for, planar energy radiating from him and the crystal. He is immune from all damage while imprisoned.

The Black Crystal. The crystal is a piece of a Writhing Battery and retains some of its power. In addition to the area effects, it has AC 20, 150 HP, Damage Threshold 20, resistance to all damage, and immunity to spells of 3rd level or lower.

Beyond the Void. A passive Perception of 16 or higher notices the stars are hundreds of jet-black eyes entering and exiting existence sporadically. Those with a passive Perception of 21 or higher can notice the eyes are inside mouths and tentacles from those who dwell in the layers: A **Star Spawn Hulk** and **Star Spawn Seer**.

DEVELOPMENT

Freeing Glurbuk is the number one priority. Once his prison is broken or dispelled, everything in this demiplane (including the players) is sucked in with a schlurping noise into the center of the room and nothingness. Moments later, they are suddenly back in Mulmaster, but things are wrong. Some examples:

- Everything is a shade of gray.
- Time has stopped flowing around them.
- There is no sound and everything is thin.

This stops when characters interact with Glurbuk, who breaks into a smile, his *awakened* tentacle friend emerging from his ear as he yells “Splashy!” and the world snaps back into place. This should be a jarring yet amusing moment.

What Does He Know? Glurbuk has a happy smile across his face, the *awakened* tentacle creature (octopus-squid hybrid) acting as a translator. He will listen intently to the characters requests but does not give aid or information, as he knows next to nothing and is scared. After a minute or so, he will wish to be back home, which triggers his casting of *wish* for the *teleport* spell. Glurbuk simply... Is.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene, if combat occurs:

- **Very Weak and Weak:** Replace Star Spawn Hulk with Star Spawn Mangler
- **Strong:** Replace Star Spawn Seer with Star Spawn Larva Mage
- **Very Strong:** Replace Star Spawn Seer with Star Spawn Larva Mage, add Star Spawn Mangler
- **Deadly:** Add Star Spawn Larva Mage and add two Star Spawn Manglers.

PLAYING THE PILLARS

COMBAT

The various star spawn should not enter combat, and cannot be interacted with, until a creature **tampers** with the crystal. The star spawn roll initiative with advantage and attack **divine casters** until they are dead.

EXPLORATION

Investigating characters might notice **small cracks** in the crystal that can be used to ignore its damage threshold [Intelligence (Investigation) DC 20]. These cracks can also be used to easily move the crystal, if needed.

EXPLORATION CONTINUED

Those skilled in Arcana or cast *detect magic* or *identify* above 4th level find that Glurbuk is contained by an **imprisonment** spell and can be released by staring at his body and rapidly saying “Glurbuk” three times.

SCENE 2D. LATHANDER'S DISEASE

A powerful cleric serving Lathander was captured and has since been used for nefarious schemes. Recover the body. (Order of the Gauntlet Request)

AREA INFORMATION

See Page 6 for general information. For a city location suggestion, the shrine to Lathander and its open field are an ideal location (Location 17 in "City Guide: Mulmaster").

CREATURES/NPCs

The corpse of the Order of the Gauntlet cleric has been transformed into an amalgamation of angelic forms and demonic corruptions: a makeshift

Planetar. It has a **Thayan War Priest** by its side, who continues to influence and warp it at all times.

Objectives/Goals. The celestial has foggy memories of its past life; having killed multiple enemies, it is currently wrestling with conflicting emotions. The Thayan ally is trying to calm it down and maintain the spells and energy holding it together. It needs the angelic being alive to appease Szass Tam and his needs.

What Does He Know? If the characters are able to hold a discussion with the pair without being caught (the celestial knows when it hears a lie), then the Thayan is eager to talk about their control of the celestial. This includes talking about tampering with the shrine, the souls stuck in the body, and how excited he is for Szass Tam's approval.

The celestial does not know much of anything, though it can bring up memories of its time as a cleric of Lathander if nudged. It remembers some of the battles it waged, the people it saved, and it hurts that side of him to be where he is currently. The Thayan is eager to hear more of these memories, as they are a key part of the experiment.

DEVELOPMENTS

Depending on how the celestial and Thayan are handled, there are one of two outcomes:

The Body is Recovered. If the body is killed, the evil influence is removed, or the cleric's soul gains full control of the body, the cleric and celestial souls are free to leave the Material Plane, and the body is available for recovery. The players must have a way to either hide the body and come back for it or bring it with them without being noticed.

The Body is not Recovered. If the celestial is plane shifted, disintegrated, or other means of no recovery, then the mission is a failure. The dust or faint fragments of its form can be brought back but do not provide what the Order of the Gauntlet requested.

Syranna and the Hawks. Those with a passive Perception of 18 or higher will feel like they are being watched but will not have a sense of where before it stops. Those with a passive Perception of 23 or higher will notice movement on a far-away building as those who were watching the party teleport away. Those who investigate can find a spyglass with a hawk claw etched into its base and some half-dozen footprints left behind.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak:** Replace Thayan War Priest with Thayan Enchanter, no environmental healing
- **Weak:** Replace Thayan War Priest with Thayan Enchanter
- **Strong:** Planetar regains 31 (4d10+7) hit points on initiative count 20.
- **Very Strong:** Planetar regains 31 (4d10+7) hit points on initiative count 20, and replace Thayan War Priest with a Thayan Archmage.
- **Deadly:** Replace the Planetar with a Solar, replace Thayan War Priest with a Thayan Archmage, and the Solar regains 37 (5d10+7) hit points on initiative count 20.

PLAYING THE PILLARS

COMBAT

The would-be angel has judged all unworthy, and counts as **undead** and **celestial**. On initiative count 20 it **regains** 25 (3d10 + 7) hit points from the shrine's power and Thayan magic. Killing the Thayan reduces this healing by half. Last, reducing the Thayan to 0 doesn't finish it. It instead rises as an undead (**Skull Lord**) and must be killed again.

EXPLORATION

Perceptive characters [DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) skill check] can notice changes to the **shrine** of Lathander. Tampering with these Thayan alterations reduce the healing that the celestial receives if combat occurs, and can help the dead cleric's soul gain complete control of the body. This can be further pushed by casting high level spells such as *dispel evil and good*.

SOCIAL

The **spirit** of the cleric still resides in the body, fighting to break free. Calling to the teachings of **Lathander** and doubting the Thayan ways can help the spirit take control [DC 20 Charisma (Persuasion) skill check]. This can result in the celestial having disadvantage on attacks, healing a character, or as far as forcing the body to collapse as the soul is freed.

SCENE 2E. BROKEN TOWER

The Lords Alliance spy Mara is on the brink of breaking from interrogation and needs to escape. Throw off her captors. (Hightower Family request)

AREA INFORMATION

See Page 6 for general information. For a city location suggestion, the buildings just to the south of the Thayan Embassy are an ideal location (Location 14 in "City Guide: Mulmaster").

CREATURES/NPCs

In one of the half dozen buildings behind the southern end of the Thayan Embassy, **Mara Hightower (Abjurer)** is the focus of interrogation by **4 Thayan Mages**, **2 Thayan Archmages**, **2 Thayan Knights**, and a **Steel Predator**.

Objectives/Goals. Mara has been a spy in the Thayan Embassy for almost two years as a high-ranking Abjurer. The Red War, and recent information divulged from a Thayan spy in the Lords Alliance has caused some of her story to be brought into question, and she is looking for a way out.

The Thayans are looking to confirm their suspicions while Szass Tam and the city are under distress, to hide their failure and clean up the mess if at all needed. An elemental rift can hide many things.

UPSTANDING CITIZENS

When the characters spot Mara and the Thayans, they have to decide on how they wish to help the situation. If the characters refuse to be stealthy, Mara will call upon them as her underlings (see Acting as Her Allies). Here are some examples.

An Open Assault. While this is a choice that can be made, the characters should be aware that this Thayan contingent would be difficult and not without its difficulties, one of which is showing Mara that the characters can be trusted even while fighting her. Or worse, if they kill her by accident.

Causing a Distraction. A distraction could give Mara the chances she needs to leave, but it might backfire if there is not a suitable reason for her absence. The might of Thay extends far.

Acting as her Allies. Acting as her underlings or allies will give Mara alibies, and a reason to leave the scene. The characters' answers will be scrutinized and more (opposed Insight vs Deception, or other applicable skill check contests).

DEVELOPMENTS

Mara Escapes. If the characters are able to successfully distract the Thayans for three rounds of combat or through environmental distractions, Mara will be able to escape. Her safety at a future date is unknown but the mission is a success.

Mara is Let Go. If the characters are able to successfully overcome multiple skill checks and do not raise suspicion, Mara is let go for the time being. This is the safest option, with Mara thanking the characters by giving them a *potion of superior healing* before teleporting to safety.

Mara is Captured. If the characters are overcome in the scene, do not choose to help, or worse, then Mara is captured and is unable to be found again. This mission is a failure.

Syranna and the Hawks. If the Thayans or Mara are asked about Syranna or the letter sent to the factions, both sides give information.

The Thayans remark about the traitor's demise, and how her soul was used for experimentation on items and other equipment by the zulkirs. It has been a year or so since they have heard the name.

Mara remembers Syranna fondly, as a friend and an ally against Szass Tam. Her anger cost her her life and soul though, and Mara does not know what happened to her after her execution.

TREASURE

- **Magic Items.** Potion of Superior Healing.

PLAYING THE PILLARS

COMBAT

Combat will pit the characters against the entire Thayan force, including Mara (who must protect her identity, and does not know them). **Secretly telling her** that they are here to help might turn the tide or have her play dead.

EXPLORATION

The characters can find a nearby **elemental rift (Appendixes 10A-10E)** that could be used to reduce some of the Thayan forces [DC 18 Wisdom (Survival)]. In addition, some of the buildings might have secret **trapdoors** to lure unsuspecting individuals to their doom.

SOCIAL

Boldly claiming to be a powerful Thayan might cause enough of a disturbance to give pause to the interrogators [DC 25 Charisma (Deception or Intimidation)]. A success would give advantage to the next two Charisma skill checks with the Thayan forces.

EPISODE 3: THE FINAL GAMBIT (STORY OBJECTIVE B)

Estimated Duration: 100 Minutes

SCENE 3. A BREAK IN THE FIGHT

Hawks brooding, cultists scheming, citizens reeling...
Characters have done much, but more is asked.

PREREQUISITES

Completing the scenes in Episode 2 or reaching the 120-minute time limit during Episode 2 will allow the characters to move to Episode 3.

STORY OBJECTIVE B

Resolve the situation with the Hawk's strike team, and hinder the Elemental Evil cultists and their plot before leaving... Or staying to fight.

There is no easy tie in for either bonus objective, as the story progresses quickly from Scene 3A to 3B before ending the adventure.

AREA INFORMATION

This area features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The harbor area is filled with dead bodies, escaping refugees, the sounds of fighting, and the smell of decay and elemental discharge.

Lighting. Darkness inside of the safe house, and dim light outside.

SCENE 3A. RENDING TALONS (HARPER REQUEST)

The Hawks make their move against the party, as they have lied in wait to attack traitors of the city.

AREA INFORMATION

This area features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The Harper hideout is hidden in the docks of the Harbor, rocks and other debris cleverly hiding the 5x5 foot entrance before magical wards cover what the mundane cannot. Inside, the safe house is a 30x50 foot room, with dozens of bookshelves still holding intel (coded and acid washed), multiple beds for sleeping, and various other supplies.

Lighting. Darkness inside of the safe house, and dim light outside.

THOSE THAT WAIT – CREATURES/NPCs

As the characters look inside of the Harper hideout and destroy it as requested, a passive Perception of 25 or higher will hear something moving at the entrance. If someone is watching outside, they instead see faint movement on rooftops and behind alleyways that is precise and well trained.

If either check is successful, the characters are not surprised as a *forcecage* spell envelopes the hideout entrance in its cage form (trying to capture outside characters as well). What lies in hiding is the Hawk strike team: Adalina Caldobra (**warlord**) who has greater invisibility cast on her, a **diviner**, a **war priest**, and an **archmage** (holding concentration on greater invisibility).

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak:** Remove the War Priest and Archmage, and the Diviner is holding concentration on *greater restoration*
- **Weak:** Remove Archmage, and the Diviner is holding concentration on *greater restoration*

- **Strong:** Increase each creature's HP by 20%, and Adalina does an extra 5d6 damage with her sneak attack.
- **Very Strong:** Increase each creature's HP by 30%, and Adalina does an extra 6d6 damage with her sneak attack.
- **Deadly:** Add one Archmage simulacrum with no 9th level spell slot available, increase each creature's HP by 30%, and Adalina does an extra 6d6 damage with her sneak attack.

Objectives/Goals. The Hawks believe that the characters are Thayan agents, as the message (Handout 1) was not responded to by anyone. If the characters do not immediately act hostile, the characters can talk of their mission to put the Hawks at ease [DC 23 Charisma (Persuasion)]. Give advantage and disadvantage as needed.

If this fails, they can attempt it one more time with the DC increased by 5. If it fails a second time, or if the characters act in a hostile manner at any time, the Hawks initiate combat with Adalina activating her *oathbow* on a visible target.

DEVELOPMENTS

Non-Combat. The Hawks apologize profusely for the confusion and threats. Adalina in particular bows and lays down her *oathbow* for a character to take. She does not deem herself worthy of it and believes another can take up the fight against Szass Tam. The Hawks excuse themselves once Adalina does this, as civilians still need help throughout the city and the fighting is only escalating. And one of their own is missing after actively hunting Black Earth cultists.

Combat. Defeating the Hawks in combat is a bittersweet victory: This group of soldiers did what they could for the greater good, acting as needed to protect their city and its people. The characters can take *Syranna's Folly* from Adalina's body.

TREASURE

- **Magic Items.** *Syranna's Folly* (Oathbow).

PLAYING THE PILLARS

COMBAT

The Hawks are a well-trained and seasoned group. Adalina's fortune has been foretold that her first attack with her *oathbow* will be a **critical hit** against her target, with her allies keeping her protected until it is unneeded. She also has learned to **sneak attack** with her weapons for an additional 4d6 damage, once per turn.

EXPLORATION

The Harper safehouse hides a **secret tunnel** [DC 21 Intelligence (Investigation)] that emerges behind the Hawks' current position. It is how the Hawks would enter and exit if trouble were coming, and they do not expect the characters to find it.

SOCIAL

Characters may still have a chance to resolve the scene without fighting, even if tensions have been raised and initiative started. Playing to the Hawks' sense of justice and not attacking back can cause the Hawks to pause and reconsider their attack... But this works only once.

SCENE 3B. ONE MORE THING (ENCLAVE REQUEST)

A tremor rocks the ground at the end of either development, and a nearby building collapses. In the rubble is a tunnel and a dead Cult of the Black Earth cultist, pieces of a devastation orb in his hands.

AREA INFORMATION

This area features:

Lighting. Darkness.

Dimensions & Terrain. A packed earth tunnel dives to over 1000 feet below the ground, drops of water and the sound of moving creatures borrowing through dirt nearby. Every so often, another shockwave rips through the ground, and characters cross the path with other dead cultists who have perished to prematurely exploding orbs.

At the end is a 50x30x20 foot room made of worked stone and shifting mud, a **dozen defective devastation orbs (earth)** scattered with multiple dead Black Earth cultists, and one unconscious **Mulmaster Hawk (Warlord)**: The same one missing from Adalina's group. If the characters did not learn this from the Hawks in 3A, they will not know that she was missing but her armor and heraldry will show her affiliation.

The center of this room churns with the energy of an **elemental earth node**, freshly born and showing vague images of the Plane of Earth.

DEFECTIVE DEVASTATION ORBS

The various orbs are all inscribed with various magical glyphs and techniques written in Druidic, that the Emerald Enclave have used to contain or suppress these items in the past. The goal of these changes is to reduce the time that it takes for an orb to explode... But has generally backfired.

The above information can be found with spells such as *identify* or *divination* or can be learned by researching the orbs [DC 21 Intelligence (Arcana) skill check]. A success also learns how to safely contain one of the orbs to return to the Emerald Enclave, and that the others can be deactivated permanently. The containment for travel requires a DC 21 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) skill check, and destroying an orb requires a DC 21 Intelligence (Nature) skill check. A failure of either skill check, or physically interacting with an orb in any other manner will trigger a premature explosion.

Lowering the DC. Reward creative uses of items and abilities to lower the DC of the Sleight of Hand skill check. For example, using air magic or symbols that represent air can lower the DC but using earth magic or symbols (such as the mud in the room) can increase the DC.

When they Explode. Each creature within 500 feet of the orb must make a DC 18 Constitution saving throw. On a failure the creature takes 12d6 thunder damage and is paralyzed until the end of their next turn. On a success, the creature takes half damage and is knocked prone. This damage does not trigger other defective orbs, as the Enclave research has made them immune to their own power.

Once one orb has been moved, destroyed, or prematurely detonated, the earth elemental node transforms into an **Earth Rift (Appendix 10C)**.

SQUAD HAWK DOWN

The unconscious Hawk is on her last legs, currently at 0 hit points, 3 level of exhaustion, but stable enough to not be making death saving throws. Most of the dead cultists were victim to her blade, but survivors have since used her vitality to open the rift and harness more energy.

Due to this use of her vitality, she **cannot be resuscitated** until she is 500 feet or more away from the earth elemental node. Any health she recovers should be kept track of for purposes of death saves, or immediate death if something catastrophic were to occur.

Last, be mindful of creatures being within 5 feet of each other. The Hawk herself is susceptible to the Necrotic Kiss, and can only suffer three more levels of exhaustion before dying.

CLEARING THE RIFT

Once the elemental rift is active, start initiative. Characters can either ignore the rift for now and continue to try and deactivate the orbs, try to take a few orbs with them and escape, or close this elemental rift permanently.

The Rift and the Orbs. On initiative count 20 of each round, the earth rift has a 1 in 6 chance of causing a devastation orb to explode prematurely. An orb that explodes this way follows the same damage and DC saving throws as listed above. Be mindful of the Mulmaster Hawk's condition, for if the characters did not move her or heal her she is likely to perish.

Closing the rift requires the characters to deactivate all orbs in the room, and then make multiple skill checks similar to closing an earth rift (**Appendix 10C**). Stopping this rift destroys the Black Earth's long-term plans in this area, for now.

DEVELOPMENT

For this scene to be a success, the characters must successfully take at least one devastation orb away from the earth node without it exploding, and then deactivate the elemental node entirely. Once the devastation orb has been 500 feet or more away from the node for longer than 10 minutes, it naturally deactivates.

- If the characters do not bring back pieces of a devastation orb, it is still a success, but the Enclave is less than thrilled with the results. This will affect future adventures.
- If no pieces of an orb are taken back, all of the devastation orbs are allowed to explode, or the elemental node (and subsequent rift) is allowed to stay and grow, this section is a failure (and will influence future adventures in the region).
- As for the Hawk: Characters who successfully save the Hawk find that she is grateful and saddened to find that she was brought down by the Cultists. As a token of her appreciation before leaving to join her fellow Hawks, she retrieves an *oil of sharpness* from a hidden compartment in the pommel of her sword. She tried to coat her weapon with it, but was brought down before doing so.
- A dead Hawk does not mean a failure for the mission, but the characters will not find the *oil of sharpness* on her person as it has shattered and made the pommel and grip of her sword slick, and prone to cause small cuts even through clothing.

TREASURE

- ***Magic Items.*** Oil of Sharpness.

WRAP-UP: CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

As the characters leave the elemental node and all that it entailed, there are multiple choices for their path forward. Do they stay behind and join the fight proper to save civilians and right wrongs? Do they leave and help evacuate citizens who have already fled? Do they return to their homes and let the ones who started the mess finish it? That is their choice, once they return what is needed.

ADVENTURE REWARDS

At the end of the session, the characters each receive rewards based upon their accomplishments. These rewards include advancement and treasure, and may include player rewards—magic item unlocks, story awards, or new downtime activities, as follows:

ADVANCEMENT AND TREASURE CHECKPOINTS

The characters receive **2** advancement checkpoints and 4 treasure checkpoints for each **story** objective **that** they complete, as follows:

- **Story Objective A:** Successfully Resolve At Least Two Scenes
- **Story Objective B:** Handle the Hawks and Break the Devastation Orbs

The characters receive 1 advancement checkpoint and 2 treasure checkpoints for each **bonus objective** that they complete, as follows:

- **Bonus Objective A:** Resolve the Cloak Fiasco
- **Bonus Objective B:** Acquire the Thayan Turncoat

PLAYER REWARDS

The characters earn the following player rewards for **completing the adventure**:

MAGIC ITEM UNLOCK

Characters completing the adventure's **main objectives** unlock this magic item:

Syranna's Folly (Oathbow). This elven bow has the soul of a Thayan rebel permanently and irreversibly entwined within it, her sigil defiled and etched into the grip. When attuned, the bearer can speak and understand Thayan, in addition to receiving the following Bond: "I will not be at peace until Szass Tam and his plots are erased from existence". This item can be found in **Appendix 8**.

STORY AWARDS

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

Our Strength is Absolute. The Hightower family has recognized your deeds and your aid to one of their own and have bestowed upon you a signet ring marking you as an ally. While this will have little bearing on most encounters, having such an item on hand might prove useful in future encounters with Lords' Alliance agent who know the family, and the Hightower's themselves. This story award can be found in **Appendix 9**.

DUNGEON MASTER 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 adventure's **player rewards**.

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.

APPENDIX 1: LOCATIONS & NPCs

The following NPCs and locations feature **prominently** in this adventure.

- **Kresimira Siminov (kreh-seh-ME-ra SI-min-av).**
(Damaran Human - She/Her - Harper)
Kresimira wants nothing more than to see Thay crumble but agrees that some Harpers have gone too far, and she wishes to fix the mess.
Personality: *I'm only nervous because I'm anxious*
Ideal: *Those with too much power need to be fixed*
Bond: *My faction means everything to me*
Flaw: *Quick changes terrify me*
- **Adra Thalmiar (A-drah thall-me-ar).**
(High Elf - They/Them - Order of the Gauntlet)
The Gauntlet is aware of the evils that Thay has done and wish to cleanse it at the source, but civilians must be safe first. Adra is sleep deprived from work, but still believes in the cause.
Personality: *Peace and acceptance for all good.*
Ideal: *Beauty points us beyond ourselves, to truth.*
Bond: *My faction and my gods guide me.*
Flaw: *To worry is to stress, so others worry for me.*
- **Menhet (men-et).**
(Fallen Aasimar - She/Her - Emerald Enclave)
The elemental rifts that plague the city are of the utmost importance to the Enclave, as they continue to cause long term damage to the environment and the city as a whole. Tick's death has only made Menhet angrier.
Personality: *Passion fuels my every move.*
Ideal: *Balance is key to a strong Faerûn.*
Bond: *My bloodline serves to balance me.*
Flaw: *There is no such thing as surrender.*
- **Drake Hightower (DRAKE high-tow-er).**
(Chondathan Human - He/Him - L.A.)
With his family being involved in the Red War since the beginning, Drake continues to believe it is their duty to see it through as leaders.
Personality: *Nobility does not place me above all.*
Ideal: *Blood runs thicker than water.*
Bond: *I must live up to my family's name.*
Flaw: *I often shame my family's name.*
- **Mara Hightower (mar-ah high-tow-er).**
(Chondathan Human - She/Her - L.A.)
A spy deep within the Thayan world, Mara has recently been investigated and might soon be

caught. She is looking to escape with the help of adventurers.

Personality: *I always have plans within plans.*

Ideal: *I ensure those who can be redeemed, are.*

Bond: *The Thayans will be cast down.*

Flaw: *I do not know when to quit.*

- **Idrex Berdrakoroohm**
(E-drex ber-dra-KA-room)
(Gold Dragonborn - He/Him - Zhentarim)
The Zhent Ghettos and their people are vital to the Zhentarim and are their number one priority. And seeing the other factions suffer for their hubris makes him smile.
Personality: *Schadenfreude keeps me alive.*
Ideal: *Respect is earned, not just given.*
Bond: *The other Zhents who took me off the street.*
Flaw: *I can't stop quips from leavin' me lips.*
- **Glurbuk (Glure-BUCK).**
(Orc - He/Him - Lords Alliance?)
Glurbuk... Is... A simple orc wizard who loves his tentacle companion (Splashy). Ends up in trouble more often than he causes it.
Personality: *Jovial, curious, and lost.*
Ideal: *Glurbuk... Is.*
Bond: *Splashy!*
Flaw: *Glurbuk... Is... (Far Realm alterations manifest randomly near and on him when upset)*
- **Adalina Caldobra (ADD-a-lee-nah kal-DO-bra).**
(Turami Human - She/Her - Hawks)
A respected member of the Hawks, Adalina has been spurred to action against the Thayans after finding the Oathbow that she now wields (Syranna's Folly).
Personality: *My trust has worn thin, earn it.*
Ideal: *I lay down my life for city and citizen.*
Bond: *I will not rest until Szass Tam is crushed.*
Flaw: *I hate being proven wrong.*
- **Mulmaster (MUL-master).** The City of Danger was once a cosmopolitan metropolis under the dictatorship of the High Blade but was devastated by the machinations of the Cults of Elemental Evil. In the years following, it has been rebuilding with the aid of the Mageocracy of Thay.
For More Information:
<https://www.dmsguild.com/product/202483/City-Guide-Mulmaster>

APPENDIX 2: CREATURE STATISTICS

ABJURER

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)

Hit Points 84 (13d8 + 26)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Int +8, Wis +5

Skills Arcana +8, History +8

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages any four languages

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Spellcasting. The abjurer is a 13th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks). The abjurer has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): blade ward, dancing lights, mending, message, ray of frost

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

2nd level (3 slots): arcane lock*, invisibility

3rd level (3 slots): counterspell*, dispel magic*, fireball

4th level (3 slots): banishment*, *stoneskin**

5th level (2 slots): cone of cold, wall of force

6th level (1 slot): flesh to stone, globe of invulnerability*

7th level (1 slot): symbol*, teleport

*Abjuration spell of 1st level or higher

Arcane Ward. The abjurer has a magical ward that has 30 hit points. Whenever the abjurer takes damage, the ward takes the damage instead. If the ward is reduced to 0 hit points, the abjurer takes any remaining damage. When the abjurer casts an abjuration spell of 1st level or higher, the ward regains a number of hit points equal to twice the level of the spell.

ACTIONS

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

ARCHMAGE

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

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

Damage Resistance damage from spells; nonmagical bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing (from *stoneskin*)

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages any six languages

Challenge 12 (8,400 XP)

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

Spellcasting. The archmage is an 18th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks). The archmage 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*, *stoneskin**

5th level (3 slots): *cone of cold*, *scrying*, *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.

BEHOLDER ZOMBIE

Large undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 93 (11d10 + 33)

Speed 0 ft., fly 20 ft. (hover)

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

Saving Throws Wis +2

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages understands Deep Speech and Undercommon but can't speak

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Undead Fortitude. If damage reduces the zombie to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the zombie drops to 1 hit point instead.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (4d6) piercing damage.

Eye Ray. The zombie uses a random magical eye ray, choosing a target that it can see within 60 feet of it.

1. **Paralyzing Ray.** The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed 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.

2. **Fear Ray.** The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened 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.

3. **Enervation Ray.** The targeted creature must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw, taking 36 (8d8) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

4. **Disintegration Ray.** If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or take 45 (10d8) force damage. If this damage reduces the creature to 0 hit points, its body becomes a pile of fine gray dust.

If the target is a Large or smaller nonmagical object or creation of magical force, it is disintegrated without a saving throw. If the target is a Huge or larger nonmagical object or creation of magical force, this ray disintegrates a 10-foot cube of it.

DIVINER

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

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): shield, fog cloud, 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,* greater invisibility, ice storm

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.

ENCHANTER

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)

Hit Points 40 (9d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (–1)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)

Saving Throws Int +6, Wis +4

Skills Arcana +6, History +6

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages any four languages

Challenge 5 (1,900 XP)

Spellcasting. The enchanter is a 9th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). The enchanter has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): friends, mage hand, mending, message

1st level (4 slots): charm person*, mage armor, magic missile

2nd level (3 slots): hold person*, invisibility, suggestion*

3rd level (3 slots): fireball, haste, tongues

4th level (3 slots): dominate beast*, stoneskin

5th level (2 slots): hold monster*

*Enchantment spell of 1st level or higher

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.

REACTIONS

Instinctive Charm (Recharges after the Enchanter Casts an Enchantment Spell of 1st Level or Higher) The enchanter tries to magically divert an attack made against it, provided that the attacker is within 30 feet of it and visible to it. The enchanter must decide to do so before the attack hits or misses.

The attacker must make a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the attacker targets the creature closest to it, other than the enchanter or itself. If multiple creatures are closest, the attacker chooses which one to target.

GHAST

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 36 (8d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	17 (+3)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	8 (–1)

Damage Resistances necrotic

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Stench. Any creature that starts its turn within 5 feet of the ghastr must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the start of its next turn. On a successful saving throw, the creature is immune to the ghastr's stench for 24 hours.

Turning Defiance. The ghastr and any ghouls within 30 feet of it have advantage on saving throws against effects that turn undead.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d8 + 3) piercing damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage. If the target is a creature other than an undead, it must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed 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.

GHOUL

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 22 (5d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	7 (-2)	10 (+0)	6 (-2)

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

ACTIONS

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

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2d4 + 2) slashing damage. If the target is a creature other than an elf or undead, it must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed 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.

GREATER ZOMBIE

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 97 (13d8 + 39)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	10 (+0)	17 (+3)	4 (-3)	6 (-2)	6 (-2)

Saving Throws Wis +1

Damage Resistances cold, necrotic

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8

Languages Understands the languages it knew in life

but can't speak

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Turn Resistance. The zombie has advantage on saving throws against any effect that turns undead.

Undead Fortitude. If damage reduces the zombie to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the zombie drops to 1 hit point instead.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The zombie makes two melee attacks.

Empowered Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage and 7 (2d6) necrotic damage.

IRON GOLEM

Large construct, unaligned

Armor Class 20 (natural armor)

Hit Points 210 (20d10 + 100)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
24 (+7)	9 (-1)	20 (+5)	3 (-4)	11 (+0)	1 (-5)

Damage Immunities fire, poison, psychic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't adamantite

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Understands the languages of its creator but can't speak

Challenge 16 (15,000 XP)

Fire Absorption. The golem is immune to any effect that would alter its form.

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

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

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The golem makes two slam attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 20 (3d8 + 7) bludgeoning damage.

Sword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 23 (3d10 + 7) slashing damage.

Poison Breath (Recharge 6). The golem exhales poisonous gas in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 19 Constitution saving throw, taking 45 (10d8) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

MAGE

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 12 (15 with mage armor)

Hit Points 40 (9d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)

Saving Throws Int +6, Wis +4

Skills Arcana +6, History +6

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages any four languages

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Spellcasting. The mage is a 9th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). The mage has the following wizard spells prepared:

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

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

2nd level (3 slots): misty step, suggestion

3rd level (3 slots): counterspell, fireball, fly

4th level (3 slots): greater invisibility, ice storm

5th level (1 slot): cone of cold

ACTIONS

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

NECROMANCER

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)

Hit Points 66 (12d8 + 12)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (–1)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)

Saving Throws Int +7, Wis +5

Skills Arcana +7, History +7

Damage Resistances necrotic

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages any four languages

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Spellcasting. The necromancer is a 12th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). The necromancer has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): chill touch, dancing lights, mage hand, mending

1st level (4 slots): false life*, mage armor, ray of sickness*

2nd level (3 slots): blindness/deafness*, ray of enfeeblement*, web

3rd level (3 slots): animate dead*, bestow curse*, vampiric touch*

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

5th level (2 slots): Bigby's hand, cloudkill

6th level (1 slot): circle of death*

*Necromancy spell of 1st level or higher

Grim Harvest (1/Turn). When the necromancer kills a creature that is neither a construct nor undead with a spell of 1st level or higher, the necromancer regains hit points equal to twice the spell's level, or three times if it is a necromancy spell.

ACTIONS

Withering Touch. *Melee Spell Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 5 (2d4) necrotic damage.

PLANETAR

Large celestial, lawful good

Armor Class 19 (natural armor)

Hit Points 200 (16d10 + 112)

Speed 40 ft., fly 120 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
24 (+7)	20 (+5)	24 (+7)	19 (+4)	22 (+6)	25 (+7)

Saving Throws Con +12, Wis +11, Cha +12

Skills Perception +11

Damage Resistances radiant; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Condition Immunities charmed, exhausted, frightened

Senses truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 21

Languages All, telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 16 (15,000 XP)

Angelic Weapons. The planetar's weapon attacks are magical. When the planetar hits with any weapon, the weapon deals an extra 5d8 radiant damage (included in the attack).

Divine Awareness. The planetar knows if it hears a lie.

Innate Spellcasting. The planetar's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 20). The planetar can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: detect evil and good, invisibility (self only)

3/day each: blade barrier, dispel evil and good, flame strike, raise dead

1/day each: commune, control weather, insect plague

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The planetar makes two melee attacks.

Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 21 (4d6 + 7) slashing damage plus 22 (5d8) radiant damage.

Healing Touch (4/Day). The planetar touches another creature. The target magically regains 30 (6d8 + 3) hit points and is freed from any curse, disease, poison, blindness, or deafness.

SKULL LORD

Medium undead, lawful evil

Armor Class 18 (Plate)

Hit Points 105 (14d8 + 42)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	16 (+3)	17 (+3)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	21 (+5)

Skills Athletics +7, History +8, Perception +12, Stealth +8

Damage Resistances cold, necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, poisoned, stunned, unconscious

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 22

Languages all the languages it knew in life

Challenge 15 (13,000 XP)

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

Master of the Grave. While within 30 feet of the skull lord, any undead ally of the skull lord makes saving throws with advantage, and that ally regains 1d6 hit points whenever it starts its turn there.

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

Spellcasting. The skull lord is a 13th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 18, +10 to hit with spell attacks). The skull lord knows the following sorcerer spells:

Cantrips (at will): chill touch, fire bolt, mage hand, poison spray, ray of frost, shocking grasp
1st level (4 slots): magic missile, expeditious retreat, thunderwave
2nd level (3 slots): mirror image, scorching ray
3rd level (3 slots): fear, haste
4th level (3 slots): dimension door, ice storm
5th level (2 slots): cloudkill, cone of cold
6th level (1 slot): eyebite
7th level (1 slot): finger of death

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The skull lord makes three bone staff attacks.

Bone Staff. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) bludgeoning damage plus 14 (4d6) necrotic damage.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The skull lord 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 larva mage regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Bone Staff (Costs 2 Actions). The skull lord makes a bone staff attack.

Cantrip. The skull lord casts a cantrip.

Move. The skull lord moves up to its speed without provoking opportunity attacks.

Summon Undead (Costs 3 Actions). Up to five skeletons or zombies appear in unoccupied spaces within 30 feet of the skull lord and remain until destroyed. Undead summoned in this way roll initiative and act in the next available turn. The skull lord can have up to five undead summoned by this ability at a time.

SOLAR

Large celestial, lawful good

Armor Class 21 (natural armor)

Hit Points 243 (18d10 + 144)

Speed 50 ft., fly 150 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
26 (+8)	22 (+6)	26 (+8)	25 (+7)	25 (+7)	30 (+10)

Saving Throws Int +14, Wis +14, Cha +17

Skills Perception +14

Damage Resistances radiant; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhausted, frightened, poisoned

Senses truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 24

Languages All, telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 21 (33,000 XP)

Angelic Weapons. The solar's weapon attacks are magical. When the solar hits with any weapon, the weapon deals an extra 6d8 radiant damage (included in the attack).

Divine Awareness. The solar knows if it hears a lie.

Innate Spellcasting. The solar's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 25). The solar can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: detect evil and good, invisibility (self only)

3/day each: blade barrier, dispel evil and good, resurrection

1/day each: commune, control weather

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The solar makes two melee attacks.

Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +15 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 22 (4d6 + 8) slashing damage plus 27 (6d8) radiant damage.

Slaying Longbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 150/600 ft., one target. Hit: 15 (2d8 + 6) piercing damage plus 27 (6d8) radiant damage. If the target is a creature that has 100 hit points or fewer, it must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or die.

Flying Sword. The solar releases its greatsword to hover magically in an unoccupied space within 5 feet of it. If the solar can see the sword, the solar can mentally command it as a bonus action to fly up to 50 feet and either make one attack against a target or return to the solar's hands. If the hovering sword is targeted by any effect, the solar is considered to be holding it. The hovering sword falls if the solar dies.

Healing Touch (4/Day). The solar touches another creature. The target magically regains 40 (8d8 + 4) hit points and is freed from any curse, disease, poison, blindness, or deafness.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

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

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

Searing Smite (Costs 2 Actions). The solar emits magical, divine energy. Each creature of its choice in a 10-foot radius must make a DC 23 Dexterity saving throw, taking 14 (4d6) fire damage plus 14 (4d6) radiant damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Blinding Gaze (Costs 3 Actions). The solar targets one creature it can see within 30 feet of it. If the target can see it, the target must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be blinded until magic such as the lesser restoration spell removes the blindness.

STAR SPAWN HULK

Large aberration, chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 136 (13d10 + 65)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	8 (-1)	21 (+5)	7 (-2)	12 (+1)	9 (-1)

Saving Throws Dex +3, Wis +5

Skills Perception +5

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

Languages Deep Speech

Challenge 10 (5,900 XP)

Psychic Mirror. If the hulk takes psychic damage, each creature within 10 feet of the hulk takes that damage instead; the hulk takes none of the damage. In addition, the hulk's thoughts and location can't be discerned by magic.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The hulk makes two slam attacks. If both attacks hit the same target, the target also takes 9 (2d8) psychic damage and must succeed on a DC 17 Constitution saving throw or be stunned until the end of the target's next turn.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8 + 5) bludgeoning damage.

Reaping Arms (Recharge 5-6). The hulk makes a separate slam attack against each creature within 10 feet of it. Each creature that is hit must also succeed on a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw or be knocked prone.

STAR SPAWN LARVA MAGE

Medium aberration, chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 168 (16d8 + 96)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	12 (+1)	23 (+6)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Dex +6, Wis +6, Cha +8

Skills Perception +6

Damage Resistances cold; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities psychic

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, restrained

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages Deep Speech

Challenge 16 (15,000 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. The larva mage'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: eldritch blast (3 beams, +3 bonus to each damage roll), minor illusion

3/day each: dominate monster

1/day each: circle of death

Return to Worms. When the larva mage is reduced to 0 hit points, it breaks apart into a swarm of insects in the same space. Unless the swarm is destroyed, the larva mage reforms from it 24 hours later.

ACTIONS

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) bludgeoning damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 19 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the end of its next turn.

Plague of Worms (Recharge 6). Each creature other than a star spawn within 10 feet of the larva mage must succeed on a DC 19 Dexterity saving throw or take 22 (5d8) necrotic damage and be blinded and restrained by masses of swarming worms. The affected creature takes 22 (5d8) necrotic damage at the start of each of the larva mage's turns. The creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

REACTIONS

Feed on Weakness. When a creature within 20 feet of the larva mage fails a saving throw, the larva mage gains 10 temporary hit points.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

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

Cantrip (Costs 2 Actions). The larva mage casts one cantrip.

Slam (Costs 2 Actions). The larva mage makes one slam attack.

Feed (Costs 3 Actions). Each creature restrained by the larva mage's Plague of Worms takes 13 (3d8) necrotic damage, and the larva mage gains 6 temporary hit points.

STAR SPAWN MANGLER

Medium aberration, chaotic evil

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 71 (13d8 + 13)

Speed 40 ft., climb 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)

Saving Throws Dex +7, Con +4

Skills Stealth +7

Damage Resistances cold

Damage Immunities psychic

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, prone

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Deep Speech

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Ambush. On the first round of each combat, the mangler has advantage on attack rolls against a creature that hasn't taken a turn yet.

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The mangler makes two claw attacks.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) slashing damage. If the attack roll has advantage, the target also takes 7 (2d6) psychic damage.

Flurry of Claws (Recharge 4-6). The mangler makes six claw attacks against one target. Either before or after these attacks, it can move up to its speed as a bonus action without provoking opportunity attacks.

STAR SPAWN SEER

Medium aberration, neutral evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 153 (18d8 + 72)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	22 (+6)	19 (+4)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Dex +6, Int +11, Wis +9, Cha +8

Skills Perception +9

Damage Resistances cold; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities psychic

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 19

Languages Common, Deep Speech, Undercommon

Challenge 13 (10,000 XP)

Out-of-Phase Movement. The seer can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. Each creature it moves through takes 5 (1d10) psychic damage; no creature can take this damage more than once per turn. The seer takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The seer makes two comet staff attacks or uses Psychic Orb twice.

Comet Staff. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d6 + 6) bludgeoning damage, or 10 (1d8 + 6) bludgeoning damage if used with two hands, plus 18 (4d8) psychic damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 19 Constitution saving throw or be incapacitated until the end of its next turn.

Psychic Orb. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +11 to hit, range 120 feet, one target. *Hit:* 27 (5d10) psychic damage.

Collapse Distance (Recharge 6). The seer warps space around a creature it can see within 30 feet of it. That creature must make a DC 19 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the target, along with any equipment it is wearing or carrying, is magically teleported up to 60 feet to an unoccupied space the seer can see, and all other creatures within 10 feet of the target's original space each takes 39 (6d12) psychic damage. On a successful save, the target takes 19 (3d12) psychic damage.

REACTIONS

Bend Space. When the seer would be hit by an attack, it teleports, exchanging positions with another star spawn it can see within 60 feet of it. The other star spawn is hit by the attack instead.

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 each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

STONE GOLEM

Large construct, unaligned

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 178 (17d10 + 85)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	9 (-1)	20 (+5)	3 (-4)	11 (+0)	1 (-5)

Damage Immunities poison, psychic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't adamantite

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Understands the languages of its creator but can't speak

Challenge 10 (5,900 XP)

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

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

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The golem makes two slam attacks.

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

Slow (Recharge 5-6). The golem targets one or more creatures it can see within 10 feet of it. Each target must make a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw against this magic. On a failed save, a target can't use reactions, its speed is halved, and it can't make more than one attack on its turn. In addition, the target can take either an action or a bonus action on its turn, not both. These effects last for 1 minute. A target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

THAYAN KNIGHT

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

Armor Class 18 (plate)

Hit Points 153 (18d8 + 72)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Wis +5, Cha +5

Skills Athletics +7, Deception +5, Intimidation +5

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Aura of Warding. Ancient magic lies so heavily upon the Thayan knights that their aura forms an eldritch ward. A Thayan knight and friendly creatures within 10 feet of the knight have resistance to damage from spells.

Tattoo Binding. The Thayan knight is magically bound to any Red Wizard zulkir within 60 feet. If the Thayan knight is within 60 feet of a Red Wizard zulkir, the Thayan knight can use his or her reaction to transfer half of any damage the zulkir takes (rounded up) to the Thayan knight. This effect lasts until the beginning of the Thayan knight's next turn, and the effect ends if the Thayan knight is unconscious, incapacitated, or slain.

Spellcasting. The Thayan knight is a 10th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). It has the following paladin spells prepared:

1st level (4 slots): command, protection from evil and good, thunderous smite

2nd level (3 slots): branding smite, find steed

3rd level (2 slots): blinding smite, dispel magic

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Thayan knight makes three attacks.

Glaive. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 9 (1d10 + 4) slashing damage.

Shortbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 80/320 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

Dreadful Aspect (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest).

The Thayan knight exudes magical menace. Each enemy within 30 feet of the Thayan knight must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute. If a frightened target ends its turn more than 30 feet away from the Thayan knight, the target can repeat the saving throw, ending the effect on itself on a success.

WAR PRIEST

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 18 (plate)

Hit Points 117 (18d8 + 36)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	17 (+3)	13 (+1)

Saving Throws Con +6, Wis +7

Skills Intimidation +5, Religion +4

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages any two languages

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Spellcasting. The priest is a 9th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). It has the following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): light, mending, sacred flame, spare the dying

1st level (4 slots): divine favor, guiding bolt, healing word, shield of faith

2nd level (3 slots): lesser restoration, magic weapon, prayer of healing, silence, spiritual weapon

3rd level (3 slots): beacon of hope, crusader's mantle, dispel magic, revivify, spirit guardians, water walk

4th level (3 slots): banishment, freedom of movement, guardian of faith, stoneskin

5th level (1 slot): flame strike, mass cure wounds, hold monster

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The priest makes two melee attacks.

Maul. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 10 (2d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

REACTIONS

Guided Strike (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest).

The priest grants a +10 bonus to an attack roll made by itself or another creature within 30 feet of it. The priest can make this choice after the roll is made but before it hits or misses.

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 of 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, reach 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.

APPENDIX 3: RED WAR ONGOING EFFECTS

This adventure takes place during the events of *DDEP00-01 The Red War*. As a result, the following additional rules are in effect for the duration of this adventure, starting in Episode 2 as described.

Credit goes to K. Jasmine Vernon for the base of this explanation and its layout.

SZASS TAM'S NECROTIC KISS

With the assistance of Zulkir Dar'lon Ma – Szass Tam has blanketed the city of Mulmaster in a series of enchantments.

All living humanoids other than those intentionally excluded by Szass Tam and the Zulkir (such as the Red Wizards, with others being called out during the course of this adventure) are immediately afflicted with the following:

SZASS TAM'S NECROTIC KISS

Any living creature that ends its turn within 5 feet of this creature must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or else immediately gain one level of exhaustion. Levels of exhaustion gained as a result of this affliction are healed at a rate of one per week, or immediately if the source of the affliction is ended.

Removing the Kiss. This affliction cannot be removed, dispelled, or delayed by any known spell or effect – including wish. The Necrotic Kiss ends automatically at the conclusion of this adventure (but is also present in other adventures set during the Red War).

Non-Humanoid Creatures. Living non-humanoid creatures (beasts, elementals, summoned fey, etc.) are not afflicted with the Necrotic Kiss, but are not immune to its effects. If any such creature (including the character's own mount, if any) ends its turn adjacent to an afflicted humanoid, they must make the saving throw or suffer 1 level of exhaustion from the Necrotic Kiss.

DMs should describe the effect after the first save is made. While this curse is an ever-present challenge for the duration of this adventure, it should not remain unexplained.

NECROTIC KISS EXAMPLE ROUND

- Bob moves adjacent to a Red Wizard and ends his turn. He does not need to make a saving throw against the Necrotic Kiss as Bob is not adjacent to himself, nor is the Red Wizard afflicted.

- Susan moves adjacent to Bob and the Red Wizard and ends her turn. Susan must now make a saving throw against the Necrotic Kiss because Bob is afflicted.
- Red Wizard dances wildly and ends their turn. The Red Wizard does not need to make a save because Red Wizards are immune to the effect.
- At the end of Bob's next turn, if Bob is still adjacent to Susan he too will need to make a saving throw, as Susan herself is afflicted.
- If the adventurers move so that there's 10 feet of space, no save is needed by either character.

CANCEROUS MAGIC

The Thayans have been toiling away in an effort to harness the rifts into the elemental plane. These rifts are an abomination in the fabric of the Weave, and magic has begun to behave erratically as a result.

The following effects apply for the duration of this adventure:

CANCEROUS MAGIC

- **Spells (Wild Surge).** Every leveled spell cast by the characters and their allies automatically triggers a *wild surge*. Roll on the Wild Surge table in the *Player's Handbook* (p104).
- **Necrotic Kiss.** Any creature afflicted with *Szass Tam's Necrotic Kiss* has disadvantage on the first saving throw they make each round.

RED WIZARDS AND THEIR ALLIES

To reiterate, all Red Wizards (unless specifically called out) are immune to the effects of the Necrotic Kiss and Cancerous Magic. This immunity extends to their allies, which will be called out as being a **Thayan Ally** directly in the adventure.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

To help your overall awareness of the city, and to give a bird's eye view of locations called out in this adventure, please download the PDF "**City Guide: Mulmaster**" from the DM's Guild, which contains maps and city information, via the following link: <https://www.dmsguild.com/product/202483/City-Guide-Mulmaster>

APPENDIX 4: CLOAKED MIGHT (BONUS OBJECTIVE A.)

Estimated Duration: 60 Minutes

SCENE A. ADJUDICATION

As the characters move between objectives, they become witness to a power struggle: Rastol Shan is missing, and Cloaks are in danger from each other.

OBJECTIVE

- **Bonus Objective A.** Resolve the Cloak Dispute

AREA INFORMATION

This area features:

Dimensions & Terrain. Broken down buildings, dozens of undead bodies scattered around the edges of courtyard.

Lighting. Dim light from the clouds and elemental energy flowing overhead

CREATURES/NPCs

The two groups of cloaks are in a heated debate after having cleansed some of the Thayan undead in the area. One **Archmage** leads each side of the debate, with a **Stone Golem** as backup. One is happy to have the Thayans fix what the factions did not and wants the Cloaks to side with them. The other is vehemently opposed to the idea.

Both mages have *mind blank*, *mage armor*, and *contingency* with *greater invisibility* pre-cast.

Objectives/Goals. Both leaders wish to fill the gap that Rastol Shan is currently leaving, but neither side is willing to move on their issue.

What Does He Know? The pro-Thay leader knows about the Kyuss batteries and agrees that harnessing their power will only better the region and those who control it. It is also better to work with Thay who prosper, then work against Thay and fail at every turn.

The anti-Thay leader knows that Thay continues to milk the city for every bit of worth before leaving its withered husk to die. It is only a matter of time. Thay is a plague that kills everything it touches, and not even the smartest leaders have maneuvered against them easily, or well.

DEVELOPMENT

As the players interact with each leader, they can work the Cloaks around the courtyard with a DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) skill check. A success begins to turn the Cloaks against the unselected leader, who will take out their rage and emotion against his rivals and those who entered the debate without cause. This may be stopped without bloodshed but a clear head is required to do so.

Once the defeated leader is vanquished or shamed to leave, the other Cloaks thank each character for their input, and will turn a blind eye to some of their spellcasting in the future if their leader officially oversees the Cloaks in their entirety.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene, if combat occurs:

- **Very Weak and Weak:** Reduce the HP of the Stone Golem by 50.
- **Strong:** Add one Thayan Mage.
- **Very Strong:** Add one Thayan Mage and one Thayan Knight.
- **Deadly:** Add one Thayan Mage, one Thayan Knight, and replace the Stone Golem with an Iron Golem.

PLAYING THE PILLARS

COMBAT

If the characters don't win one side of the argument over, they very well could be attacked by **both sides** of the conflict. In addition, if they find themselves overwhelmed in combat they could try to persuade the side not fighting to provide aid (DC 18 Charisma skill check)

EXPLORATION

The open courtyard gives many places to **spy** on the arguing Cloaks, giving ample time to influence the events from the shadows before revealing themselves.

SOCIAL

An **impassioned** speech on the motives, pros and cons, economic and more of a specific leaders' viewpoints can help to resolve this without bloodshed with a DC 18 Intelligence (Deception Persuasion) or DC 24 Charisma (Deception or Persuasion) skill check. If combat still breaks out, the leader might be more demoralized and make attacks with disadvantage.

APPENDIX 5: THE QUIET THAYAN (BONUS OBJECTIVE B.)

Estimated Duration: 60 Minutes

SCENE A. MEETING THE FAMILY

A wizard familiar bears a letter for the adventurers as they move through the streets of Mulmaster during the Red War: a Thayan wishes to leave the city and wants to meet. Those in line to be a tharchion are rare, and a turncoat even rarer.

OBJECTIVE

- **Bonus Objective A.** Convince the Tharchion to leave Thay and strike a deal.

AREA INFORMATION

This area features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The derelict building in which the meeting is taking place is 10x20x10, with piles of broken debris in it and boarded up windows.

Lighting. Dim light from the clouds and elemental energy flowing overhead. The inside of the building is completely dark.

CONTENT WARNING

This scene is meant to be mildly uncomfortable, given both how the Thayan treats his slaves and how he thinks of the world and others. Lawful Evil characters might thrive here but be sure to know your table's feelings on these sorts of sensitive matters before going far into this encounter. Reducing the abuse and other less socially acceptable tendencies during this section can go a long way to making a table happy.

CREATURES/NPCs

Waiting in the building is a **Thayan Archmage**, multiple slaves packed into a corner of a room holding luggage, paraphernalia, and other odd items. A DC 16 Wisdom (Medicine) skill check will see that the slaves are malnourished and covered in makeup to cover the more heinous bruises and scars. These are just another set of his objects.

Objectives/Goals. The Thayan Tharchion wants nothing more than to leave Thay behind. He feels as if he has plateaued within the structure, both in material wealth and power.

What Does He Know? What he offers in exchange for the stability and gold that a faction or other large group can bring to him, is knowledge. Knowledge of the region in which he helped to oversee, knowledge on recent Thayan research, and more. But he will not go into details yet, as the deal has not been made and there will be plenty of time when he is not in a war zone. His slaves do not live long in such conditions.

DEVELOPMENT

To seal the deal with the Thayan, the characters will have to accept both his slaves and his attitude towards everything around him. If the characters go to immediately accept the deal, the Thayan will smell what he considers some "suckers" and try to get more for himself out of the deal until he cannot get any more.

If the characters disrespect his position, question his treatment of those around him, or try to work on a different deal, the Thayan will decline and become apathetic towards the characters. If this happens again he will call the deal off, as he believes another group will accept it.

If a group attacks him, his *contingency* will *plane shift* him to the Elemental Plane of Fire if possible. If this does not happen, and he is brought below half health, he will plead for his life by offering the group his slaves as compensation for his hubris. His life is more important than anyone else's.

PLAYING THE PILLARS

COMBAT

The battered **slaves** that the Thayan uses as servants can be pushed to help against the fight with their master with a DC 10 Charisma skill check. If successful, they will throw themselves at their master and try to drag him to the ground.

EXPLORATION

Those who choose to scope out the meeting location will find the Thayan pacing inside, taking his anger out on those beneath him. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) skill check can tell that he is **nervous and anxious**, ready to leave the city.

SOCIAL

A successful DC 20 Wisdom (Insight) skill can tell that while he is not lying about what he knows, he is **overselling himself** on the raw intel that he has ready. Calling his bluff might make him more eager to overlook transgressions.

APPENDIX 6: SYRANNA'S REQUEST (PLAYER HANDOUT 1)

Esteemed faction members,

I send this request to you with the utmost urgency. Mulmaster will die soon at the hands of the Thayans. Szass Tam and his zulkirs drain the land and its people of their energy, killing many behind closed doors while “fixing” the city.

There are many of us that fight against Szass Tam and his ilk, but with vitriol and thinly veiled preparations to and from Thay it is only a matter of time until we are caught. I have worked with adventurers and heroes in the past in such places as the Doomvault, and today I call upon you all to come together again. Join a true Thayan in ending Szass Tam's plots and removing the Red Wizards from existence.

Be swift, be discreet, and may the gods watch over you all.

Syranna

APPENDIX 7: LIST OF FACTION REQUESTS (PLAYER HANDOUT 2)

Kresimira Simonov

(Damaran Human - She/Her - Harper)

The Harpers have long been an enemy of Thay, but with the escalations in Mulmaster they are looking to scrub a resource center clean before Thay hunts the factions down within. It was partially completed by other Harpers, but they were killed before completing their duty.

Adra Thalmiar

(High Elf - They/Them - Order of the Gauntlet)

The Gauntlet is aware of the evils that Thay have done over the years, and wish to cleanse it at the source, civilians safe and plans ready. One of their best clerics recently went missing, and they would like his body and memories returned before they are used for ill. His worship of Lathander was inspiring.

Menhet

(Fallen Aasimar - She/Her - Emerald Enclave)

The elemental rifts that plague the city are of the utmost importance to the Enclave, as the Enclave knows that war will arrive soon, and they will only grow. Elemental Evil cultists have stolen research on devastation orbs and how to expedite their growth: This research and any created orbs must be purged.

Drake Hightower – Request 1

(Chondathan Human - He/Him - Lords Alliance)

The Lords Alliance wishes for stability: The threat of war, lack of resources, and Mulmaster's position in the Moonsea, and the other faction's choice to push onward drags them to action. To top it off, a known "problem" from within the faction was captured and is being experimented on. They need Glurbuk the orc wizard back.

Drake Hightower – Request 2

Drake has a request from the Hightower family: His sister Mara, a spy, is at risk of discovery. The Alliance considers her non-vital, but his family wishes for her return. They offer to those who bring her back a Hightower signet ring marking them as allies of the family and the Lords' Alliance.

Idrex Berdrakoroohm

(Gold Dragonborn - He/Him - Zhentarim)

The Zhent Ghettos and their people are vital to the Zhentarim and are their number one priority. And seeing the other factions suffer for their hubris makes him smile, if it does not hurt the Black Network or its allies.

APPENDIX 8: MAGIC ITEM

Characters completing the adventure's main objectives unlock this magic item:

SYRANNA'S FOLLOW (OATHBOW - TABLE H)

Weapon (longbow), very rare (requires attunement)

When you nock an arrow on this bow, it whispers in Elvish, "Swift defeat to my enemies." When you use this weapon to make a ranged attack, you can, as a command phrase, say, "Swift death to you who have wronged me." The target of your attack becomes your sworn enemy until it dies or until dawn seven days later. You can have only one such sworn enemy at a time. When your sworn enemy dies, you can choose a new one after the next dawn.

When you make a ranged attack roll with this weapon against your sworn enemy, you have advantage on the roll. In addition, your target gains no benefit from cover, other than total cover, and you suffer no disadvantage due to long range. If the attack hits, your sworn enemy takes an extra 3d6 piercing damage.

While your sworn enemy lives, you have disadvantage on attack rolls with all other weapons.

This item is found on **Magic Item Table H** in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

This elven bow has the soul of a Thayan rebel permanently and irreversibly entwined within it, her sigil defiled and etched into the grip. When attuned, the bearer can speak and understand Thayan, in addition to receiving the following Bond: "I will not be at peace until Szass Tam and his plots are erased from existence".

APPENDIX 9: STORY AWARD

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

OUR STRENGTH IS ABSOLUTE

The Hightower family has recognized your deeds and your aid to one of their own and have bestowed upon you a signet ring marking you as an ally.

While this will have little bearing on most encounters, having such an item on hand might prove useful in future encounters with Lords' Alliance agent who know the family, and the Hightower's themselves.

APPENDIX 10A: ELEMENTAL RIFTS

Thanks to the events of DDEP2 Mulmaster Undone, there are a significant number of elemental rifts open throughout the trade city of Mulmaster. These rifts were, for the most part, under control; although the Red Wizards of Thay were unable to close them entirely, they were able to keep them from expanding and from spewing their deadly energies out. Now that the Red Wizards have abandoned this theoretically magnanimous course of action, the rifts have grown unstable and now pose a serious threat to the adventurers and residents!

Rift Save DCs and Attack Bonuses

Tier	Save DC	Attack Bonus
1	11	+5
2	13	+8
3	15	+12
4	17	+15

Damage Severity by Level (Single Target)

Tier	Moderate	Dangerous	Deadly
1	5 (1d10)	11 (2d10)	22 (4d10)
2	11 (2d10)	22 (4d10)	55 (10d10)
3	22 (4d10)	55 (10d10)	99 (18d10)
4	55 (10d10)	99 (18d10)	132 (24d10)

Damage Severity by Level (Multiple Targets)

Tier	Moderate	Dangerous	Deadly
1	3 (1d6)	7 (2d6)	14 (4d6)
2	7 (2d6)	14 (4d6)	35 (10d6)
3	14 (4d6)	35 (10d6)	63 (18d6)
4	35 (10d6)	63 (18d6)	84 (24d6)

USING AN ELEMENTAL RIFT IN AN ENCOUNTER

An elemental rift can be substituted for any creature or combination of creatures in a combat encounter – be sure to review the experience value(s) of the creature to that of the rift. There should not be more than two rifts in any individual encounter, as it may become too much to track and take away from the running of the game. Simply choose an element that makes thematic sense and use the save DCs, attack bonus, and damage severity as listed above.

Rifts are complex traps, as presented in Xanathar's Guide to Everything.

APPENDIX 10B: AIR RIFT

Complex trap, levels 1-20 dangerous threat

A two-dimensional, angry slash in reality is here. Gale-force winds scream out of it and peals of thunder reverberate around this space.

Trigger. The rift has already been triggered.

Initiative. The rift acts on initiative count 20 and on initiative count 10, losing ties.

Active Elements. The air rift includes supernaturally strong winds, peals of deafening thunder, and lightning bolts.

Gale Force Winds (Initiative 20). The rift emits a blast of wind that slams into everything within 50 feet. Creatures must make a Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, the creature is thrown 20 feet away and is knocked prone; on a successful save, the creature is thrown half as far. If a creature is thrown into a hard surface, it takes **moderate (multiple targets)** bludgeoning damage, or half as much damage on a successful save.

Deafening Thunder (Initiative 10). Each creature within 20 feet of the rift must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or else be deafened for one minute.

Arc Lightning (Initiative 10). Roll a d6. Lightning arcs out and strikes that many random targets within 50 feet of the rift, inflicting **dangerous** lightning damage; a creature struck in this manner takes half damage if they succeed on a Dexterity saving throw. A creature can only be hit once per turn by Arc Lightning.

Dynamic Elements. The longer the rift is open, the more dangerous it becomes. The broken magic of the insane elemental cults has been further corrupted by the meddling of the Thayans.

Winds Intensify. The DC to resist being thrown and knocked prone increases by +1 for each round that the rift is open.

Elemental Fury. For each successful Arcana check made to seal the rift, the DC of all saving throws caused by the rift increases by +1, and Arc Lightning can target one additional creature.

Constant Elements. This rift is created of equal parts pure elemental power and raw hatred. The air around it seethes with these energies. Gale Force Winds, Deafening Thunder, and Arc Lightning affect each creature that ends its turn in an area affected by these elements.

Gale Force Winds. Any creature that ends its turn within 20 feet of the rift must succeed on a Strength (Athletics) check or be pushed 10 feet away. Ranged attacks that use ammunition made against a creature that is within 10 feet of an air rift automatically miss.

Deafening Thunder. Once a creature is deafened, they gain a level of exhaustion for each additional Deafening Thunder saving throws that they fail.

Arc Lightning. A creature wearing heavy metal armor or wielding a two-handed metal weapon is automatically targeted by Arc Lightning.

Countermeasures. The rift's active elements can be deterred or delayed, and the rift can be sealed with specific countermeasures. One countermeasure can be determined if a character spends their action to make a Moderate DC skill check.

Gale Force Winds (Arcana). A wall of force or similar effect will provide temporary respite. After three rounds, the spell or effect fails as if it were subjected to a disintegrate spell.

Deafening Thunder (Arcana, Medicine, Insight). A carefully placed silence spell will grant advantage on the saving throw, as will stuffing one's ears with wax or some similar substance.

Arc Lightning (Arcana, Nature). Planting a large metal rod or object into the ground within 5 feet of a creature and stationed between the creature and the rift will grant advantage on that character's saving throw against the arc lightning. The rod must be at least as tall as the creature.

Sealing the Rift (Arcana). As an action, a creature within 10 feet of the rift can attempt to seal the rift. Sealing the rift requires several successful Intelligence (Arcana) checks equal to the number of characters in the group. Casting dispel magic (DC 15) counts as one success. Once sealed, the rift disappears in a blast of force; any creature within 10 feet of the rift must make a DC Constitution saving throw or else take **dangerous (multiple targets)** force damage and be knocked prone.

APPENDIX 10C: EARTH RIFT

Complex trap, levels 1-20 dangerous threat

A hovering chunk of multi-colored quartz, humming with earthshaking intensity. As it hovers the facets vibrate and shift with eye-watering speed.

Trigger. The rift has already been triggered.

Initiative. The rift acts on initiative count 20 and on initiative count 10, losing ties.

Active Elements. The earth detonates metronomic peals of deafening thunder.

Sonic Maelstrom (Initiative 20). The rift emits a shockwave of force that slams into everything within 50 feet. Creatures must make a Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the creature is thrown 20 feet away and is knocked prone; on a successful save, the creature is thrown half as far. If a creature is thrown into a hard surface, it takes **moderate (multiple targets)** bludgeoning damage, or half as much damage on a successful save.

Deafening Thunder (Initiative 10). Each creature within 20 feet of the rift must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or else be deafened for one minute.

Shard Blast (Initiative 10). Roll a d10. Razor sharp shards of quartz fly out and strike that many random targets within 50 feet of the rift, inflicting **moderate** force damage; a creature struck in this manner takes half damage if they succeed on a Dexterity saving throw. A creature can only be hit once per turn by Shard Blast.

Dynamic Elements. The longer the rift is open, the more dangerous it becomes. The broken magic of the insane elemental cults has been further corrupted by the meddling of the Thayans.

Maximum Force. The DC of Constitution saving throws increases by +1 for each round that the rift is open.

Elemental Fury. For each successful Arcana check made to seal the rift, the DC of all saving throws caused by the rift increases by +1, and Shard Blast targets an additional creature.

Constant Elements. This rift is created of equal parts pure elemental earth and thundering malice. The earth around the rift cracks and shudders under its fury. Each creature that ends its turn in the rift's area of effects suffers from Deafening Thunder and Rippling Earth.

Deafening Thunder. Once a creature is deafened, they gain a level of exhaustion for each additional Deafening Thunder saving throws that they fail.

Rippling Earth. Each creature within 20 feet of the rift is knocked prone and takes **dangerous** thunder damage, or half as much and is not knocked prone on a successful Constitution saving throw.

Countermeasures. The rift's active elements can be deterred or delayed, and the rift can be sealed with specific countermeasures. One countermeasure can be determined if a character spends their action to make a Moderate DC skill check.

Shard Blast (Insight, Acrobatics). Creatures can leap out of the way of the shard as a reaction—falling prone but taking no damage.

Deafening Thunder (Arcana, Medicine, Insight). A carefully placed silence spell will grant advantage on the saving throw, as will stuffing one's ears with wax or some similar substance.

Rippling Earth (Acrobatics, Athletics). With well-timed maneuvering a creature can avoid the worst of the earth's violent rumbling granting advantage on the Constitution save required for this element.

Sealing the Rift (Arcana). As an action, a creature within 10 feet of the rift can attempt to seal the rift. Sealing the rift requires several successful Intelligence (Arcana) checks equal to the number of characters in the group. Casting dispel magic (DC 15) counts as one success. Once sealed, the rift disappears in a blast of force; any creature within 10 feet of the rift must make a DC Constitution saving throw or else take dangerous (multiple targets) force damage and be knocked prone.

APPENDIX 10D: FIRE RIFT

Complex trap, levels 1-20 dangerous threat

An orb of flame the size of a large dog darts unpredictably around the area—pulsing with occasional gouts of fire and oily black smoke.

Trigger. The rift has already been triggered.

Initiative. The rift acts on initiative count 20 and on initiative count 10, losing ties.

Active Elements. The fire rift includes waves of hellish fire, clouds of choking black smoke, and unpredictable bursts of speed.

Fiery Dash (Initiative 20). The rift moves 30 feet, moving through spaces occupied by creatures. The first time it enters a creature's space on a turn, that creature takes **moderate (multiple targets)** fire damage and catches fire; until someone takes an action to douse the fire, the creature takes **moderate** fire damage at the start of each of its turns.

Flame Lash (Initiative 10). The rift emits a 30-foot tendril of elemental fire that attacks a single creature. On a hit, the target takes **dangerous (single target)** fire damage.

Choking Smoke (Initiative 10). A 20-foot radius cloud of toxic smoke forms spot within 120 feet of the rift. Creatures within the smoke are heavily obscured and must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 minute. The creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. The cloud disappears on this initiative count on the following round.

Dynamic Elements. The longer the rift is open, the more dangerous it becomes. The broken magic of the insane elemental cults has been further corrupted by the meddling of the Thayans.

Angry Flames! The DC of fire-based effects increases by +1 for each round that the rift is open.

Elemental Fury. For each successful Arcana check made to seal the rift, the DC of all saving throws caused by the rift increases by +1, and Flame Lash targets an additional creature.

Constant Elements. This rift is created of equal parts pure elemental power and raw hatred. The fire around it seethes with these energies. Hellish heat and choking smoke affect each creature that ends its turn in an area affected by these elements.

Hellish Heat. The first time a creature approaches closer than 10 feet of the rift or starts its turn within 10 feet of the rift must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or take **moderate (multiple targets)** fire damage and gain a level of exhaustion.

Choking Smoke. Each creature that starts its turn within 20 feet of the rift must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or takes **dangerous (multiple targets)** poison damage. A successful save reduces this damage by half.

Countermeasures. The rift's active elements can be deterred or delayed, and the rift can be sealed with specific countermeasures. One countermeasure can be determined if a character spends their action to make a Moderate DC skill check.

Fiery Dash (Insight). Characters may use their reaction to leap out of the way of the rift. They take no damage but fall prone.

Choking Smoke (Arcana, Nature). The smoke is blown away with a *gust of wind* or other similar effect. The smoke reforms at the end of the second round after being dispelled in this way.

Sealing the Rift (Arcana). As an action, a creature within 10 feet of the rift can attempt to seal the rift. Sealing the rift requires several successful Intelligence (Arcana) checks equal to the number of characters in the group. Casting dispel magic (DC 15) counts as one success. Once sealed, the rift disappears in a blast of force; any creature within 10 feet of the rift must make a DC Constitution saving throw or else take dangerous (multiple targets) force damage and be knocked prone.

APPENDIX 10E: WATER RIFT

Complex trap, levels 1-20 dangerous threat

A roiling mass of water brimming with chunks of ice ripples chaotically to and fro in a serpentine fashion.

Trigger. The rift has already been triggered.

Initiative. The rift acts on initiative count 20 and on initiative count 10, losing ties.

Active Elements. The water rift includes pulses of numbing cold, jets of icy water, and patches of freezing ground.

Tsunami (Initiative 20). The rift moves 30 feet, moving through spaces occupied by creatures. The first time it enters a creature's space on a turn, that creature takes **moderate (multiple targets)** cold damage and is restrained until someone takes an action to break the coating of ice.

Ice Bolt (Initiative 10). The rift emits a 30-foot bolt of elemental ice at a creature who takes **dangerous (single target)** cold damage. On a successful save, the target takes only half damage.

Drowning (Initiative 10). A 20-foot radius sphere of frigid water forms in a spot within 120 feet of the rift. Creatures within the sphere that lack a swim speed are in difficult terrain, have disadvantage on melee and ranged attacks, and resistance to fire damage. An unconscious creature in the sphere begins to suffocate in a number of rounds equal to its Constitution modifier (minimum of 1 round).

Dynamic Elements. The longer the rift is open, the more dangerous it becomes. The broken magic of the insane elemental cults has been further corrupted by the meddling of the Thayans.

Chill of Death. The DC of cold-based effects increases by +1 for each round that the rift is open.

Elemental Fury. For each successful Arcana check made to seal the rift, the DC of all saving throws caused by the rift increases by +1, and Ice Bolt targets an additional creature.

Constant Elements. This rift is created of equal parts pure elemental power and raw hatred and the area around it seethes with these energies. Stygian cold and a corrosive salt spray affect each creature that ends its turn in an area affected by these elements.

Endless Chill. The first time a creature approaches closer than 10 feet of the rift or starts its turn within 10 feet of the rift must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or take **moderate (multiple targets)** cold damage and gain a level of exhaustion.

Sea Spray. Each creature within 20 feet of the rift takes **dangerous** acid damage, or half as much on a successful Constitution saving throw.

Countermeasures. The rift's active elements can be deterred or delayed, and the rift can be sealed with specific countermeasures. One countermeasure can be determined if a character spends their action to make a Moderate DC skill check.

Tsunami (Acrobatics, Insight). Characters may use their reaction to leap out of the way of the rift. They take no damage but fall prone.

Drowning (Arcana, Nature). The water sphere can be disincorporated with a *thunderwave* or other similar effect. The sphere reforms at the end of the third round after being dispelled in this way.

Sealing the Rift (Arcana). As an action, a creature within 10 feet of the rift can attempt to seal the rift. Sealing the rift requires several successful Intelligence (Arcana) checks equal to the number of characters in the group. Casting dispel magic (DC 15) counts as one success. Once sealed, the rift disappears in a blast of force; any creature within 10 feet of the rift must make a DC Constitution saving throw or else take dangerous (multiple targets) force damage and be knocked prone.

APPENDIX 11: DUNGEON MASTER TIPS

This adventure is designed for **three to seven 11th-16th level characters** and is optimized for **five characters with an average party level (APL) of 13**. Characters outside this level range cannot participate in this adventure.

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<http://dnd.wizards.com/playevents/organized-play>

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<http://dndadventurersleague.org/community-spotlight-online-roleplay-the-red-war/>

<http://dndadventurersleague.org/ccc-red-war/>

<https://www.dmsguild.com/product/254132/The-Verdantium-A-Red-War-Roleplaying-Guide>

To DM an adventure, you **must** have 3 to 7 players—each with their own character whose level is within the adventure’s level range. Characters playing in a **hardcover** adventure may continue to play to but if they play a different hardcover adventure, they **can’t return** to the first one if they’re outside its level range.

PREPARING THE ADVENTURE

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. Familiar 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.)

Players can play an adventure they previously played as a Player or Dungeon Master, but may only play it once with a given character. Ensure each player has their character’s adventure logsheet (if not, get one from the organizer). The players fill out the adventure name, session number, date, and your name and DCI number. In addition, the player also fills in the starting values for advancement and treasure checkpoints, downtime days, and renown. These values are updated at the conclusion of the session.

Each player is responsible for maintaining an accurate logsheet. If you have time, you can do a quick scan of a player’s character sheet to ensure that nothing looks out of order. If you see magic items of very high rarities or strange arrays of ability scores, you can ask players to provide documentation for the irregularities. If they cannot, feel free to restrict item use or ask them to use a standard ability score array.

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

ADJUSTING THIS ADVENTURE

When combat is a possibility, the adventure will provide a sidebar that helps you to determine the best mix/number of opponents to provide them with to create an appropriate challenge. While you’re not bound to these adjustments; they’re here for your convenience and consideration.

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

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