



CHANGE OF ADDRESS

A Waterdeep Adventure

The hand behind the Baron of Blood's troubles is revealed, and he vows to make himself the worst kind of neighbor.
Part One of the *Home Sweet Home* trilogy.

A Four to Six-Hour Adventure for Tier 4 Characters.

Optimized For: APL 18



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ADVENTURE PRIMER

"Searchers after horror haunt strange, far places."

—H.P. Lovecraft

BACKGROUND

The vampire **ARTOR MORLIN** isn't in a good mood. He's temporarily moved to Skullport while searching for a new place to call home after his previous lair was exposed by Jarlaxle Baenre. And although his minions have ended the vampire threat to Waterdeep buried within Undermountain, he's learned that someone in **SHADOWDUSK HOLD** has been directing the threat all along—a threat he aims to stop once and for all.

Unfortunately, the mad mage **HALASTER** isn't the only one throwing obstacles in Artor's way behind the scenes, and he's got one last card to play: the mad lich **ANDRAS SHADOWDUSK**. Andras is one of Halaster's most powerful minions in Undermountain and he has no desire to let the Baron of Blood spoil his fun.

EPISODES

The adventure's story is spread across **three story episodes** that take approximately **four hours** to play. These episodes are 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 the adventure over several sessions, you'll want to revisit the Call to Action each time you play.

- **Episode 1: Get 'er Done.** Artor Morlin orders the characters to clean out a portion of Shadowdusk Hold so that he can move his coffin there. This is the **Call to Action**.
- **Episode 2: House Cleaning.** The characters enter Shadowdusk Hold, clear out the denizens there, and find the Plate Armor of Etherealness, which enables them to pass through the Qualith locks. This is **Story Objective A**.
- **Episode 3: Far Out.** The characters encounter Far Realm corruption in Shadowdusk Hold. They battle Andras Shadowdusk, a lich who's corrupted by the Far Realm and planning an assault on Ahghairon's Tower. This is **Story Objective B**.

BONUS OBJECTIVES

This adventure also includes two, 1-hour bonus objectives that the characters can pursue if they have additional time—earning more advancement and treasure checkpoints in the process. The bonus objectives are found in this adventure's appendices:

- **Bonus Objective A: Find the Map.** The characters negotiate with "Skulker" map collectors for a map of the portion of Shadowdusk Hold that Artor wants cleaned out. This bonus objective is found in **Appendix 5**.
- **Bonus Objective B: Prison Break.** The characters find a stable of Andras Shadowdusk's humanoid "experiments". They fight the monster guards and free the captives. This bonus objective is found in **Appendix 6**.

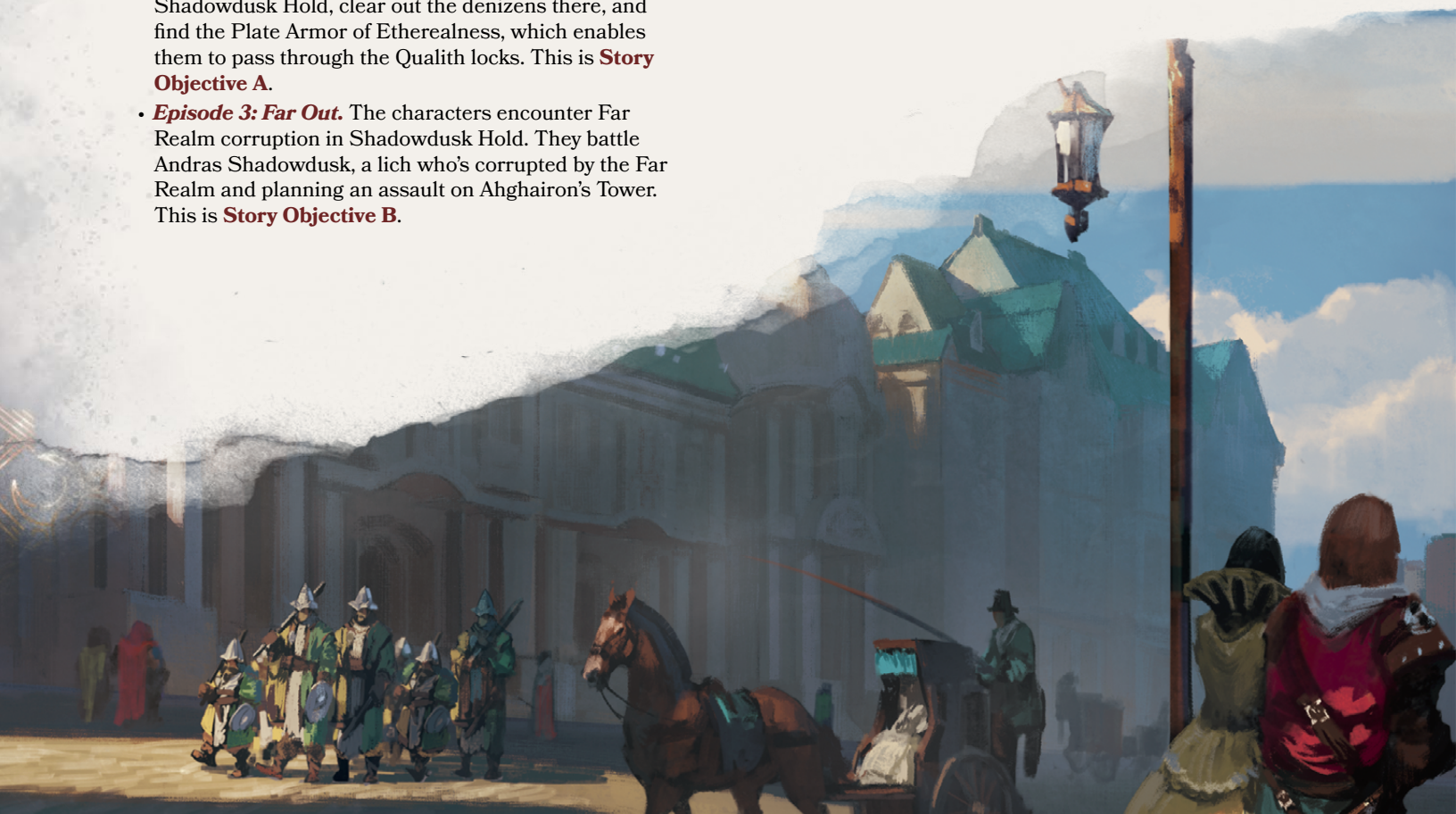
EPISODE SEQUENCE

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

HOW WILL YOU PLAY?

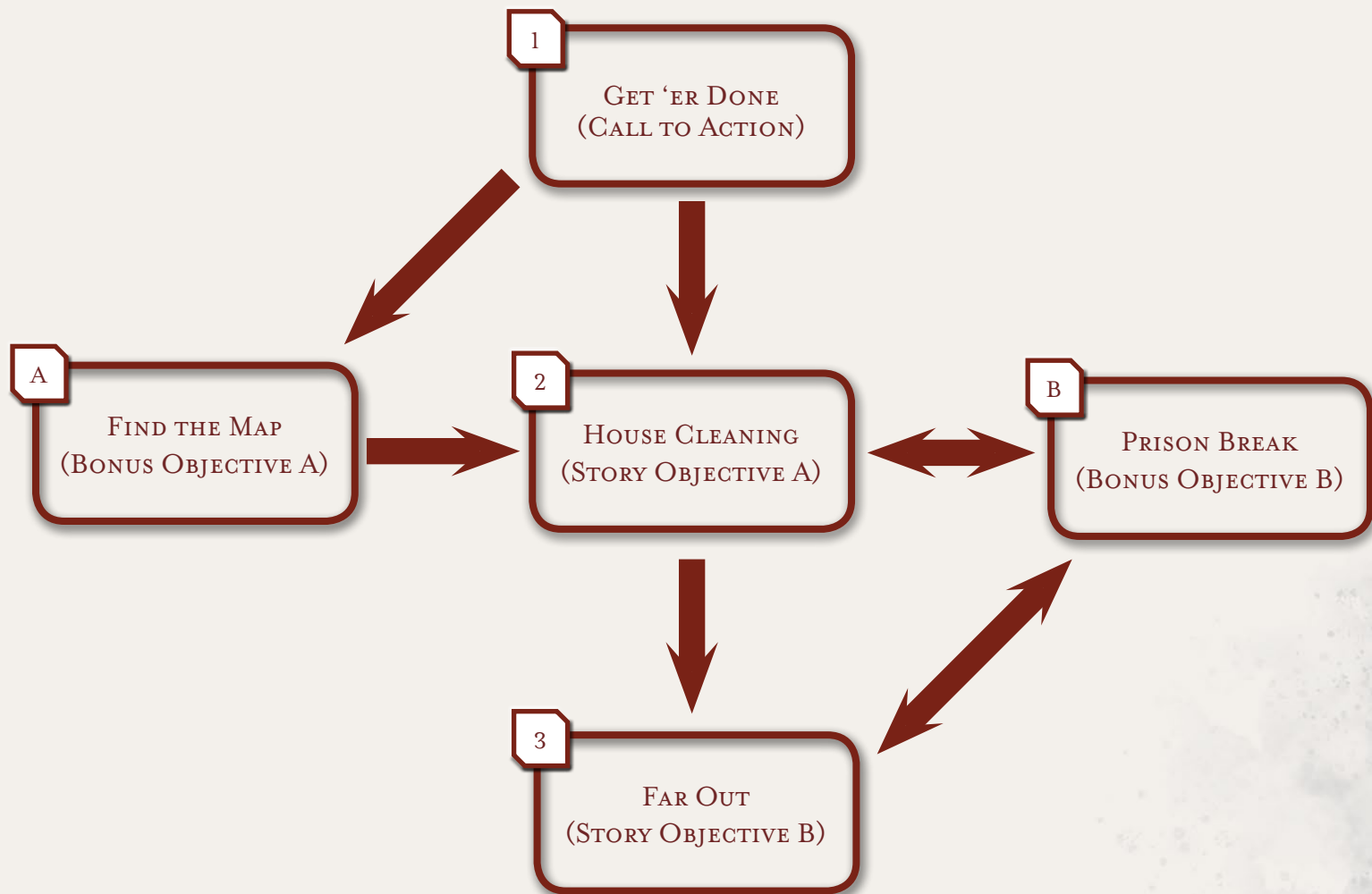
The duration of your session depends on how much of this adventure you use. At the very least, your session will last approximately four hours. However, if you wish, you can provide a longer experience for your players by using the bonus objectives.

- **Story Objectives Only.** To complete both of the adventure's story objectives, the characters play Episodes 1 through 3 in order.
- **Bonus Objectives.** You can extend this adventure one or two hours through the bonus objectives. **Bonus Objective A** occurs upon receiving the **Call to Action** and occurs prior to the onset of **Episode 2** and must be completed prior to beginning **Episode 2**, while **Bonus Objective B** branches off from the middle of **Episode 2** and may be completed after beginning **Episode 3**.



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: GET 'ER DONE



Estimated Duration: 45 minutes

SCENE A: SUMMONED INTO SERVICE

Ordered by Artor Morlin to clean out a portion of Shadowdusk Hold, the manner in which Artor gives the characters the task depends on whether or not the characters played previous Season 8 adventures.

- **Played Prior Season 8 Adventures.** Artor once again calls for the characters to meet him—this time, in a semi-crowded tavern called the Tempted Paladin in Lower Skullport.
- **Didn't Play Prior Season 8 Adventures.** The characters have a chance run-in with Artor Morlin while relaxing in a tavern in Lower Skullport called the Tempted Paladin. The reasons behind their visit is up to them—meeting a contact for a new job, paying off a debt to a shady merchant, or just taking in the sights.

AREA INFORMATION

The area has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The tavern is 60 feet long and 30 feet wide. Tapestries hang on the walls depicting ancient battles from the ancient Shoon Imperium. The bar is on the west wall of the common area which has a number of small round tables arranged throughout. A heavy red curtain hangs behind the bar, concealing a doorway that leads to a small, empty kitchen and the cellar.

Lighting. A large fire blazes in the hearth in the middle of the room. The lighting is warm, but not bright enough to enable the characters to get a good look at the faces of the patrons around them.

Smells & Sounds. Solemn, haunting music and hushed whispers fill the air. The tavern has none of the usual smells that such an establishment would have—cooking, pipe smoke, spilled ale. Odd.

CREATURES/NPCs

The Tempted Paladin is unusually busy given its location and hour, but the patrons aren't what they seem. The **vampire** Artor Morlin sits in a chair at the table furthest from the door. The other dozen-and-a-half patrons (and the bard strumming out the solemn music) are **vampire spawn**—Artor's progeny.

Objectives/Goals. Artor has quickly grown tired of Skullport and wants a more private, inaccessible residence—something more befitting the Baron of Blood. Not only does he want the characters to clear out a portion of Shadowdusk Hold, he also wants to know who has been challenging him as of late.

What Does He Know? Artor knows the legends of the madness of the Shadowdusk family and assumes someone else may have enlisted them to harass him. Artor found one of Halaster's gates to Shadowdusk Hold in the cellar of the Tempted Paladin (the primary reason he moved in) but knows it's an **elder rune gate**. He's unsure as to what awaits on the other side, nor does he know what the **elder rune** does to those who enter. He knows that the gate activates only if a **potion of healing** (any type will suffice) is poured onto the threshold.

CALL TO ACTION

He hopes the characters will do him the favor of disabling any *elder rune* traps and removing the denizens of Shadowdusk Hold so that he can relocate his coffin there. If the characters balk at helping a vampire, he says that if it wasn't for him Waterdeep would be overrun with vampires. It is he who keeps the vampire threat "manageable" and the characters would do well to recognize his services.

Artor doesn't mention that the others in the tavern are his underlings, but if any of the characters threaten the Baron with violence, the **vampire spawns** stand in unison and glare at the characters with malevolence. Upon giving the characters their task, Artor issues a curt, dismissive gesture and resumes watching the bard.

BONUS OBJECTIVE A. If using this additional content, Artor suggests paying a visit to Oleander and Will in Skullport for a map of the section he wants cleared (see **Bonus Objective A**). He tells them to ask for the "duergar's map."

TREASURE & REWARDS

If the characters have no *potion of healing*, Artor rolls his eyes in contemptuous disappointment and gives the characters:

- A slender vial filled with a murky red liquid: a *potion of healing*

SCENE B: GETTING THERE IS HALF THE FUN

The characters enter the portal gate that takes them to Shadowdusk Hold, begin cleaning out the undead and aberrations they find, and discover what might be the taint of the Far Realm.

PREREQUISITES

This episode begins once the characters accept the **Call to Action** in **Episode 1**. If the characters want to complete **Bonus Objective A**, they must do so before starting **Episode 2**.

STORY OBJECTIVE A

Entering Shadowdusk Hold and clearing it of its denizens is **Story Objective A**. The characters must also pass through the Qualith portal gate to enter Andras Shadowdusk's lair in **Episode 3**.

BONUS OBJECTIVE A. If using this additional content, the characters return to the tavern upon retrieving the map. The vampire spawns are still there listening to the bard, but Artor Morlin is gone

AREA INFORMATION

The area has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The gate room mirrors the dimensions of the tavern above—60 feet long and 30 feet wide, with a 7-foot high ceiling. Old barrels and wooden boxes are stacked haphazardly throughout—all are covered in thick dust and cobwebs.

Lighting. There's no light in the cellar other than what the characters bring with them.

Sounds & Smells. The cellar smells dusty and moldy, like every other place in Skullport.

Elder Rune Gate. The gate stands opposite the circular stair on the far side of the cellar. Two wide pillars stand 5 feet apart and 3 feet from the far wall. The pillars have been carved to resemble index fingers—complete with claw-like fingernails curved toward each other. There's no visible gate threshold.

Once a character splashes a *potion of healing* on the ground between the finger-like pillars, the gate activates for one minute—filling the space between them with a swirling blue vortex.

Have the characters determine the order in which they enter the gate. Roll randomly or select a character. When that character attempts to pass through the gate, the character is paralyzed. An *elder rune* (determined randomly from the Elder Rune Deck found in **Appendix 8**) appears on the gate's vertical plane. Roll a die to determine whether it applies a boon or a bane (even for boon, odd for bane). Once done, the character is no longer paralyzed and can pass through the gate. No other *elder runes* appear here.

ELDER RUNES

Elder runes are ancient symbols imbued with magical power. With years of study, any creature that can cast the symbol spell can learn an elder rune and add it to the selection of symbols that can be created with the spell. Halaster has spent lifetimes studying elder runes, inventing new ones, and harnessing their volatile magic. He likes to place them throughout Undermountain as hazards.

CREATURES/NPCs

A young boy (in reality a **vampire spawn**) leads the characters to the gate in the cellar.

Objectives/Goals. The boy was once a street rat that Artor turned to serve as his spy. His youthful appearance makes it hard for anyone to suspect him—even the hardened denizens of Skullport.





EPISODE 2: HOUSE CLEANING



Estimated duration: 1 hour 45 minutes

SCENE A: THROUGH THE GATE

The characters enter a gate room in Shadowdusk Hold.

SHADOWDUSK HOLD

The hold has the following features, unless stated otherwise:

- Ceilings are 15 feet high, with floors and walls of smooth stone—polished to a mirror finish.
- Any humanoid that dies within Shadowdusk Hold rises 1d4 hours later as a **will-o'-wisp** under the DM's control. Casting dispel evil and good on the corpse before the will-o'-wisp forms prevents this, as does removing the body from Shadowdusk Hold or into the area of a *hallow* spell.
- Sconces throughout Shadowdusk Hold flicker with torchlight created by *continual flame* spells. These magic torches are set in upside-down sconces, and their magical flames point downward.

AREA INFORMATION

This area has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The room is a circular foyer 50 feet in diameter with a 40-foot high domed ceiling. Twelve columns stand in a wide circle around the gate exit in the center of the room. Statues stand between each column (see **Berlain's Statues**).

Lighting. The gate's blue vortex fills the room with bright, flickering blue light.

Elder Rune Gate. The "pillars" on this gate are carved to look like big toes with clawed nails pointing toward each other. It is activated for 1 minute by splashing a *potion of healing* into the area between the toes.

Berlain's Statues. A painted lifelike statue of a woman stands between each column. While each statue represents the same woman, they differ—depicting a descent into madness, accompanied by mutations; multiple mouths, misshapen shoulders, and extra arms. The statues all bear strange markings with raised dots and scratches—something that a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals to be Qualith.

READING QUALITH

The writing can't be read without the use of *comprehend languages* or similar magic. Even then, a non-psionic creature that isn't proficient in Qualith who attempts to read the writing must succeed on a DC 11 Wisdom save or suffer a random short-term madness (see **Appendix 9**).

A successful translation identifies the statues as that of a woman named Berlain Shadowdusk, and the majority of the writing as insane poems written by her cousin, Andras, describing how the "stars" made Berlain "unspeakably beautiful."

CREATURES/NPCs

Two **beholder zombies** float in the gate room and three **shadow assassins** lurk near the statues.

Objectives/Goals. The beholder zombies here were created by Andras Shadowdusk to guard the gate. They wait with the patience that only the mindless undead possess and attack any creature that enters the room that isn't Andras. The shadow assassins exist only to slay the living. They were also put there by Andras to guard the gate

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak or Weak:** Remove a **shadow assassin**.
- **Strong or Very Strong:** Add two **shadow assassins**.

SCENE B: THE LONG HALLWAY

The characters make their way through a long, dark hallway where spectral apparitions dance about.

AREA INFORMATION

This area has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The entirety of this 100-foot long, 10-foot wide hallway is painted blood-red. There is a banded wooden door 10 feet into the hallway on the right. Upon entering the hallway, a *wall of fire* erupts from the floor 20 feet beyond the door. The hallway extends another 70 feet past the *wall of fire* before ending in a second similar door.

Lighting. The *wall of fire* illusion sheds bright light throughout the entirety of the hallway.

Resting Room. The banded door on the right opens into a smaller room 20 square feet. It is filled with broken furniture and shredded tapestries. Should the characters rest here, their rest passes quietly.

Tapestries. Tapestries (weighing 20 pounds each) hang from the walls. They depict countless tentacled, nightmarish horrors consuming humanoids.

Wall of Fire Illusion. An illusory *wall of fire* intersects the hallway 30 feet from the entrance. It is a *programmed illusion* triggered when a character enters the hallway. Though the *wall of fire* roars and crackles as one would expect, it gives off neither heat nor smoke. A creature that uses an action to investigate the illusion and succeeds on a DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) check determines that the *wall of fire* is, in fact, an illusion. Physical interaction with the *wall* automatically reveals it to be an illusion.

Berlain's Trap. An inlaid metal plate—painted the same color as the floor—spans the width of the hallway on the floor immediately after the *wall of fire*. Only creatures on the same side of the wall, or those that know it to be an illusion, notice the plate with a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check. Creatures that can't see through the illusion, but know it's there, can avoid the plate by jumping at least 3 feet past the wall and landing in the hallway beyond it.

A pair of niches on either side of the hallway, 10 feet past the *wall of fire*, house two grotesquely misshapen statues of Berlain. Whenever 30 pounds or more is placed on the plate, gouts of fiery oil blast from the statues' mouths and fill the hallway 15 feet in front of them. Any creature in the area must succeed on a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw or take 35 (10d6) fire damage on a failed throw or half as much on a successful one.

CREATURES/NPCs

A number of **spectral apparitions** dart harmlessly around the hallway—oblivious to the characters or the *wall of fire*. These are the souls of Berlain's experiments who died in the holding cells (**Bonus Objective B**).

SCENE C: THE LABORATORY

This laboratory has tables covered in tools and components. Three crude gurneys are arranged in the center of the room. After completing this scene, the characters can follow **Bonus Objective B**.

AREA INFORMATION

The area has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The laboratory is 50 feet long and 30 feet wide. There is an open hallway to the left that leads to darkness and **Bonus Objective B**. A locked wooden door is on the wall across from the characters.

Lighting. A 2-foot wide sphere of magical white light floats near the ceiling, casting a cold, randomly flickering light throughout the area.

Sounds & Smells. The characters hear through the door the screams and cries of the duergar being dragged into the room by the cadaver collector. The stench of blood and offal permeates the room.

Tables and Gurneys. Long tables with components, sharp tools, and scrolls are arranged against the walls. Three crude gurneys stand in the center of the room, each covered in blood stains and dried tissue.

BONUS OBJECTIVE B. If using this additional content, there is an open hallway to the left that leads to a bank of cells.





CREATURES/NPCs

A **star spawn larva mage** watches a **cadaver collector** drag Eldeth Dankil (an emaciated **duergar**) screaming into the room.

The star spawn larva mage looks like a mass of writhing tentacles clothed and hooded in a mage's robes and wearing a white theater mask.

The cadaver collector construct wears the impaled bodies of previous adventurers, a mishmash of armor, and Berlain's grotesque experiments who were killed after they were either thrown out or tried to escape.

Objectives/Goals. The star spawn larva mage's sole desire on this plane is to dissect its inhabitants. It is content to stay in the laboratory so long as it gets a fresh supply of experiments.

The cadaver collector serves the star spawn larva mage, bringing subjects from the prison cells when ordered and cleaning up the remains of failed experiments. It also prowls the streets of Skullport looking for fresh subjects or dead bodies.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak or Weak:** The hit points for both the cadaver collector and star spawn larva mage are halved.
- **Strong or Very Strong:** Add a **flesh golem**.

TREASURE & REWARDS

Characters investigating the remains of the cadaver collector who succeed on a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check find:

- A suit of *plate armor of etherealness* impaled on the construct's body. The armor is in surprisingly good condition given its location.

SCENE D: THRONE ROOM

The throne room is circular in shape, similar to the Elder Rune Gate room. A throne made of bone sits on a dais in the middle of the room.

AREA INFORMATION

The area has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The circular room is 50 feet in diameter with a 40-foot high domed ceiling. Columns, all still in the process of being carved and painted, are arranged in an inner circle around the throne in the center of the room. The top portions of each column have been chipped away and the bottom portions have unpainted carvings of Far Realm aberrations and macabre depictions of Berlain. To the right is a closed portcullis with a winch 5 feet to the right. The characters can open it if they activate the winch.

Zaniak's Throne. The throne sits upon a three-step, circular dais. It is 7 feet tall, 3 feet wide, and made entirely from of bones. The rib cages of human, dwarves, elves, and dragonborn make up the backrest, with skulls lining the top and staring vacantly at any who look upon it. The seat and armrests are made of arm and leg bones.

CREATURES/NPCs

A **boneclaw** and a **shadow assassin** inhabit the dark throne room and immediately attack any creature besides Andras that enters the room.

PLAYING THE PILLARS (SCENE C: THE LABORATORY)

Combat

When the characters enter, the star spawn larva mage regards them for a moment from behind its white mask. The characters hear whispers near their ears: "Ah, *fresh experiments*," and then it attacks.

Exploration

The components on the tables are non-magical, the tools look like surgical instruments, and the scrolls are written in Deep Speech detailing gruesome experiments, like how long it takes a subject die without skin or a liver.

Social

After the battle, Eldeth begs the characters to rescue the other prisoners down the hall (**Bonus Objective B**). If the characters refuse, she follows them and pesters them for help while evangelizing about Moradin's grace.

Objectives/Goals. Both the boneclaw and shadow assassin are slaves to Andras's will. At the moment, Andras has no use for them, so he's ordered them to guard the throne room. Both are delighted when something to kill arrives.

What Does He Know? The boneclaw knows everything about Andras Shadowdusk's lair, the prisoners (**Bonus Objective B**), the Far Realm fissure, as well as the scrolls of *lesser restoration* stored under the throne of bones.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak or Weak:** Remove the **shadow assassin**.
- **Strong or Very Strong:** Add five **greater zombies**.

TREASURE & REWARDS

A character searching the throne who succeeds on a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check finds a small compartment hidden in the base. Within is:

- A small box with three *spell scrolls of lesser restoration*.

SCENE E: THE QUALITH GATE

The characters enter a square room with stone benches arranged in front of a heavy, dark purple curtain that covers the entire opposite wall. Behind the curtain is a portal gate that requires them to read the Qualith runes etched on it to pass through.

AREA INFORMATION

The area has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The room is 40 feet on a side. Three rows of stone benches are arranged in front of a heavy, purple curtain on the far wall. Each of the other walls has three obvious arrow slits.

Lighting. The characters see shadows reaching for them out of the corner of their eye, but when they turn there's nothing there. These come from the Far Realm taint affecting the characters' minds. The room is otherwise dimly lit.

Sounds. The characters hear whispers similar to how the star spawn larva mage spoke, but they can't make out what the whispers are saying.

Curtain. The curtain isn't magical, and the characters can pull it aside—revealing the gate.

Qualith Gate. The gate is crudely fashioned to look like the head of a mind flayer, with its tentacles forming an oval for the mirror-like portal. Characters who look into it see a mirror image of themselves... and another version of themselves standing **behind** the mirror image, grinning at them and black mist where the eyes should be. Characters must succeed on a DC 12 Wisdom save or suffer a random form of short-term madness (Appendix 9).

To pass through the gate, the characters must read the Qualith etchings (**Reading Qualith, Episode 2, Scene A** or by using the *plate armor of etherealness*) on the mind flayer's tentacles. Once read and understood, the gate activates and a swirling purple vortex in the mirror replaces the reflections. It stays open for 1 minute.

Hidden Hallway. Behind the arrow slits is a narrow, 5-foot wide hallway, accessed by a secret door near the Qualith Gate. A character that succeeds on a DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check is able to detect the secret door.

TREASURE & REWARDS

The characters find a crate in the arrow slit hallway. The crate contains some minor spell reagents and:

- A *potion of fire giant strength*.





EPISODE 3: FAR OUT



Estimated duration: 1 hour 45 minutes

SCENE A: ENTER INTO MADNESS

The characters enter the lair of Andras Shadowdusk (located off tier 3 of Shadowdusk Hold in *Dungeon of the Mad Mage*) through the Qualith Gate. They're assaulted by even more whispers that flit about their ears like insects and they see writhing shadows out of the corner of their eyes. The architecture in each room is a horrifying mixture of undead neglect warped by Far Realm madness.

Any character that finishes a long rest here must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom save or gain no benefit from the long rest and become afflicted by a random form of long-term madness (see **Appendix 9**).

If the characters completed **Bonus Objective A**, they quickly determine that the map is useless, for the rooms and hallways have been so corrupted by the Far Realm that they are now in different places and have different dimensions. See **Appendix 4** for a map of its current layout.

PREREQUISITES

This episode begins once the characters complete **Episode 2** and enter Andras Shadowdusk's chambers through the Qualith Gate.

STORY OBJECTIVE B

Clearing out the Far Realm denizens and defeating Andras Shadowdusk is **Story Objective B**. After defeating him, the characters find insane battle plans for an attack

on Ahghairon's Tower. This clue leads the characters to *DDAL08-17 The Tower of Ahghairon*.

AREA INFORMATION

This area has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The room is a warped circle about 50 feet in diameter and has a 40-foot high domed ceiling. The floor undulates like slow-motion waves and the columns twist, curve, and seem to melt. The effects are unnerving but harmless. There are open entries to hallways on the left, right, and directly ahead.

Lighting. Cracks in the dark walls pulse with a purple light that changes shades and casts a harsh, sickly glow upon the whole room.

Sounds. The characters hear the splashing from the **death slaadi** coming down the hall before they see them.

CREATURES/NPCs

Three **death slaadi** skitter from out of the closest hallway and attack the characters.

Objectives/Goals. The death slaadi guard the gate with their lives and suffer no trespassers.

What Do They Know? The slaadi are aware of the spinal trap puddles in each hall (see **Scene B: Hallways**). Characters who succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check notice that the slaadi leap from puddle to puddle when they come bounding down the hallway.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak or Weak:** Remove one **death slaad**.
- **Strong or Very Strong:** Add one **death slaad**.

SCENE B: HALLWAYS

The hallways all look as though the characters are walking through the inside of a snake. The halls twist and curve, and glowing Far Realm slime puddles cover the floor in random places.

AREA INFORMATION

This area has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The halls are about 5 feet wide and 10 feet high.

Sounds & Smells. The characters hear what sounds like a ragged intake of breath before the spinal traps activate.

The slime in the puddles has an acrid, chemical stench, but is otherwise harmless.

Spinal Traps. The spinal trap puddles are within a foot or two of each other and pulsate with a purple and green glow. Spines protrude from everywhere at random angles. If the characters *avoid* the slime puddles, every 5 feet the nearest spine fires at them. The characters must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity save or suffer 2d6 necrotic damage from the shooting spines.

The characters can stop the spinal traps from firing by *stepping* in the slime puddles.

SCENE C1: BONE ROOM

The room is warped and pulsating like every other room in this lair.

AREA INFORMATION

This area has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The warped room is about 30 feet in diameter.

Bone Pile. There is a large pile of bones about 6 feet high and 12 feet in diameter at the base. The bones shift about due to the Far Realm taint imperceptibly warping the room at all times. On the other side of the bones lay a pile of old books. If the characters search the books, they find a leather-bound report written by the Watchful Order of Magists and Protectors chronicling the Shadowdusk family's descent into madness.

Sounds. The bones constantly clack and grind and roll down the pile.

Shadowdusk Report. The Shadowdusk family, like many other Waterdhavian noble lineages, made its fortune in trading and became famous for sponsoring and then leading expeditions into Undermountain. One of the items they recovered was a tablet of black crystal that allowed contact with entities of the Far Realm. Xerrion Shadowdusk came to possess the tablet and used it to contact otherworldly beings in an attempt to destroy his

family's business rivals and political enemies. This contact drove Xerrion mad, and it wasn't long before the madness spread to other members of the Shadowdusk family and came into public view. As the family's behavior grew more bizarre, local broadsheets circulated rumors that the Shadowdusks had been replaced by aberrant horrors in human guise. Their ancestral villa, Shadowdusk Hold, was burned to the ground in the Year of the Harp (1355 DR). Xerrion and many other Shadowdusks retreated to Undermountain where they could treat with Far Realm horrors in private. The report freely admits the fire was started by the Watchful Order.

SCENE C2: GIBBERING MOUTHER ROOM

The room is warped, but not with the same Far Realm mutations as previous rooms. This one looks more melted in spots, as if the stone was liquefied and then hardened again. There are Qualith etchings on the walls.

AREA INFORMATION

This area has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The warped room is about 30 feet in diameter. The characters see a hallway directly across from where they enter.

Sounds. Disgusting squishes noises and wet breathing fills the room, accompanied by an occasional moan or wail.

Qualith Etchings. If the characters read the Qualith etchings on the walls (see **Reading Qualith, Episode 2, Scene A** or use the *plate armor of etherealness*), they learn how the Shadowdusk family's motto used to be "No secrets without truth." After the family's fall, its motto changed to "We do not fear the darkness." The family's crest is a lit torch with three embers rising from the flame, set against a purple background. In the wake of the family's descent into Undermountain and madness, this crest has been literally turned upside down, so that the torch flame points downward.

CREATURES/NPCs

Two **gibbering mouters** block the way out. They are amorphous masses of mouths and eyes that propel themselves by oozing forward, fastening several mouths to the ground and pulling their bulk behind.

Objectives/Goals. The gibbering mouters are driven to devour. They are the result of Andras's foul experiments with Far Realm magic and were initially made from some of his former apprentices. Over time, the creatures grew larger by consuming adventurers and Andras's slaves who came within their reach.

PLAYING THE PILLARS (SCENE C2: GIBBERING MOUTHER ROOM)

Combat

The characters can't get around the gibbering mouters without them reaching the characters with their oozing tentacles made of mouths and eyes.

Exploration

The room is empty except for the creatures and the Qualith etchings.

Social

The gibbering mouters are the epitome of madness. If the characters try talking to them, the creatures only wail in agony or ecstasy, they can't tell which.



SCENE C3: NOTHIC ROOM

Another warped and pulsating room contains several tapestries and scrolls laying on the ground. Half-eaten corpses of mutated rats and other star spawn are strewn in the corners.

AREA INFORMATION

This area has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The room is about 30 feet in diameter. There are no other doors or exits except the one through which the characters entered.

Sounds. The nothics in the corner chitter to each other over the tapestries and scrolls.

CREATURES/NPCs

Eight **nothics** are gathered around the tattered tapestries and scrolls.

Objectives/Goals. The nothics are the former apprentices of Andras Shadowdusk. He used them as practice while combining the secrets of undeath with Far Realm mutations. However, they remember nothing of their former lives except a vague recognition of the tapestries and scrolls on the floor that they once studied.

What Do They Know? The nothics are aware of the Far Realm fissure, that Andras Shadowdusk is a lich, and that his lair is beyond the fissure room.

SCENE D: THE FISSURE

The characters find a fissure in reality that leads to the Far Realm.

AREA INFORMATION

The area has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The room is about 50 feet in diameter and about 20 feet high. Pink and purple ooze covers the floor. On top of it lay the rotting tentacles and carcasses of unknown horrors that had clawed their way out of the fissure but either couldn't survive here or were half-eaten by something else.

Lighting. The room pulsates with a dark purple light emanating from the fissure.

Far Realm Fissure. The fissure floats in the middle of the room looking like a gob of ink dropped into a glass of water. Black tendrils snake out from it and then

PLAYING THE PILLARS (SCENE C3: NOTHIC ROOM)

Combat

The nothics are startled by the characters, but don't attack them unless the characters attack first.

Exploration

If the characters succeed on a DC 16 Intelligence (History) check, they can decipher the tapestries and scrolls. The tapestries show Waterdeep, the Shadowdusk family (normal and mutated), and Ghaunadar (That Which Lurks). The scrolls are treatises on human sacrifice, necromancy, and Far Realm aberrations.

Social

If the characters succeed on a DC 18 Charisma (Persuasion or Intimidation) check, the nothics tell them—in between their mad ravings and wet grunts—about the Far Realm fissure (Scene D), that Andras is a lich, and that his lair (Scene E) is just past the fissure room.

PLAYING THE PILLARS (SCENE D: THE FISSURE)

Combat

The star spawn manglers drop from the ceiling and attack as soon as all the characters enter the room.

Exploration

The characters can find the phylactery sword hilt by poking through the rotting tentacles and succeeding on a DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check. A successful DC 20 Intelligence (Arcana) check tells the characters the sword hilt is a lich phylactery.

Social

Encourage role-playing if any characters succumb to a short-term madness condition after failing their DC 10 Wisdom saves.

slowly retreat. Any creature not native to the Far Realm that starts its turn in the room must succeed on a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw or suffer a random short-term madness (see **Appendix 9**). No acts by the characters can seal the fissure—it's simply beyond the capabilities of mortal creatures.

Phylactery of Andras. Andras Shadowdusk's phylactery is the hilt of a paladin's holy sword that he broke during one of his last battles before becoming a lich. He loved the blasphemy of taking something so holy and corrupting it with his dark soul. He keeps his phylactery close to the fissure, which he sees as the source of his power and his connection to Berlain. The hilt is buried within the rotting tentacles of a Far Realm aberration directly beneath the fissure. The hilt can only be damaged or destroyed by the reformed blade of that paladin's holy sword.

CREATURES/NPCs

Five **star spawn manglers** inhabit the room—low-slung, creeping horrors with multiple gangly arms.

Objectives/Goals. The star spawn manglers were summoned by Andras Shadowdusk for guard duty over the fissure.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak or Weak:** Remove three **star spawn manglers**.
- **Strong or Very Strong:** Add two **star spawn manglers**.

SCENE E: LAIR OF ANDRAS

SHADOWDUSK

The characters find the mad lich, Andras Shadowdusk, in his lair. The room has somewhat normal architecture, though spidery veins of Far Realm blackness creep along all four walls and the floor. Numerous tables are arranged haphazardly throughout the room, each containing piles of scrolls, maps, magical components, and tools.

AREA INFORMATION

The area has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The spidery Far Realm veins congeal into pure blackness at the top of the 50-foot diameter room's domed ceiling 20 feet overhead. Crude star constellations and planetary alignments cover the dome. Characters who succeed on a DC 20 Intelligence (Arcana) check notice that the planetary alignments depicted occur in 500 years.

Lighting. The black, Far Realm veins pulse and shift between purple, pink, and green lights—shedding dim light throughout the room. On the domed ceiling, the constellations and planets slowly blink like eyes with a sickly white light.

Battle Plans. The tables contain maps with plans to attack Ahghairon's Tower with poems to Berlain scribbled in the margins. The plans say the Tower's destruction is necessary, but are clearly doomed to failure. They indicate that Andras appreciates "Blackcloak" telling him about the tower in exchange for making Artor Morlin miserable in Skullport.

Secret Door. A secret door is built into the east wall and opens into a hallway leading to tier 3 of Shadowdusk Hold (see *Dungeon of the Mad Mage*). The door is virtually seamless, and can only be opened by the trigger built into a small hole in the center of the domed ceiling.

CREATURES/NPCs

Andras Shadowdusk is here, his lips curled into a smile—exposing rotting teeth.

Objectives/Goals. Andras wants to kill the characters so he can turn them into shadow assassins for the army he's building to attack Ahghairon's Tower. In addition to his attack, he also:

- Sends five **flesh golems** lurching toward the characters. Their heads are crudely sculpted to look like Berlain before she mutated, but their bodies are stitched up muscles and limbs from various species held captive in the laboratory (**Episode 2, Scene D**).
- The **spectral apparitions** that were previously harmless now become deadly, attacking the characters during a "Lair Action" (see *Monster Manual* for details).
- The Far Realm madness causes Andras to have conversations with the whispers in his mind. At the start of his turns, he reveals each action he's about to take as though speaking to Berlain.

What Does He Know? Andras has learned from Halaster that the first Unmasked Lord of Waterdeep, the great archmage Ahghairon, still lives and is holed up in Ahghairon's Tower. Andras fears that Ahghairon is the only person capable of sealing the Far Realm rift, so he plans to destroy the Tower with his undead aberrations.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak or Weak:** Remove four **flesh golems**.
- **Strong or Very Strong:** Add two **shadow assassins**.

PLAYING THE PILLARS (SCENE E: LAIR OF ANDRAS SHADOWDUSK)

Combat

Andras welcomes them with a rictus smile. He says in a gravelly voice that his apparitions have monitored their progress and he is impressed with their strength. "You will make excellent shadow assassins in my army. But, of course, you must first die. Let us begin." Then he attacks.

Exploration

A successful DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals the secret door and the means by which to open it. The only way to reach the trigger is with *mage hand* or a thin pole (the hole is too small for a human hand to fit).

Social

Encourage role-playing if any characters succumb to a short-term madness condition after failing their DC 10 Wisdom saves in the fissure room.



WRAP-UP

After defeating Andras and discovering his plans to attack Ahghairon's Tower, the characters may return to the Tempted Paladin. Or, if they haven't already done so, they can complete **Bonus Objective B** on their way out.

When the characters return to the Tempted Paladin, they can report to Artor Morlin what they found. He appears angry and frustrated with the news. He tells the characters he will think on this, but orders them to remain in Skullport, for he may have use for them soon.

If the characters completed **Bonus Objective B**, Artor is none too happy about a stream of "grotesques" stomping around outside his tavern, especially since not even his vampire spawn thought they were appetizing enough to eat. He tells the characters that freeing the prisoners was a waste of his time and that they've earned a red mark in their ledgers. One more and he will make them wish they were Shadowdusk experiments before he's done with them.

ADVENTURE REWARDS

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

ADVANCEMENT AND TREASURE

CHECKPOINTS

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

- **Story Objective A:** Clear the first level of the Hold.
- **Story Objective B:** Find the source of the Far Realm taint and a clue to Ahghairon's Tower.

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

- **Bonus Objective A:** Obtain the map of the Hold.
- **Bonus Objective B:** Free the prisoners and slaves.

PLAYER REWARDS

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

MAGIC ITEM UNLOCK

Characters completing the adventure unlock:

Plate Armor of Ethereality. This armor has a holy symbol of Shar forged into the breastplate. While you wear it, you can speak and understand Qualith. See **Appendix 7**.

DUNGEON MASTER REWARDS

In exchange for running this adventure, you earn advancement and treasure checkpoints as though you played the adventure, but none of the adventure's player rewards.

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

APPENDIX 1: LOCATIONS & NPCs

The following NPCs and locations feature prominently in this adventure.

- **Andras Shadowdusk (AN-dras SHA-dow-dusk).**

Andras Shadowdusk is a relatively new lich who is corrupted by Far Realm madness. Years ago he fell in love with his younger cousin Berlain and proposed marriage, even though he was old enough to be her father. When she rebuffed his offer, Andras became a lich because he believed it was the only way he could make Berlain love him. He recently moved to a corner of Shadowdusk Hold, despite the Far Realm taint, so he could be closer to her. Found in **Episode 3**.

Personality: For Berlain. Everything. Always.

Ideal: For Berlain. Everything. Always.

Bond: For Berlain. Everything. Always.

Flaw: Is it mad to turn oneself into a lich and submit to the Elder Gods of the Far Realm in order to court a beautiful woman? No. That is love.

- **Artor Morlin (AR-tor MOR-lin).** A male vampire and one of the Masked Lords of Waterdeep. Also known as the Baron of Blood. Very few have this knowledge. Found in **Episode 1**.

Personality: I am wary and would rather observe my foes or send my minions and lackeys to deal with threats than handle them on my own.

Ideal: Waterdeep is my personal hunting ground, and I brook no challenges from other vampires.

Bond: I will keep my hunting to criminals and other undesirables so long as the other Masked Lords leave me alone.

Flaw: If I must fight, my bloodlust consumes me and exposes my vampiric desires.

- **Eldeth Dankil (el-DETH dan-KEEL).** A female duergar who pleads with the adventurers to rescue her fellow prisoners and slaves from Andras Shadowdusk's "experiments" prison. She and her brother were exiled by her clan for secretly worshipping Moradin. Found in **Bonus Objective B**.

Personality: I am a heretic among my people for committing the sin of acknowledging Moradin as the All-Father.

Ideal: I must exemplify Moradin's grace by rescuing the Shadowdusk prisoners and slaves.

Bond: My younger brother is all the family I have. Our faith will keep us strong.

Flaw: Once I pick a goal, I'm obsessed with it to the detriment of everything else in my life.

- **Oleander and Will (o-lee-AN-der).** Strongheart halflings who own a map shop in Skullport called the

Sword and Sextant. They are eager to procure accurate maps of Undermountain. Found in **Bonus Objective A**.

Personalities: This is a tough town and halflings need to be even tougher to survive.

Ideal: Maps are the by-product of civilization, and we bring civilization to Undermountain.

Bond: Nobody pushes us around without a fight. Nobody.

Flaw: We always assume our customers are trying to rob us. Because they usually are.

- **Shadowdusk Hold.** Home to the Shadowdusks of Undermountain, a formerly great family of Waterdeep that fell to evil and madness. It has become a place where the Shadowdusks can treat with Far Realm horrors away from the prying eyes of other Waterdavians.

Personality: Our architecture ranges from an elegant family manor to glorious Far Realm corruption.

Ideal: We do not fear the darkness.

Bond: All are welcome within our halls. Especially after death.

Flaw: We don't see as many experiments like we used to. Er, we mean guests.

- **Skullport.** A grim, cutthroat outpost of civilization in Undermountain. The town has three levels: a lower level, a middle level, and a top level. Located in level 3 of Undermountain, it can be reached by the underground River Sargauth.

Personality: Few souls on the surface know how to reach us, making any talk of Skullport akin to a rumor, or a warning—which is just how we like it.

Ideal: All hail Xanathar, who has turned me from a forlorn settlement into a haven for criminals!

Bond: Adventurers can find food, drink, shelter, and supplies here—or a quick death, if they antagonize the locals.

Flaw: Few folk have permanent residences, and most of the local businesses are presently shut down.

This appendix details monsters that are encountered in this adventure.



APPENDIX 2: CREATURE STATISTICS

This appendix details monsters that are encountered in this adventure.

ANDRAS SHADOWDUSK (LICH)

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 135 (18d8 + 54)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Con +10, Int +12, Wis +9

Skills Arcana +18, History +12, Insight +9, Perception +9

Damage Resistances cold, lightning, necrotic

Damage Immunities poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned

Senses truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 19

Languages Common plus up to five other languages

Challenge 21 (33,000 XP)

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

Rejuvenation. If it has a phylactery, a destroyed lich gains a new body in 1d10 days, regaining all its hit points and becoming active again. The new body appears within 5 feet of the phylactery.

Spellcasting. The lich is an 18th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 20, +12 to hit with spell attacks). The lich has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *mage hand*, *prestidigitation*, *ray of frost*

1st level (4 slots): *detect magic*, *magic missile*, *shield*, *thunderwave*
2nd level (3 slots): *detect thoughts*, *invisibility*, *Melf's acid arrow*,
mirror image

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

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

5th level (3 slots): *cloudkill*, *scrying*

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

7th level (1 slot): *finger of death*, *plane shift*

8th level (1 slot): *dominate monster*, *power word stun*

9th level (1 slot): *power word kill*

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

ACTIONS

Paralyzing Touch. *Melee Spell Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 10 (3d6) cold damage. The target must succeed on a DC 18 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.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

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

Cantrip. The lich casts a cantrip.

Paralyzing Touch (Costs 2 Actions). The lich uses its Paralyzing Touch.

Frightening Gaze (Costs 2 Actions). The lich fixes its gaze on one creature it can see within 10 feet of it. The target must succeed on a DC 18 Wisdom saving throw against this magic or become frightened for 1 minute. The frightened target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a target's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the target is immune to the lich's gaze for the next 24 hours.

Disrupt Life (Costs 3 Actions). Each living creature within 20 feet of the lich must make a DC 18 Constitution saving throw against this magic, taking 21 (6d6) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

BEHOLDER ZOMBIE

Large undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 93 (11d10 + 33)

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

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

Saving Throws Wis +2

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned, prone

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages understands Deep Speech and Undercommon but can't speak

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

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

ACTIONS

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

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

1. **Paralyzing Ray.** The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

2. **Fear Ray.** The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

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

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

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

BONECLAW

Large undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 127 (17d10 + 34)

Speed 40 ft.

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

Saving Throws Dex +7, Con +6, Wis +6

Damage Immunities cold, necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from non-magical attacks

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages Common plus the main language of its master

Challenge 12 (8,400 XP)

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

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The boneclaw makes two claw attacks.

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

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

The boneclaw then magically teleports up to 60 feet to an unoccupied space it can see. It can bring one creature it's grappling, teleporting that creature to an unoccupied space it can see within 5 feet of its destination. The destination spaces of this teleportation must be in dim light or darkness.

REACTIONS

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

CADAVER COLLECTOR

Large construct, lawful evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 189 (18d10+90)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+5)	14 (+2)	20 (+5)	5 (-3)	11 (+0)	8 (-1)

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

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

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages understands all languages but can't speak

Challenge 14 (11,500 XP)

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

Summon Specters (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). As a bonus action, the cadaver collector calls up the enslaved spirits of those it has slain; 1d6 specters (without Sunlight Sensitivity) arise in unoccupied spaces within 15 feet of the cadaver collector. The specters act right after the cadaver collector on the same initiative count and fight until they're destroyed. They disappear when the cadaver collector is destroyed.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The cadaver collector makes two slam attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (3d8 + 5) bludgeoning damage plus 16 (3d10) necrotic damage.

Paralyzing Breath (Recharge 5-6). The cadaver collector releases paralyzing gas in a 30-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a successful DC 18 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed for 1 minute. A paralyzed creature repeats the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself with a success.

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 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 (1d4) bludgeoning damage.

DEATH SLAAD

Medium aberration (shapechanger), chaotic evil

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 170 (20d8 + 80)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	15 (+2)	19 (+4)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)

Skills Arcana +6, Perception +8

Damage Resistances acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder

Senses blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 18

Languages Slaad, telepathy 60 ft.

Challenge 10 (5,900 XP)

Shapechanger. The slaad can use its action to polymorph into a Small or Medium humanoid, or back into its true form. Its statistics, other than its size, 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.

Innate Spellcasting. The slaad's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). The slaad can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *detect magic*, *detect thoughts*, *invisibility* (self only), *mage hand*, *major image*

2/day each: *fear*, *fireball*, *fly*, *tongues*

1/day each: *cloudkill*, *plane shift*

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

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

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The slaad makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its claws or greatsword.

Bite (Slaad Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 + 5) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) necrotic damage.

Claws (Slaad Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d10 + 5) slashing damage plus 7 (2d6) necrotic damage.

Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6 + 5) slashing damage plus 7 (2d6) necrotic damage.

DEATHLOCK

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 12 (15 With Mage Armor)

Hit Points 36 (8d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Int +4, Cha +5

Skills Arcana +4, History +4

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

Damage Immunities Poison

Condition Immunities Exhaustion, Poisoned

Senses Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 11

Languages the languages it knew in life

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

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

At will: *detect magic*, *disguise self*, *mage armor*

Spellcasting. The deathlock is a 5th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). It regains its expended spell slots when it finishes a short or long rest. It knows the following warlock spells:

Cantrips (at will): *chill touch*, *eldritch blast*, *mage hand*

1st–3rd level (2 3rd-level slots): *arms of Hadar*, *dispel magic*, *hold person*, *hunger of Hadar*, *invisibility*, *spider climb*

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

ACTIONS

Deathly Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) necrotic damage.

DEATHLOCK WIGHT

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 12 (15 With Mage Armor)

Hit Points 37 (5d8+15)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Wis +4

Skills Arcana +3, Perception +4

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

Damage Immunities Poison

Condition Immunities Exhaustion, Poisoned

Senses Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 14

Languages the languages it knew in life

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

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

At will: *detect magic*, *disguise self*, *mage armor*

1/day each: *fear*, *hold person*, *misty step*

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The wight attacks twice with Grave Bolt.

Grave Bolt. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +5 to hit, range 120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) necrotic damage.

Life Drain. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) necrotic damage. The target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

A humanoid slain by this attack rises 24 hours later as a zombie under the wight's control, unless the humanoid is restored to life or its body is destroyed. The wight can have no more than twelve zombies under its control at one time.

GIBBERING MOUTHER

Medium aberration, neutral

Armor Class 9

Hit Points 67 (9d8 + 27)

Speed 10 ft., swim 10 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	8 (-1)	16 (+3)	3 (-4)	10 (+0)	6 (-2)

Condition Immunities prone

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages —

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Aberrant Ground. The ground in a 10-foot radius around the mouter is doughlike difficult terrain. Each creature that starts its turn in that area must succeed on a DC 10 Strength saving throw or have its speed reduced to 0 until the start of its next turn.

Gibbering. The mouter babbles incoherently while it can see any creature and isn't incapacitated. Each creature that starts its turn within 20 feet of the mouter and can hear the gibbering must succeed on a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw. On a failure, the creature can't take reactions until the start of its next turn and rolls a d8 to determine what it does during its turn. On a 1 to 4, the creature does nothing. On a 5 or 6, the creature takes no action or bonus action and uses all its movement to move in a randomly determined direction. On a 7 or 8, the creature makes a melee attack against a randomly determined creature within its reach or does nothing if it can't make such an attack.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The gibbering mouter makes one bite attack and, if it can, uses its Blinding Spittle.

Bites. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 17 (5d6) piercing damage. If the target is Medium or smaller, it must succeed on a DC 10 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone. If the target is killed by this damage, it is absorbed into the mouter.

Blinding Spittle (Recharge 5–6). The mouter spits a chemical glob at a point it can see within 15 feet of it. The glob explodes in a blinding flash of light on impact. Each creature within 5 feet of the flash must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or be blinded until the end of the mouter's next turn.

GITHYANKI GISH

Medium humanoid (gith), lawful evil

Armor Class 17 (half plate)

Hit Points 123 (19d8 + 38)

Speed 30 ft.

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

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

Skills Insight +6, Perception +6, Stealth +6

Senses passive Perception 16

Languages Gith, Common

Challenge 10 (5,900 XP)

Innate Spellcasting (Psionics). The githyanki's innate spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no components:

At will: *mage hand* (the hand is invisible)

3/day each: *jump*, *misty step*, *nondetection* (self only), *tongues*

1/day each: *plane shift*, *telekinesis*

Spellcasting. The githyanki is an 8th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). The githyanki has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *blade ward*, *light*, *message*, *true strike*

1st level (4 slots): *expeditious retreat*, *magic missile*, *sleep*, *thunderwave*

2nd level (3 slots): *blur*, *invisibility*, *levitate*

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

4th level (2 slots): *dimension door*

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The githyanki makes two longsword attacks.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage, or 8 (1d10 + 3) slashing damage if used with two hands, plus 18 (4d8) psychic damage.

GITHYANKI KNIGHT

Medium humanoid (gith), lawful evil

Armor Class 18 (plate)

Hit Points 91 (14d8 + 28)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Con +5, Int +5, Wis +5

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Gith

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Innate Spellcasting (Psionics). The githyanki's innate spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no components:

At will: *mage hand* (the hand is invisible)

3/day each: *jump*, *misty step*, *nondetection* (self only), *tongues*

1/day each: *plane shift*, *telekinesis*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The githyanki makes two silver greatsword attacks.

Silver Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d6 + 6) slashing damage plus 10 (3d6) psychic damage. This is a magic weapon attack. On a critical hit against a target in an astral body (as with the *astral projection* spell), the githyanki can cut the silvery cord that tethers the target to its material body, instead of dealing damage.

GITHYANKI WARRIOR

Medium humanoid (gith), lawful evil

Armor Class 17 (half plate)

Hit Points 49 (9d8 + 9)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Con +3, Int +3, Wis +3

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages Gith

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Innate Spellcasting (Psionics). The githyanki's innate spellcasting ability is Intelligence. It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no components:

At will: *mage hand* (the hand is invisible)

3/day each: *jump*, *misty step*, *nondetection* (self only)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The githyanki makes two greatsword attacks.

Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) slashing damage plus 7 (2d6) psychic damage.

GOLEM, FLESH

Medium construct, neutral

Armor Class 9

Hit Points 93 (11d8 + 44)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	9 (-1)	18 (+4)	6 (-2)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

Damage Immunities lightning, poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks not made with adamantite weapons

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

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

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

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Berserk. Whenever the golem starts its turn with 40 hit points or fewer, roll a d6. On a 6, the golem goes berserk. On each of its turns while berserk, the golem attacks the nearest creature it can see. If no creature is near enough to move to and attack, the golem attacks an object, with preference for an object smaller than itself. Once the golem goes berserk, it continues to do so until it is destroyed or regains all its hit points.

The golem's creator, if within 60 feet of the berserk golem, can try to calm it by speaking firmly and persuasively. The golem must be able to hear its creator, who must take an action to make a DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check. If the check succeeds, the golem ceases being berserk. If it takes damage while still at 40 hit points or fewer, the golem might go berserk again.

Aversion of Fire. If the golem takes fire damage, it has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks until the end of its next turn.

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

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

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

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The golem makes two slam attacks.

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

GREATER ZOMBIE

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 97 (13d8 + 39)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Wis +1

Damage Resistances cold, necrotic

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8

Languages understands the languages it knew in life but can't speak

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

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

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The zombie makes two melee attacks.

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

KROTHUS (MAGE)

Medium humanoid (human), lawful evil

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)

Hit Points 40 (9d8)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Int +6, Wis +4

Skills Arcana +6, History +6

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages Common, Undercommon, Deep Speech, Dwarvish

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

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

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

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

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

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

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

5th level (1 slot): *teleportation circle*

ACTIONS

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

NOTHIC

Medium aberration, neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 45 (6d8 + 18)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)

Skills Arcana +3, Insight +4, Perception +2, Stealth +5

Senses truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Undercommon

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Keen Sight. The nothic has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The nothic makes two claw attacks.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) slashing damage.

Rotting Gaze. The nothic targets one creature it can see within 30 feet of it. The target must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw against this magic or take 10 (3d6) necrotic damage.

Weird Insight. The nothic targets one creature it can see within 30 feet of it. The target must contest its Charisma (Deception) check against the nothic's Wisdom (Insight) check. If the nothic wins, it magically learns one fact or secret about the target. The target automatically wins if it is immune to being charmed.

SHADOW ASSASSIN

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 78 (12d8 + 24)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	19 (+4)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Dex +8, Int +5

Skills Perception +9, Stealth +12

Damage Vulnerabilities radiant

Damage Resistances acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison

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

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 19

Languages understands the languages it knew in life but can't speak

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Amorphous. The assassin can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

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

Sunlight Weakness. While in sunlight, the assassin has disadvantage on attack rolls, ability checks, and saving throws.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The assassin makes two Shadow Blade attacks.

Shadow Blade. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) necrotic damage. Unless the target is immune to necrotic damage, the target's Strength score is reduced by 1d4 each time it is hit by this attack. The target dies if its Strength is reduced to 0. The reduction lasts until the target finishes a short or long rest.

If a non-evil humanoid dies from this attack, a shadow (see the *Monster Manual*) rises from the corpse 1d4 hours later.

STAR SPAWN LARVA MAGE

Medium aberration, chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 168 (16d8 + 96)

Speed 30 ft.

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

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

Skills Perception +6

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

Damage Immunities psychic

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

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages Deep Speech

Challenge 16 (15,000 XP)

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

At will: *eldritch blast* (3 beams, +3 bonus to each damage roll), *minor illusion*

3/day: *dominate monster*

1/day: *circle of death*

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

ACTIONS

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target.

Hit: 7 (1d8 + 3) bludgeoning damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 19 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the end of its next turn.

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

REACTIONS

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

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

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

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

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

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

STAR SPAWN MANGLER

Medium aberration, chaotic evil

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 71 (13d8 + 13)

Speed 40 ft., climb 40 ft.

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

Saving Throws Dex +7, Con +4

Skills Stealth +7

Damage Resistances cold

Damage Immunities psychic

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, prone

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Deep Speech

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

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

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The mangler makes two claw attacks.

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

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

VAMPIRE SPAWN

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 82 (11d8 + 33)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Dex +6, Wis +3

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +6

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

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages the languages it knew in life

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Regeneration. The vampire regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn if it has at least 1 hit point and isn't in sunlight or running water. If the vampire takes radiant damage or damage from holy water, this trait doesn't function at the start of the vampire's next turn.

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

Vampire Weaknesses. The vampire has the following flaws:

Forbiddance. The vampire can't enter a residence without an invitation from one of the occupants.

Harmed by Running Water. The vampire takes 20 acid damage when it ends its turn in running water.

Stake to the Heart. The vampire is destroyed if a piercing weapon made of wood is driven into its heart while it is incapacitated in its resting place.

Sunlight Hypersensitivity. The vampire takes 20 radiant damage when it starts its turn in sunlight. While in sunlight, it has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The vampire makes two attacks, only one of which can be a bite attack.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 8 (2d4 + 3) slashing damage. Instead of dealing damage, the vampire can grapple the target (escape DC 13).

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one willing creature, or a creature that is grappled by the vampire, incapacitated, or restrained. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) necrotic damage. The target's hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the necrotic damage taken, and the vampire regains hit points equal to that amount. The reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

WERERAT

Medium humanoid (human, shapechanger), lawful evil

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 33 (6d8 + 6)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Perception +2, Stealth +4

Damage Immunities bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks not made with silvered weapons

Senses darkvision 60 ft. (rat form only), passive Perception 12

Languages Common (can't speak in rat form)

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Shapechanger. The wererat can use its action to polymorph into a rat-humanoid hybrid or into a giant rat, or back into its true form, which is humanoid. Its statistics, other than its size, 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.

Keen Smell. The wererat has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

ACTIONS

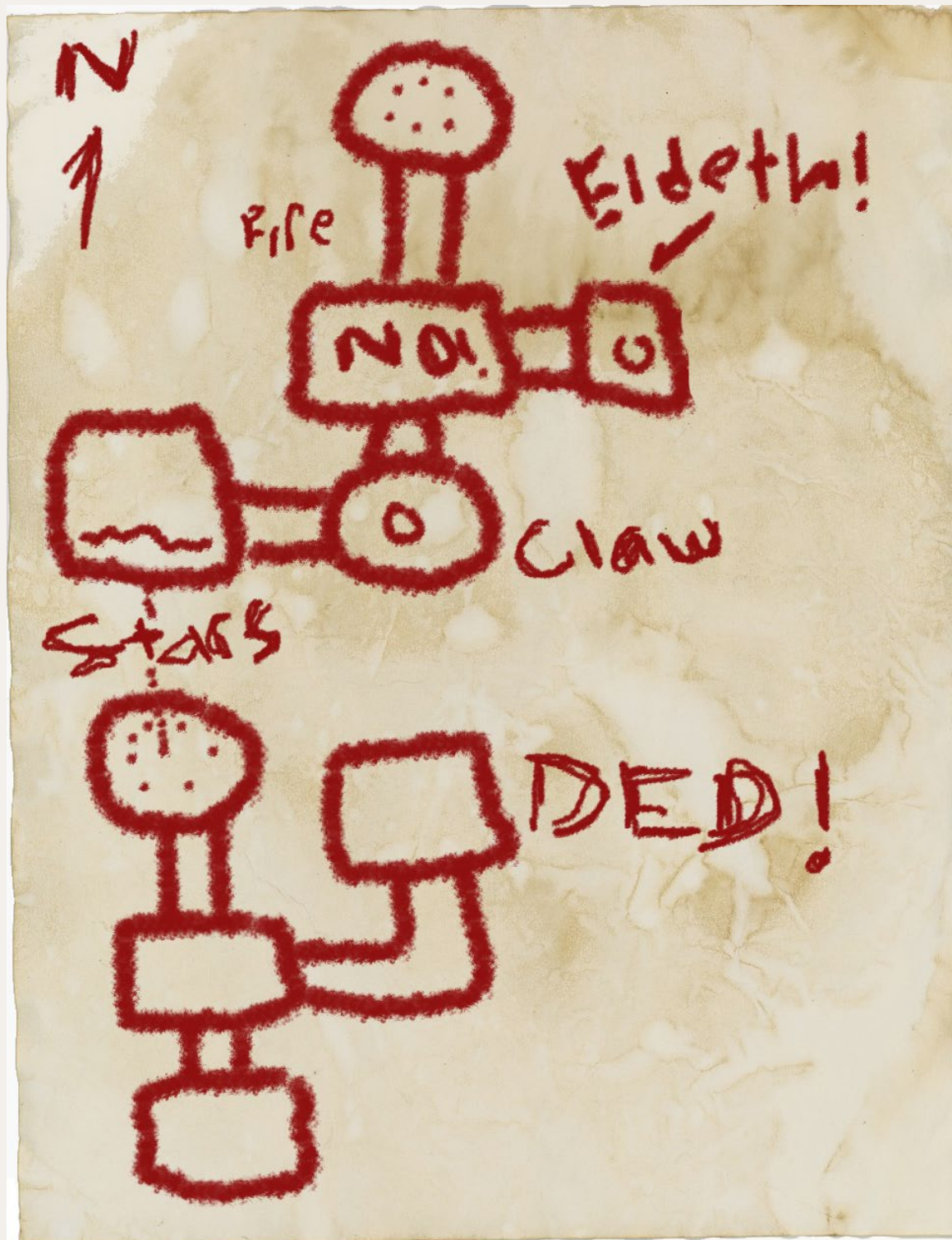
Multiattack (Humanoid or Hybrid Form Only). The wererat makes two attacks, only one of which can be a bite.

Bite (Rat or Hybrid Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage. If the target is a humanoid, it must succeed on a DC 11 Constitution saving throw or be cursed with wererat lycanthropy.

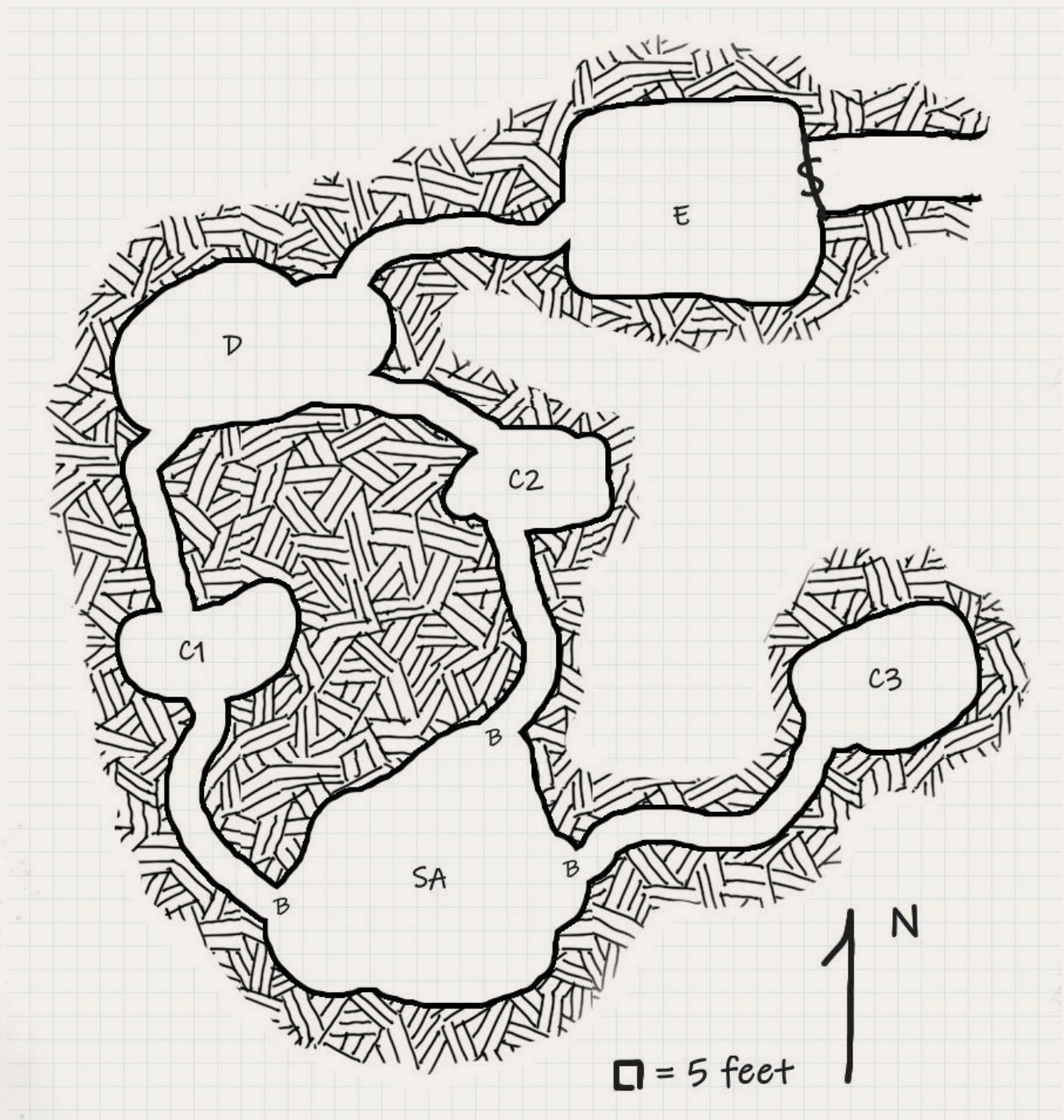
Shortsword (Humanoid or Hybrid Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

Hand Crossbow (Humanoid or Hybrid Form Only). *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

APPENDIX 3: SHADOWDUSK HOLD FROM OLEANDER AND WILL



APPENDIX 4: LAIR OF ANDRAS MAP



APPENDIX 5: FIND THE MAP (BONUS OBJECTIVE A)

Estimated Duration: 60 minutes

SCENE A: THE SWORD AND SEXTANT

Artor points the characters to the Sword and Sextant where two strongheart halflings deal in maps of Undermountain. While there, they find some deadly customers arguing with the halflings.

PREREQUISITES

This Bonus Objective occurs after the characters accept the **Call to Action** in **Episode 1**. It can't be pursued once the characters start **Episode 2**.

OBJECTIVES

Obtaining a map of the portions of Shadowdusk Hold that Artor wants explored is **Bonus Objective A**.

AREA INFORMATION

This area has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The shop is 20 feet wide, 50 feet long, and shaped like a crooked finger.

Lighting. Lanterns hang from pegs on the ceiling, shedding bright orange glow throughout the room.

Shelves & Tables. The walls are lined floor-to-ceiling with shelves—each crammed full of rolled scrolls, leather books, and small boxes. Tables are arranged throughout the room and contain more stacks of documents. None of the shelves or tables have labels.

CREATURES/NPCs

A **githyanki knight** and six **githyanki warriors** all wear necklaces of mummified mind flayer tentacles. Will and Oleander (halfling **commoners**) oversee the day-to-day at the Sword and Sextant.

Objectives/Goals. The githyanki knight demands that the halflings turn over any maps of mind flayer colonies within Undermountain. The halflings have no intention of doing so without first being paid.



What Do They Know? The githyanki are on a holy mission to root out mind flayers in Undermountain. This particular group of warriors is fresh out of their Undermountain crèche (see *Dungeon of the Mad Mage*) and arrived in Skullport by a small astral skiff that is parked off one of the catwalks in the middle level of Skullport. A **githyanki gish** and two more **githyanki warriors** are waiting for them on the skiff. The halflings carry daggers hidden in their coats and are adept at roguish sneak attacks. They ask for the characters' help in the hope that the battle enables them to escape through a secret trap door under one of their document tables.

PLAYING THE PILLARS (SCENE A: THE SWORD AND SEXTANT)

Combat

When the fighting starts, three githyanki warriors grab the halflings and run out of the shop while the knight and remaining warriors attack the characters.

Exploration

The halflings' filing system is incomprehensible to the characters. They could spend days searching the shop. They need the halflings to direct them to the map, if it exists.

Social

When the halflings see the characters enter they shop, they say they'll make it worth their while if they kick these githyanki scum out. The githyanki knight pauses if the characters try talking to him. But he only pauses a moment. He only speaks Gith and his holy mission takes priority over deals with mortals. He orders his warriors to attack.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak or Weak:** Remove four **githyanki warriors**.
- **Strong or Very Strong:** Add two **githyanki warriors**.

SCENE B: THE CHASE

The characters race out the door of the Sword and Sextant to chase the githyanki warriors and their halfling captives. By the time they exit the shop, the githyanki and halflings are nowhere to be seen.

AREA INFORMATION

The area has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The maze-like streets Skullport's lower level are made of deteriorating cobblestones and packed, haphazard buildings. The wooden stairs to the middle level are rotten, creaky, and shake with each step. The catwalks, made from the wood of old shipwrecks, are in the same shape as the stairs.

Lighting. An occasional torch born by a denizen of Skullport bobs along the street and the catwalks. There is no other light source.



COMPLICATIONS

Using the rules governing Chases in Chapter 8 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, start with the first complication below, then randomly determine as many others as you wish.

Chase Complication 1. About 50 feet to the left, a male **commoner** lays on the ground moaning. He tells the characters that someone shoved him from behind. He didn't see who since he went face-first into the cobblestone street (blood streams from his broken nose). He'll tell the characters which way he heard them run if someone heals his nose.

CHASE COMPLICATIONS

d6 Complication

- 1 A male **duergar** beggar sits in a door well with a blanket wrapped around him. If asked, he says nothing. A successful DC 15 Charisma (Intimidation or Persuasion) check convinces him to point a shaky hand to a narrow street on the right. Or a character tossing the duergar a coin automatically succeeds.
- 2 The road ends at a T-intersection where two female **drow** converse. If asked where the githyanki went, they offer information for a price of 50 gp. If the characters pay or if the characters succeed on a DC 15 Charisma (Intimidation or Persuasion) check, the drow point to the right (the correct direction). If the characters refuse or fail on the check, the drow motion angrily to the left. If the characters go left, they notice they've been had and lose the trail and suffer a level of exhaustion trying to catch up. If the characters return to the intersection, the drow are nowhere to be found.
- 3 Down a narrow alley, three **wererats** feast on the corpse of a goat—blocking the characters' path. The wererats attack the characters to protect their meal. The characters must succeed on a DC 15 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to dodge the wererats or take 7 (2d6) piercing damage.
- 4 While running along a precariously high catwalk with rotting, crumbling slats, each character must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check or fall through the catwalk to the ground 20 feet below, taking 7 (2d6) bludgeoning damage.
- 5 One of the **githyanki warriors** stayed behind to cover his allies' escape. If the characters succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity (Stealth) group check, they're able to sneak past him. Otherwise, he gives chase, and deals 7 (2d6 + 2) slashing damage and 7 (2d6) psychic damage to each character before they manage to give him the slip.
- 6 No complication

PLAYING THE PILLARS (SCENE B: THE CHASE)

Combat

Combat is unavoidable in the wererat and githyanki warrior complications, but optional in the others. The drow can put up a fight but attacking the commoner and duergar would be murder.

Exploration

The characters should be focused on chasing the githyanki. If they get distracted, say they hear angry halfling cries or the sounds of fighting just around the corner.

Social

Besides the wererats and githyanki warrior, the NPCs in each complication are willing to talk and negotiate.

SCENE C: THE ASTRAL SKIFF

The characters round a corner to find what looks like a flying boat floating at the end of the catwalk.

AREA INFORMATION

This area has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The catwalk leading to the skiff is 20 feet long.

Lighting. Lanterns aboard the skiff illuminate the vessel with a red light.

Astral Skiff. The astral skiff is 30 feet long and 10 feet wide. It's close enough to the end of the catwalk for any creature to step on board. The githyanki use it to travel to the Material Plane and Skullport.

CREATURES/NPCs

Five **githyanki warriors** occupy the skiff and are preparing for travel. They've bound the hands of Oleander and Will with rope and tossed them into a corner. One **githyanki gish** sits on the throne-like helm at the front of the skiff.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak or Weak:** Remove three **githyanki warriors**.
- **Strong or Very Strong:** Add two **githyanki warriors**.

WRAP-UP

After defeating the githyanki and/or searching the astral skiff, the skiff loses the psionic power keeping it afloat. It falters and then crashes to the lower level. All creatures must make a DC 12 Dexterity save. On success, they safely leap to the catwalk. On failure, they fall with the skiff and suffer 2d8 damage.

Will and Oleander are happy to give the characters the “duergar map” they seek...for the low, low price of 50 GP (“Hey, this is a tough town and we need to eat, too!”). They also accept as payment the Stardock maps and Stardock rod that the characters found on the skiff.

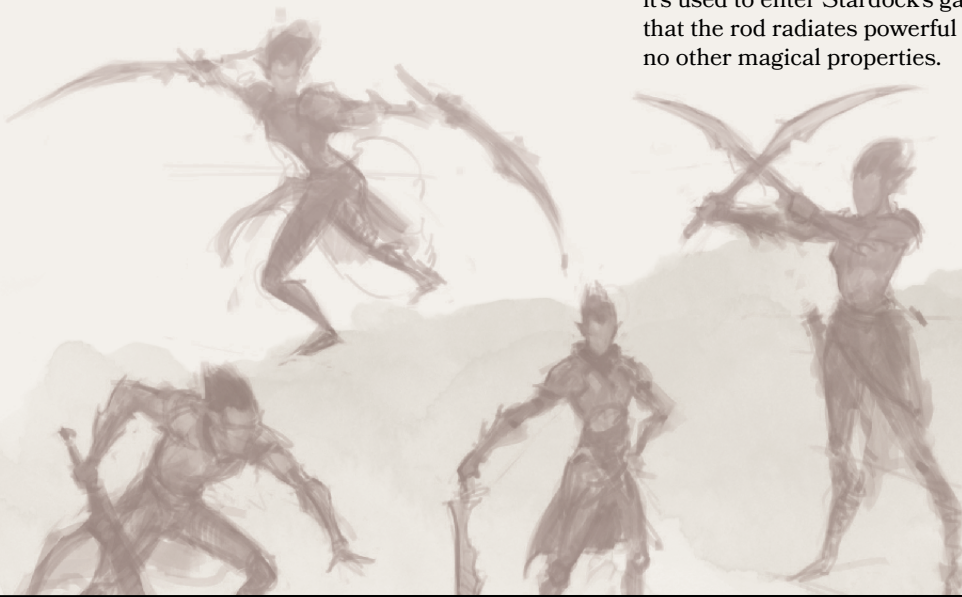
The halflings bring the characters back to their shop and retrieve the map from a high shelf. They explain that little is known about Shadowdusk Hold. This map is the only one they have. It came to them from a mad duergar who entered their shop two tendays ago. He claimed to have “escaped from the stars that haunt Shadowdusk Hold.” After giving them the map, the duergar left the shop, jumped into the River Sargauth, and was never seen again.

TREASURE & REWARDS

Map of Shadowdusk Hold. The map is crudely drawn on the dried, tan skin of a humanoid creature. It shows two sections separated by what looks like a portal gate. See **Appendix 3**.

Stardock Maps. The maps are drawn on vellum scrolls with a professional hand. See *Dungeon of the Mad Mage* for details.

Stardock Rod. A 1-foot-long black crystal rod. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (History) check reveals that it's used to enter Stardock's gates. *Detect magic* reveals that the rod radiates powerful conjuration magic but has no other magical properties.



PLAYING THE PILLARS (SCENE C: THE ASTRAL SKIFF)

Combat

The githyanki warriors and gish attack when they see the characters and fight to the death.

Exploration

If the characters search the skiff, a successful DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals maps of Stardock, the hollowed out asteroid the githyanki call home. They also find a Stardock Rod.

Social

The githyanki will fight to the death to complete their holy mission, and won't negotiate with the characters.

APPENDIX 6: BONUS OBJECTIVE B: PRISON BREAK (BONUS OBJECTIVE B)

Estimated Duration: 60 minutes

SCENE A: THE TELEPORTATION CIRCLE

Eldeth Dankil explains that the prison where the experiments are held is located in the basement of a building in Skullport's lower level ("*I know Skullport foundations when I see them,*" she says), but she doesn't know where. The only sure way to reach it is through a *teleportation circle* down the hall from the laboratory.

PREREQUISITES

This objective can only be pursued once the star spawn larva mage has been defeated in **Episode 2**, and the female duergar, Eldeth Dankil, rescued.



OBJECTIVE

Freeing the captives in the laboratory cells, and destroying the teleportation circle that enables the cadaver collector to obtain fresh subjects is **Bonus Objective B**.

AREA INFORMATION

The area has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The room is located down a dark 40-foot-long hallway from the laboratory in **Episode 2, Scene D**. The room itself is 20 square feet. The walls are covered in eerie, scrawled sigils that are painted the color of dried blood.

Teleportation Circle. The circle is 10 feet in diameter, occupies the center of the room, and is painted in the same blood color as the sigils on the wall. The circle's destination is the basement of an abandoned building in Skullport's lower level, eastern corner (see *Dungeon of the Mad Mage*).

The characters can destroy the *teleportation circle* with a *dispel magic* spell or by scrubbing away a portion of the painted circle. If the characters try destroying it, Eldeth pleads with them not to, for it's the only way they can reach the poor prisoners.

ELDETH AND KILDRAK

Eldeth and her brother Kildrak were captured from Skullport and enslaved to Andras's stone cutting crew. After months of torture and deprivation, Kildrak escaped through the gate in the Tempted Paladin's cellar before Artor moved in. But he couldn't bring himself to go back for his sister. The guilt drove him mad, so he drew a map of what he knew, gave it to Oleander and Will, and threw himself into the River Sargauth.

CREATURES/NPCs

A human **mage** named Krothus and six **flesh golems** occupy the room. Krothus' legs have been removed, and he hangs from a harness attached to the ceiling in the left corner. The flesh golems stand mutely next to Krothus.

PLAYING THE PILLARS (SCENE A: THE TELEPORTATION CIRCLE)

Combat

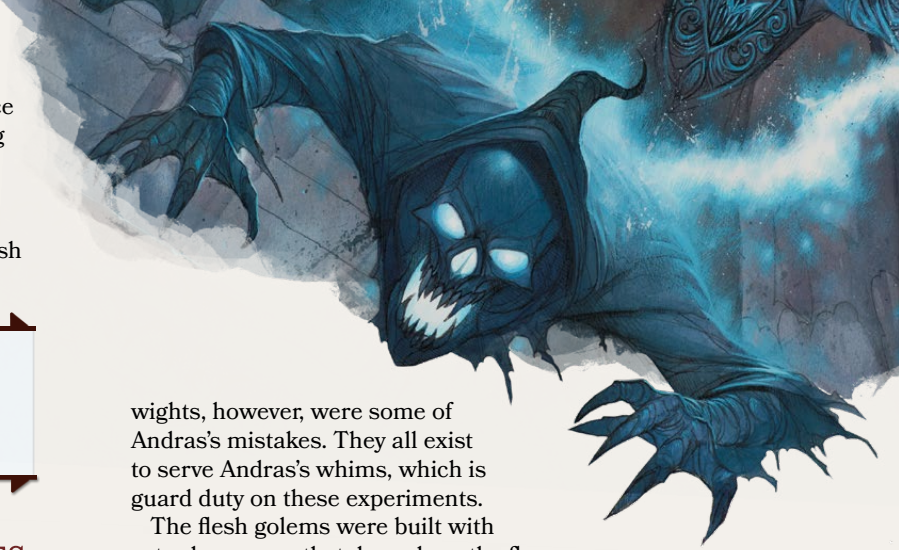
Krothus is fanatically devoted to protecting the *teleportation circle*. If the characters try destroying or dispelling it, he and his flesh golems attack.

Exploration

Astute characters may wonder why this *teleportation circle* works in Undermountain, given that Halaster has shut down such spells. This can be their first clue that Halaster has a hand in this part of Shadowdusk Hold.

Social

Krothus insanely babbles if the characters question him—pointing out his legs on the flesh golem, raving about the musical screams from the lab, and blessing Andras for giving him this task. He doesn't reveal Andras's plans, but activates the *teleportation circle* for the characters if they ask.



What Does He Know? Krothus is a former apprentice of Andras Shadowdusk and driven mad by the creeping Far Realm taint. He volunteered to be the mage that activates the *teleportation circle*. To ensure he never desired another task, he had his own legs removed by the star spawn larva mage. They're now used by the flesh golem next to him.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak or Weak:** Remove three **flesh golems**.
- **Strong or Very Strong:** Add two **flesh golems**.

SCENE B: THE EXPERIMENTS

Andras keeps his experiments and slaves in a large, nightmarish room of horrible moans and sickening smells. The room is located in the basement of an abandoned building in the eastern corner of Skullport's lower level.

AREA INFORMATION

This area has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The room is 80 square feet and 10 feet high. There are locked metal grates on the floor spaced every 5 feet. A stairway on the opposite side of the room leads up to a heavy wooden door that's locked. Beyond the door lies the streets of Skullport.

Lighting. A ball of white magical light about 2 feet in diameter floats near the ceiling, casting the prison in a cold, brutal light that flickers randomly.

Sounds & Smells. Anguished cries, insane laughter, and wet gurgles issue from the metal grates. The smell staggers the characters, and they must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution save or be poisoned for one turn.

Cells. There are 40 prison cells carved into the stone floor—each 5 feet on a side and covered by a metal grate and secured with a lock bar. The lock bar can be slid off the grate by anyone above the cell.

CREATURES/NPCs

The prison is guarded by two **deathlocks**, three **deathlock wights**, and two **flesh golems** with freakishly long arms.

Objectives/Goals. The deathlocks were former apprentices of Andras Shadowdusk who voluntarily allowed him to turn them. The apprentices who became

wights, however, were some of Andras's mistakes. They all exist to serve Andras's whims, which is guard duty on these experiments.

The flesh golems were built with extra-long arms that drag along the floor while they walk. These enable them to pull slaves and prisoners from each cell.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak or Weak:** Remove one **deathlock wight** and one **flesh golem**.
- **Strong or Very Strong:** Add two **deathlock wights**.

WRAP-UP

After winning the battle, the characters can release the prisoners by removing the lock bars. Each cell contains at least one creature, while some have two or three.

Eldith tells the characters which cells **not** to unlock because the mutated creatures are too dangerous to be released. If the characters release the mutated creatures anyway, they have a 50% chance of being attacked by a mutated **commoner**.

The characters can pick the lock of the heavy wooden door at the top of the stairs with thieves' tools and a successful DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check.

The Tempted Paladin is only a few blocks away, so the characters can return to Shadowdusk Hold through the cellar gate. The vampire spawn are still sitting in the same places listening to the same bard. They don't even look up as the characters pass by.

If the characters return to the *teleportation circle*, Krothus becomes enraged upon seeing them and screams, "*The deathlocks had one job!*" He and his flesh golems then attack the characters.

PLAYING THE PILLARS (SCENE B: THE EXPERIMENTS)

Combat

The deathlocks and flesh golems attack on sight. If the characters step on the metal grates, they have a 50% chance of being grappled by a mutated creature imprisoned there.

Exploration

If the characters search the room, all they find are putrid mounds of garbage and waste.

Social

The deathlocks and flesh golems do not speak to the characters and attack them on sight.

APPENDIX 7: MAGIC ITEMS UNLOCK

Characters completing this adventure's objective unlock this magic item. Once unlocked, the item may be purchased once using treasure checkpoints. Once this item has been purchased, it's no longer available unless later unlocked by other means.

PLATE ARMOR OF ETHEREALNESS

Armor (plate), legendary (requires attunement)

While you're wearing this armor, you can speak its command word as an action to gain the effect of the *etherealness* spell, which lasts for 10 minutes or until you remove the armor or use an action to speak the command word again. This property of the armor can't be used again until the next dawn. This item is found on **Magic Item Table I** in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

This armor has a holy symbol of Shar forged into the breastplate. It also looks dim and reflects light poorly. While you wear it, you can speak and understand Qualith without having to roll any checks or saves to avoid short-term madness.

APPENDIX 8: ELDER RUNES DECK

 ANARATH <i>Elder Rune of Protection and Sacrifice</i> Bane Effect: The target must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or it can't regain hit points until a <i>remove curse</i> or <i>greater restoration</i> spell is cast on it. Boon Effect: The target is immune to the blinded, charmed, deafened, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, and stunned conditions. In addition, the target stabilizes immediately when it drops to 0 hit points. This boon effect lasts for 24 hours.	 ANGRAS <i>Elder Rune of War</i> Bane Effect: The target must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or it gains vulnerability to all damage and a -2 penalty to death saving throws for 24 hours. Boon Effect: When the target hits with an attack, the target can turn that hit into a critical hit, after which this boon effect ends.	 HALASTER <i>Elder Rune of the Mad Mage</i> Bane Effect: The target must make a Constitution saving throw, taking 20d6 force damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. Boon Effect: The target recovers its expended spell slots of 6th level and lower. If the target has no spell slots to recover, a magical shield surrounds the target for 1 hour instead. This shield grants the target resistance to all damage and can't be dispelled, though contact with an antimagic field destroys it.
 KOROMBOS <i>Elder Rune of Chaos</i> Bane Effect: The target must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw or suffer the effect of a <i>confusion</i> spell with a duration of 1 minute. Boon Effect: When the target rolls damage, it can reroll any of the damage dice once. It must use the new rolls, after which this boon effect ends.	 LAEBOS <i>Elder Rune of Fire</i> Bane Effect: The target must make a Dexterity saving throw, taking 10d10 fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful save. Boon Effect: The target gains a pool of ten d6s. Up to two of these dice can be expended at a time and added to any damage roll the target makes when it hits with a weapon attack. The damage added by these dice is fire damage.	 LAMMATH <i>Elder Rune of Security</i> Bane Effect: For the next 24 hours, the target can't gain advantage on attack rolls, ability checks, or saving throws. Boon Effect: Once within the next 24 hours, the target can use its reaction to reduce the damage it takes from one source by 10d6.
 NCHASME <i>Elder Rune of Decision</i> Bane Effect: The target must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw or be incapacitated for 1 hour. While incapacitated in this way, the target gains the following personality flaw, which supersedes any opposing flaw: "I fundamentally disagree with everything anyone else says." Boon Effect: The target can cast the <i>augury</i> spell as an action three times, requiring no components and with no chance of a random reading.	 SAVAROS <i>Elder Rune of Goblkind</i> Bane Effect: All nonmagical coins and gems on the target's person vanish. Boon Effect: The rune magically summons a goblin (use the goblin stat block in the <i>Monster Manual</i>), which appears in an unoccupied space within 20 feet of the target. The goblin is rude to everyone except the target and obeys the target's commands. The goblin vanishes in a puff of smoke if it drops to 0 hit points.	 ULLATHAR <i>Elder Rune of Passage</i> Bane Effect: The target must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw or be restrained for 24 hours. Boon Effect: For the next 24 hours, the target gains the following benefits: • The effects of the <i>freedom of movement</i> spell • The ability to cast the <i>knock</i> spell at will, requiring no components

APPENDIX 9: MADNESS EFFECTS

SHORT-TERM MADNESS

d100	Effect (lasts 1d10 minutes)
01-20	The character retreats into his or her mind and becomes paralyzed. The effect ends if the character takes any damage.
21-30	The character becomes incapacitated and spends the duration screaming, laughing, or weeping.
31-40	The character becomes frightened and must use his or her action and movement each round to flee from the source of the fear.
41-50	The character begins babbling and is incapable of normal speech or spellcasting.
51-60	The character must use his or her action each round to attack the nearest creature.
61-70	The character experiences vivid hallucinations and has disadvantage on ability checks.
71-75	The character does whatever anyone tells him or her to do that isn't obviously self-destructive.
76-80	The character experiences an overpowering urge to eat something strange such as dirt, slime, or offal.
81-90	The character is stunned.
91-100	The character falls unconscious.

LONG-TERM MADNESS

d100	Effect (lasts 1d10 x 10 hours)
01-10	The character feels compelled to repeat a specific activity over and over, such as washing hands, touching things, praying, or counting coins.
11-20	The character experiences vivid hallucinations and has disadvantage on ability checks.
21-30	The character suffers extreme paranoia. The character has disadvantage on Wisdom and Charisma checks.
31-40	The character regards something (usually the source of madness) with intense revulsion, as if affected by the antipathy effect of the <i>antipathy/sympathy</i> spell.
41-45	The character experiences a powerful delusion. Choose a potion. The character imagines that he or she is under its effects.
46-55	The character becomes attached to a "lucky charm," such as a person or an object, and has disadvantage on attack rolls, ability checks, and saving throws while more than 30 feet from it.
56-65	The character is blinded (25%) or deafened (75%).
66-75	The character experiences uncontrollable tremors or tics, which impose disadvantage on attack rolls, ability checks, and saving throws that involve Strength or Dexterity.
76-85	The character suffers from partial amnesia. The character knows who he or she is and retains racial traits and class features, but doesn't recognize other people or remember anything that happened before the madness took effect.
86-90	Whenever the character takes damage, he or she must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or be affected as though he or she failed a saving throw against the <i>confusion</i> spell. The <i>confusion</i> effect lasts for 1 minute.
91-95	The character loses the ability to speak.
96-100	The character falls unconscious. No amount of jostling or damage can wake the character.

APPENDIX 10: DUNGEON MASTER TIPS

This adventure is designed for **three to seven 17th to 20th level characters** and is optimized for **five characters with an average party level (APL) of 18**. Characters outside this level range cannot participate in this adventure.

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<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 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

