



XANATHAR'S WRATH

A Waterdeep Adventure

This couldn't get worse. The key you are searching for has fallen into the hands of the eye tyrant of Skullport himself. Now you just need to rob Xanathar without getting disintegrated.

Part Three of the *Skullport Shakedown* trilogy.

A Two-Hour Adventure for Tier 2 Characters.

Optimized For: APL 8



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ADVENTURE PRIMER

"I have an eye for detail."

—The Xanathar

BACKGROUND

Factions all over (and under) Waterdeep seek the key rumored to unlock the tower of the First Lord, **AHGHAIRON**. One of these is the aberrant **SHADOWDUSK FAMILY**. From the depths of Undermountain, they cut a deal with the beholder boss of the **XANATHAR GUILD** gang of thieves.

THE XANATHAR disintegrates a few underlings to motivate the others and sends the gang out in search of the key. The extra motivation works. The gang tracks the key to an agent of a rival group, **BREGAN D'AERTHE**, in **SKULLPORT**. They kill the drow and bring the key to one of the Xanathar's nearby bases.

The beholder wastes no time and immediately contacts the Shadowdusks. They quickly arrive to claim their prize and then return to the depths of the mountain. Of course, as far as the player characters know, the Xanathar still has the key and their job is to get it.

EPISODES

The adventure is spread over **three to five episodes** that takes approximately two to four hours to play. These episodes are initially introduced by a Call to Action Episode.

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: Enemy of My Enemy.** A debt owed to the party's employer allows the characters to learn that the Xanathar now possesses the key of Ahghairon and where the key is located. The party must move quickly if they hope to recover it. This is the **Call to Action**.

- **Episode 2: Preparation is Key.** The characters decide on a plan of action to steal the key. They then exploit weak points in the Xanathar's organization to garner advantage for their plan. This is **Story Objective A**.
- **Episode 3: Braving Xanathar's Wrath.** The party infiltrates the Xanathar's base, finds the beholder's hidden vault, and steals the key. This is **Story Objective B**.

BONUS OBJECTIVES

This adventure includes two 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: Assassinating the Fish.** To add insult to injury, the party is asked to kill Sylgar, the Xanathar's pet goldfish. This bonus objective is found in **Appendix 4**.
- **Bonus Objective B: Preserving the Art(ist).** The party learns that a kidnapped child savant will be killed once she paints a portrait. It is up to them to rescue her from the Xanathar. This bonus objective is found in **Appendix 5**.

EPISODE SEQUENCE

Depending on your time constraints, and play style and environment, this adventure will take 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 2 hours. However, if you wish, you can provide a longer experience for your players by pursuing the bonus objectives.

Story Objectives Only. To complete the adventure's main objectives, the characters participate in Episodes 1 through 3 in order, however, you may include the opportunity to pursue bonus objectives.

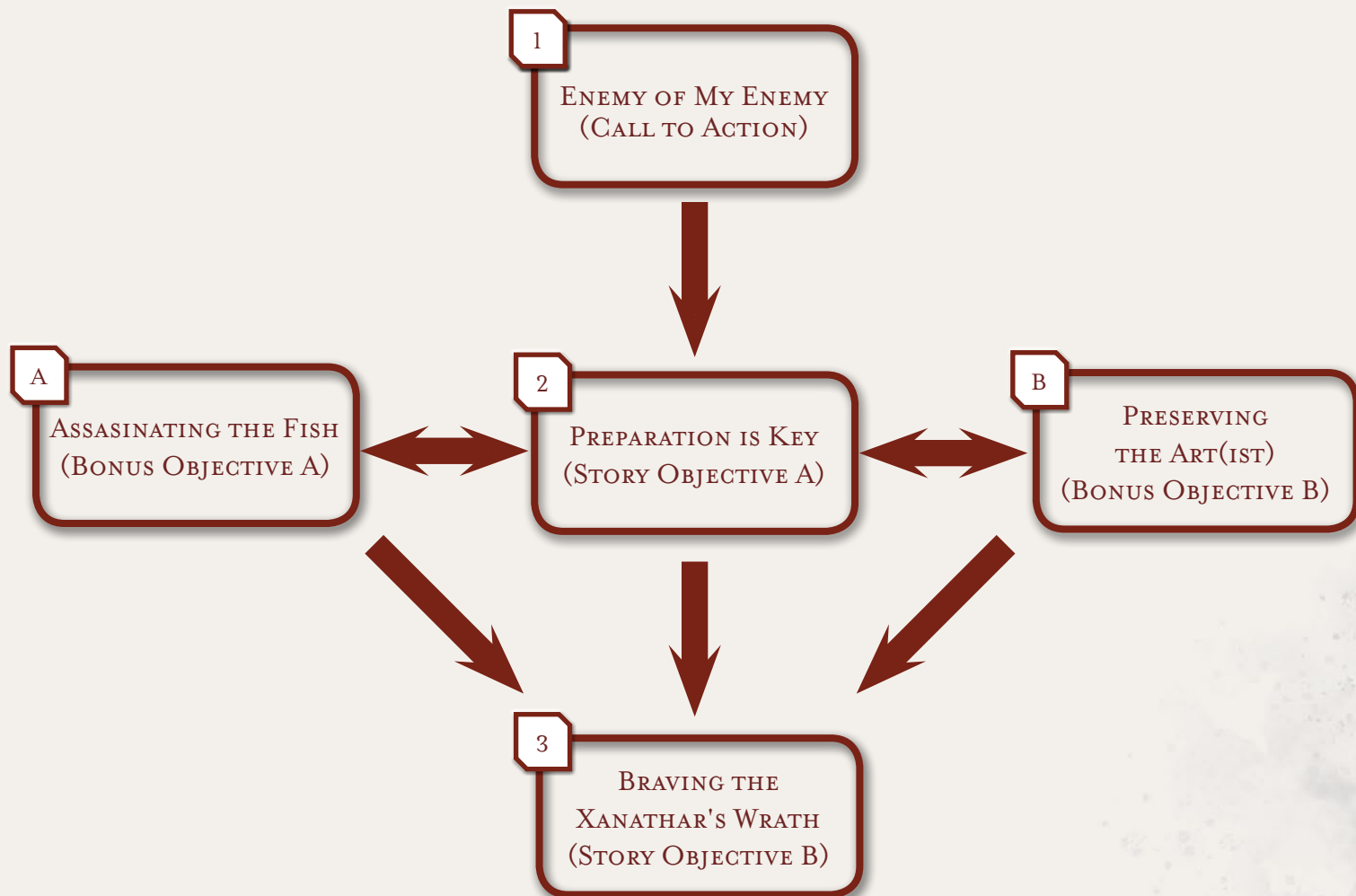
Bonus Objectives. You can extend this adventure by one or two hours by including opportunities for the characters to pursue the bonus objectives.

Bonus Objective A is presented in **Episode 1**. Depending on the character's plans, it may come into play while dealing with the fish's caretaker in **Episode 2**. However, the party won't have a chance to kill Sylgar until **Episode 3**. The inclusion of **Bonus Objective B** introduces scenes into **Episode 2**. But it is only during **Episode 3** that the characters learn of the child's intended fate and rescue her from the beholder.



ADVENTURE FLOWCHART

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





EPISODE 1: ENEMY OF MY ENEMY



Estimated Duration: 15 minutes

AN EXTREMELY BRIEF GUIDE TO SKULLPORT

Skullport is a ruined and nearly abandoned port town in a cavern deep beneath the grand city of Waterdeep. This shadow port is home to numerous illicit activities and any vice can be found for the right price or if you are strong enough to take it. But woe to those who garner the attention of the Skulls! These floating, disembodied skulls rarely interact, but have been known to punish open conflict by raining fireballs down on all parties and bystanders.

The town connects to several levels of the Undermountain dungeon and to various sea caves. It is protected by Skull Island, which holds a hardened fortress. Two-story towers armed with siege weapons are strategically placed along the 20-foot-high outer walls.

Limited in width by the underground cavern where it sits, Skullport's buildings rise upward from the street level of Lower Skullport into ramshackle levels called Middle and Upper Skullport. Almost all of the levels are controlled by the Xanathar Guild. The Xanathar is a mysterious paranoid tyrant to most, but those privy to deeper secrets know it is a beholder. The organization is based on a "survival of the fittest" mentality, with those who scheme the best rising to the top.

Skullport is largely abandoned and many of the remaining residents work for the Xanathar, pay tribute to the Xanathar, keep tabs on the Xanathar for another organization, or if very talented, all of the above. A few Harper spies seek to undermine the Xanathar's schemes, Zhent agents have infiltrated the Xanathar Guild, and drow from Bregan D'aerthe occasionally lurk in dark alleys. Almost any creature could be encountered walking the streets and beyond the unpredictable intervention of the Skulls or the ire of the Xanathar Guild, there is no law.

ALTERATIONS TO MAGIC IN SKULLPORT

Skullport is affected by the changes to magic that are common throughout Undermountain. No spell other than *wish* can be used to enter Undermountain, leave it, or transport oneself from one level to another. *Astral projection*, *teleport*, *plane shift*, *word of recall*, and similar spells simply fail, as do effects that banish a creature to another plane of existence. These restrictions apply to magic items and artifacts that have properties that transport or banish creatures to other planes as well. Magic that allows transit to the Border Ethereal, such as the *etherealness* spell, is the exception to this rule. A creature that enters the Border Ethereal from Undermountain is pulled back into the dungeon upon leaving that plane.

AREA INFORMATION

Skullport has the following features:

Lighting. The darkness of the cavern is only broken by light sources carried by travelling denizens or leaked from building interiors.

Lower Skullport. Also called the Street Level, this section of the city encompasses the buildings near the ground level of the cavern.

Middle Skullport. This city region is built on top of Lower Skullport buildings and stalagmites as well as into the cavern walls.

Travel. Numerous ladders, stairs, and ramps grant access to Skullport's upper regions. Catwalks, rope bridges, and old ship's rigging crisscross the city above the ground. Anchored to the various buildings and the cavern's natural features, they act as streets and alleys in the air. Most of the catwalks are 10 feet in width and are as rickety and haphazard as everything else here.

Upper Skullport. The highest locations in the city are referred to as Upper Skullport. These buildings, haphazardly built atop the buildings of Middle Skullport and into huge stalactites, rise all the way up to the cavern's 90-foot-ceiling.

THE FLAMESKULLS

Over a century ago, these flameskulls were arbiters of their own mad version of law and order in Skullport. While they have deteriorated and are now generally incomprehensible, they can be a tool for the DM to add some weirdness to the adventure. They can interrupt fights with powerful magic, suddenly appear to give the characters bizarre quests, or claim that the party is violating some nonsensical law. Feel free to use them in whatever way enhances your adventure!

A NEW FRIEND

In *DDAL08-10 The Skull Square Murders*, the characters are hired by Volothamp Geddarm to reclaim a "stolen" key to Ahghairon's tower. If the characters did not participate in that adventure, quickly summarize their employment and journey to Skullport before beginning the opening scene.

The adventure opens with the characters at the Tawdry Nymph, a busy festhall found 40 feet in the air in Middle Skullport. An anonymous note delivered earlier in the day asked them here to learn important information about the missing key.

AREA INFORMATION

This area has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The festhall is a single-story stone building with a large common area filled with tables for patrons to enjoy food, drink, and games. Reasonably priced rooms are available to rent.

Lighting. Candle chandeliers provide ample light.

Sound. The general murmur of the crowd is loud enough to drown out table conversations.

Carvings. The walls of the hall are engraved and painted with scenes of patrons enjoying themselves in a variety of activities, quite a few of which are morally or ethically objectionable.

CREATURES/NPCs

The festhall's half-elf owner, **Ander Starshine**, cheerfully meanders about the common area. Once the characters are settled at a table, the scarred **goblin boss**, Grumble, takes a seat.

Objectives/Goals. Grumble simply wants to share information about the key without being noticed by Bregan D'aerthe or the Xanathar Guild. He was sent by Cory'bant'ex, a friend and Bregan D'aerthe agent, to repay a debt to Volo. (She was rescued from the Xanathar's gang by the party if they participated in *DDAL08-11 Poisoned Words*; otherwise, she was rescued by others under Volo's employ.)

What Does Grumble Know? The Xanathar Guild has a key to Ahghairon's tower stored within a converted pirate ship, the *Wrath*, in Upper Skullport, and Bregan D'aerthe plans to steal it tomorrow night. Grumble knows quite a bit about the *Wrath* (almost too much...) and its denizens.

Who's Who at the Wrath. Grumble provides the following information about the *Wrath*'s denizens:

- **Ott Steeltoes.** The dwarven caretaker of the Xanathar's prized goldfish, Sylgar. Unbeknownst to the Xanathar, fish aren't immortal, and Ott must **occasionally shop** for a replacement in the event that the goldfish dies. Talk about a stressful job. He's at the Tawdry Nymph during the characters' meeting with Grumble—who points him out.
- **The Xanathar.** The ruler of the criminal organization of the same name is due to arrive for a portrait sitting on the middle deck with his pet goldfish in the morning. Grumble warns that the Xanathar wields a powerful magic and is likely to have a retinue of attendants; **avoid** at all cost!
- **Ahmaergo.** For a 100 gp, Grumble arranges the delivery of a **minotaur skull** engraved with magical symbols. Ahmaergo is obsessed with minotaurs and is unlikely to resist such a gift.

CALL TO ACTION

They characters must act before the drow if they are to recover the key. To help them on what he (more than once) refers to as a suicide mission, he suggests that the characters get whatever supplies they might need and return to the Tawdry Nymph. From there, he offers to help the characters cast out the *Wrath* and go over what he knows in greater detail.

BONUS OBJECTIVE A. If utilizing this additional content, Grumble promises to reward the party if they assassinate the Xanathar's pet fish, Sylgar, and its replacements. The fish can be found with the Xanathar during the portrait sitting, while all of the replacement fish are hidden in Ott's quarters somewhere on the bottom-most deck. Ott's quarters in **Episode 3** are replaced by **Appendix 4**.

BONUS OBJECTIVE B. If utilizing this additional content, Grumble informs the group that the Xanathar's portrait will be painted tomorrow by a kidnapped child. The artistic prodigy is being held at The Crock and the Helm inn and if the characters act by soon, they may be able to replace her guards and use the ruse to gain access to the *Wrath*. This bonus objective is outlined in **Appendix 5**.

TREASURE

To assist the characters in their mission, Grumble offers up his own wooden hand:

- The hand has arcane symbols scrawled onto its palm that function as a *spell scroll of invisibility*.



EPISODE 2: PREPARATION IS KEY



Estimated Duration: 45 minutes

PLANNING THE HEIST

Using information provided by Grumble, the characters plan a heist in Skullport. They must decide when and how they steal the key from the Xanathar. The scene in this episode is optional and the party may proceed without participating if they wish. Their path all depends on their interest in learning Ott Steeltoes' secret path into the Wrath.

PREREQUISITES

The characters begin this episode after speaking with Grumble and directed to meet back at the Tawdry Nymph for additional information.

OBJECTIVES

Learning about the *Wrath* and coming up with a plan to pull off their heist is **Story Objective A**. Grumble assists the characters in providing information that may be necessary to accomplish this. Tracking Ott Steeltoes back to the *Wrath* may not be a terrible idea as well. Proceed to **Scene A. Hooking the Fish Keeper**. If you are using **Bonus Objective B**, there are two scenes for this episode in **Appendix 5**.

BIG PLANS WITH LITTLE TIME

Planning for the heist should be carefully time-boxed by you to insure enough time to complete the adventure. Without a time limit, players may debate plan merits and weaknesses for hours.

During planning, remind the players of the rumored locations of the Xanathar's vault and the Xanathar's portrait sitting (as well as Ott's quarters if **Bonus Objective A** is used). Ask the players if any 9th-level character is under the *Deal With Dawn's Beacon* from *DDIA-XGE Underworld Speculation*. That story award may impact how the Xanathar treats with them but note that the enchantment only impacts him if he is physically in the beholder's presence. A careful party may also scout the Wrath in Upper Skullport to see the base for themselves and better prepare. Refer to **Episode 3** for more information on the Xanathar's *Wrath*.

SCENE A. SCOPING OUT THE WRATH

Grumble escorts the characters to the Wrath, making it a point to single out features of the ship. Along the way, he points out the following to the characters:

- The upper deck is patrolled by **guards**. Sneaking past them will likely be difficult.
- The *Wrath* has a few windows that may be used to gain access, but they're all blocked by **iron grates**.
- Its outer walls are enchanted to **block scrying** and **teleportation** spells, and provided the door is closed, the inner walls are utterly **sound-proofed**.
- The Xanathar keeps an art gallery within the *Wrath*. A **secret vault** is rumored to be found within. Grumble believes that the key is there.
- There are a number of **magic crystals** activated at night that sound an alarm when touched or if a creature gets too close to them. A key carried by a dwarven lieutenant, Ahmaergo, disables them.

- Grumble knows that Ott Steeltoes uses a secret entrance to access the ship but hasn't been able to track him to where it is. **Tailing Ott** following a supply run might reveal a less-guarded entrance.

SNEAKY, SNEAKY

While casing the joint, you may decide that the characters are being a little too obvious or that the Wrath's denizens are being extra careful. To heighten the suspense, consider asking the characters to make a Dexterity (Stealth) check to move about unnoticed or if confronted by a guard asking why they're loitering in the area, a Charisma (Deception) check to assuage the guard's suspicion. If time isn't an issue, intentionally acting suspicious in an attempt to draw guards away from the ship might not even be a bad idea. Refer to the Chase rules in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for guidance on giving pursuing guards the slip!

SCENE B. HOOKING THE FISH KEEPER

Ott Steeltoes typically visits two places in Skullport—the Tawdry Nymph and the store where he buys the replacement goldfish. He's pretty easy to spot; he's the only dwarf in the Tawdry Nymph with a skullcap of fake beholder eyestalks carting around a large fishbowl full of large goldfishes on a wooden wagon—potential replacements for Sylgar.

Ott is easy enough to follow; he's in a hurry, lightly drunk, and way more focused on not spilling the contents of the fishbowl than looking to see if anyone is following him. However, if the characters aren't being particularly sneaky, or if you feel it appropriate to heighten the suspense, Ott may glance behind him and potentially notice the characters—who may need to succeed on a Dexterity (Stealth) or Charisma (Deception) check to avoid notice. Eventually, Ott clambers atop a small wooden platform off a suspended catwalk roughly 30 feet directly below the *Wrath*.

AREA INFORMATION

This area has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The catwalks are 10-feet wide and range from 10 feet off the ground to 60 feet off the ground.

Lighting. Although blocked from natural sunlight, phosphorescent mosses and fungi as well as luminescent mineral veins and crystal collections provide dim light throughout Skullport.

Wooden Platform. Hidden runes on this unassuming 5-by-5-foot platform if a specific tune is played while standing atop it. One minute later, a variation of *Tenser's floating disk* appears. The disc, and anything atop it becomes invisible. It then levitates 30 feet up to the Wrath. The effect lasts 5 minutes so anyone on the disk has that long to locate and open the secret door into the ship (**Episode 3, Scene J**), and clamber inside.

CREATURES/NPCs

Ott Steeltoes (a **dwarven cultist**) is a strange (and not too bright) fellow pulling a wagon containing a number of large goldfishes.

Objectives/Goals. Ott's sole purpose in the Xanathar Guild is to tend for the Xanathar's goldfish, Sylgar. The dwarf desperately wants to be free of his responsibilities but is in too deep to leave the gang. During this scene, he simply wants to return home with his replacement fish. He's currently trying to get back to the *Wrath* with the bowl of what are likely to be replacement goldfish.

What Does He Know? Ott isn't bright, but he knows that he doesn't want to get caught pulling a tank full of goldfish around Skullport. He's in a rush to get back to the ship so he can stash the fish. He knows the precise tune needed to activate the secret means of accessing the *Wrath*, but also knows not to tell others what it is—he'll get loads of trouble.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene, according to your group.

- **Weak or Very Weak:** Remove the **slithering tracker**.

PLAYING THE PILLARS (SCENE B. HOOKING THE FISH KEEPER)

Combat

If threatened, Ott throws a large mushroom puffball to the ground—transporting him (but not the goldfish) into an extradimensional space for 12 hours. On the following round, the spore cloud coalesces into a **shambling mound** and a **slithering tracker** (with the plant type). Ott accidentally drops his musical pipe when he's transported.

Exploration

Ott is extremely drunk. The magic pipe can be stolen without his notice on a successful DC 5 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check. Assuming the loss is after he summons the energy disk, Ott doesn't notice the pipe's absence for several days.

Social

The dwarf is naturally suspicious of strangers in Skullport but becomes friendly enough if offered another drink. Even drunk, he knows better than to discuss the *Wrath* or too much about the gang. If the characters act too suspiciously, he attempts to warn the Xanathar with mental messages (an ability that Ott doesn't actually possess, but rather believes he does.)



EPISODE 3: BRAVING XANATHAR'S WRATH



Estimated Duration: 60 minutes

SETTING: THE WRATH

The Xanathar's base in Upper Skullport is a converted 85-foot-long sloop named *Wrath*, hung from the underground cavern's ceiling by six huge chains. Maps for the ship are found in **Appendix 3**. The mast has been replaced with a large brick blockhouse topped with a wooden water tank. The figurehead of a roaring demon wreathed in magical flames dominates the ship's bow.

Aft of the main deck is a raised quarterdeck. *Wrath* is written across the stern above the only lower deck windows. The interior of the ship is divided into two decks. The deck immediately below the main deck is the middle deck and the bottom deck is the orlop deck. A bannister wraps around the main deck and quarterdeck to protect people from accidental falls.

PREREQUISITES

This episode may be pursued upon completing the Call to Action.

OBJECTIVES

Infiltrating the ship, locating the secret vault, and finding the key to Ahghairon's Tower is Story Objective B. The heroes may have discovered a number of ways to do this:

- **Ott's Secret Door.** If the characters tailed Ott, they may be able to use the secret door to **Scene J**.
- **The Minotaur Skull.** If the characters parted with enough gold, they may be able to get an audience with Ahmaergo in **Scene C**.

- **Using the Windows.** The characters may try to pry open the bars blocking the windows to **Scene I**.
- **Posing as Veena's Guards.** If utilizing **Bonus Objective B**, the characters may try to access the *Wrath* by posing as the child prodigy's guards.

AREA INFORMATION

This area has the following features:

Figurehead. The *Wrath*'s figurehead is actually a **gargoyle** that animates during an attack. The magical flames disappear when it leaves the bow.

Below Decks. The ceiling of the interior decks is only 6-feet high.

Blockhouse. The blockhouse ceiling is 8-feet high. Two exterior ramps form a path over the blockhouse. The exterior walls have arrow slits, although the slit in Ahmaergo's office (**Scene 1C**) is closed by shutters.

Lighting. The ship is illuminated by strategically placed sconces targeted with *continual flame* spells.

Magic Protection. The *Wrath*'s external walls are ensorcelled to prevent scrying and teleportation. The ship is also resistant to fire.

Sentry Crystals. Spherical crystals, 6-inches across and engraved with a lidless eye, have been embedded in the ceilings of several rooms—each with a keyhole in the center. These crystal turns red if triggered by movement in the room. At the end of the following round, a triggered crystal sounds a piercing alarm that can be heard throughout the ship (but not outside of it) and at other Xanathar Guild hideouts throughout Skullport.

The crystal can be disabled by a set of thieves' tools and a successful DC 17 Dexterity check made with thieves' tools or by using the key in Ahmaergo's possession. A creature that moves no faster than 5 feet in a round

that succeeds on a DC 15 Dexterity (Stealth) check can approach the crystal without triggering its alarm. Any attacks, spellcasting, or similarly aggressive movements trigger it, however.

Sound. The walls of the ship are enchanted to block sound (and screams). Unless the door is open, any noises from within a room can't be heard outside (excluding the sentry crystal alarm).

INFILTRATING THE WRATH

Ahmaergo conducts business in his office (Scene 1C) all day and late into the night. Barring an alarm at the vault summoning it sooner, the Xanathar arrives at the Wrath in the morning. The exact time of its arrival is left up to you, but it uses secret doors to reach the audience chamber for its portrait sitting (Scene C → Scene H → Scene I). Once arriving, Ott joins the Xanathar to tend to Sylgar.

This episode is about a heist, not a gang war. Discourage the party from a frontal assault. Help them avoid detection. To heighten tension, guards from the blockhouse (Scene B) may patrol elsewhere in the ship. A captured guard is an invaluable source of information.

If an alarm is sounded, it takes the guards in the blockhouse a few minutes to organize and investigate. Meanwhile, the other denizens are likely to stay in their offices or at their posts. Additionally, reinforcements (three human veterans) arrive often enough to harass the heroes into fleeing but not to overwhelm them. The Xanathar departs if it suspects it's in danger but may order the ship set alight if the intruders hunker down. The Xanathar does whatever its able to spare Sylgar from this fate, however.



SCENE A. DECK WATCH

Members of the Xanathar Guild patrol the main deck of the *Wrath* between these two locations. They use ramps to walk over the blockhouse instead of through it. They can't see the external secret doors on the bottom deck due to the curve of the hull.

CREATURES/NPCs

Looming over the deck is a female **ettin** called Bamboom (one head is Bam; the other is Boom). Two human **archers** support her and alternate watch locations with the giant. If combat begins, the **gargoyle** leaps from the *Wrath's* bow and enters combat.

Objectives/Goals. Bamboom watches for intruders, although she often bides the time by trying to learn how to pick a large, rusty lock. The archers try to move around in such a way to ensure that they are able to see whatever the ettin doesn't. None of them usually don't go below deck if the alarm is sounded; as far as they know, they guard the only entrance to the *Wrath*.

What Do They Know? Bamboom and the gargoyle have never seen the ship's interior, but the archers know the general layout of the rooms below deck. Neither knows the location of the vault. The entire group receives its orders from Maglor, the bugbear in the blockhouse (**Scene B**).

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene, according to your group.

- **Very Weak:** Remove an **archer**.
- **Very Strong:** Add an **archer**.

SCENE B. BLOCKHOUSE GUARD

Another group of gang members guard Ahmaergo's office and access to the *Wrath's* interior. A spiral metal stair descends into the ship. A small table with four chairs allows the guards to relax a bit.

CREATURES/NPCs

Maglor (a **bugbear chief**) commands three **half-orc veterans** at this post.

Objectives/Goals. These guards support Ahmaergo or the outside guards as needed; however, Maglor and a veteran always remain in this room to guard the stairwell.

What Do They Know? Maglor is the gate-keeper for the ship as well as Ahmaergo. No one comes on or off without talking to him. All of the guards know the general layout of the ship.

Maglor is expecting Veena in the morning so if the characters deliver her, he orders a veteran to escort them all to the audience chamber to await the Xanathar (**Scene 2I**). If the party have the fake minotaur artifact, Maglor allows them to speak with Ahmaergo privately in his office (**Scene 1C**).

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene, according to your group.

- **Weak** or **Very Weak**: Remove a **veteran**.
- **Strong** or **Very Strong**: Add a **veteran**.

SCENE C. AHMAERGO'S OFFICE

This is the office of the Xanathar's right hand man... er, dwarf... Ahmaergo. He handles much of the day-to-day affairs of the Xanathar Guild.

AREA INFORMATION

This area has the following features:

Furnishings. A large mahogany desk faces the door. A comfortable chair sits behind it. A small fireplace in the southeast corner keeps this room nice and warm. Two crossed greataxes are mounted on the wall behind the desk. The entirety of the south wall is covered with a map of Skullport that if lifted, reveals a map of Waterdeep.

Sentry Crystal. A sentry crystal is embedded in the wall. If Ahmaergo is not present, it scans the room for movement.

Secret Doors. A secret trapdoor in the ceiling allows the Xanathar access when it visits, and a matching secret trapdoor is set into the floor. A creature examining either that succeeds on a DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check locates the door.

CREATURES/NPCs

Ahmaergo conducts gang business in his office from mid-morning until late into the night.

Objectives/Goals. Ahmaergo is a busy dwarf with little patience. He constantly receives and answers missives from gang members throughout the organization. However, he always makes time for his obsession with minotaurs.

What Does Ahmaergo Know? Ahmaergo is well informed about the entire gang and owns the only key to the sentry crystals. He knows the Xanathar has a secret vault on the *Wrath* and believes the door is hidden in the portrait gallery (**Scene H**). He also knows that Ahghairon's key is stored in the vault—waiting to be claimed by a representative of the Shadowdusk family. The Shadowdusks are strange ex-nobles of Waterdeep who claim Undermountain as their home. They hired the gang to steal the key.

THE MINOTAUR SKULL

When the items command word is uttered, any creature within 5 feet of the enchanted skull must make a DC 15 Charisma saving throw or find their soul magically trapped inside the skull for one hour. While trapped, the target's body and carried equipment cease to exist. Once used or if the skull is removed from Skullport, this property is lost.

SCENE D. MESS

Gang members stationed at the ship eat two meals a day here. The room is dominated by an oak table surrounded by eight chairs.

SCENE E. GALLEY

The galley is the *Wrath's* kitchen. It actually has running water thanks to the blockhouse water tower above. A curtain separates the cook's sleeping area from the rest of the room. The curtain hides a simple hammock and a small chest of personal items.

CREATURES/NPCs

Mordai (a **tiefling bandit**) is the ship's cook, and spends his days here, either working or sleeping.

Objectives/Goals. Mordai is a member of the Xanathar Guild who demonstrated a talent for cooking. To strangers, he pretends to be an indentured servant who wants to escape. (He turns on the characters at the first opportunity but is a coward at heart.)

What Does Mordai Know? Mordai knows very little beyond guild basics. He's not aware of the Xanathar's true nature, but knows a beholder works with the gang. He spends most of his time in the kitchen since the base guards are loath to lose his cooking skills.

SCENE F. PANTRY

The kitchen's pantry of dry goods is kept here.

SCENE G. PRIVY

Move along; nothing to see here.

SCENE H. PRIVATE GALLERY

Four statues stand before four paintings hung along the wall.

AREA INFORMATION

This area features:

Ceiling Door. A secret trapdoor to Ahmaergo's office (**Scene C**) is concealed in the ceiling. It can be found with a successful DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check.

Paintings. All of the paintings depict the Xanathar with its pet goldfish. As a harmless magical side effect of the beholder's attention, the numerous eyes in the paintings subtly follow any creature in the gallery.

The painting behind the woman statue is mounted to the wall instead of hung like the others. Turning the frame to a 45-degree angle unlocks the secret door under the halfling statue. The frame slides back to the locked position if not held.

Statues. Standing before each painting is a different statue on a small pedestal: an impeccably-dressed male elf, a bald man in rough workman clothes, a scarred woman in a cloak, and a smirking halfling. An empty pedestal waits between the man and woman. All the statues hold paint brushes and are recognizable as missing Waterdeep artists.

A careful search finds a trapdoor to the vault (**Scene Q**) hidden under the halfling statue. The statue blocks the door from opening and must be moved. Additionally, the door is locked, but can be unlocked by a mechanism hidden behind a painting (see above).

CREATURES/NPCs

The four statues have been treated with a special alchemical process to become **stone cursed**.

Objectives/Goals. The stone cursed are under explicit orders to guard the ship's vault. One minute after anyone other than the Xanathar enters the vault, the statues animate and attack. If no one is still in the gallery, three of the statues drop down into the vault through the trapdoor. The remaining stone cursed closes the door and stands on it with its considerable weight.

THE FATE OF VEENA

If **Bonus Objective B** is used, this room should drive home the danger for the young painter. All of these artists were promised their freedom after the job as well.

SCENE I. AUDIENCE CHAMBER

This room is used for audiences with the Xanathar. However, the beholder is only present during the day.

AWAITING THE XANATHAR

Any guards escorting the group to the audience chamber stand guard outside the door. If the characters are stealthy, they can explore without him being the wiser. Working together, they may be able to overpower him. Remember: a closed door prevents any sound from escaping.

AREA INFORMATION

This area has the following features:

Furnishings. The chamber is filled with fine furniture: a bookshelf, a fully stocked liquor cabinet, and a pair of leather chairs are in the southwest corner. An easel holding a blank canvas sits next to a small table of paint beside the windows. A table in the middle of the room holds a 3-foot-wide fishbowl. This is the home of Sylgar while aboard the Wrath.

Main Deck Door. A door (locked from the inside) on the north wall blocks access from the main deck. The lock can be opened with a set of thieves' tools and a successful DC 17 Dexterity check.

Windows. Large windows along the stern offer a view of the dilapidated town. However, the curtains over the windows are drawn unless the Xanathar is present. The windows are covered by iron grates outside the Wrath. A character succeeding on a DC 17 Strength (Athletics) check (characters that are climbing make this check with disadvantage). The windows are locked but can be opened with a set of thieves' tools and a successful DC 17 Dexterity check.

CREATURES/NPCs

During the day, the **Xanathar** poses with **Sylgar** for **Veena's** portrait. You decide exactly when the beholder arrives. If the Sylgar is here, so is its devoted care-taker, **Ott Steeltoes**.

STORY AWARD: DEAL WITH DAWN'S BEACON

If any of the characters possess the **Deal with Dawn's Beacon** story award from *DDIA-XGE Underworld Speculation*, they are magically compelled to attack the Xanathar upon seeing it!

Objectives/Goals. The Xanathar wants its portrait completed. Veena desperately wants to return home. Ott simply waits, ready to pounce if Sylgar needs anything. Sylgar enjoys watching the antics of the big air-breathers.

PLAYING THE PILLARS (SCENE I. AUDIENCE CHAMBER)

Combat

Veena cowers under a table during combat. If Sylgar is killed, Ott flees to retrieve a replacement. Among other items, the Xanathar wears a *ring of invisibility* (its magic rings **aren't unlocked** by this adventure). Per the game's rules, it can utilize its eye rays and remain invisible, but be careful not to overpower the group using this tactic. If reduced to less than 100 hit points, it turns invisible and flees. The Xanathar might disintegrate a section of the floor beneath a foe or through a door for extra fun.

Exploration

The chamber doesn't offer much of real interest aside from some rather fine liquor.

Social

The party may be able to pass themselves off as guild members to the Xanathar as long as they act properly deferential. Additionally, the beholder is paranoid and susceptible to stories of betrayal. If a character suggests a gang member is disloyal, the Xanathar may leave to investigate, but eventually returns—likely in a bad mood.



ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene, according to your group.

- **Very Weak:** The Xanathar is distracted; it forgoes its legendary actions and flees if reduced to 110 hit points.
- **Very Strong:** The Xanathar uses its *ring of invisibility* to its fullest potential but attempts to leave at least one of its foes alive to tell the tale of their defeat.

SCENE J. SECRET DOOR

This small compartment houses a hidden hatch that opens to the outside of the ship invisible from the main deck due to the curve of the hull.

AREA INFORMATION

This area has the following features:

Hidden Hatch. A character searching the compartment that succeeds on a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check finds the hatch and the catch used to open it. It's a full 80 feet to the ground below, though a falling creature might get lucky and catch onto some rigging or one of the few catwalks. A falling creature that succeeds on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw manages to grab onto the rigging or a catwalk and slow their fall—halving the damage they take upon hitting the ground.

Strange Backpack. Alternatively, a backpack containing a large, light canvas sheet attached by silk ropes to the backpack straps (a parachute, though the characters are unlikely to know what it is) hangs on the wall inside the compartment. If after leaping out of the hatch, the parachute prevents all damage for a single Medium or smaller creature or slows the decent of up to three similar creatures enough to halve the fall damage. Any more than three such creatures cause the parachute to rip.

SCENE K. OTT'S QUARTERS

This filthy room serves as Ott Steeltoes' quarters.

BONUS OBJECTIVE A. If utilizing this additional content, this area is further modified as detailed in **Appendix 4**.

AREA INFORMATION

This area has the following features:

Litter. Trash and half-eaten food create difficult terrain in the room.

Mushroom Shrine. An unhealthy 5-foot-wide colony of mushrooms grows next to a hammock strung along the east wall. Ott prays and tends to the fungi as his personal representation of the Demon Queen of Fungi, Zuggtmoy. A character with a passive Perception of 12 or higher notes that the multi-layered mushroom colony has a vaguely humanoid outline.

Secret Door & Fish Storage. A secret door in the north wall hides a small storage room. Anyone searching the north wall finds the door on a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check. A simple trigger mechanism opens the door. Inside are fish supplies and a large fish tank with two goldfish. Oddly, the room is very well-kept and orderly.

CREATURES/NPCs

Ott Steeltoes is responsible for the Xanathar's pet fish and is only here when not tending to Sylgar in the audience chamber (**Scene I**). The goldfish in the tank have the same statistics as **Sylgar**.

Objectives/Goals. Ott suffers from a hang-over and simply wants to be left alone until the Xanathar arrives with Sylgar.

What Does Ott Know? Ott barely maintains a hold on his sanity. When not dealing with Sylgar, he has a hard time knowing what is real and what is fantasy. He believes he can telepathically communicate with the Xanathar. (He cannot.) Of course, he knows all about the secret door but reveals nothing.

SCENE L. PRIVY

This room is a privy with running water from the water tower above the main deck.

SCENE M. BATH & LAUNDRY

This room holds a large wooden tub filled with soapy water and soaking dirty clothes. A small wooden paddle leans against the tub. A spigot from the ceiling can provide water if the knob is turned. A small chain connects the top of the tub with a cork stopper under the water. If pulled, it opens the tub's drain.

SCENE N. SLAVE QUARTERS

This room contains three worn and patched hammocks as well as a rickety table with stools.

CREATURES/NPCs

At night, the slaves are asleep in the hammocks. Otherwise, they're playing games while waiting to be called upon to work. All have an open eye branded on their foreheads. Baltrik, a **hobgoblin** butler is here along with Oma (a **commoner**), both of which assisted by a young halfling **commoner** named Fildo.

Objectives/Goals. These slaves are all trusted servants. Baltrik, the leader of the group, still has a bit of pride and promises not to reveal the characters as intruders for an hour. Fildo and Oma assist Baltrik with the day-to-day of keeping the Wrath's crew comfortable.

What Do They Know? The slaves have worked throughout the ship except the vault (**Scene Q**). Baltrik found the outlines of a secret trapdoor in the portrait gallery (**Scene H**) while cleaning but doesn't know how it opens or to where it leads.

SCENE O. STORAGE

This storage room contains cleaning supplies, spare bedsheets and pillows, etc. The bedsheets could be used as parachutes to cushion a fall from the ship, but not completely. They only reduce the damage to 1d4 points of bludgeoning damage per 10 feet fallen.

SCENE P. AHMAERGO'S QUARTERS

This unlit room is the personal quarters of the dwarf, Ahmaergo.

AREA INFORMATION

This area features:

Furnishings. Ahmaergo's mattress lies on a frame of minotaur bones. The furred blanket is minotaur hide. A wooden helmet stand is found near the bed. Ahmaergo often practices goring this wooden dummy with his helmet. The dummy has an actual human skull as a head.

Sentry Crystal. A sentry crystal is embedded in the wall. If Ahmaergo is not present, it is scanning the room for movement.

Trunk. A large stone trunk sits beside the bed. The lid is engraved with a mind-bogglingly complex maze. The trunk is unlocked but its trapped. If opened without first tracing a solution to the lid's maze, a spectral minotaur head charges from the trunk and attacks whomever opened the chest (+8 to hit). If gored, a target takes 22 (4d10) force damage and is knocked prone. Successfully navigating the maze requires a successful DC 18 Intelligence check. Alternatively, the trap can be dispelled by *dispel magic* (DC 16) or other similar magic.

The trunk contains a lacquered minotaur mask smeared with blood. It also contains an assortment of dwarven clothing and two minotaur costumes: one male and one female.

CREATURES/NPCs

Ahmaergo is normally in his office (**Scene C**) from mid-morning until late into the night but is asleep here at night. He sleeps in a nightshirt (AC 12) but keeps his weapons and his horned helmet within easy reach beside his bed.

Objectives/Goals. Ahmaergo attacks any intruders in a rage, but he's smarter than his choice in helmets conveys and surrenders if reduced below 50 hit points—although if the characters don't look too good themselves, he may try to open his door and call for help.

What Does Ahmaergo Know? Ahmaergo is well-informed about the entire gang and owns the only key to the sentry crystals. He's unsure but believes the vault door is hidden in the portrait gallery (**Scene H**). He is also aware that Ahghairon's key is stored in the vault, waiting to be claimed by the Shadowdusks, strange ex-nobles of Waterdeep who hired the gang to steal the key.

SCENE Q. TREASURE VAULT

This hidden room is one of the Xanathar's personal treasure vaults. The walls are encased in riveted steel. The only apparent access is the ceiling trapdoor from the gallery above (**Scene H**).

AREA INFORMATION

This area has the following features:

Furnishings. A long bookshelf holds rows of rare books and scrolls. This wooden display case holds jewelry and other artworks gifted to the Xanathar.

Safe. A large, square safe sits at the stern with a complex lock consisting of a row of six dials—each engraved with letters of the Elvish alphabet. A metal handle that is turned once the combination has been entered sits in the middle of the safe's door. A character that succeeds on a DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check hears a quiet "click" as the dial is set to the correct letter. The safe's combination, from left to right, is S-Y-L-G-A-R. Anyone that tries to turn the safe's handle without the dials set to the correct combination takes 22 (4d10) lightning damage.



Secret Escape Hatch. A careful search of the east wall reveals a secret exit that can be opened by pressing a wall plate. It's a full 80 feet to the ground below, though a falling creature might get lucky and catch onto some rigging or one of the a few catwalks. A falling creature that succeeds on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw manages to grab onto the rigging or a catwalk and slow their fall—halving the damage they take upon hitting the ground.

Sentry Crystal. A sentry crystal embedded in the wall always scans the room for movement.

Ship in a Bottle. A replica of the Wrath floats in a large 5-foot-long glass bottle. It is buffeted by wind and rain in a terrible tiny storm. This bottle houses an air elemental (see **Creatures/NPCs**).

CREATURES/NPCs

A trapped **air elemental** is the source of the storm in the ship's glass bottle. The portrait gallery's **stone cursed** (**Scene H**) might have followed the party into the vault.

Objectives/Goals. The elemental is magically compelled to guard the vault and bursts from within and attacks if the bottle is opened, the alarm sounds, or if anyone other than Ahmaergo or the Xanathar open the safe.

TREASURE & REWARDS

Amongst common treasures, the safe contains:

- A small scroll (**Appendix 6**) rests upon a wooden box within which rests the key to Ahghairon's tower rests inside the box (**Appendix 7**).
- A *gem of seeing* carved into the shape of a goldfish. The word "Sylgar" is engraved into the bottom.
- A *potion of invulnerability*.

WRAP-UP: WE MADE IT!

The adventure concludes with the characters escaping the *Wrath* before being overwhelmed by the Xanathar Guild. Their escape is assisted by the goblin, Grumble, who appears from a side tunnel to offer them a ride in a wagon filled with the dead. He is bound for a zombie-maker in Lower Skullport. The characters can hide under the bodies as the gang searches the streets. The goblin delivers the party to an abandoned warehouse where they can rest and recuperate safely.

When the characters finally return to the room rented for them at the Guts & Garters inn, Volo is waiting. The events at the *Wrath* are the talk of the town. The Xanathar believes Bregan D'aerthe is responsible.

Volo thanks the party profusely and lavishes compliments upon them when they hand over Ahghairon's key but doesn't immediately leave for the tower. He explains that too many people are watching the tower and they need to wait for the heat to die down. For now, they should enjoy the night because he is picking up the tab. If the characters rescued Veena, Volo arranges for the girl's passage to Waterdeep and onward to Baldur's Gate.

PLAYING THE PILLARS (SCENE Q. TREASURE VAULT)

Combat

During combat, a character thrown by the elemental may trigger the pressure plate and reveal the escape hatch.

If the alarm sounds, the Xanathar arrives several minutes later (after the guardians are defeated). The beholder is concerned about harming its treasures and limits its eye rays as described in the audience chamber (**Scene I**). It has a healthy respect for the Skulls of Skullport and does not follow if the party escapes through the secret door.

Exploration

This scene equally encompasses exploration and combat.

Social

The elemental and the stone cursed can't be negotiated or otherwise treated with.

ADVENTURE REWARDS

Upon completing the adventure, the characters each receive rewards based upon their accomplishments. These rewards include advancement and treasure, and may include special rewards, such as story awards or new downtime activities, as follows:

ADVANCEMENT AND TREASURE

CHECKPOINTS

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

- **Objective A:** Plan the heist on the Xanathar's base.
- **Objective B:** Recover Ahghairon's key.

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

- **Bonus Objective A:** Assassinate the fish!
- **Bonus Objective B:** Safeguard Veena.

PLAYER REWARDS

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

MAGIC ITEM UNLOCK

Characters completing adventure's **Main Objective B** unlock this magic item.

Gem of Seeing. This orange gem has been carved into the shape of a goldfish. The bottom is inscribed with the word *Sylgar*. The Xanathar won't be happy that you have this. This item can be found in **Appendix 8**.

DM REWARDS

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

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



APPENDIX 1: LOCATIONS & NPCs

The following NPCs and locations feature prominently in this adventure.

- **Ahmaergo (ah-MAIR-go).** Ahmaergo, the Xanathar's majordomo, has a fascination with minotaurs. Although outwardly civil, the shield dwarf is as devious and corrupt as the worst devil, yet also unflinchingly loyal to his beholder master.

Personality: *I'm an iron fist in a velvet glove. My rage is the last thing many see.*

Ideal: *The strong prey on the weak.*

Bond: *The Xanathar is the boss but I have the real power, and I like it that way.*

Flaw: *I am fascinated with minotaurs and the primal power they embody.*

- **The Crock and the Helm.** The Crock and the Helm is a rough, seedy inn in Lower Skullport frequented by sailors.

Personality: *We provide a quiet place to drown your sorrows.*

Ideal: *Your troubles are your own.*

Bond: *Patrons have been coming here for decades to drink and to forget.*

Flaw: *Everything and everyone has a price.*

- **Grumble (GRUM-bel).** Grumble is a scarred, one-handed goblin who has worked for every organization in Skullport and survived. Grumble has the odd habit of getting distracted by unusual fungi and other growths that he happens across.

Personality: *I've lived a rough life and seen it all.*

Ideal: *If you pay me, I'll believe whatever you want.*

Bond: *Cory'bant'ex saved my life once; I owe her.*

Flaw: *I am a pessimist who always expects to die from the next job.*

- **Ott Steeltoes (ott stil-TOHS).** Ott Steeltoes is a shield dwarf with odd habits and tics. Beyond his weird leather skullcap, he insists on always wearing his namesake steel-toed boots. The constant stress of a life dependent on the wellbeing of a fish has pushed him beyond the edges of sanity and sobriety. He often drinks himself to sleep and spends his free time worshipping Zuggtmoy, the demon queen of fungi.

Personality: *I keep out of harm's way by avoiding attention. If I do my job well, you don't even know I am there.*

Ideal: *I constantly see and hear things others are too oblivious to notice, but I have learned the true corrupt nature of the universe.*

Bond: *My life depends on a fish.*

Flaw: *I drink to silence the master's voice for a time.*

Can't you hear it? Sometimes the voices of the Xanathar and Zuggtmoy shout over each other to be heard.

- **The Tawdry Nymph.** The Tawdry Nymph is a festhall in Middle Skullport.

Personality: *We provide a good time for everyone.*

Ideal: *Food and drink at reasonable prices along with entertainment insures a constant stream of customers.*

Bond: *Individuals know to come to us for a fun night.*

Flaw: *Some people are overly sensitive to the entertainment that might be available at any given time.*

- **Veena (VĒN-ah).** Veena is a child savant kidnapped from Baldur's Gate to paint the Xanathar's portrait. She is only 11 years old and in terrible trouble.

Personality: *I demand perfection from my art. I also talk to myself while contemplating a problem.*

Ideal: *My portraits capture the good in everyone.*

Bond: *My skills need to be admired and respected.*

Flaw: *I'm only a child; I've lived a sheltered life.*

- **Wrath.** One of the Xanathar Guild bases in Upper Skullport is the Wrath, a smuggler's sloop hung from the great cavern's ceiling.

Personality: *The Wrath is both a hanging curiosity and a fortress.*

Ideal: *We hide the gang's business from prying eyes.*

Bond: *Only the Xanathar Guild can use the ship.*

Flaw: *Secret entrances betray our security.*

- **Xanathar (ZAN-ah-thar).** The Xanathar is the beholder crime lord that lives in the dungeons under Waterdeep. It is a paranoid tyrant that charms and bullies its minions into servitude.

Personality: *I enjoy wealth and power. All others are envious of what I have.*

Ideal: *I am superior to others by my very nature.*

Bond: *I only care about one creature other than myself: Sylgar.*

Flaw: *Traitors and their plots are everywhere.*

APPENDIX 2: CREATURE STATISTICS

This appendix details monsters that are encountered in this adventure.

ARCHER

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 16 (studded leather)
Hit Points 75 (10d8 + 30)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)

Skills Acrobatics +6, Perception +5
Senses passive Perception 15
Languages any one language (usually Common)
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Archer's Eye (3/day). As a bonus action, the archer can add 1d10 to its next attack or damage roll with a longbow or shortbow.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The archer makes two attacks with its longbow.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage.

Longbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage.

BANDIT

Medium Humanoid (any race), any non-lawful alignment

Armor Class 12 (leather armor)
Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)
Speed 30 ft.

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

Senses passive Perception 10
Languages any one language (usually Common)
Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

ACTIONS

Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) slashing damage.

Light Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 80 ft./320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage.

BANDIT CAPTAIN

Medium Humanoid (any race), any non-lawful alignment

Armor Class 12 (leather armor)
Hit Points 65 (10d8 + 20)
Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Str +4, Dex +5, Wis +2
Skills Athletics +4, Deception +4
Senses passive Perception 10
Languages any two languages
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

ACTIONS

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

Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) slashing damage.

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

REACTIONS

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

TIEFLINGS

Tieflings use the specified stat blocks, modified as follows:

- *Medium humanoid, neutral evil*
- **Languages** Common, Infernal
- **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.
- **Damage Resistance** fire
- **Legacy of Malbolge.** The tiefling knows the minor illusion cantrip and can cast *disguise self* once with this trait and regains the ability to do so when it finishes a long rest. Charisma is its spellcasting ability for this spell.

BUGBEAR CHIEF

Medium humanoid (goblinoid), chaotic evil

Armor Class 17 (chain shirt, shield)

Hit Points 65 (10d8 + 20)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Intimidation +2, Stealth +6, Survival +3

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Common, Goblin

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Brute. A melee weapon deals one extra die of its damage when the bugbear hits with it (included in the attack).

Heart of Hruggek. The bugbear has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned, stunned, or put to sleep.

Surprise Attack. If the bugbear surprises a creature and hits it with an attack during the first round of combat, the target takes an extra 7 (2d6) damage from the attack.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The bugbear makes two melee attacks.

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

Javelin. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30/120 ft., one target. Hit: 10 (2d6 + 3) piercing damage in melee or 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage at range.

COMMONER

Medium Humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 10

Hit Points 4 (1d8)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 0 (10 XP)

ACTIONS

Club. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 2 (1d4) bludgeoning damage.

ETTIN

Large giant, chaotic evil

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 85 (10d10 + 30)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+5)	8 (-1)	17 (+3)	6 (-2)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)

Skills Perception +4

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages Giant, Orc

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Two Heads. The ettin has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks and on saving throws against being blinded, charmed, deafened, frightened, stunned, and knocked unconscious.

Wakeful. When one of the ettin's heads is asleep, its other head is awake.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The ettin makes two attacks: one with its battleaxe and one with its morningstar.

Battleaxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 14 (2d8 + 5) slashing damage.

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

FLAMESKULL

Tiny undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 40 (9d4 + 18)

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

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
1 (-5)	17 (+3)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)

Skills Arcana +5, Perception +2

Damage Resistances Lightning, Necrotic, Piercing

Damage Immunities Cold, Fire, Poison

Condition Immunities Charmed, Frightened, Paralyzed, Poisoned, Prone

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Common

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

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

Rejuvenation. If the flameskull is destroyed, it regains all its hit points in 1 hour unless holy water is sprinkled on its remains or a dispel magic or remove curse spell is cast on them.

Spellcasting. The flameskull is a 5th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). It requires no somatic or material components to cast its spells. The flameskull has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *mage hand*

1st level (3 slots): *magic missile*, *shield*

2nd level (2 slots): *blur*, *flaming sphere*

3rd level (1 slot): *fireball*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The flameskull uses Fire Ray twice.

Fire Ray. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +5 to hit, range 30 ft., one target. Hit: 10 (3d6) fire damage.

GARGOYLE

Medium elemental, chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 52 (7d8 + 21)

Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)	6 (-2)	11 (+0)	7 (-2)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't adamantite

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, petrified, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Terran

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

False Appearance. While the gargoyle remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from an inanimate statue.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The gargoyle makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) slashing damage.

GOBLIN BOSS

Small humanoid (goblinoid), neutral evil

Armor Class 17 (chain shirt, shield)

Hit Points 21 (6d6)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Stealth +6

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages Common, Goblin

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Nimble Escape. The goblin can take the Disengage or Hide action as a bonus action on each of its turns.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The goblin makes two attacks with its scimitar. The second attack has disadvantage.

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

Javelin. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30/120 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

REACTIONS

Redirect Attack. When a creature the goblin can see targets it with an attack, the goblin chooses another goblin within 5 feet of it. The two goblins swap places, and the chosen goblin becomes the target instead.

HOBGOBLIN

Medium humanoid (goblinoid), lawful evil

Armor Class 18 (chain mail, shield)

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	9 (-1)

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Goblin

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Martial Advantage. Once per turn, the hobgoblin can deal an extra 7 (2d6) damage to a creature it hits with a weapon attack if that creature is within 5 feet of an ally of the hobgoblin that isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d8 + 1) slashing damage, or 6 (1d10 + 1) slashing damage if used with two hands.

Longbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage.

OWLBEAR

Large monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 59 (7d10 + 21)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)	3 (−4)	12 (+1)	7 (−2)

Skills Perception +3

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages —

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Keen Sight and Smell. The owlbear has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight or smell.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The owlbear makes two attacks: one with its beak and one with its claws.

Beak. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 10 (1d10 + 5) piercing damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 14 (2d8 + 5) slashing damage.

SHAMBLING MOUND

Large plant, unaligned

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 136 (16d10 + 48)

Speed 20 ft., swim 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	8 (−1)	16 (+3)	5 (−3)	10 (+0)	5 (−3)

Skills Stealth +2

Damage Resistances cold, fire

Damage Immunities lightning

Condition Immunities blinded, deafened, exhaustion

Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 10

Languages —

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Lightning Absorption. Whenever the shambling mound is subjected to lightning damage, it takes no damage and regains a number of hit points equal to the lightning damage dealt.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The shambling mound makes two slam attacks. If both attacks hit a Medium or smaller target, the target is grappled (escape DC 14), and the shambling mound uses its Engulf on it.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 13 (2d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

Engulf. The shambling mound engulfs a Medium or smaller creature grappled by it. The engulfed target is blinded, restrained, and unable to breathe, and it must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw at the start of each of the mound's turns or take 13 (2d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage. If the mound moves, the engulfed target moves with it. The mound can have only one creature engulfed at a time.

SLITHERING TRACKER

Medium ooze, chaotic evil

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 32 (5d8 + 10)

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	19 (+4)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)

Skills Stealth +8

Damage Vulnerabilities cold, fire

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Condition Immunities blinded, deafened, exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, unconscious

Senses blindsight 120 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages understands languages it knew in its previous form but can't speak

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Ambusher. In the first round of a combat, the slithering tracker has advantage on attack rolls against any creature it surprised.

Damage Transfer. While grappling a creature, the slithering tracker takes only half the damage dealt to it, and the creature it is grappling takes the other half.

False Appearance. While the slithering tracker remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a puddle, unless an observer succeeds on a DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) check.

Keen Tracker. The slithering tracker has advantage on Wisdom checks to track prey.

Liquid Form. The slithering tracker can enter an enemy's space and stop there. It can also move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

Spider Climb. The slithering tracker can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

Watery Stealth. While underwater, the slithering tracker has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to hide, and it can take the Hide action as a bonus action.

ACTIONS

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 8 (1d10 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

Life Leech. One Large or smaller creature that the slithering tracker can see within 5 feet of it must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or be grappled (escape DC 13). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained and unable to breathe unless it can breathe water. In addition, the grappled target takes 16 (3d10) necrotic damage at the start of each of its turns. The slithering tracker can grapple only one target at a time.

STONE CURSED

Medium construct, lawful evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 19 (3d8 + 4)

Speed 10 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	5 (-3)	14 (+2)	5 (-3)	8 (-1)	7 (-2)

Damage Vulnerabilities bludgeoning

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, petrified, poisoned

Senses passive Perception 9

Languages the languages it knew in life

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Cunning Opportunist. The stone cursed has advantage on the attack rolls of opportunity attacks.

False Appearance. While the stone cursed remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a normal statue.

ACTIONS

Petrifying Claws *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d10 + 3) slashing damage, or 14 (2d10 + 3) slashing damage if the attack roll had advantage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw, or it begins to turn to stone and is restrained until the end of its next turn, when it must repeat the saving throw. The effect ends if the second save is successful; otherwise the target is petrified for 24 hours.

SWASHBUCKLER

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

Armor Class 17 (leather armor)

Hit Points 66 (12d8 + 12)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Acrobatics +8, Athletics +5, Persuasion +6

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Lightfooted. The swashbuckler can take the Dash or Disengage action as a bonus action on each of its turns.

Suave Defense. While the swashbuckler is wearing light or no armor and wielding no shield, its AC includes its Charisma modifier.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The swashbuckler makes three attacks: one with a dagger and two with its rapier.

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

Rapier. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage.

VEENA (COMMONER)

Medium Humanoid (human), chaotic good or neutral evil

Armor Class 11

Hit Points 4 (1d8)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Perception +4

Senses passive Perception 14

Languages Common

Challenge 0 (10 XP)

ACTIONS

Unarmed Strike. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 bludgeoning damage.

VETERAN

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 17 (splint)

Hit Points 58 (9d8 + 18)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Athletics +5, Perception +2

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The veteran makes two longsword attacks. If it has a shortsword drawn, it can also make a shortsword attack.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage, or 8 (1d10 + 3) slashing damage if used with two hands.

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

Heavy Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d10+1) piercing damage.

HALF-ORCS

Half-orcs use the specified stat blocks, modified as follows:

- **Medium humanoid (orc)**, neutral evil
- **Languages** Common, Orc
- **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.
- **Skills** Intimidation +2
- **Relentless Endurance (Recharges after a Long Rest).** When the orc is reduced to 0 hit points, but not killed outright, it drops to 1 hit point instead.
- **Savage Attacks.** When the orc scores a critical hit with a melee weapon attack, it can roll one of the weapon's damage dice one additional time and add it to the extra damage of the critical hit.

WEREBOAR

Medium humanoid (human, shapechanger), neutral evil

Armor Class 10 in humanoid form, 11 (natural armor) in boar or hybrid form

Hit Points 78 (12d8 + 24)

Speed 30 ft. (40 ft. in boar form)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+1)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	8 (-1)

Skills Perception +2

Damage Immunities bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical weapons that aren't silvered

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Common (can't speak in boar form)

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Shapechange. The wereboar can use its action to polymorph into a boar-humanoid hybrid or into a boar, or back into its true form, which is humanoid. Its statistics, other than its AC, are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

Charge (Boar or Hybrid Form Only). If the wereboar moves at least 15 feet straight toward a target and then hits it with its tusks on the same turn, the target takes an extra 7 (2d6) slashing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Relentless (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). If the wereboar takes 14 damage or less that would reduce it to 0 hit points, it is reduced to 1 hit point instead.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The wereboar makes two attacks, only one of which can be with its tusks.

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

Tusks (Boar or Hybrid Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage. If the target is a humanoid, it must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be cursed with wereboar lycanthropy.

XANATHAR (BEHOLDER)

Large aberration, lawful evil

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 180 (19d10 + 76)

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

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	17 (+3)	15 (+2)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Int +8, Wis +7, Cha +8

Skills Perception +12

Condition Immunities prone

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 22

Languages Deep Speech, Undercommon

Challenge 13 (10,000 XP)

Antimagic Cone. The beholder's central eye creates an area of antimagic, as in the antimagic field spell, in a 150-foot cone. At the start of each of its turns, the beholder decides which way the cone faces and whether the cone is active. The area works against the beholder's own eye rays.

ACTIONS

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

Eye Rays. The beholder shoots three of the following magical eye rays at random (reroll duplicates), choosing one to three targets it can see within 120 feet of it:

1. **Charm Ray.** The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw or be charmed by the beholder for 1 hour, or until the beholder harms the creature.

2. **Paralyzing Ray.** The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 16 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.

3. **Fear Ray.** The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 16 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.

4. **Slowing Ray.** The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, the target's speed is halved for 1 minute. In addition, the creature can't take reactions, and it can take either an action or a bonus action on its turn, not both. The creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

5. **Enervation Ray.** The targeted creature must make a DC 16 Constitution saving throw, taking 36 (8d8) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

6. **Telekinetic Ray.** If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 16 Strength saving throw or the beholder moves it up to 30 feet in any direction. It is restrained by the ray's telekinetic grip until the start of the beholder's next turn or until the beholder is incapacitated.

7. **Sleep Ray.** The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw or fall asleep and remain unconscious for 1 minute. The target awakens if it takes damage or another creature takes an action to wake it. This ray has no effect on constructs and undead.

8. **Petrification Ray.** The targeted creature must make a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, the creature begins to turn to stone and is restrained. It must repeat the saving throw at the end of its next turn. On a success, the effect ends. On a failure, the creature is petrified until freed by the greater restoration spell or other magic.

9. **Disintegration Ray.** If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 16 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 object or creation of magical force, this ray disintegrates a 10-foot cube of it.

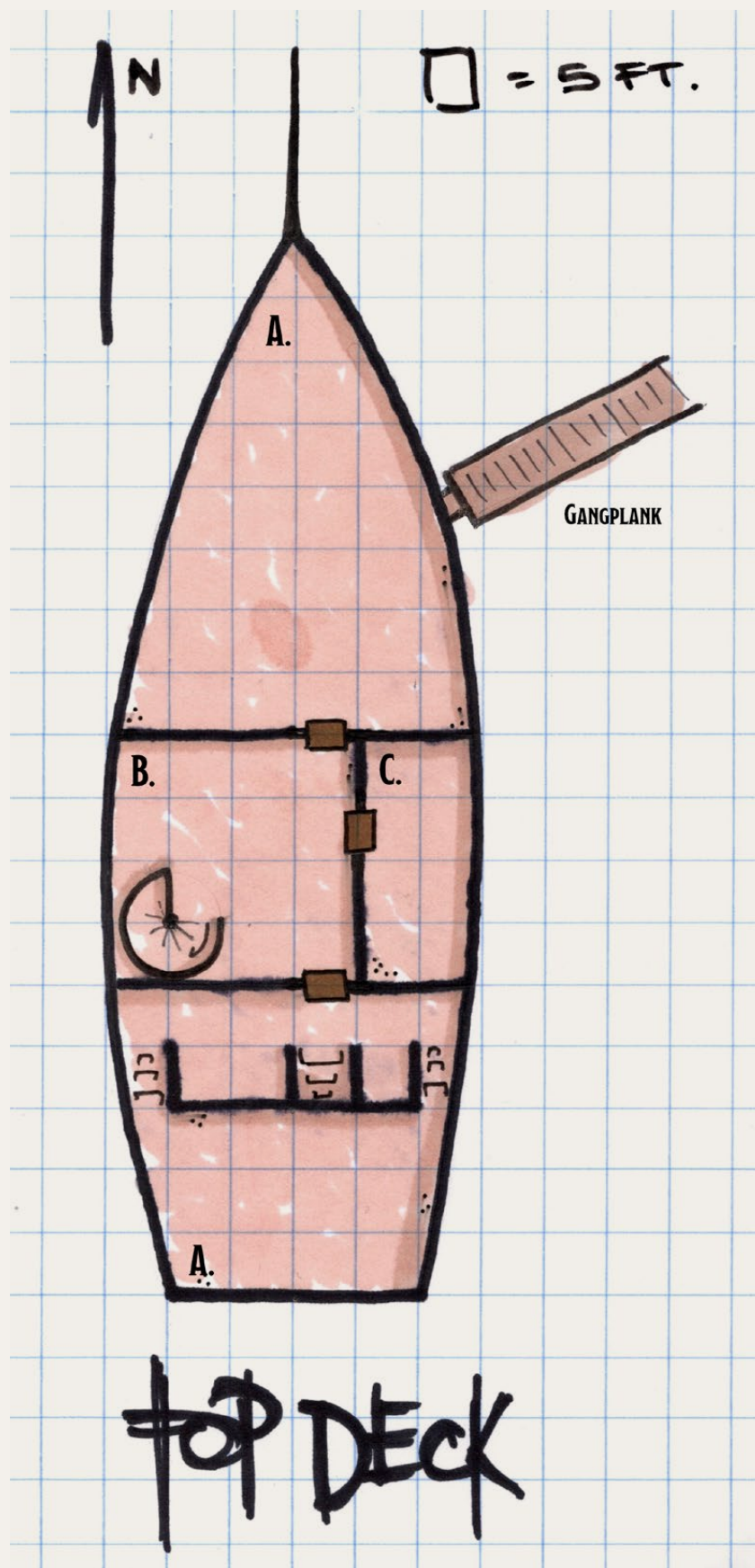
10. **Death Ray.** The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw or take 55 (10d10) necrotic damage. The target dies if the ray reduces it to 0 hit points.

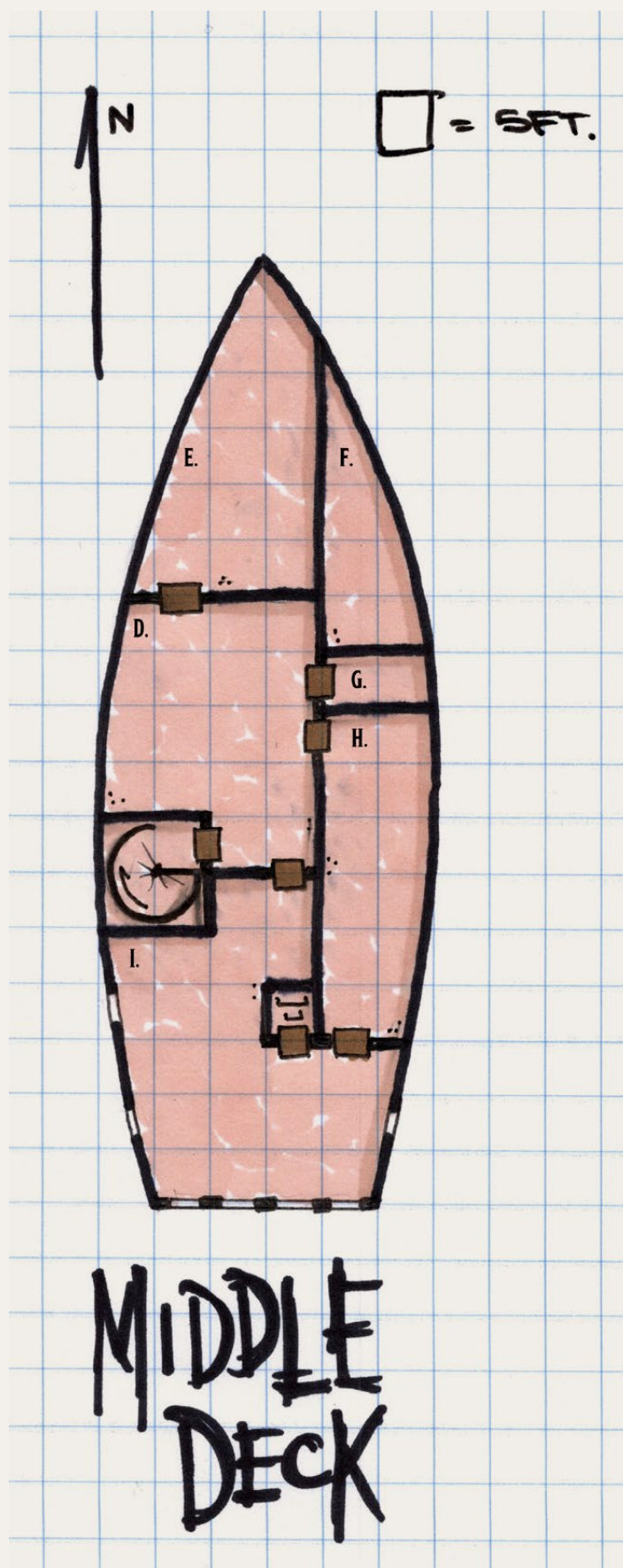
LEGENDARY ACTIONS

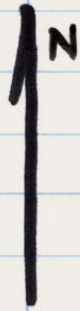
The beholder can take 3 legendary actions, using the Eye Ray option below. It can take only one legendary action at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The beholder regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

- **Eye Ray.** The beholder uses one random eye ray

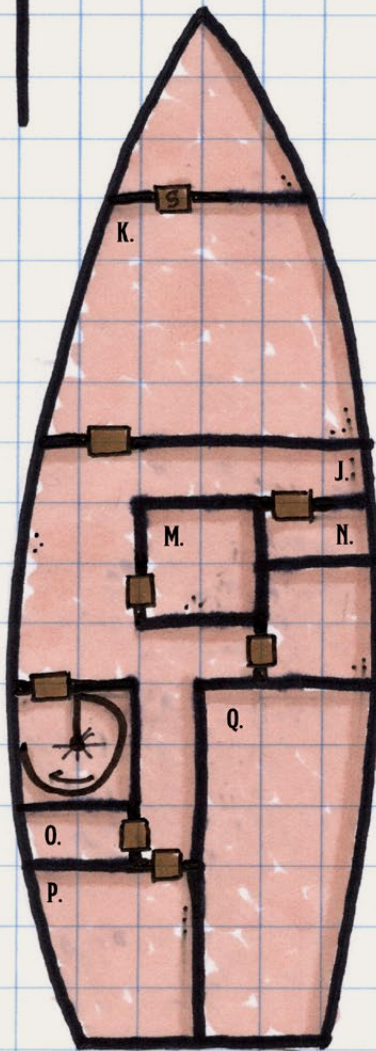
APPENDIX 3: MAPS OF THE WRATH







□ = 5FT.



Bottom
Deck

APPENDIX 4: ASSASSINATING THE FISH (BONUS OBJECTIVE A)

Estimated Duration: 60 minutes

SCENE A. OTT'S QUARTERS (ENHANCED)

As revenge for Cory'bant'ex torture, Grumble asks the party to kill the Xanathar's pet fish, Sylgar, and any replacements its gang has prepared. Sylgar will no doubt be with the Xanathar during the portrait sitting in the *Wrath's* audience chamber at the stern (**Scene I**), but its replacements will likely be hidden in Ott's quarters on the bottom-most deck. This bonus objective expands the scene for Ott's quarters (**Scene K**), a trash-filled room.

AREA INFORMATION

This area has the following modifications:

Beholder Engraving. The west wall is engraved with a beholder. Three eyestalks end in removable crystals of differing colors: black, purple, and red. One additional eyestalk has an empty socket.

Litter. Trash and half-eaten food create difficult terrain in the room. Searching through the rubbish finds a yellow crystal. Additionally, a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check uncovers a poem written in Dwarvish on parchment:

*My only friend is a fish,
With scales of gold.
His brown eyes watch,
As my thoughts unfold.*

Mushroom Shrine. An unhealthy 5-foot-wide colony of mushrooms grows next to a hammock along the east wall. Ott prays and tends to the fungi as his personal representation of the Demon Queen of Fungi, Zuggtmoy. A character with a passive Perception of 12 or higher notes that the colony has a vaguely humanoid outline.

Secret Door & Fish Storage. The secret door in the north wall has an engraving of a goldfish with empty eye sockets. Anyone searching the north wall finds the door on a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check but not the opening mechanism. The door hides a small storage room. Inside are fish supplies and a large fish tank with two goldfish. Oddly, the room is very well-kept and orderly.

THE DOOR PUZZLE

A character who reads the poem, contemplates color compositions, and succeeds on a DC 13 Intelligence check remembers that purple and yellow can create brown. If those two crystals are placed in the fish engraving, the secret door pops open. When this happens, the two crystals turn brown until removed. If the wrong crystals are placed in the fish engraving, an energy beam strikes the character who must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or contract the disease specified below (from the contagion spell). A *dispel magic* or *remove curse* spell ends the effect. Otherwise, its effects last for 1 hour.

Color #1	Color #2	Beam Color	Disease
Black	Purple	Plum	Blinding sickness
Black	Red	Brick	Filth fever
Black	Yellow	Mustard	Slimy doom
Purple	Red	Garnet	Seizure
Red	Yellow	Orange	Flesh rot

PLAYING THE PILLARS

Combat

If threatened, Ott cries out to his queen and rushes into the mushroom-covered wall, knocking himself out. The fungi release spores in response to Ott's anxiety (see Exploration). The next turn, the mushrooms grow into a **shambling mound**.

Exploration

If Ott is not present, the room is filled with mushroom spores. At the start of his turn, a character must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, he suffers disadvantage to attacks and ability checks until his next turn. The turn after releasing the spores, the fungi grow into a **shambling mound** and attack.

Social

Ott really doesn't want to talk; he has a splitting headache. In fact, his pain and borderline sanity prevent him from recognizing the party as non-gang members. He simply orders them to leave.

APPENDIX 5: PRESERVING THE ART(IST) (BONUS OBJECTIVE B)

Estimated Duration: 60 minutes

The child savant Veena is in great danger. She was kidnapped to paint the Xanathar's portrait and she has been promised her freedom when done, but it is all a lie. The Xanathar intends to turn her to stone to protect its identity. The characters do not learn of her impending fate until reaching the beholder's private gallery on the *Wrath* (**Episode 3, Scene H**). The goblin explains that a kidnapped painter, a child savant from Baldur's Gate, is being held at The Crock and the Helm in Lower Skullport. The artist is working on a portrait of the Xanathar and she is to be delivered to the *Wrath* tomorrow.

During **Episode 3**, Veena is likely painting the Xanathar, keeping him busy as the characters explore its base. Because of its constant presence, rescuing her will prove difficult. It is recommended that the characters complete this objective last.

GRUMBLE'S CALL TO ACTION

Safeguarding Veena is **Bonus Objective B** is used. Grumble makes an additional suggestion to the party in **Episode 1**. The characters can replace her guards to gain access to the base. Following this suggestion leads to **Scenes A and B**.

SCENE A. SWITCHING THE COLOR PALETTE

The Crock and the Helm is a rough, seedy inn in Lower Skullport frequented by sailors. It offers cheap food, cheap beer, and sparse rooms where customers can hang their hammocks. In fact, a group of pirates have kidnapped a promising painter for the Xanathar and are holding her in a room here.

AREA INFORMATION

This area features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The wooden inn has three stories. The ground floor contains the common room and kitchen. Cramped rooms fill the upper floors. The

bar and numerous tables with short stools are found in the common room. The pirates' room is a simple 10-by-15-foot rectangle. Hammocks are folded in a corner until needed for sleep.

Lighting. Foul-smelling candles and battered lanterns provide dim light in the common room. Customers must carry their own candles to light their way upstairs. A single lantern lights the pirates' room.

Sound. Sailors come here to drink; not to talk, not to be entertained, but to drink. Only a few low conversations can be heard.

CREATURES/NPCs

The bartender (a **bandit captain**) is a gruff, fat bearded man with one eye named Erondar. The pirates (three **swashbucklers**) and the kidnapped child, **Veena**, have a room on the top floor. The painter's talents cannot be mimicked (insuring an interesting complication since she is therefore required to be on the *Wrath*).

Objectives/Goals. A former smuggler, Erondar's prime motivation is money. He won't risk his own skin over anything but his inn. At night, the pirates are either waiting to be relieved the next morning or sleeping. Otherwise, the pirates are preparing to deliver the artist to the *Wrath*. Veena really wants to return home and is willing to do what it takes to make that happen.

What Do They Know? The pirates spend their time delivering the painter to the *Wrath* and playing cards or dice games while they wait. They expect to be paid a significant amount of gold once the portrait is finished. Veena is scheduled to paint the Xanathar in the morning and has been promised her freedom when done. None of them know that the Xanathar is a beholder.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene, according to your group.

- **Weak or Very Weak:** Remove a **swashbuckler**.
- **Very Strong:** Add a **swashbuckler**.

PLAYING THE PILLARS (SCENE A. SWITCHING THE COLOR PALETTE)

Combat

The pirates flee or surrender if half of them are defeated. If the pirates are defeated at night, more pirates may arrive from the ship in the morning and learn what happened from Erondar. If the characters are still here or at another Skullport establishment, the pirates may track them down—they want their easy money back.

Exploration

To avoid a confrontation, the players may attempt to steal Veena away while the pirates are sleeping. The door lock is easily picked on a successful DC 12 Dexterity check by a character with thieves' tools. A character can slip past the sleeping pirates to Veena's hammock with a successful DC 15 Dexterity (Stealth) check. On a failure, the character awakens the pirates. Another check is required to exit the room. If she disappears in the night, the pirates search the city for her but don't think to actually check the *Wrath*.

Social

The pirates aren't loyal to the Xanathar Guild but expect to be paid well. If offered a bribe of 100 gp or more, they'll abandon their charge without hesitation, though they can be convinced to do so for only 75 gp if the offering character succeeds on a DC 17 Charisma (Persuasion or Intimidation) check. This check is made with advantage if the characters share that the Xanathar is a beholder. (The pirates wisely don't trust a beholder's benevolence.)

SCENE B. ADDING A DARK WASH

After leaving the Crock and the Helm with Veena, the characters are hailed as they walk down a deserted street in Lower Skullport.

AREA INFORMATION

This area features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The street is 15-foot wide and lined with abandoned buildings.

Lighting. The only light source not carried by the characters is the torch held by the stranger.

Smell & Sound. Characters with a passive Perception score of 12 or higher notice a musky animal smell as well as hear the rustling of feathers in the closest building.

CREATURES/NPCs

A large muscular woman (a **wereboar**) wearing furs, armed with a maul, and carrying a torch introduces herself as Wilda. Her master, an oni named Jadeel, watches from a nearby building—something that a perceptive character notices. Wilda has two pet **owlbears** in the building awaiting her call.

Objectives/Goals. Wilda is paid to follow the orders of the oni and she enjoys a good fight. The oni is there to ensure that Wilda accomplishes her charge, but has no intention to stick around if she fails or if pursued by the characters.

What Does Wilda Know? She explains that her master wishes to buy Veena. Her master enjoys dining on the flesh of children, but few can be found in Skullport. He noticed Veena as the party walked down the street. The oni doesn't take no for an answer so neither can Wilda.

A FINAL THREAT

Once the encounter is over, the characters hear a rumbling voice come from thin air: "*You can't always watch her. Once you are gone, I'll pick my teeth with the child's bones.*" This threat adds an interesting complication—if the characters abandon Veena, the oni finds her, takes her, and consumes her.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

- Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene, according to your group.
- **Very Weak:** Remove an **owlbear**.
- **Very Strong:** Add an **owlbear**.

PLAYING THE PILLARS (SCENE B. ADDING A DARK WASH)

Combat

Wilda's master avoids combat but her **owlbears** join her when called. If defeat seems imminent, Wilda surrenders as long as her owlbears are still alive. If an owlbear is dead, she fights in a rage until dead. If the characters attack the oni or appear to be pursuing it, the oni turns invisible and flees the area and then uses Change Shape to take on an unassuming disguise.

Exploration

The abandoned buildings in the area hold nothing of value. Wilda and her minions are simply passing through.

Social

Unless the characters have a spare child to give to Wilda, negotiations break down quickly.

APPENDIX 6: SHADOWDUSK LETTER (PLAYER HANDOUT)

The following note is written in Common.

Request tower key.
Eye Tyrant retrieves for us:
reward of gem sight!

In gratitude and respect,
Lady Shadowdusk

APPENDIX 7: AHGHAIRON'S KEY (PLAYER HANDOUT)



APPENDIX 8: MAGIC ITEM

Characters completing this adventure's objective unlock this magic item.

GEM OF SEEING

This gem has 3 charges. As an action, you can speak the gem's command word and expend 1 charge. For the next 10 minutes, you have truesight out to 120 feet when you peer through the gem. The gem regains 1d3 expended charges daily at dawn. This item is found on **Magic Item Table G** in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

This orange gem has been carved into the shape of a goldfish. The bottom is inscribed with the name *Sylgar*. The Xanathar will not be happy that you have this.

APPENDIX 9: DUNGEON MASTER TIPS

This adventure is designed for **three to seven 5th-10th level characters** and is optimized for **five characters with an average party level (APL) of 8**. Characters outside this level range cannot participate in this adventure.

NEW TO D&D ADVENTURERS LEAGUE?

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

NEW TO WATERDEEP?

<http://dnd.wizards.com/story/waterdeep>

NEW TO BEING THE DUNGEON MASTER?

<http://dndadventurersleague.org/storyline-seasons/waterdeep-adventures/>

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 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	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

DDALo8-12 Xanathar's Wrath

This orange gem has been carved into the shape of a goldfish. The bottom is inscribed with the name 'Sylgar'. The Xanathar will not be happy that you have this.

RARE

MAGIC ITEM TABLE: G

Item Unlock

DDALo8-12 Xanathar's Wrath

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Item Unlock



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