



DARK • SUN™

C A M P A I G N S E T T I N G



Adventures in the Dead Lands

Adventures in the Dead Lands

An anthology of adventures from levels 3 to 18

Anthology Credits

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Prologue

It took 22 years to finish Secrets of the Dead Lands. It took over a year to finish Faces of the Dead Lands. The combined result of these 800+ pages was practically a campaign setting of its own, and we knew it would be an issue getting people to play in such an unfamiliar setting. So, to aid DMs and highlight the most interesting aspects of the Dead Lands sub-setting, we came together as a team and turned our best ideas into adventures for the region.

This anthology contains 13 adventures covering a wide range of different factions and geographical locations, providing a variety of ways for DMs and players to experience and interact with the Dead Lands in their campaigns.

Most of these adventures only scratch the surface of the factions and groups mentioned, and much potential for future use and development by DMs remains. But it is our hope that, at the very least, these adventures will help show what the characters and locations in the Dead Lands are really like and how else they could be used.

Enjoy!

- Jack Meyer

The Organization of this Book

The book's adventures are organized first by conceptual theme, then by level.

Group 1 – Paths into the Dead Lands features adventures similar to *The Emissary*, where the party starts outside of the Dead Lands, and then are introduced to or are brought into the Dead Lands by circumstances or a quest.

Group 2 – Trouble in the Dead Lands contains adventures that take a party that is already in or familiar with the Dead Lands, and gives them a reason to travel within the region.

Group 3 – Last Visits to the Dead Lands provides world-shaking adventures where high-level parties must achieve something that could profoundly change the region, or possibly even prove to be their last visit to the Dead Lands.

Group 4 – Tales of the Unbound is a series of adventures within the Dead Lands that are designed for use with undead PCs (see Appendix C “Playing as the Unbound”, page 504).

There is also **Group 5 – General Appendices** at the back. While every adventure has a set of specific appendices at its end, this last section of the book contains more general reference material and essential rules which potentially affect all adventures run in the region. There is also a section full of adventure hooks to help DMs with more ideas for Dead Lands adventuring.

While most of the adventures were written to be run however a DM wishes in a campaign, some of the adventures have been designed to be run in a particular sequence:

- **Tales of the Unbound:** Unbound and Unleashed, The Bait, Other Body Experiences, An Ancient Auction.
- **The Bugdeed Cycle:** A Fool's Errand of the Tohr-Kreen and A Mother's Plea

Other groupings of adventures are certainly possible, but may require extensive modifications to the adventures to further link them together.

The background is a dark, atmospheric scene. In the center, a bright, glowing orb of light is visible, surrounded by dark, gnarled tree branches and some red flowers. A silhouette of a person stands in the foreground, looking towards the orb. The overall mood is mysterious and ominous.

Group 1 – Paths into the Dead Lands



The Debt



A Dark Sun 3.5e adventure module for four 9th-level characters

The son of merchant chief Oğlast is gravely ill and may soon die. Oğlast needs truly exceptional heroes to repay a debt in the Dead Lands incurred long ago.

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Introduction

The Debt is a short D&D adventure for four 9th-level player characters (PCs). Consult the Scaling the Adventure sidebar for ways to modify the scenario for higher or lower levels of play.

This scenario is designed as an introduction to the Dead Lands. While it theoretically begins in Nibenay, it involves traveling to the Dead Lands, and can easily be placed in any Dark Sun game or begin in any City State. DMs are encouraged to adapt some of the details to their players and campaign.

Developer's notes

This adventure concept was an early suggestion by a member who was only with us for a brief period – Preserver3 (Jason Wills-Starin). On the face of it, it seemed a straightforward and almost obvious setup. But then Adam and Dylan worked their magic on it all, and we ended up with something that feels more like what a western adventure would look like if DMed by George Romero.

This was the second adventure we ever released for playtest, and it ran successfully at the first AthasCon to positive reviews. For those parties who didn't like the intrigue and stealth of The Emissary adventure in the Dead Lands Boxed Set, The Debt makes for an elegant alternative way to introduce adventuring parties to the Dead Lands. -JM

Preparation

You (the DM) will need the 3rd edition revised D&D core rulebooks, including the *Player's Handbook*, the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*, as well as the *Expanded Psionics Handbook*. This adventure also uses material from *Faces of the Dead Lands*, *Secrets of the Dead Lands*, *Terrors of the Dead Lands* and the *Dark Sun 3.5 conversion* rulebook from Athas.org, but all necessary rules are already included.

Adventure Background

The Oglast family are the descendants of five human brothers - undertakers that traveled with the Champion Wyan of Bodach during his attacks on the pixies of Small Home. They have since established a minor Merchant House of gem crafting psionics living in Nibenay.

As they were dealing with the bodies of those humans that died cleansing Small Home, the five brothers were the first to encounter the newly risen undead Small Homers. Most of the undertakers were killed, including four of the five Oglast brothers. To secure his escape, the fifth arranged a deal with the marauding spirits, accepting a curse that afflicts his family to this day.

Once a generation, the family must send at least four people wearing the funerary robes of their ancestors to make a pilgrimage to the mass graves on the hill of Small Home in the Dead Lands. There, the pilgrims must perform a ceremony appeasing the undead Small Homers and condemning the humans buried here. Should the pilgrimage not be made, four random members of the Oglast family will suffer the Curse (a wasting sickness).

Overview

The son of merchant chief Oglast is gravely ill and may soon die. Oglast needs truly exceptional heroes to repay a debt in the Dead Lands incurred long ago. The party must travel to the ruins of Small Home in the Dead Lands to perform a ceremony of appeasement but to get there, they will need to avoid the dangers of the desert and the undead terrors of the Dead Lands.

Adventure Hooks

The party need only come to Oglast for the adventure to begin. They might find themselves at his door for a variety of reasons:

- The PCs hear that the Oglasts require discrete and capable mercenaries for a delicate task.
- Oglast sends a messenger to contact the PCs directly, having heard of their past exploits.
- When looking for work (or a way to avoid the Nibinense authorities for a while), a mutual acquaintance sets up a meeting with Oglast.

Scaling the Adventure

The Debt is designed for a party of four 9th-level adventurers, but it can be easily modified to present an appropriate challenge for parties of different sizes or levels.

Consider adapting the adventure for PCs of average levels 7 to 11 by adding effective positive or negative levels to the creatures in each encounter to change their effective **Challenge Rating**. A creature takes the following penalties/bonuses for each positive/negative level it has gained:

+/-1 on all skill checks and ability checks.

+/-1 on attack rolls and saving throws.

+/-5 hit points.

+/-1 effective level (whenever the creature's level is used in a die roll or calculation, reduce it by one for each negative level). If the creature casts spells, she gains/loses one spell slot of her highest-level spells. (If she has more than one spell at her highest level, she chooses which she gains/loses.) In addition, when she next prepares spells or regains spell slots, she gets one more/less spell slot at her highest spell level. If the creature is a manifester, she gains/loses enough power points to manifest her highest-level power once.

Part I: A Family Matter

1) An Invitation (EL -)

Depending on the hook used, the PCs may or may not have already been in contact with Oglast. Regardless, the PCs encounter a messenger, who tells them he is to escort them to the House of Oglast, in the noble district.

Should they accept, they will be led through the city to the Oglast estate:

This plastered stone villa has seen better days: it's a substantial house and has been here for a very long time. They've made quite a fortune over the king's ages, but those fortunes are in decline.

When you are taken into the building, you are greeted in the entry hall by a middle-aged human man with an excessively wide grin and dressed in the manner

of a well-to-do merchant: a loose, brightly-colored linen shirt and trousers.

"Welcome to my humble home, fair heroes! I am Elder Magras Oglast. You are just in time!"

The elder Oglast leads the PCs to an adjoining chamber, he claps his hands, and the doors open to the great hall, revealing an impressive banquet.

In the middle of this austere but well-maintained grand hall lies a large stone table covered with a sumptuous feast which appears just prepared and ready to be eaten. There are several other guests standing and mingling, while servants await around the edges of the room near the tapestries. Upon seeing you, the guests smile and begin taking their seats. There is an elegant wooden chair at the head of the

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table, with several empty seats on either side. The servants pull out the chairs while Oglast beckons you to sit.

Once the PCs sit, they are encouraged to eat and drink. If they ask questions regarding the task ahead, they are told “let us eat first, then we shall discuss business”. If they press, the others around the table will begin to glance at them and mutter amongst themselves about the party’s rudeness.

During the meal, Oglast and the guests will toast the PCs and their health, welcoming them heartily. The feast appears to be a remarkable variety of high-quality faire – fresh (non-magical) fruits, Gulgian nuts, roast mekilot, etc.

Once dinner has been finished, Oglast begins speaking with the PCs:

“Thank you for coming at such short notice. Since we had already started dinner, it was only right to share our hospitality with you. Now I can show you why I need your assistance.”

From a side door, a young boy is rolled forward in a pushchair. Under his blankets he appears to be very thin, with pale yellowish skin and bags under his sunken eyes. It is clear he is in a very delicate state and deathly ill.

Oglast allows anyone in the party with knowledge of psionics, magic, or healing to examine the child. If the PCs try any curative or healing magic, they will discover it fails. *Detect magic* will work, but it will register a magical curse of astonishing power. Oglast will frown and shake his head:

“Yes. Healing cannot help him now. My son suffers from our family curse.

“Allow me to explain. King’s Ages ago, my ancestors were physicians who served in a great army and they witnessed

an atrocity in an ancient war. On the ground where the massacre happened, the dead rose to take their revenge on the living, and all but one of my ancestors were claimed by their fury.

“To secure his freedom, he made a bargain with the angry spirits. In exchange for his life, each generation four souls must return and conduct an appeasement ceremony, lest four members of the family be afflicted by the curse.”

“My brothers and I were to make our pilgrimage three months ago, but then they disappeared - we fear their caravan has been lost. In this last cycle, my son has been afflicted with this horrible wasting curse, and even the high templars have been unable to help.

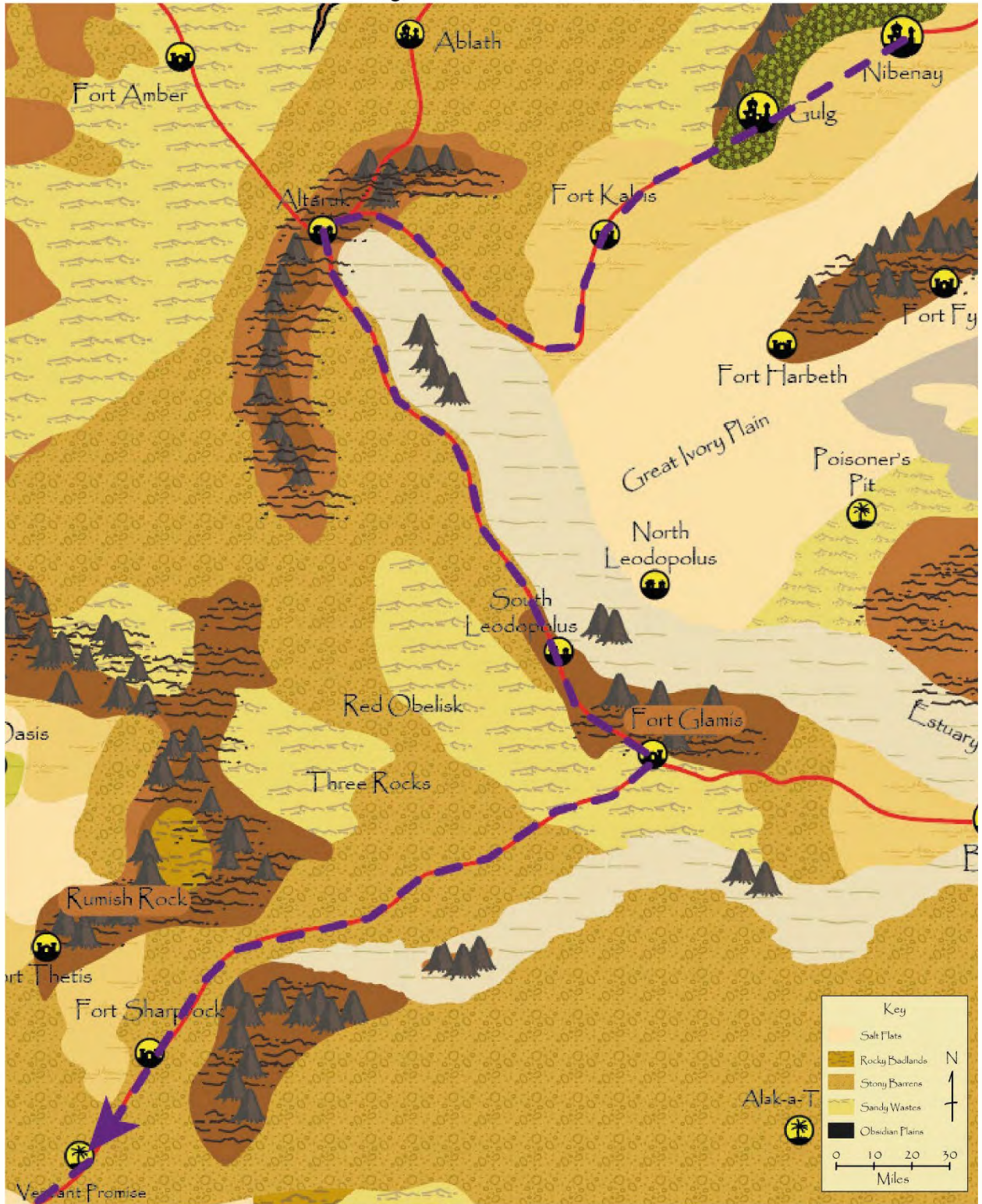
“I need four strong heroes to make the pilgrimage in my stead. Do so and you can name your price. Can you do this?”

If the PCs refuse, Oglast will say “That is a shame. but I’m afraid you have no choice but to help now. For you see, this was your induction banquet and, upon accepting our hospitality, you have joined our merchant house and therefore our *family*. Now you are subject to the same curse, so you **MUST** help us.”

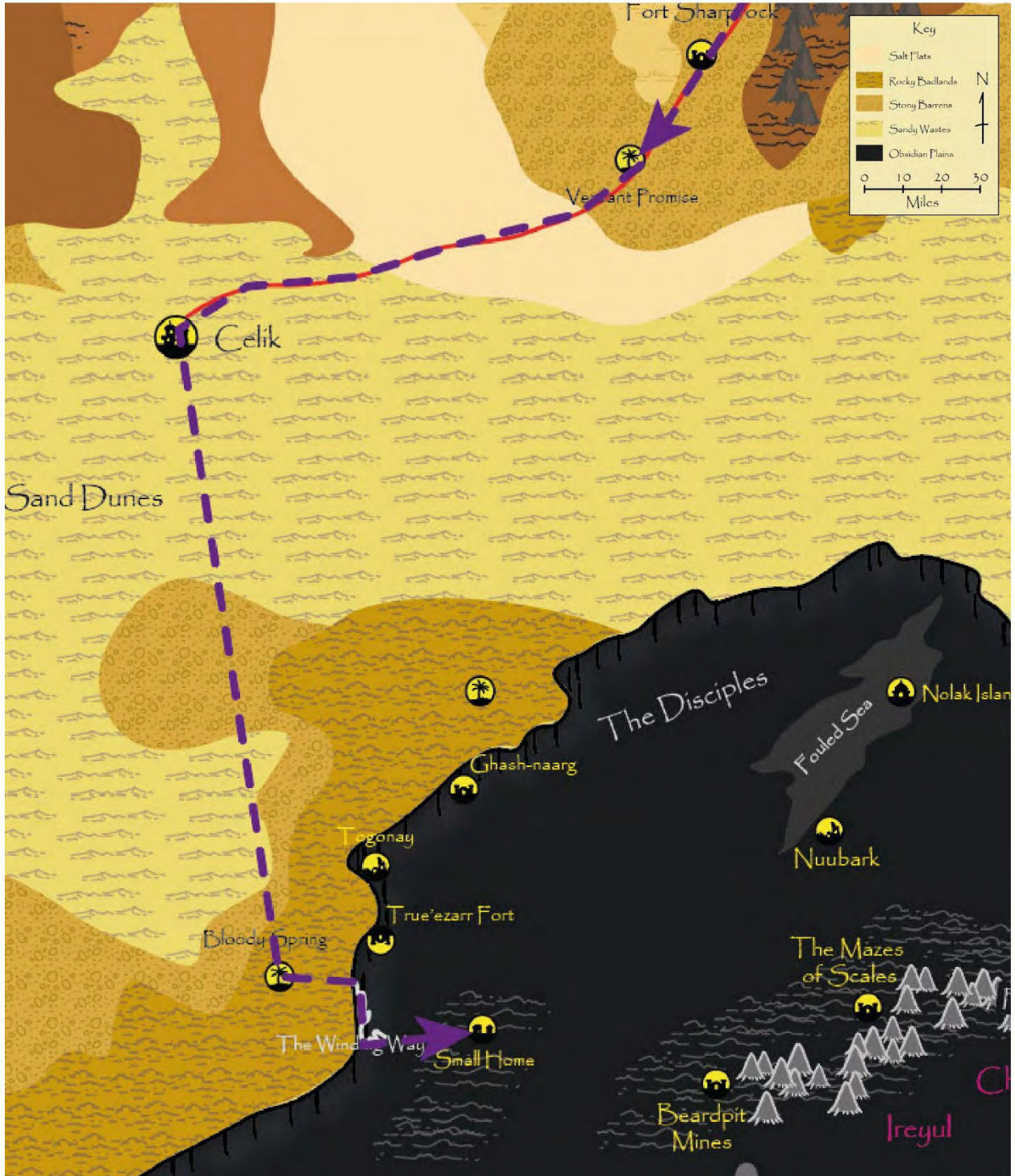
If pressed, Oglast will explain that his merchant house is small, containing only three dozen active family members, leading to a high likelihood of at least one of the PCs suffering the curse and, if not them, then perhaps their family members someday instead.

A Sense Motive check (DC 24) will reveal that while Oglast believes everything he has said to be true, he is holding some information back. With a Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate check (DC 24), Oglast will reveal that the pilgrims rarely return, but he believes this to be due to the dangers of the journey, not because the pilgrimage is automatically a death sentence.

FROM NIBENAY TO VERDANT PROMISE



FROM VERDANT PROMISE TO SMALL HOME



Part 2: A Long Journey South

Whether the PCs willingly volunteered for the mission or were coerced, Oglast's servants will help the PCs get prepared and supplied for the journey, which will begin the following day.

Oglast will give the PCs a hand drawn map detailing the route to Small Home and add one final note:

"These are the funerary robes of my ancestors. It is VITAL that you wear these robes when within the woods of Small Home. You should put them on as soon as you catch sight of the woods, as there is no telling what might happen otherwise. It is imperative that you do so, for all our sakes."

With that, Oglast wishes them well on the journey and takes his leave. His servants will provide one kank per PC and 20 days' worth of food and water (80 gallons) but anything else will need to be purchased by the PCs,

as House Oglast is stretched thin these days. The party is otherwise free to proceed to Small Home.

If the PCs think to ask, Oglast can use his contacts to arrange passage for them on a caravan going south to Celik. Once in the vicinity of Celik, the party can proceed to the Dead Lands on their own.

Development

The journey from Nibenay to the Dead Lands is a long and dangerous one (about 450 miles by road, or 18.75 days). The trip south can be as eventful or easy as the DM wishes, and a random encounter table has been provided to facilitate detailing the trip. Either way, the adventure picks back up south of Celik in the Endless Sand Dunes.

Desert Random Encounter Tables

Reference: ToA = Terror's of Athas; MM = Monster Manual

Stony Barrens Encounters		Sandy Wastes Encounters	
2D10	Encounter	2D10	Encounter
2	1 Cloud Ray (CR 13, ToA pg 31)	2	1d4 Locust Swarms, Athasian (CR 4, ToA pg 222)
3	1 Drake, Earth (CR 17, ToA pg 38)	3	1 Megapede (CR 20, MM2 pg 148)
4	1d4 Locust Swarms, Athasian (CR 4, ToA pg 222)	4	Drake, Earth (CR 17, ToA pg 38)
5	Id fiend (CR 5, ToA pg 90)	5	Sink worm (CR 10, ToA pg 155)
6	Ankheg (CR 3, MM pg 14)	6	Thrax (CR varies, ToA pg 172)
7	Plains giant, athasian (CR 12, ToA pg 66-67)	7	Scrab (CR 2, ToA pg 141)
8	B'roh'g (CR 5, ToA pg 10)	8	Tagster (cat, psionic) (CR 2, ToA pg 27-28)
9	Kank, wild (CR 2, ToA pg 218-219)	9	B'roh'g (CR 5, ToA pg 10)
10	Gith (CR 1/2, ToA pg 71)	10	Elves or Gith (CR 1/2, ToA pg 71)
11	Erdland (CR 1, ToA pg 190-191)	11	Silt runner (CR 1/2, ToA pg 150-151)
12	Monstrous Centipede, Gargantuan (CR 6, MM pg 286)	12	Monstrous Scorpion, huge (CR 7, MM pg 287)
13	Cha'thrang (CR 3, ToA pg 185-186) or flailer (CR 5, ToA pg 60-61)	13	Slaves
14	Baazrag (CR 2, ToA pg 11-12)	14	Sand cactus (CR 2, ToA pg 25-26)
15	Tembo (CR 5, ToA pg 171-172)	15	Desert giant, athasian (CR 10, ToA pg 66-68)
16	Braxat (CR 12, ToA pg 18)	16	Dune Freak (CR 2, ToA 48-49)
17	Zhackal (CR 1, ToA pg 209)	17	Cha'thrang (CR 3, ToA pg 185-186)
18	Nightmare beast (CR 15, MM2 pg 161-162)	18	T'chowb (CR 4, ToA pg 168)
19	Rampager (CR 12, MM2 pg 177)	19	Dune trapper (CR 8, MM pg 21-22)
20	Basilisk, Greater (CR 12, MM pg 24)	20	Dragonme (CR 7, MM pg 89)

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2) Raiders (EL 9)

Obsidian Claws (CR 5) 4x – See Appendix 1

Obsidian Claw Eagle Companions (CR -) – See Appendix 1

South of Celik, deep within the Endless Sand Dunes, the party has entered a region of sandy wastes that are the hunting grounds of a tribe of pterrann raiders. The only indication that something might be amiss is a small flight of eagles high in the sky; when they catch sight of the PCs, the eagles will give a screech and move to circle directly overhead the party - a passive Listen or Spot DC 20 check (Spot bonus +10 as opposed to Spot bonus +1d20) will note this activity, and a DC 15 Knowledge (Nature) check will indicate that this is unusual behavior.

Unless the PCs somehow detect this ambush and move to avoid it, read:

As you pass by a large sand dune, several reptilian humanoids pop up from behind it and begin to fire upon your group with their bows.

The raiders immediately attack.

The Obsidian Claws

The Obsidian Claws are a group of pterranns from the villages to the northwest, exiled and seemingly driven insane by some disease they were infected with. The group uses obsidian weapons, all painstakingly and carefully mined from the edge of the Dead Lands. They take precautions to avoid undead (using psionics or magic) and have survived many mining excursions. This has given them a near-endless supply of obsidian blades, arrows, etc., and they've become quite infamous in the region for using such weapons.

Inspired by their exposure to the devastation of the Dead Lands, the Obsidian Claws have a dualistic religion (unlike most pterranns), revering both the Earth Mother and the Obsidian Father - a spirit of destruction they, in their madness, believe will someday come to destroy the unworthy. Their druid leader is said to have strange powers and that she can even raise the dead back to a second, unending life.

Tactics: The pterranns have sent their eagle animal companions out to scout for prey. From high in the air, the eagles will begin to circle over the PCs once they're in sight, staying above them until combat begins. The pterranns will monitor the eagles to track the party while staying out of sight, maneuvering into place for an ambush.

The pterrann rangers will spring their ambush from over a hill, attacking when the PCs are 100 ft. away. They will take the time to each activate a potion-orb of bull's strength and cat's grace. If or when the party closes the distance, the pterranns will switch to their thanaks.

The eagles will move to support the pterranns once melee combat begins, using Aid Another actions to either improve the pterrann's AC or grant them a bonus to hit, as appropriate.

Development: Assuming the characters are victorious, they are free to move on - there is nothing particularly interesting about this specific patch of desert and the pterranns' tribe won't miss them for several days. Proceed to Encounter #3 – Bloody Spring Oasis.

3) Bloody Spring Oasis (EL 9)

Dune Reaper, Drone (CR 6) 2x – See Appendix 1

Dune Reaper, Warrior (CR 7) 1x – See Appendix 1

Bloody Spring is an oasis that lies near the Winding Way, one of the only known routes into the Dead Lands. Unfortunately, the oasis has become the favored hunting ground of a pack of dune reapers.

Finally! The map you were given by Oglast indicated there should be an oasis near here, one last place to rest and resupply before entering the Dead Lands. From this distance, you can see grass and bushes growing around a small pool of sparkling water - there are even a few stunted palms growing around the oasis. The wind shifts and you can actually SMELL the water on the air.

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Bloody Spring Oasis

The pool of water at Bloody Spring Oasis, as the name implies, is a deep blood-red. Local legends speak of the spring as cursed and of being the sight of multiple grisly slaughters until the spring itself ran red with blood.

Whatever the site's history, however, the waters are perfectly safe to drink. The pool is stained rust-red from a relatively high concentration of iron in the water.

Tactics: The dune reapers leap from where they are hidden beneath the sand and charge the party, each attacking a different target. The dune reapers fright to the death.

Development: The spring holds more than enough water for the PCs' needs. With the defeat of the dune reapers, the oasis (a known hunting ground of the predators) will be a safe place for the party to rest for the time being.

Even a cursory search of the oasis will reveal the remnants of the dune reaper's predation: claws, teeth and bones litter the ground. A Search check (DC 15) will reveal 20cp worth of crafting materials; increase the cp value of materials found by an additional 10cp for every 5 points the DC was exceeded by (i.e., 30cp for a result of 20-24, 40cp for 25-29, etc).

When the party is ready to move on, proceed to Encounter #4 – The Winding Way.

4) The Winding Way (EL 20 or -)

Thinking Zombie Earth Drake (CR 20) 1x – See Appendix 1

The party has reached the Winding Way - an ancient but still serviceable route down into the Dead Lands, but an undead earth drake now lairs near the top of the road, preventing access to the route. The PCs must somehow move past the beast to proceed.

You've reached the fabled end of the world - here, obsidian-coated cliffs fall away down to a seemingly endless expanse of obsidian. Whatever happened must have been quite powerful, as the blackglass seems to coat the ground in places along the edge as well as the cliffs themselves.

Nearby, you can see the remains of an ancient road that slowly descends over the edge along a ledge. The area near the roadbed, however, shows concerning signs of wear - great scratches and gouges are mar the obsidian, as if from the frequent passing of something with massive, fearsome claws.

A Knowledge (arcana or the planes) check (DC 20) will identify the marks as belonging to an earth drake. If the party continues forward:



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As you near the precipice where the road continues down, you can see a gaping hole in the ground. The claw marks and great furrows around the entrance indicate it is most likely the lair of a formidable predator. It will be impossible to proceed down the road without closely approaching the lair.

The claw marks belong to an undead earth drake that lairs at the top of the Winding Way. The drake is likely far too powerful for the party to face (CR 20), but some options for how to proceed are outlined below:

- Use Stealth to travel past the drake's lair undetected (Move Silently check during the day, Hide check at night; DC 19)
- Walk further along the cliff face to a location where the PCs could climb down to the road at a location past the drake's lair (climb down ~200ft, requiring four DC 18 checks; using rope will reduce the DC of the checks, see the Climb skill description in the Player's Handbook).
- Use magic /psionics:
 - Stealth effects: invisibility, silence, cloud mind, hide from undead, etc.
 - Flight: fly, levitation, feather fall, etc.
 - Teleportation effects: dimension door, etc.

Tactics: If the PCs are detected by the undead drake, loath to leave its lair, it will let loose a *concussion blast*, affecting 4 targets for 4d6 points of force damage each. If the PCs do not immediately retreat, the drake will exit its lair and attack with its full might.

Development: If the PCs manage to bypass the earth drake without being detected, they receive experience points as if they had defeated an EL 7 encounter. They may then continue down the Winding Way; proceed to Encounter #5 - Silk Wurm Colony.

5) Silk Wurm Colony (EL 8)

Silk Wyrms (CR 4) 4x – See Appendix 1

Slightly down the Winding Way from the earth drake's lair is a colony of silk wyrms. Normally encountered alone, the silk wyrms each have solitary nests, but all in roughly the same location - providing for better defense and mating opportunities. Situated near the top of the cliffs, the nest's location provides optimal access to prey in the southern Tablelands, while still being nearly inaccessible to both other predators from the Tablelands and undead from the Dead Lands.

Coming around a bend in the path, you are greeted by a bizarre sight: fallen boulders clutter the road-ledge here, but they are all strung with a strangely



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diaphanous white material - it looks like nothing so much as a noble's silks.

Without warning, enormous, armored serpents fly up out of the boulder field towards you. They coil and uncoil as they move through the air, as if slithering across sand.

Tactics: Each of the silk wyrms will target a single PC, each hoping to have the prey all to itself.

Development: Past experience or an Appraise check (DC 15), will indicate that the silk from a silk wurm is valuable. With an hour's effort, all the nearby silk can be collected - 7000 cp worth of raw materials.

Once the silk wyrms are dealt with, the PCs are free to move on down the Winding Way. Proceed to Encounter #6 - Tru'ezarr Fort Patrol.

6) Tru'ezarr Fort Patrol (EL9)

Ram-Azah's Sergeant (CR 9) 1x – See Appendix 1

Ram-Azah's Human Zombies (CR ½) 6x – See Appendix 1

Once past the silk wyrms the party will travel down the Winding Way and across the obsidian for a while before encountering a patrol from Tru'ezarr Fort. The patrol is nearly unavoidable, barring the use of invisibility, teleportation, or similar effects.

You've finally traversed the many switchbacks and ledges of the aptly named Winding Way and descended to the obsidian plain below. The incredible heat of the blackglass sears your feet through your footwear, with every step and the scalding hot winds make you gasp with every breath.

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Ahead, you catch sight of a group of people making their way towards you.

Have the PCs make Spot checks, DC 10 - the patrol from Tru'ezarr Fort is 10 ft away for every point by which the highest result succeeds (i.e., a result of 26 means the patrol is 160 ft away when first sighted). When the patrol is 50 ft away, read:

Something looks wrong with the group moving towards you - they seem to stagger along rather than walk smoothly as you'd expect and seem to jerk as they move.

A Knowledge - Religion check (DC 15) will reveal that the oncoming group are likely zombies. The patrol

will head straight towards the party and attack. The obsidian here is flat and featureless, with nowhere to hide and no way to avoid the patrol.

Tactics: The sergeant will hang back and allow the zombies to engage the party, using a bow to attack the party at range until engaged in melee. If the mindless zombies are eliminated, the sergeant can be convinced (Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate check, DC 18) to speak with the PCs and possibly even let them go.

Development: Once the PCs have evaded or defeated the patrol, they're free to move on to Small Home. Proceed to Encounter #7 - Donning the death Shrouds.

7) Donning the Death Shrouds (EL -)

Before they left, Oglast very clearly instructed the party to garb themselves in the funerary robes of his ancestors once within sight of Small Home. Should they not do so, there will be consequences.

You've nearly at your destination - you can see the forest of Small Home in the distance. Oglast was very insistent that you all put on the ancestral funeral robes he gave you but refused to say why.

Development: The PCs may heed Oglast's advice, or not, as they wish. Proceed to Encounter #8 - A Cold Welcome.

Part 3: Small Home

8) A Cold Welcome (EL12 or -)

Pixie Small Homer (CR 12) 1x - See Appendix 1

When the PCs enter the woods of Small Home, if they are wearing the funerary robes, they see only a single undead pixie menacing them, though they sense the presence of many other lurking undead.

The woods of Small Home are surreal and eerie - dead trees of all sizes stand at all angles, covered in the thinnest layer of blackglass imaginable. Many of the smaller trees lay tumbled in disarray on the ground, but many of the larger trees sway in the hot winds off

the obsidian plain, creaking and scratching against each other.

The solitude of the forest breaks as a hideously demonic-looking creature fades into view, hateful crimson fire burning in its tiny eyes. Its wings flutter silently as it stares at you, brandishing a thin blade and bow, but it makes no move to attack you.

Looking around, you see no more of the creatures, but you can feel the weight of their eyes upon you, silently watching.

If the PCs manage to avoid attacking the undead pixie, read:

Adventures in the Dead Lands

After several moments of glaring pure malice at you, the horrible little creature backs away and begins to fade from view again. Perhaps you have passed some sort of test...for now.

The PCs may make a Sense Motive check (DC 18) to realize they have just passed some sort of test and may move along with provoking an attack.

Development: If the party attacks the pixie, it gladly returns the favor, hunting the PCs until either it kills all the PCs, it is destroyed, or the party escapes Small Home. Should combat ensue, the other undead of Small Home will not join in (but see Encounter #10 - A Bad Hill to Die On, below).

If the characters fail to put on the ritual funerary robes, the undead of Small Home refuse to recognize them as pilgrims and will attack as they enter the woods (see Encounter #10 - A Bad Hill to Die On, below). Should the PCs manage to retreat, don the robes, and return to Small Home, repeat Encounter #8 - A Cold Welcome and then proceed with Encounter #9 - The Cursed Spirits (below), as normal.

9) The Cursed Spirits (EL 10 or -)

Rhelan, Elbar, Bhonar, & Irdurn - Oglast Brothers (CR 6) 4x – See Appendix 1

Once at the funerary hill, the PCs meet the Oglast brothers, who were driven to murder each other by the spirits of Small Home. They may help or hinder the party.

The map leads you to a small blackglass-covered hill. Located in a small clearing, you can feel the regret and hate of the watching spirits even more strongly here than before.

The intensity of the hate seems to build until finally four spectral figures materialize before you: they're human, and are all dressed alike. They look alike as well and bear a striking resemblance to the merchant Oglast - these must be his ancestors then.

If the PCs let the spirits begin to speak before reacting with violence, read:

"..don't know, why don't you ask them."



Adventures in the Dead Lands

"Well, I would if you'd just be quiet for a single moment. It's always like this with you, I can't ever get a moment's...."

"Oh, look! They're wearing the robes - they must be here for the ritual."

"Of course they're here for the ritual, no one else ever comes here. You know, if you even had half a..."

"If they're here for the ritual, that means they're family - stop this, you'll embarrass us!"

"Greetings cousins, I am pleased to meet you. I am Rhelan, and these here are: Elbar, Bhonar, and Irdurn."

"Hello." "HI." "(Harumph)".

"Yes, well...Please, we have a moment - tell us of the world and how our family fares?"

Whenever the PCs stop speaking, or should they not speak at all, read:

"Well, I suppose we should proceed with the ritual."

"Wait, they know that the pixies will attack as soon as the ritual is over, right?"

Assuming the PCs inquire about what that means, read:

"Oh yes, you're safe as you travel here and perform the ritual."

"Right but, vicious little monsters that they are, the pixies feel that the agreement is over with the end of the ritual."

"Yes, they always attack the participants as they are leaving."

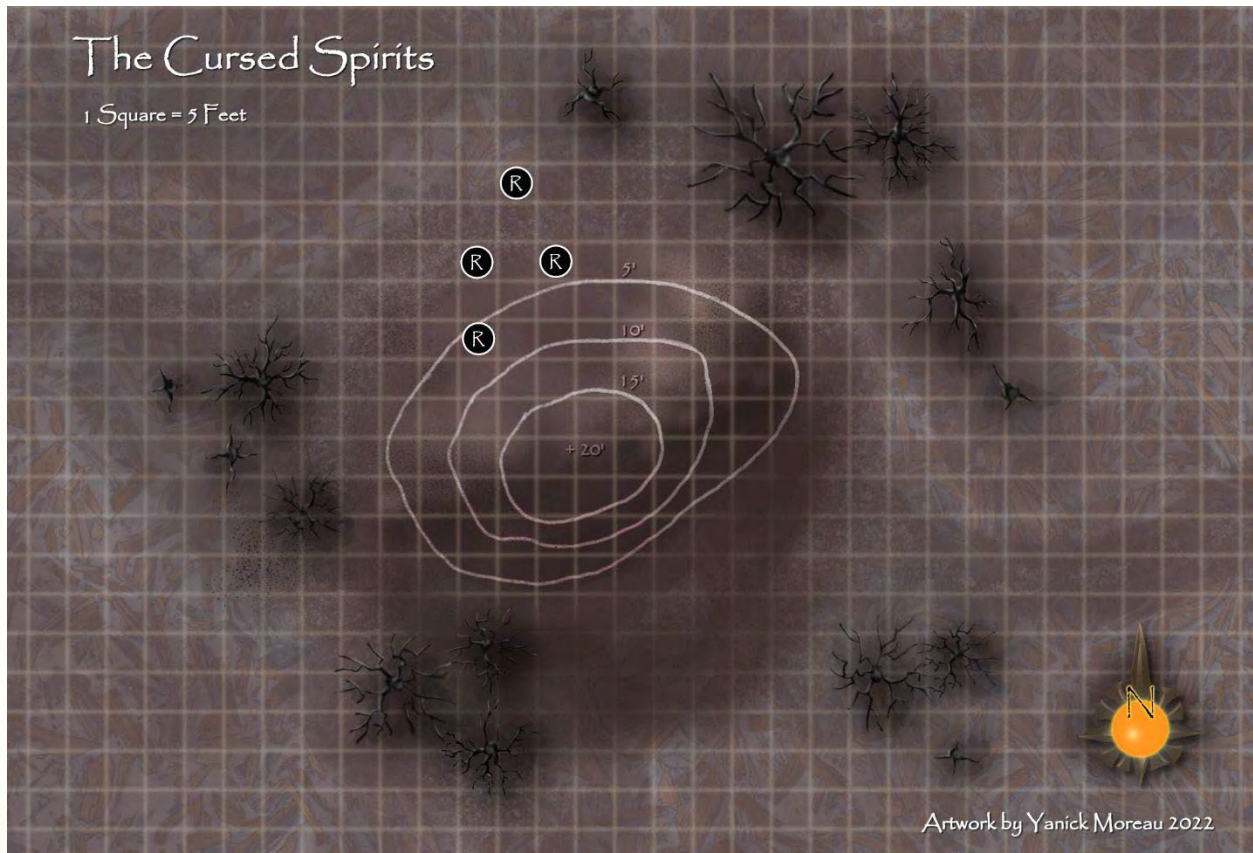
"The ceremony isn't nearly as important to them as the victims being sacrificed, you know."

With this, a pixie will again reveal itself:

Without warning, the small, winged creature fades back into view and speaks to the spirits before you. You can't understand the words, but the hate in the creature's whispering voice makes you think it could only be talking about you.

"No, we can't. We won't, not again. They're kin."

The tiny creature's face fills with rage, and it continues to speak harshly to the brothers, its finger jabbing emphatically in your direction.



Adventures in the Dead Lands

"Well, that's it then. She says it's us or you."

"Yes, sorry cousins, it's nothing personal."

"Hold still and we'll make it quick - only a few short days, you'll see."

The Oglast brothers can be convinced to not attack the party through persuasion (a Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidation check, DC 25. An especially good argument might, at the DMs option, grant a +4 bonus on the check).

If successful, the brothers will instead agree to assist the party in defeating the pixies that have tormented them for so long. Proceed with the encounter A Bad Hill to Die On, but one of the Oglast brothers will assist the PCs against the pixie while the other 3 brothers combat a second pixie that reveals itself as well. Otherwise, the brothers will attack the party.

Tactics: If combat ensues with the party, the Oglast brothers will each attack a single PC, attacking with their incorporeal touch until the target is dead.

Should one of the PCs prove capable of harming the spirits with physical damage (with a magical weapon, for instance), they will switch targets to avoid that character. Should a character do so with magic or psionics, the brothers will focus on destroying that PC first.

Development: If the PCs survive, the pixie will attack; proceed with Encounter #10 - A Bad Hill to Die On.

10) A Bad Hill to Die On (EL 12)

Pixie Small Homer (CR 12) 1x – See Appendix 1

Once the PCs resolve the situation with the Oglast brothers (one way or the other) the watching pixie will grow extremely agitated and attack. If the PCs have convinced the brothers to not attack, a second pixie will fade into view and attack three of the brothers.

The hateful, winged, little creature seems to have lost patience with you, surging forwards to lash out at you.



Tactics: Enraged, the undead pixies will flit in and out of combat using their *greater invisibility* and spectral swords.

Development: The party can either attempt to fight the pixie or run away, their obligations fulfilled. If they manage to defeat the pixie, read the following:

As the little creature falls motionless to the ground, dozens more of the hideous beings fade into view, their tiny eyes staring pure hate at your party. The creatures whisper and grumble amongst themselves, making ready for battle.

With their compatriot defeated, dozens of pixies are now coming forward to vent their endless rage and frustration on the PCs. The PCs may each make a Sense Motive check (DC 12) to determine that so many pixies represent an unwinnable battle and that they should retreat while they still can, having 1 round at most before the pixies attack en masse. Wise characters will run, foolish ones will die.

If the PCs convinced the Oglast brothers to assist them against the pixie, they find the Oglast Spade (see Appendix 1 - New Items) on the ground after the battle.

Concluding the Adventure

If the PCs manage to escape Small Home alive, they still have a long road home ahead of them.

The pixies generally patrol the route when pilgrims are coming to Small Home, keeping their victims safe until the ceremony, but anyone who escapes from Small Home is fair game for the undead of the Dead Lands.

Between Small Home and the Winding Way, the party might encounter another patrol from Tru'ezarr Fort or a small force of Ahnthyarka's bugdead. The trip north from the Winding Way to the City States could be as eventful or easy as the DM wishes.

When the party returns to Oglast for their reward (or revenge), the merchant is overjoyed and flabbergasted at their success. Before they even arrive, the merchant Oglast knew of the party's success, as his son's wasting disease has lifted and the boy now grows stronger with each day. However, it was his understanding that he was sending the PCs to their deaths one way or the other (a role he had been prepared to fill himself, previously), and he is woefully unprepared to reward them for their efforts.

Further Adventures

Depending on how events in Small Home unfolded, many subsequent adventures could follow.

House Oglast has been in dire financial straits lately, with the loss of one of their caravans and three of their high-ranking House members. Oglast simply does not have the funds available to pay the PCs what they're owed. Having publicly inducted them into his merchant house, however, he cannot simply turn them away empty-handed. Perhaps, if the party wishes to be rewarded, they will agree to escort the House's next

trade caravan - the profits from which "will surely repay them in full."

PCs more inclined to revenge might rob or even murder Oglast as restitution, perhaps even moving to destroy his merchant house. A financially motivated party could easily find funds and goods in Oglast's home to equal what is owed to them. More vengeful parties could begin a campaign of terror and destruction against House Oglast, systematically eliminating House agents and family members until Magras Oglast stands alone and vulnerable. More savvy parties could instead simply eliminate Oglast, moving to take over the merchant house for themselves. Any of these activities would be sure to draw the city's templars, nobles, and merchant houses as the conflict escalates.

If the spirits of the Oglast brothers were destroyed, perhaps the familial curse has been lifted. The idea of his family finally being free of the curse fills Oglast with excitement, but fear of how the hateful spirits of Small Home will react also fills him with dread. Oglast begs the party to consult priests, sages, and mediums to foresee a possible assault by the vengeful pixies on his House and holdings. This might even lead to the party needing to travel back to the Winding Way, scouting out the possibility of a punitive force of spirits.

Perhaps the death of their hunters has enraged the Obsidian Claws, leading to a rampage of death and destruction as they search for those responsible. House Maraneth of Celik might contact the PCs, to be used as either experienced troubleshooters who have had dealing with the pterrann raiders before, or as unwitting scapegoats to placate the raider tribe and secure safe passage for their caravans.





Appendix 1: Monsters and NPCs

Dune Reaper, Drone CR 6

TN Large Aberration

Init: +7; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0

Languages: -

AC: 18; touch 12, flat-footed 15

(-1 size, +3 Dex, +6 natural)

hp 60 (8 HD; 8d8+24)

Spell Resistance: 13

Saves: Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +6; Fear Resistance

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee: Claw +12 (3d6+7)

Full Melee: 2x Claw +12 (3d6+7) and Bite +10 (1d8+3)

Space: 10 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +6; **Grapple:** +17

Combat Options: Pounce, Rake (+12 to hit, 3d6+3 dmg)

Abilities: Str 24, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 1, Wis 10, Cha 6

SQ: Darkvision 60 ft., Fear Resistance, Spell Resistance.

Feats: Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (Claw), Multiattack.

Skills: Hide +5, Jump +12.

Fear Resistance (Ex): Because of their ruthlessness when in search of prey, dune reapers benefit from a +4 racial bonus on Will saves against fear effects.

Pounce (Ex): If a dune reaper charges, it can make a full attack, including two Rake attacks.



Dune Reaper, Warrior CR 7

TN Large Aberration

Init: +6; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0

Languages: -

AC: 19; touch 11, flat-footed 17

(-1 size, +2 Dex, +8 natural)

hp 85 (10 HD; 10d8+40)

Power Resistance: 15; **Spell Resistance:** 15

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +7; Fear Resistance

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee: Claw +14 (3d6+8)

Full Melee: 2x Claw +14 (3d6+8) and Bite +12 (2d6+4)

Space: 10 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +7; **Grapple:** +19

Combat Options: Pounce, Rake (+14 to hit, 3d6+4 dmg)

Psi-Like Abilities: At will - *cloud mind*, *concussion blast* (4d6*), *ego whip* (2d4, DC 12*), *inertial barrier*, *matter agitation*, *mindlink* (9 targets*), *psionic daze* (13 HD*), *tower of iron will* (2 rounds, PR 20); ML 10th; The save DCs are Charisma-based. *Includes augmentation for dune reaper's manifester level.

Abilities: Str 26, Dex 15, Con 18, Int 3, Wis 10, Cha 8

SQ: Darkvision 60 ft., Fear Resistance, Power Resistance, Spell Resistance.

Feats: Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (Bite), Improved Natural Attack (Claw), Multiattack.

Skills: Hide +6, Jump +13.

Fear Resistance (Ex): Because of their ruthlessness when in search of prey, dune reapers benefit from a +4 racial bonus on Will saves against fear effects.

Pounce (Ex): If a dune reaper charges, it can make a full attack, including two Rake attacks.



Earth Drake CR 20

Unique Thinking Zombie Earth Drake

TN Gargantuan Undead (Augmented Dragon, Earth, Psionic)

Init: +2; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft., Low-Light Vision; Listen +24, Search +2, Spot +24

Aura: -

Languages: -

Adventures in the Dead Lands

AC: 25; touch 4, flat-footed 25

(-4 size, -2 Dex, +21 natural)

hp 287 (25 HD; 25d12+125)

Damage Reduction: 15/metal; **Spell Resistance:** 28;
Power Resistance: 28; **Resistances:** Cold 10,
Electricity 10

Immunities: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Distractible
(those who take from its hoard), Vulnerability to
Blessed Elements

Saves: Fort +8, Ref +12, Will +9

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares), Burrow 10 ft.

Melee: Bite +32 (4d6+11; 20/x2) or Tail Slap +32
(2d6+16; 20/x2)

Full Attack: Bite +32 (4d6+11; 20/x2) and 2 x Claw +30
(2d8+5; 19-20/x2) and Tail Slap +30 (2d6+16; 20/x2)

Base Attack: +25; **Grapple:** +48

Space: 20 ft.; **Reach:** 15 ft.

Combat Options: Death Gaze (2/day, 30 ft., DC 24,
3d6+25), Disease (DC 24), Elemental Earth Attack
(DC 24), Improved Grab, Putrefying Touch (DC
24), Swallow Whole

Combat Gear: –

Psi-Like Abilities (ML 15th):

At will – *concussion blast* (2 additional targets, 5d6
damage*)

3/day – *body adjustment* (7d12*), *compression* (two size
categories, 15 minute duration*), *control object*,
dissolving touch (11d6 damage*), *ectoplasmic form*,
expansion (manifest as swift action, 15 minute
duration*), *false sensory input* (6 additional targets,
DC 15), *immovability* (manifest as swift action*),
inertial barrier, *matter agitation*, *matter manipulation*,
precognition, *sensitivity to psychic impressions*,
telekinetic force (500 lbs max*)

*Includes augmentation for earth drake's manifester
level.

Abilities: Str 33, Dex 7, Con –, Int 6, Wis 11, Cha 14

SQ: Distractible (those who take from its hoard),
Enduring Focus (an item in its hoard), Enhanced
Ability (skills), Gray toughness 5

Feats: Awesome Blow, Cleave, Great Cleave,
Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (claw),
Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Armor,
Multiattack, Power Attack

Skills: Climb +19, Concentration +25, Jump +19, Listen
+24, Move Silently +13, Psicraft +6, Search +2, Sense
Motive +4, Spot +24, Survival +10

Possessions: –

Death Gaze (Su): The undead can kill lesser beings
with a single gaze. Twice per day as a standard
action, the undead can stare at a creature within 30 ft.,
killing the creature if it fails a Fortitude save. This is
similar to a gaze attack, except that those merely
looking at it are not affected. On a successful save, the
creature suffers 3d6 points of damage plus 1 point per
HD of the undead.

Disease (Su): A thinking zombie's bite delivers one of
the following diseases (50% chance of either). The save
DC is 10 + ½ thinking zombie's HD + thinking zombie's
Cha modifier.

- *Filth fever*—bite, Fortitude save, incubation period
1d3 days, damage 1d3 Dex and 1d3 Con.
- *Red ache*—bite, Fortitude save, incubation period
1d3 days, damage 1d6 Str.

Elemental Attack (Earth) (Su): Once per day an earth
drake may gate in 50 cubic ft. of material from the
elemental plane of earth. This material is composed of
rock and soil and must be gated onto a solid surface
but may be in any shape the drake desires. Any one
caught in the area the material is gated into must make
a Reflex save (DC 10 + ½ HD + Cha modifier). A failed
save means the victim is trapped under the earth and
is affected as though by an avalanche (see DMG
Chapter 3).

Enduring Focus (Su): The undead's life force is tied to
a focus, either an object or an unfulfilled task. As long
as this object (usually called a phylactery) is intact or
the task unfinished, the undead cannot be permanently
killed; it reforms 1d100 days after its apparent death.
The phylactery has the hardness and hit points of a
normal object of its kind. Killing the undead in the
Gray prevents it from returning from destruction.

Putrefying Touch (Su): A touch from the undead
causes flesh to develop boils and sores that ooze sickly
yellow-colored pus. Creatures struck by the undead's
natural attacks must make a Fortitude save. Creatures
that fail receive a -4 penalty to Dexterity and a -4
penalty on interaction checks (such as Bluff,
Diplomacy, Intimidate, and Sense Motive). The
wounds last 1d8 days or until cured by a remove
disease or heal spell.

Vulnerability to Blessed Elements (Ex): A thinking
zombie takes half again as much (+50%) damage as
normal from blessed elements.

Adventures in the Dead Lands

Appearance

The body of the undead drake, rarely meeting a serious threat, still resembles that of a living earth drake. It is an enormous reptilian beast, seemingly composed entirely of hunks of rock and stone.



Obsidian Claw CR 5

Male & Female Pterrak Ranger 5

NE Medium Humanoid (Reptilian)

Init: +1; **Senses:** Listen +7, Search +1, Spot +9

Languages: Common, Saurian

AC: 16; touch 11, flat-footed 15

(+1 Dex, +5 armor)

hp 37 (5 HD; 5d10+10)

Saves: Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +2

Speed: 30 ft.

Melee: Thanak +9 (1d10+2; 20/x3) or Claw +7 (1d3+2)

Full Melee: Thanak +9 (1d10+2; 20/x3) or 2x Claw +7 (1d3+2) and Bite +2 (1d4+2)

Ranged: Comp. Longbow +8 (1d8+2; Range 100; 20/x3)

Full Ranged: Comp. Longbow +6/+6 (1d8+2; Range 100; 20/x3)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +5; **Grapple:** +7

Combat Options: Favored Enemy (Animals +2), Favored Terrain (Sandy Waste +4)

Combat Gear: Chitin Armor +1, MW Composite (+4) Longbow, MW Thanak

Psi-Like Ability: At will—*missive*; ML 2nd.

Ranger Spells (CL 2nd, DC 11 + spell level): 1—*Longstrider*

Abilities: Str 14, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 10

SQ: Animal Companion (2nd lvl), Camouflage, Combat Style (Ranged), Wild Empathy (+5).

Feats: Endurance[®], Rapid Shot[®], Track[®], Weapon Focus (Longbow), Weapon Focus (Thanak).

Skills: Climb +1, Concentration +2, Craft (Weaponcrafting) +9, Handle Animal +8, Hide +9, Jump +1, Listen +7, Move Silently +8, Spot +9, Survival +9.

Possessions: 4,300cp or Combat Gear plus: Dose of Obsidian Claw Blood (as medium spider venom)

x4, Potion-Orb of *Bull's Strength* x2, Potion-Orb of *Cat's Grace* x2; Food and water (1 day's rations) x4.

Favored Enemy (Ex): At 1st level, a ranger may select a type of creature from among those given on Table: Ranger Favored Enemies. The ranger gains a +2 bonus on Bluff, Listen, Sense Motive, Spot, and Survival checks when using these skills against creatures of this type. Likewise, he gets a +2 bonus on weapon damage rolls against such creatures.

Favored Terrain (Ex): At any time when you could normally select a favored enemy, you may instead choose to select a favored terrain. You receive a +2 bonus to Hide, Knowledge (nature), Move Silently, Spot and Survival checks made within your favored terrain.



Obsidian Claw Eagle Animal Companion CR -

Eagle Animal Companion (2nd lvl)

TN Small Animal

Init: +2; **Senses:** Low-Light Vision; Listen +4, Spot +16

Languages: -

AC: 14; touch 13, flat-footed 12

(+1 size, +2 Dex, +1 Nat)

hp 5 (1 HD; 1d8+1)

Saves: Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +2

Speed: 10 ft., Fly 80 ft.

Melee: Talons +3 (1d4)

Full Melee: 2x Talons +3 (1d4) and Bite -2 (1d4)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +0; **Grapple:** -4

Abilities: Str 10, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 2, Wis 14, Cha 6

SQ: Link, Low-Light Vision, Share Spells.

Feats: Alertness, Weapon Finesse[®].

Skills: Listen +4, Spot +16.



Oglast Brother CR 6

Male Elite Human Racked Spirit Warrior 5

Adventures in the Dead Lands

NE Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Human, Incorporeal, Psionic)

Init: +7; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft.; Listen +14, Search +8, Spot +14

Aura: -

Languages: Common, Remaan, Sylvan

AC: 16; touch 16, flat-footed 13; Incorporeal (+3 Dex, +3 Def)

hp 42 (5 HD; 5d12+10)

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Bound to Area, Stench, Vulnerability to *Raise Dead*

Saves: Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +3

Speed: Fly 50 ft. (perfect)

Melee: Incorporeal Touch +9 (1d6 plus Energy Drain)

Ranged: -

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +5; **Grapple:** -

Combat Options: Energy Drain (DC 15), Rotting Touch (DC 15, 6d6 dmg).

Combat Gear: -

Psi-Like Abilities: At will - aura sight*, empathy*, mindlink*, psionic dominate*; 3/day—recall agony*, telekinetic force*. ML = HD. The save DCs are Charisma-based. *Power can be augmented.

Abilities: Str --, Dex 16, Con --, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 16

SQ: Bound to Area (hill), Darkvision 60 ft., Enhanced Ability (+1 to hit), Gray Toughness 1, Skills, Stench, Undead Traits, Vulnerability to *Raise Dead*.

Feats: Alertness, Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Bluff).

Skills: Bluff +10, Intimidate +11, Listen +14, Search +8, Sense Motive +12, Spot +14.

Possessions: none (-1 CR)

Bound to Area (Su): The undead cannot leave a particular area without weakening its connection to the Gray. The area may range from one room to several square miles. Each day the undead is away, it gains a negative level. When its negative levels equal its HD, the undead is destroyed. If it returns, it recovers 1 negative level per day.

Energy Drain (Su): Living creatures hit by a racked spirit's incorporeal touch attack gain one negative level. For each negative level bestowed, the racked spirit gains 5 temporary hit points. A racked spirit can use its energy drain ability once per round. The DC for the Fortitude save to remove the negative level after 24

hours is 10 + 1/2 racked spirit's HD + racked spirit's Cha modifier.

Rotting Touch (Su): The creature's touch turns living plants into a useless, rotting mess. Within hours of the undead's touch, plants wither and die, fruits become inedible, and water even becomes sulfurous, dealing a creature that drinks it 1d4 points of nonlethal damage per gallon. The undead can make a touch attack against a plant creature, dealing 1d4 points of damage per CR (adjusted by special abilities and weaknesses).

Stench (Ex): The creature's flesh is rotten and putrefying, emitting a foul stench easily identifiable as undead.

Vulnerability to Raise Dead (Ex): A spellcaster can target a racked spirit with a raise dead spell, destroying the creature with a successful touch attack unless the racked spirit makes a Will save. On a successful save, the racked spirit still takes 6d6 points of damage.



Ram-Azah's Sergeant CR 9

Male or Female Human Fallen Fighter 8

LE Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Human, Psionic)

Init: +6; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft.; Listen +8, Search +7, Spot +13

Aura: Despair (10 ft range, DC 13)

Languages: Classic Dwarven, Ulyanese, Ulyanese Giant

AC: 26; touch 13, flat-footed 24; Dodge, Mobility (+2 Dex, +6 Nat, +5 armor, +1 Def, +2 shield)

hp 68 (8 HD; 8d12+16)

Damage Reduction: 5/magic

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Code of Honor

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +5

Speed: 30 ft.

Melee: Greatclub +16 (1d10+9; 20/x2)

Full Melee: Greatclub +16/+11 (1d10+9; 20/x2)

Ranged: Composite Longbow +11 (1d8+7; Range 110 ft.; 20/x3)

Full Ranged: Composite Longbow +11/+6 (1d8+7; Range 110 ft.; 20/x3)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +8/+3; **Grapple:** +16

Adventures in the Dead Lands

Combat Options: **Blinding Touch (DC 13)**, **Curse**, **Create Spawn**, **Disease (DC 13)**, **Great Cleave**, **Paralysis (DC 13)**, **Power Attack**, **Psionic Weapon (+2d6)**, **Spring Attack**

Combat Gear: **Chitin Armor +1**, **Composite (+6) Longbow +1** (called via *call weaponry*), **Heavy Chitin Shield**, **Javelin x10**, **Obsidian Greatclub +1**

Psi-Like Abilities: At will - *call weaponry**, *death knell*, *deathwatch*, *mindlink**; 1/day—*recall agony**. ML = HD. The save DCs are Charisma-based. *Power can be augmented.

Abilities: Str 22, Dex 14, Con --, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 9

SQ: **Code of Honor**, **Damage Reduction**, **Darkvision 60 ft.**, **Gray Toughness**, **Random Abomination (Extra Arm)**, **Undead Traits**.

Feats: **Cleave** ⁸, **Dodge**, **Great Cleave**, **Improved Initiative** ⁸, **Mobility**, **Power Attack** ⁸, **Psionic Weapon**, **Spring Attack**, **Weapon Focus (Greatclub)** ⁸, **Weapon Specialization (Greatclub)** ⁸.

Skills: **Climb +17**, **Intimidate +11**, **Jump +17**, **Listen +8**, **Knowledge (Warcraft) +5**, **Search +7**, **Sense Motive +8**, **Spot +13**.

Possessions: 9,400cp or **Combat Gear plus:** **Cloak of Resistance +1**, **Crawling Tattoo of Energy Ray (ML 1st) x2**, **Gauntlets of Strength +2**, **Ring of Protection +1**, **Psionic Tattoo of Biofeedback (ML 3rd)**.

Blinding Touch (Su): The undead can make a touch attack as a standard action that doesn't provoke an attack of opportunity. The touch causes blindness in the victim for 2d4 rounds. A Fortitude save negates the effect.

Curse (Su): The undead can curse an individual when it is destroyed. As the final blow is made that kills the creature, the undead can curse its destroyer, as the *bestow curse* spell.

Create Spawn (Su): A giant, humanoid, or monstrous humanoid slain by a fallen's death knell power rises as fallen after 1d4 rounds. A fallen can have spawn with Hit Dice totaling twice its own.

Code of Honor (Ex): Fallen are bound to follow a code of honor reflecting idealized rules of war. Evil fallen attempt to break or twist codes to avoid getting killed.

Damage Reduction (Su): A fallen has damage reduction 5/magic. Its natural weapons are treated as magic weapons for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

Despair (Su): Fallen radiate an aura of doom and hopelessness, causing creatures within 10 ft. to make a Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 fallen's HD + fallen's Cha modifier). Creatures that fail are shaken. Whether or not the save is successful, that creature cannot be affected again by the same undead's aura for 24 hours. Fallen can suppress or reactivate this ability as a standard action in order to achieve surprise in close quarters.

Disease (Su): The undead's natural attacks infect their victims with a disease. A creature dealt damage by the undead must make a Fortitude save or contract either filth fever (50%) or red ache (50%).

Paralysis (Su): Those hit by the undead's natural attacks must succeed on a Fortitude save or be paralyzed for 2d4 rounds.

Random Abomination - Extra Arm (Ex): The undead gains the ability to wield an additional weapon (two-weapon penalties apply) and qualifies to take the **Multi-Weapon Fighting** feat.

Skills: Fallen receive a +6 racial bonus on Listen, Search, Sense Motive, and Spot checks.



Ram-Azah's Human Zombies CR 1/2

Male or Female Human Zombie

NE Medium Undead

Init: -1; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0

Aura: -

Languages: -

AC: 11; touch 9, flat-footed 11

(-1 Dex, +2 Nat)

hp 16 (2 HD; 2d12+3)

Damage Reduction: 5/slashing

Immune: Undead Traits

Saves: Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +3

Speed: 30 ft.

Melee: Slam +2 (1d6+1; 20/x2) or Club +16 (1d6+1; 20/x2)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +1; **Grapple:** +2

Combat Options: Single Actions only

Combat Gear: -

Adventures in the Dead Lands

Abilities: Str 22, Dex 14, Con --, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 9
SQ: Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60 ft., Undead Traits.
Feats: -
Skills: -

Appearance

The warriors that serve Ram-Azah at Tru'ezarr Fort are fairly standard fallen, with ruined bodies and glowing eyes. Many, however, sport extra limbs or grafted body parts from bugdead.



Silk Wurm CR 4

TN Huge Magical Beast (Psionic)
Init: +1; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft., Low-Light Vision; Listen +6, Spot +6
Languages: -

AC: 17; touch 9, flat-footed 16; **Dodge** (-2 size, +1 Dex, +8 Nat)
hp 63 (6 HD; 6d10+30)
Resistances: Fire 10
Saves: Fort +10, Ref +6, Will +3

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares), Fly 30 ft. (average)
Melee: Bite +12 (2d6+12 plus Poison)
Space: 15 ft.; **Reach:** 10 ft.
Base Attack: +6; **Grapple:** +22
Combat Options: Blood Drain, Cocoon, Flyby Attack, Improved Grab, Poison

Psi-Like Abilities: 3/day - biofeedback (DR 3/—*), concealing amorpha, ego whip (DC 12), empty mind (+4 bonus*). Manifester level 6th. The save DC is Charismabased. *Includes augmentation for the silk wurm's manifest level.

Abilities: Str 26, Dex 13, Con 21, Int 5, Wis 12, Cha 10
SQ: Darkvision 60 ft., Low-Light Vision, Fire Resistance.
Feats: Alertness, Dodge, Flyby Attack.
Skills: Hide -3, Listen +6, Move Silently +8, Spot +6.

Blood Drain (Ex): A silk wurm drains blood from a grappled opponent, dealing 1 point of Constitution damage each round it maintains the hold.

Cocoon (Ex): Instead of draining blood, a silk wurm can make a grapple check to wrap its opponent in silk. On a successful grapple check, the silk wurm weaves a 1-inch-thick cocoon around its prey, giving it a -2 penalty to Dexterity. These penalties stack; a silk wurm wraps its victim in silk each round until the victim reaches Dexterity 0 and is completely encased in the cocoon.

A slashing or piercing weapon can cut a trapped victim free. The cocoon's silk has hardness 3, fire resistance 2, and 2 hit points per inch of thickness. For every inch of silk removed, the trapped creature regains 2 points of Dexterity.

Silk wurm silk is valuable, and artisans can weave it into clothing that grants a +1 armor bonus and resistance to fire 2. Such silk outfits cost 3,000 Cp.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a silk wurm must hit with its bite attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can either begin draining blood or create a cocoon.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 18, initial damage 1d4 Str, secondary damage paralysis 1d4 days. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Skills: Silk wyrms receive a +4 racial bonus to all Hide and Move Silently skill checks.



Small Homer, Pixie CR 12

Male and Female Pixie Racked Spirit Psion (Telepath) 8

Chaotic Evil Small Undead (Augmented Fey, Incorporeal, Psionic)

Init: +7; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft., Low-Light Vision; Listen +17, Spot +17

Aura: -

Languages: Gnomish, Sylvan, Ulyanese Giant, Ulyanese

Adventures in the Dead Lands

AC: 23, touch 23, flat-footed 16; Incorporeal (50% miss chance)

(+1 size, +7 Dex, +5 deflection)

hp 60 (8d12 +8); **Fast Healing 3**

Damage Reduction: 10/steel; **Spell Resistance:** 23

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** **Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects**, Vulnerability to Raise Dead

Saves: Fort +2, Ref +9, Will +11

Speed: Fly 60 (perfect)

Melee: Touch +12 (1d4 plus Energy Drain)

Ranged: -

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +5; **Grapple:** -

Combat Options: **Brand (3/day, 1d8 plus penalty)**, Energy Drain (DC 19), Greater Invisibility, **Guilt Gaze (DC 19)**, Psionic Meditation (Move action), **Taint Weapon (DC 19)**

Combat Gear: -

Psi-Like Abilities: At will—*aura sight**, *empathy**, *mindlink**, *psionic dominate**; 3/day—*recall agony**, *telekinetic force**; ML = HD; The save DCs are Charisma-based.

Spell-Like Abilities: 1/day - *lesser confusion*, *dancing lights*, *detect chaos*, *detect good*, *detect evil*, *detect law*, *detect thoughts*, *dispel magic*, *entangle*, *permanent image* (visual and auditory elements only). CL = HD. The save DCs are Charisma-based.

Psion Powers: (ML 8th (+2 vs. PR), 78 PP, DC 15 + power level)

4th - *Power Leech*, *Psionic Modify Memory*

3rd - *dispel psionics*, *Energy Retort*, *False Sensory Input*

2nd - *Brain Lock*, *ID Insinuation*, *Psionic Suggestion*, *Serenity*, *Swarm of Crystals*

1st - *Deceleration*, *Detect Psionics*, *Entangling Ectoplasm*, *Mind Thrust*, *Psionic Charm*

Abilities: Str 10, Dex 24, Con -, Int 21, Wis 20, Cha 20

SQ: **Enhanced Ability (feat)**, **Fast Healing 3**, Gray Toughness 1, **Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects**, Vulnerability to Raise Dead

Feats: Dodge [Ⓟ], Combat Manifestation, Greater Power Penetration [Ⓟ], Power Penetration, Psionic Meditation, Maximize Power [Ⓟ], Quicken Power [Ⓟ], Weapon Finesse [Ⓟ].

Skills: Bluff +9, Concentration +12(+4), Hide +11, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (Local) +10, Knowledge (Psionics) +13, Listen +17, Search +19, Sense Motive +11, Spot +17, Psicraft +15

Possessions: 9,400cp or Combat Gear plus: Cloak of Charisma +2, Dust of Illusion, Headband of Intelligence +2.

Brand (Su): Up to three times per day, the creature can trace a lasting mark on a creature's skin with its fingers by making a touch attack. This touch deals 1d8 points of damage and inflicts a -2 penalty on any interaction checks the victim makes (such as Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate, and Sense Motive); the brand leaves a disturbing impression on anyone who sees it. Both the damage and penalty are permanent. A remove curse or heal spell removes the brand and its negative effects.

Energy Drain (Su): Living creatures hit by a racked spirit's incorporeal touch attack gain one negative level. For each negative level bestowed, the racked spirit gains 5 temporary hit points. A racked spirit can use its energy drain ability once per round. The DC for the Fortitude save to remove the negative level after 24 hours is 10 + 1/2 racked spirit's HD + racked spirit's Cha modifier.

Guilt Gaze (Su): The undead's gaze attack causes grief to intelligent creatures within 30 ft. Unless a victim makes a Will save, its most painful memories surface, wracking the victim with guilt over small incidents that happened years ago in its life. The guilt nauseates a creature for 1d4 rounds.

Taint Weapon (Su): The undead can taint magic and psionic weapons by touching them. It makes a touch attack against the weapon. The touch does not provoke an attack of opportunity. If the undead hits, the weapon or its wielder must make a Will save. Failure means the weapon permanently loses one point of its enhancement bonus. A weapon drained to a +0 enhancement bonus loses all other magic and psionic properties.

Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects (Ex): The undead, unlike most others of its type, is susceptible to mind-affecting effects, which affect the undead as though its type were the same as that of a living version of the creature (or as a humanoid, if it has no living analog).

Vulnerability to Raise Dead (Ex): A spellcaster can target a racked spirit with a raise dead spell, destroying the creature with a successful touch attack unless the racked spirit makes a Will save. On a successful save, the racked spirit still takes 6d6 points of damage.

Adventures in the Dead Lands

Appearance

A Small Home pixie, when actually visible, appears as a hideous, partially-transparent, winged, demonic

creature brandishing a thin blade and bow. A hateful crimson fire burns in its tiny eyes.

Appendix 2: New Items

The Oglast Spade

This appears to be a strangely shaped shovel, the edges of its metal blade still razor sharp. The Oglast Spade functions as a metal halberd +1 and also confers a +5 competence bonus to all checks related to digging

(Strength checks to dig a trench or clear a cave-in, Profession - Undertaker checks, etc).

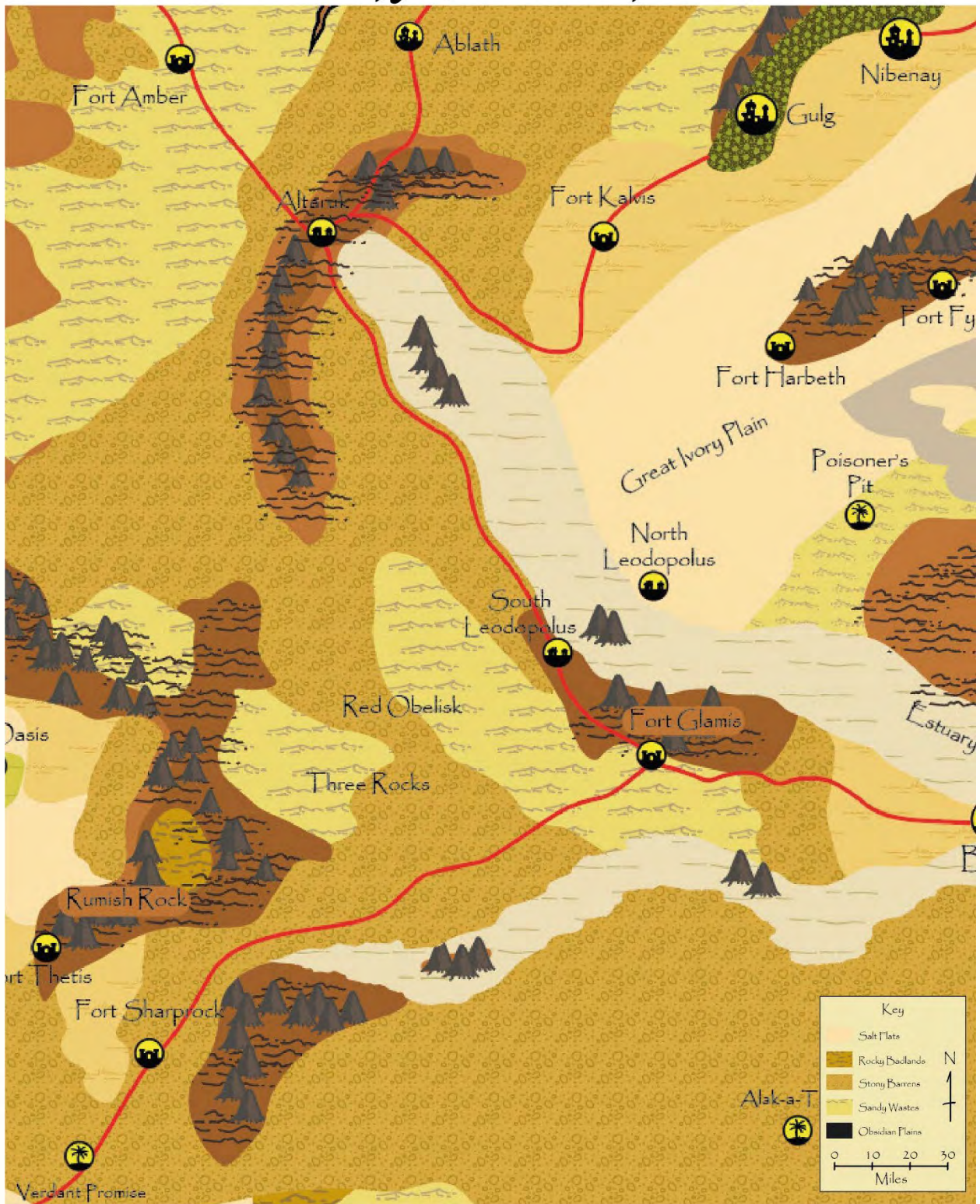
Faint evocation; CL 3rd; Craft Wondrous Item, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, soften earth and stone; Price 2,310 gp; Weight 12 lb.



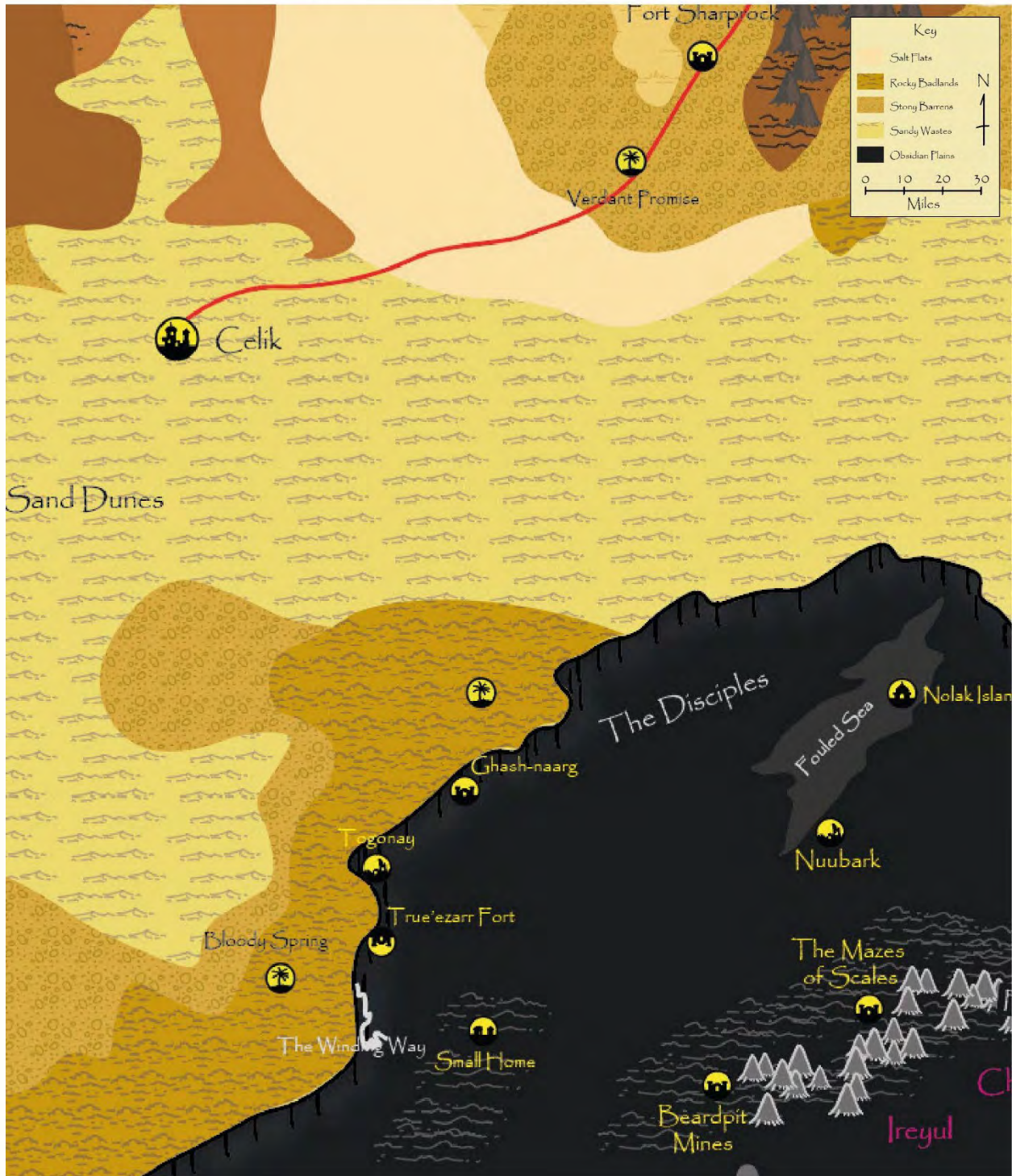
Appendix 3: Maps



FROM NIBENAY TO VERDANT PROMISE



FROM VERDANT PROMISE TO SMALL HOME



The Gristler's Wagon



A Dark Sun 3.5e adventure module for four 9th-level characters

The party has been asked to investigate a strange gristler's wagon in the elven markets, but what they find is entirely unexpected...

Credits

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Introduction

A party of four 9th level characters find an unlikely path into the Dead Lands in the form of a merchant who is paying surprisingly well for corpses. The party's contacts want them to investigate, but what's inside the wagon sends the party on a mad scramble for their very lives.

Developer's notes

This adventure actually started out as two separate concepts, one involving a travelling portal into the Dead Lands (the Gristler's Wagon), and another which involved the party interacting with the Cholite tribes (The Cholite Way).

They ended up getting merged partially because each concept was missing what the other concept had, but also because there was simply no easy way to get a party from the lands of the living straight into Chol, and we were keen to have more than one access point into the Dead Lands beyond the Winding Way.

Ultimately, it all worked out quite well, taking a "Time Bandits"-esque concept and adding a heavy dose of Mad Max for the characterization. I had a lot of fun developing voices for each of the Cholite leaders. -JM

into their armies. One of their agents is a being who calls himself "the Gristler."

Gristlers are a rare but important profession in the Tablelands: they render the inedible fats and cartilage as well as treat rotting meat and leather to produce many of the necessary products for a settlement or city. Their profession is not highly regarded, but they are often freemen, even in the most oppressive of cities. The corpses of animals are not their only materials, as in some places, gristlers are paid to quietly dispose of humanoid bodies as well.

This gristler is different. Unlike the gristlers of the Tablelands, the Gristler is in fact a fael, a type of undead normally cursed to haunt feasts and taverns and to feed for eternity. Like many residents of the Dead Lands, he does not remember much of his past, even having forgotten his birth name. He does, however, recall being an elf of the Sand Jumper clan born more than 200 years ago. Many years ago, he and his tribemates were fleeing from a pack of hungry thri-kreen in an area that is now called the Endless Sand Dunes. Lost and running low on supplies, he absconded with the group's remaining food and water during the black of night, only to run right off the Cliffs of Ulyan and fall to his death. He awoke achingly hungry, miserably thirsty, and undeniably undead. He was found by a wandering horde of undead and forcibly integrated into their group.

The Gristler now serves the Black Thunder clan of Chol, one of many clans of undead raiders in a nearly empty stretch of obsidian plains in the northern Dead Lands, lying at the very foot of the Cliffs of Ulyan. Now operating in the Tablelands and referring to himself simply as The Gristler when necessary, he is, like most fael of the Dead Lands, disciplined and focused on the task at hand, which is to procure corpses in trade for carved obsidian goods and send them through his iron ring, one of a pair of particularly large and powerful *greater ring gates*. Located by lieutenants of the Razor, the enigmatic leader of the Black Thunder clan, the ring gates are a pair of ancient Green Age artifacts capable of creating a linked portal between two distant locations – in this case linking the Gristler's wagon with the Dead Lands. There the corpses are reanimated to serve as new recruits in the Black Thunder clan.

Preparation

You (the DM) will need the 3rd edition revised D&D core rulebooks, including the *Player's Handbook*, the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*, as well as the *Expanded Psionics Handbook*. This adventure also uses material from *Faces of the Dead Lands*, *Secrets of the Dead Lands*, *Terrors of the Dead Lands*, and the *Dark Sun 3.5 conversion* rulebook from Athas.org, but all necessary rules are already included.

Adventure Background

The undead leaders of the Dead Lands are constantly seeking out new resources to maintain (or even grow) their power – they especially seek bodies to conscript

Adventures in the Dead Lands

Having stumbled upon a method of procuring bodies from far-away lands (the Tablelands), the undead leader of a faction in the Dead Lands, known only as the Razor, is using it to bring fresh meat and recruits into Chol for the benefit of the Black Thunder clan. The Razor's lieutenants found a pair of ancient Green Age artifacts capable of creating a linked portal and, through the Gristler, struck a deal with a particularly unscrupulous elven tribe to use the portal to transport bodies in exchange for economic gain.

Overview

The party is hired by one or more groups who have taken an interest in the high-profile work of a group of strange elven gristlers, offering quality obsidian weapons, fine carved jewelry, and even arcane paraphernalia in exchange for humanoid corpses. When the party investigates, the gristlers prove quite hostile to questioning. The gristlers will have to be dealt with one way or another to discover what they're hiding.

Inside the gristlers' covered wagon hangs a strange large metal ring on the wall. It is actually one-half of a particularly large and powerful pair of greater ring gates, leading to a distant land of nightmares and death - the Dead Lands. The PCs are pulled through the ring gate and find themselves in the Dead Lands, surrounded by the Black Thunder clan.

However, the Blacktooth Maw clan, rivals of the Black Thunder clan, have learned of the Black Thunder's acquisition of new bodies (but not of the ring gates specifically), and launches an attack just as the PCs are to be cut down by the Black Thunder clan. In the confusion, the PCs are able to escape into the lands of obsidian known as the Dead lands.

What happens next depends on where the PCs go, but no matter what direction they travel in, they only find monsters and misery. With luck, the PCs may contact one of the Cholite raider clans and negotiate a way home for themselves.

Adventure Hooks

Several groups with various motivations might recruit the party to investigate the gristlers and their mysterious goods, promising the party 350 sp for the task (canny PCs might even ask around and conspire to get hired by several of these groups):

- The local Veiled Alliance has a distinct interest in the gristlers' source for such high-quality arcane paraphernalia- especially considering most defilers' taste for obsidian. The Veiled Alliance agents approach the PCs in disguise, only revealing themselves as preservers if one or more PCs are a trusted ally of the Alliance.
- Low-ranking templars contact the PCs. While they appreciate not having to collect and haul corpses away lately, the composting and night soil pits do still have productivity quotas to reach. The templars want to know who the gristlers are and what they're doing with all those corpses.
- Local merchants and elven tribes have grown intensely curious about the source of the gristlers' expertly crafted obsidian goods. They would prefer the source be identified, a trade contract negotiated with the source party (or other means of acquisition found), and the gristlers eliminated, in that order.

Part 1: The Tablelands

1) The Gristlers (EL 8)

The Gristler (CR 6) 1x - see Appendix 1

Elven Gristlers (CR ½) 6x - see Appendix 1

The PCs have been hired to locate and investigate the strange elven gristlers that have recently moved to the area to ply their gruesome trade. While the party is free to explore the slums of the city searching for the

You find the elven gristlers rolling through the worst part of town with their wagon, easily found by their cry: *"Bring out yer dead, bring out yer dead!"*.

Approaching the end of an alley, past the rows of disheveled stalls and low hovels, you see a large wooden vardo-style wagon pulled by a pair of kanks, accompanied by a small group of elves. The wagon pauses every hundred yards or so for one of the elves to yell out again: *"Bring out yer dead, bring out yer dead!"*

The wagon comes to halt but from this angle, you cannot see into it as the rear door is shut tight.

As you begin to wonder what might be inside, the closest elf looks at you, *"Anything for us then??"*

gristlers, a Gather Information check (DC 18) will achieve the same result.

The elf will be very impatient with the party. If the PCs say they have no bodies for them or try to ask any questions, the gristler will snap *"Don't waste me time! I'm on a schedule! Outta the way!"* Any direct efforts to look into the wagon while it's being loaded will be met with cagey hostility and an effort to close the door.

If the PCs persist, the elf and his group will heft their weapons and say *"If y' insist, we don't mind adding you all as fresh corpses..."*. If the PCs continue in their efforts, the elven gristlers will attack.

If the PCs have a body for trade and offer it to the gristlers, then they gladly trade with the party, but under no circumstances do the gristlers allow anyone to look inside their wagon while. A complete and fresh humanoid corpse is worth 100 cp in obsidian goods, lower quality bodies receive commensurately lower amounts of goods, at the DM's option.

Should the PCs follow the gristlers and their wagon, they find that the gristlers move throughout the settlement's seedier sections, each in turn. Once their circuit thought the settlement is complete, the gristlers will move on to a new city-state or village. At night, the gristlers rest and make camp, but at least one gristler (the Gristler himself) remains tirelessly on guard throughout the night.

Scaling the Adventure

The Gristler's Wagon is designed for a party of four 9th-level adventurers, but it can be easily modified to present an appropriate challenge for parties of different sizes or levels.

Consider adapting the adventure for PCs of average levels 7 to 11 by adding effective positive or negative levels to the creatures in each encounter to change their effective **Challenge Rating**. A creature takes the following penalties/bonuses for each positive/negative level it has gained:

- +/-1 on all skill checks and ability checks.
- +/-1 on attack rolls and saving throws.
- +/-5 hit points.
- +/-1 effective level (whenever the creature's level is used in a die roll or calculation, reduce it by one for each negative level).
- If the creature casts spells, she gains/loses one spell slot of her highest-level spells. (If she has more than one spell at her highest level, she chooses which she gains/loses.) In addition, when she next prepares spells or regains spell slots, she gets one more/less spell slot at her highest spell level. If the creature is a manifester, she gains/loses enough power points to manifest her highest-level power once.

Adventures in the Dead Lands

The Gristler himself is careful to maintain a low profile and generally stays out of sight, hiding his undead nature from all but his elven allies and only revealing himself in the heat of combat.

If the PCs somehow manage to get into the wagon (whether by sneaking around the back of the wagon while the gristlers are distracted or through other means), go to Through the Ring, below.

The Elven Gristlers

The elves that are working with the Gristler are the remnants of the Sand Runner tribe. After he was levitated up to the Tablelands along with his *greater ring gate*, the Gristler wandered for many days, looking for a way to begin to fulfill his mission.

He found it with a small group of elves: the last survivors of a kreen attack that decimated their tribe and lost amid the Endless Sand Dunes, their plight brought a wry grin to the Gristler's undead lips. When he saw their tribal markings and heard that they were of the Sand Runners, he knew that chance had provided him with his solution. Greeting the refugees as cousins (albeit far removed) to his tribe, the Gristler promised to help them find food and water for the price of their assistance with his scheme - they readily agreed.

Now, the Gristler and his elven agents travel the cities and villages of the Tablelands, trading obsidian trinkets made by undead craftsmen in the Dead Lands for unwanted bodies. And they do not take kindly to inquiries.

Tactics: The Gristler will stay in the middle of the melee, stabbing and biting at foes with abandon. The elves will stay to the edges of combat, helping the Gristler flank party members or attacking with their bows.

Development: With the elven gristlers defeated, the PCs are free to investigate it and discover what secrets lie within. The Gristler has been doing excellent business lately trading obsidian items to defilers for magic wands. The wands were his back-up plan in case someone came for his unlife, but they will serve PC wizards well in the Dead Lands.

2) Through the Ring (EL -)

The Gristler's strange wagon is theirs, but the PCs will likely find more than they bargained for inside it.

With the defeat of the elven gristlers, their wagon (and the secrets inside) are yours. It is a fully enclosed wagon with a rounded roof, no windows and a single door at the rear. Its two-kank draft team is still hitched to it up front.

The Gristler had no fear of being robbed, as a cunning trap awaits those who enter. When the PCs open or enter the wagon, read:

The door to the wagon is unlocked and opens easily. The inside of the wagon is surprisingly spacious, with neatly secured drawers and cupboards lining the walls. The wagon is strangely clean and odorless, surprising for a corpse collector's wagon.

On the far wall, beyond the secured obsidian goods, hangs a strange metal ring. Made of pitted, ancient-looking iron and fully ten feet across, it must be worth a Sorcerer King's fortune!

The iron ring has been secured to the wagon wall with *sovereign glue* and cannot be pried loose with force. It is also trapped: 1 round after being touched by a living creature, the trap will activate and an effect resembling a horizontal geyser of water will explode outward from the iron ring with a loud "whoosh", filling the interior of the wagon and expanding outward from the wagon's doorway in a 40 ft cone.

After the initial 'jet of water' expands to its full size, it then reverses, and pulls everything caught within it, back through the large iron ring.

Any living creatures in the area-of-effect must make a Will save (DC 30) or be pulled back through the *greater ring gate* with the geyser and transported to the paired *greater ring gate* - in the Dead Lands. (This trap otherwise replicates the effects of the violet beam from a *prismatic spray* spell, and automatically resets in 1 round.)

Adventures in the Dead Lands



Greater Ring Gate Trap: CR -; magic device; proximity trigger (*alarm*); automatic reset; spell effect (*prismatic spray*, pulls targets into ring gate and transports them to destination gate, DC 30 Will Save negates); Search DC 30; Disable Device DC 30. Cost: -.

Viewers outside the effect's radius can clearly see that the anyone affected was pulled through the iron ring

(they do not appear to have been disintegrated or otherwise destroyed).

Development: It is very likely that most, if not all, of the PCs have been pulled through the *greater ring gate*. If any party members remain behind, they are free to join their comrades, though reactivating the trap may take some trial and error. Proceed to Encounter #3 – Black Thunder

Part 2: The Dead Lands

Once through the iron ring, the PCs find themselves in the Dead Lands, in the middle of Chol, surrounded by the Black Thunder clan.

3) Black Thunder (EL 8)

Black Thunder Subordinate Cavaliers (CR 6) 2x - see Appendix 1

With the activation of their *greater ring gate*, the Black Thunder expected a delivery of corpses and so paused their travels to collect the bounty. The arrival of the PCs is a complete surprise and leaves the undead raiders more than a little confused, if only for a moment.

You are hurled out of the iron ring and into what appears to be a completely different world: as far as the eye can see is a rolling expanse of obsidian. The air around you literally ripples from the heat, making the Athasian high-noon feel like a bitterly cold night by comparison.

You are next to a chariot with a large iron ring set in it and are surrounded by humanoid figures - some with putrid flesh clinging to their bones, others nothing but animate skeletons; most are astride some kind of skeletal mount.

One, wearing leathers, a headwrap, and a skull mask says a few words in a strange language and draws a finger across its neck. Several of those

Adventures in the Dead Lands

standing nearby immediately begin to move towards you in a menacing manner.

If the PCs understand Ulyanese, they will know the group's leader (the Razor) said: *"Living bodies! Kill them."* Even if they do not, his meaning was likely quite clear. The cavaliers will move to attack the party, regardless of attempts at conversation by the PCs. They fight to the death.

Development: Once the PCs defeat the cavaliers or when they are in dire straits, the Blacktooth Maw attack the Black Thunder's encampment. Proceed to Encounter #4 – Blacktooth Maw.

4) Blacktooth Maw (EL 8)

Lesser Blacktooth Maw Reavers (CR 5) 3x - Appendix 1

While the Black Thunder have been distracted with the arrival of living creatures (the PCs), the Blacktooth Maw have surreptitiously moved in to raid the rival clan, surging into the Black Thunder encampment and diverting their attention away from the PCs.

A whooping, ululating war cry sounds out all around you, signaling a warning by the reactions of the undead surrounding you. The chariot with the iron ring lurches away, lost in the press of bodies as the warriors all scatter in multiple directions, seemingly to face whatever enemy is coming.

The Black Thunder raiders around the PCs (even the Razor and his lieutenants) scramble to respond to the attack. The wagon and the iron ring are gone for now, moved to a safer location. Perceptive characters might catch an early glimpse of the attackers (Spot check, DC 23 - encounter distance 150 ft) or hear cries go up as the attackers are identified, but will need to understand Ulyanese to know what was said (Listen check, DC 15 - *"It's the Blacktooth Maw, they're everywhere!"*). When the PCs attempt to take any course of action, read:

Emerging from the chaos around you is a group of four savage-looking creatures, each about as large as and built much like a half-giant. Though humanoid, their massive gaping maws spread unnaturally wide in hungry grins as they catch sight of you.

Tactics: The reavers see the PCs and are visible at a range of 100 ft (unless one or more PCs made a successful Spot check, see above) and will charge into melee range with the PCs as soon as possible, fighting to the death to get the chance to savor the sweet taste of living flesh. They are completely uninterested in conversation.

Development: Once combat with the reavers is over (whether through victory in combat or a successful retreat), the PCs find themselves ignored by the combatants around them and are free to flee across the obsidian in whichever direction they wish. Proceed to Part 3 - On the Run.

Part 3: On the Run

Having escaped the clutches of the Black Thunder and a raid by the Blacktooth Maw, the PCs now find themselves likely lost in a foreign land with only whatever food and water they were previously carrying.

The PCs are free to travel in whatever direction they wish but none of the directions of travel is without hazard and there is no obvious route home.

While dehydration will likely set in, PCs should not be at risk of dying of thirst because in every possible direction of travel (except for to the east), the party is bound to encounter obstacles and enemies within 1-2 days of travel, depending on their movement speeds.

To the east, the Howling Caverns lie several days away, and perceptive PCs might find enough water there to sustain them for the trip back to central Chol. The PCs, of course, will not know any of this.

A) North - The Cliffs of Ulyan

If the party travels north, they will arrive at the Cliffs of Ulyan.

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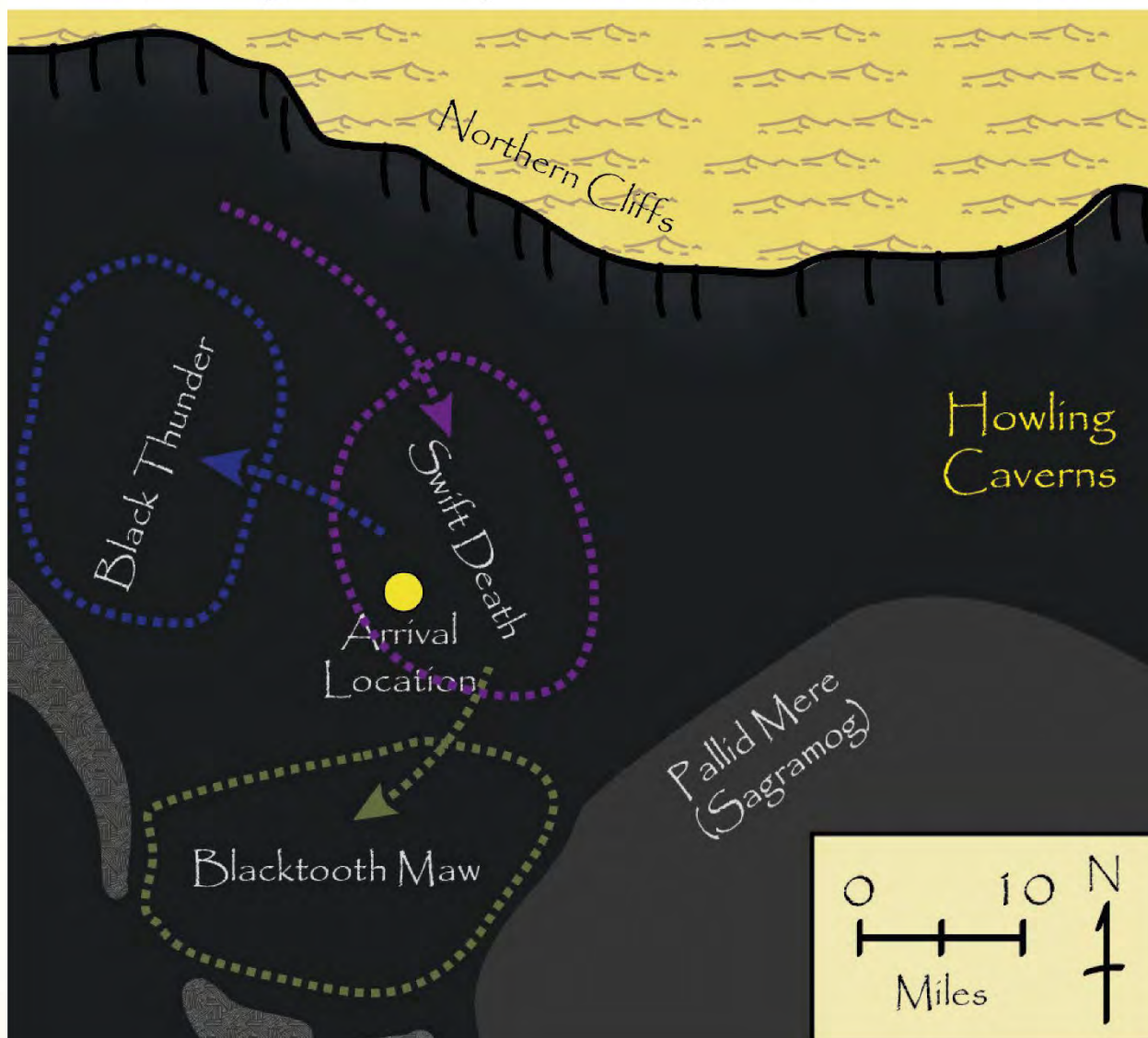
After traveling to the north for some time, you finally catch sight of something other than bare obsidian. At first, it was just an indistinct ribbon on the heat shimmer-horizon but now you can see the feature is a massive line of cliffs, extending as far as the eye can see to both east and west. By your best guesses, the cliffs must rise up at least 1000 feet and seem to be completely coated with slippery-looking blackglass.

Unless the party can climb up a sheer sheet of glass or has magic/psionics to reach the top, they will have to find another way out of the Dead Lands (note that unless they have been to the Dead Lands before or have used divinations or something similar, the PCs

will not actually know that they are currently south of the Tablelands, and so will not necessarily know that they can escape the Dead Lands by ascending the cliffs).

Development: If the PCs manage to ascend the cliffs or if they turn back towards the south, the Swift Death scouts will attack and try to capture them (while the PCs are climbing, at the top of the cliffs, or traveling across the obsidian again, as appropriate) - proceed to Part 4 - Death on Swift Wings, below. If the party turns and heads east or west at the Cliffs, go to that section, as appropriate.

CHOL REGION AND CLAN MOVEMENTS



Adventures in the Dead Lands



B) East - The Howling Caverns

If the party travels east, they will arrive at the Howling Caverns.

For some time now, you have heard a low moaning sound coming from ahead of you, and it has only grown louder as you traveled. Now, you see before you the source of the noise: caves of all sizes yawn open in the obsidian here and the pitch and volume of the sounds vary as the hot wind pushes against your backs - sometimes dropping to a deep moaning hum, other times rises to a screeching howl.

Many of the caves look large enough to accommodate your party.

The howling of the winds across the cave openings is extremely unsettling and any NPCs with the party will need to make a Will save (DC 20) each day or else vehemently advocate leaving the caves entirely.

If the PCs proceed into the caves, continue with Encounter #5 - The Lurking Blood, below. If they retreat from the caves, go to Part 4 - Death on Swift Wings, below.

5) The Lurking Blood (EL 8)

Lurking Clot (CR 8) 1x - See Appendix

Within the Howling Caverns, the PCs may find temporary shelter, but something else will find them as well.

The caves are, in fact, large enough for your group. The cave walls are oddly fluid and smooth, with the tunnels turning and twisting seemingly at random. Only a slight bit of exploration is needed to see that many of the caves (and perhaps all of them, eventually) intersect as they extend beneath the obsidian.

It is extremely loud within the caves. Anyone wishing to communicate must scream to be heard and Listen checks take a -10 penalty.

If the PCs explore the caves, they may find small, stagnant pools of water with a Survival check (DC 20). The check will take 2 hours and success will only locate enough water to sustain one human for one day (1 gallon of water) but an additional day's worth of water will be located for every 5 points the DC was exceeded (25 locates 2 days water, 30 locates 3 days, etc). Further Survival checks (DC 20) may be made to locate water, but each subsequent check will take twice as long as the last (4 hrs for the 2nd check, 8 hrs for the 3rd check, etc), whether or not the checks were successful.

The PCs may stay within the Howling Caverns as long as they wish but sooner or later the lurking blood will come for them. When it does, read:

Some kind of awful amorphous mass has slithered out of the deeper caverns: it looks like a puddle of black slime, red tinged and gelatinous. It slides amorously along the walls, uphill and unerringly towards you, completely unheard amidst the howling of the winds.

The creature is a lurking clot, a semi-independent fragment of the lurking blood. Occasionally, whether due to damage taken or some misbegotten attempt at reproduction, the lurking blood splits and creates smaller versions of itself. While these spawn are

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usually reintegrated into the larger mass almost immediately, sometimes they will act independently for hours or even centuries before being reabsorbed.

Tactics: The lurking clot will move to attack the PCs as quickly as possible, attempting to sneak up on the party under the cover of the howling noise, but it has no conception of sight, so it will not attempt to hide. It will move along the floor or walls as necessary, attacking the target that is deepest within the cave and then focusing on that target throughout the battle. The lurking clot will retreat when it reaches 20 or less hit points.

Development: If the PCs defeat the lurking clot, proceed to Encounter #6 - More Blood, below.

6) More Blood (EL 14 or -)

Lurking Blood (CR 14) 1x - see Appendix 1

Once the PCs defeat the lurking clot, read:

The slime creature has been defeated. Moments after the battle, however, more amorphous black slime splashes around a bend and into your cave. Much larger than the slime creature you have just defeated, it is a seemingly endless flood of crimson and ebony, rears back with an unhealthy, rubbery sheen as if preparing to strike.

Astute PCs will realize (with a Sense Motive check - DC 10), that this creature will be significantly more dangerous than the one they just fought, and that retreat is in order. The lurking blood will pursue PCs only as far as the cavern entrance, instinctually staying away from the surface.

Development: Once the PCs have exited the Howling Caverns, move on to Part 4 - Death on Swift Wings, below.



C) Southeast - Sagramog

If the party travels southeast, they will come to the Sagramog.

7) Swamp Dwellers (EL 8)

Injured Undead Xemokepper (CR 8) 1x - See Appendix

The Sagramog stands out on the horizon, simply due to how unique the broken landscape of jumbled obsidian looks amongst the otherwise featureless terrain of the Dead Lands.

After traveling southeast for quite a while, you come upon an unusual type of terrain: rather than the flat blackglass that you've been traversing, before you is a jumbled field of broken obsidian sheets. The sheets of blackglass seem to have partially sunk and fused into each other, but gaps and fissures can still occasionally be seen.

If the PCs move to examine the Sagramog more closely, read:

Whatever created this landscape must have been powerful indeed: the jumbled sheets of obsidian range in size from the footprint of a slave's hovel to that of a noble's villa, all mixed and stacked together in a haphazard manner stretching as far as the eye can see.

Out of the corner of your eye you spot movement: a sleek, obsidian-scaled creature lumbers over the edge of a vertical sheet of blackglass, lumbering across it like an insect on a wall. The horror seems to be moving on weirdly finned legs and has a large, wickedly fanged mouth.

The creature is an undead xemokepper and it is looking for easy prey, having recently lost a fight with another denizen of the Sagramog.

Tactics: If the party is small or looks at all weakened, the xemokepper will charge into combat, attempting to grab and consume one of the PCs with a tongue-tentacle. If the party has many members or if they look particularly strong, the xemokepper will attack with its psionics until fully healed or engaged in melee.

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Development: Once the PCs have dealt with the xemokeeper, whether through combat or simply by retreating, move on to Part 4 - Death on Swift Wings, below.

D) South - Blacktooth Maw

If the party travels south, they will eventually come into contact with the Blacktooth Maw again.

8) The Blacktooth Maw Again (EL 8)

Lesser Blacktooth Maw Reavers (CR 5) 3x - Appendix 1

After ambushing the Black Thunder, the Blacktooth Maw moved away to the south. If the PCs retreated south immediately after leaving the Black Thunder encampment, the Blacktooth Maw will catch up to the party as they travel from the north. If the PCs are coming from another encounter location, then they stumble into the Blacktooth Maw as the raiders head further south.

You catch sight of hulking undead traveling on foot or on chariots drawn by skeletal draft animals. As you catch sight of them, they seem to notice you as well, judging by the small group of them peeling away to intercept your group.

The reavers start out hostile, attacking the PCs with abandon, but they can be convinced to listen to reason if properly persuaded before combat begins (Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate check - DC 23) but are harder to convince once engaged in battle (DC 28).

Tactics: The reavers and PCs catch sight of each other at 250 ft. As before, the reavers will charge into melee range with the PCs as soon as possible, eager to take captives for their master.

Development: Once combat with the reavers is over (one way or the other), the PCs find themselves surrounded by the Blacktooth Maw. Proceed to Encounter #9 - Yughbo the Relentless.

9) Yughbo the Relentless (EL 20 or -)

After his raiders have confronted the PCs and his forces have surrounded them, Yughbo will have the PCs brought before him.

The entire tribe of hulking undead has moved to surround you but they have taken no further hostile actions - yet.

The crowd parts and a large, well-crafted chariot rolls forward. From it looms a powerful, bare-chested beast with an abnormally wide mouth and a crazed, hungry look in his eyes.

The creature grumbles out a few words in a strange language at you.

If the PCs cannot understand Ulyanese Giant, read:

The lead raider simply grunts and a subordinate scurries forward and works some magic on him.

If one or more PCs can understand Ulyanese Giant or once the (*tongues*) spell is cast, read:

"I am Yughbo the Relentless, and we are the Blacktooth Maw clan. Who are you? Where have you come from and why do you consort with our enemies, the Black Thunder?"

As he awaits your response, Yughbo absently runs a whetstone down the blade of his spear.

Ever pragmatic, Yughbo's attitude towards the party will have been unaffected by the loss or success of his forces: were they defeated, his frustration at their loss will be balanced out by his appreciation of the PC's obvious value as potential allies.

As you make your case, it's not entirely clear whether Yughbo is listening or not. But at least he waits until you have finished explaining yourselves before he speaks again:

"Now look here. You're not the first meat that's come from these new lands that those Black Thunder scum are now tapping with their magic ring. But you're on your feet and you escaped - better than most that have come through. That's why we haven't skinned and eaten you yet, but the night isn't over yet, is it boys?"

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Yughbo's bodyguards chuckle dryly and lick their lips.

"Since I'm feeling all generous today, I'll make you an offer: You don't want to be here. I want that magic ring. You help me get that chariot and its gate from the Black Thunder, you can use it one last time. Deal?"

Tactics: Unless the PCs attack him, Yughbo will not initiate combat, already having more than enough shambling corpses - he needs the PC's desperation and cunning. If they do attack him, Yughbo will send nearly endless waves of undead after them, until they die and join his clan. Statistics for Yughbo have not been provided because, as a CR 20 creature, he and his forces can easily defeat the PCs. Should statistics for Yughbo become necessary, consult *Faces of the Dead Lands*.

Development: Yughbo has no food or water, cannot spare any gliders to get the PCs out of the Dead Lands, and does not have any other means to send them north (if that is indeed even where they are from), but he is willing to stage another raid on the Black Thunder so that the PCs can escape through the iron ring, but he will expect them assist with the raid (for their part, the PCs will face two Black Thunder Subordinate Cavaliers and their mounts, per the encounter The Black Thunder Again, below).

Once the *greater ring gate* is secured, Yughbo will demand they cut off the Black Thunder's supply of new troops - slaying any of the remaining gristlers and



destroying the iron ring in the Tablelands. Yughbo worries that no matter who controls it, the ring gate will upset the balance of power in Chol, and is sure that his clan can prevail without it.

Learning how to activate the *greater ring gate*, however, may take some time - time the PCs may not have.

Should the PCs have further questions, DMs should handle them on a case-by-case basis, but Yughbo knows the following:

- They are in the Dead Lands, a place once known as Ulyan.
- Every creature here is undead, and everything is made of or covered in obsidian.
- There is no food or water to be had.
- Wherever the PCs are from, it isn't here and must be far away.

E) Southwest - The Crunch

If the party travels southwest, they will reach The Crunch, and encounter a small swarm of bugdead.

10) Bugdead (EL 8)

Exoskeleton Bugdead Worker Kank (CR 1) 6x - See Appendix

Zombie Bugdead Soldier Kank (CR 3) 3x - See Appendix

When the party approaches The Crunch, their presence will eventually draw the attention of a bugdead patrol.

After traveling in a generally southern direction for some time now, you've reached a series of strange dunes blocking your path. The dunes seem to be composed of old and broken insect shells and they extend as far as the eye can see.

If the PCs investigate the dunes of broken chitin, they find no usable pieces of shell as most of the pieces are ancient and useless. There are no paths around or through The Crunch in the immediate area.

If the PCs dig too deeply into the dunes of chitin, or when they move to leave the area, read:

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The crunch and clatter of broken shells alerts you to the presence of someone or something else nearby. Cresting over a rise not far away, you see a group of kanks. The ant-like creatures pause for a moment and then begin to move quickly in your direction.

The undead kanks immediately move to attack the PCs.

Tactics: Unsubtle combatants, the undead kanks will move as quickly as possible to enter melee with the PCs and will fight to the death.

Development: Once the PCs have dealt with the bugdead, whether through combat or simply by retreating, move on to Part 4 - Death on Swift Wings.

F) West - Black Thunder

If the party travels west, they will again encounter the Black Thunder.

11) The Black Thunder Again (EL 8)

Black Thunder Subordinate Cavaliers (CR 6) 2x - see Appendix 1

Zombie Crodlu (CR 1) 2x - See Appendix

After being ambushed by the Blacktooth Maw, the Black Thunder regrouped to the west. When the PCs encounter them, they are still trying to figure out what happened and how to respond to it (both with the PCs arrival and the Blacktooth Maw attack).

Traveling across the obsidian, you see several riders approaching you. You can't be sure, but they seem to belong to the group of undead that tried to capture you earlier when you first came through the gate.

The subordinate cavaliers are hostile when the encounter begins, attacking the PCs on sight. However, they can be made to listen to reason if properly persuaded (Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate

check - DC 20) before combat begins but become harder to convince once engaged in battle (DC 25).

Tactics: The Cavaliers and PCs catch sight of each other at 350 ft. The Cavaliers will charge into melee range with the PCs as soon as possible, eager to take captives for their master.

Development: Once combat with the cavaliers is over (one way or the other), the PCs find themselves surrounded once more by the Black Thunder clan.

12) The Razor (EL 20 or -)

After his raiders have confronted the PCs and his forces have surrounded them, the Razor will have the PCs brought before him.

The tribe of mounted undead once again surrounds you. Their leader's chariot comes forward and confronts you, looming over your group menacingly.

The masked leader makes a single gesture, and one of his blue-faced subordinates comes forward. He then casts a spell upon himself, and suddenly you can understand his words. He seems to address not only you, but everyone around you.

Once the (*tongues*) spell is cast, read:

"Living ones, you stand in the presence of the invincible immortal warrior, the scourge of the plains, the faceless skull, The Razor. The Razor is bemused that you would wander back into this place where you were meant to die, but he is impressed by your arrogance. Who are these living ones that dare to stand in The Razor's shadow?"

As the whole clan seems to await your response, The Razor glowers menacingly.

Like the other Cholite leaders, the Razor is pragmatic and his attitude towards the party will have been unaffected by the loss or success of his forces: if the raiders were defeated, they must have been weak and needed culling, making the PC's obviously valuable as allies.

After you have stated your case, you are greeted with a long silence from the clan. Two other blue-faced servants have pulled up beside The Razor and the first, and are speaking quietly amongst themselves. At the end of what seems like a

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painfully long wait, The Razor finally ends the conversation with a nod and raising of his hand. The blue-faced servant that had spoken to you previously comes forward and again addresses the entire clan:

"Riders of the Black Thunder! You are witness to a glorious day, unlike any seen in two thousand years! The immortal Razor has found mercy for these living ones, elevating them in service of our mighty cause! They shall journey back to the lands of the living to serve as agents, replacing those we have lost!"

As the clan raises their weapons to cheer and chant in a chorus of inhuman voices, the cleric moves closer alongside the party to quietly say: *"This is the best offer you're going to get, living ones: Replace our traders in the living lands, peddling obsidian goods for dead flesh, and you may return through the gate."*

Tactics: As much as he would like to see their hot blood running down his blades and revel in the carnage, the Razor will not initiate combat (for now),

valuing their current skill and cunning more than his personal satisfaction. If the PCs do attack him, Razor will send wave after wave of undead after them, until they die and join his clan. Statistics for The Razor have not been provided because, as a CR 18 creature, he and his forces can easily defeat the PCs. Should statistics for The Razor become necessary, consult *Faces of the Dead Lands*.

Development: The Razor has no food or water, but he is willing to send the PCs north (if that is indeed even where they are from) through the iron ring (he and his captains know the activation phrase). He will demand, however, that they restart delivery of new troops or some other form of tribute once in the Tablelands. If the Razor believes the PCs to be unreliable, being no fool, he will insist on the agreement being enforced through the use of *geas* spells.

Should the PCs have further questions, DMs should handle them on a case-by-case basis, but the blue-faced servant can tell the PCs the following:

- They are in the Dead Lands, a place once known as Ulyan.
- Every creature here is undead, and everything is made of or covered in obsidian.
- There is no food or water to be had.
- Wherever the PCs are from, it isn't here and must be far away.

When the PC's business with The Razor is concluded, the Black Thunder encampment again comes under attack. Read:

Before the chariot carrying the iron ring can be brought forth for you to escape this dreadful place, a whooping, ululating war cry again sounds out all around you, signaling another attack.

The Swift Death clan have caught up with the Black Thunder, with the intention of capturing or destroying the greater ring gate. The PCs will need to find and likely defend the chariot carrying the iron ring if they wish to ever make it back home. When they do, proceed to The Swift Death, below.



Part 4: Death on Swift Wings

Having learned that the Black Thunder were up to something, the Swift Death clan was already on the way to investigate when PCs arrived in the Dead Lands and began causing a commotion. Now, they are tracking the PCs with the intent of discovering the Black Thunder's new secret.

After the party leaves a destination (the Howling Caves, the Cliffs of Ulyan, the Crunch, etc), Swift Death scouts will find and attempt to detain them.

Any hopes you might have had about finding a way home in this direction were apparently for naught. As you survey your surroundings and attempt to determine what to do next, movement in the sky suddenly catches your eye.

Once the Scouts catch sight of the PCs, they will move to intercept them.

13) The Swift Death (EL 8)

Swift Death Scouts (CR 6) 2x - See Appendix

The scouts have instructions to detain, not destroy, the party, but old habits die hard, and misunderstandings are unavoidable between ancient undead and confused outsider PCs.

In the air above, through the heat shimmer, you see...something; looking less like a creature and more like a contraption, it is shaped like a giant bird or flying lizard, with wings and a tail seemingly made of bones and skin or leather membranes.

As the flyers get closer, you can see that they are creatures AND devices: seemingly humanoid creatures, they are strapped into some type of flying devices and soaring on the winds and air currents. Who or whatever they are, they are clearly moving to intercept your party.

The scouts will initially move to keep the party in place, swooping in to attack only when PCs attempt to move from their current locations. If attacked, the scouts will respond in kind and the situation will likely spiral out of control. The scouts will not think to speak to the PCs and any attempts to converse with them will need to be in a language they understand (see Appendix).

Tactics: Swift Death scouts prefer to simply drive their enemies before them, rarely engaging in actual combat unless necessary. When combat becomes necessary, they lead with their mounted crossbows, attacking safely from range. Only when they need to retrieve an item or capture someone will the scouts resort to entering melee range and endangering their gliders.

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Development: Once the PCs stop trying to escape, or combat with the scouts is over (one way or the other), the PCs will find themselves confronted by the rest of the Swift Death clan. Proceed to Encounter #14 - D'thul, below.

14) D'thul (EL 20 or -)

After his Scouts have delayed the PCs long enough for him and the bulk of his forces to arrive, D'thul will have the PCs brought before him.

Countless swooping flyers have arrived in the area and are slowly gliding overhead but they have made no further hostile actions towards you - yet.

A fearsome-looking group of individuals come forward on foot to examine you. Each is dressed in a different style but all have incredibly tanned skin and smell of exotic spices. After a moment, a spoken command from behind causes them to step back and part down the middle, revealing a mustached man with gleaming purple-black skin. He wears a headscarf and well-made, if ancient, brocaded robes.

The man speaks to you in a strange language, with what sounds like a polite but commanding tone.



If the PCs cannot understand Ulyanese, read:

The man sighs, makes a gesture, and suddenly his words become understandable. *"Come with me, we must speak."*

D'thul and two of his bodyguards escort the PCs back to his main tent. If one or more PCs can understand Ulyanese or once the (*tongues*) spell is cast, read:

"I am D'thul, true leader of Chol by birthright, and you are now the guests of the Swift Death Clan. Tell me, who might you be? Where have you come from? Why do you consort with our enemies, the Black Thunder and Blacktooth Maw clans?"

The man, 'D'thul', stands patiently awaiting your response but his tone and the glares of his bodyguards suggest he will brook no argument.

Though concerned about the loss of his people, D'thul is pragmatic: if the scouts were defeated, his anger at their loss will be balanced out by his appreciation of the PC's obvious value as potential allies.

D'thul will listen patiently to the PCs story, asking appropriate questions about where they come from ("Where is this 'Ba-lic?' What kind of city is this? etc.)

Once the PCs have finished their story, D'thul will continue:

D'thul spends a long moment considering what you have said before he speaks: *"I would know more of these lands beyond the blackglass cliffs but today is not the day for that. Our enemies have found a way to tap your lands and supply themselves with an limitless supply of your dead brethren. As skilled as we are, not even we can sustain a prolonged conflict against their ever-growing numbers.*

"We have no choice but to destroy the gate. It is too dangerous to both of our lands. But I would not expect you to help me if I did not offer you your chance to leave here. And so I will— my flying warriors can carry you above the tops of the obsidian cliffs and you shall destroy the gate for us - enforced by binding magics, of course.

"Those are my terms – in exchange for your services, I will assist you in your journey home. Do we have a deal?"

Tactics: Unless the PCs attack him, D'thul will not initiate combat, valuing their current skill and cunning more than their shambling corpses. If they do attack him, D'thul will send wave after wave of undead after

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them, until they die and join his clan. Statistics for D'thul have not been provided because, as a CR 31 creature, he and his forces can easily defeat the PCs. Should statistics for D'thul become necessary, consult *Faces of the Dead Lands*.

Development: D'thul has no food or water but he can spare gliders and their pilots to get the PCs out of the Dead Lands. In order to do so, however, he will insist they cut off the Black Thunder's supply of new troops - slaying the gristlers and destroying the iron ring in the Tablelands. He will also insist on ensuring the PCs follow through with the use of *geas* spells.

D'thul worries that no matter who controls it, the ring gate will upset the balance of power in Chol and draw

in even more powerful interests than those of his rival clans.

Should the PCs have further questions, DMs should handle them on a case-by-case basis, but D'thul knows the following:

- They are in the Dead Lands, a place once known as Ulyan.
- Every creature here is undead, and everything is made of or covered in obsidian.
- There is no food or water to be had here.
- He believes the PCs are from a place far to the north, but wherever they are from, it isn't here and must be far away.

Concluding the Adventure

Once the PCs return, their employers will likely wonder what took them so long and want to know if the PCs learned the gristlers' secrets (see Adventure Hooks, above). Should the party tell their employer of their trip to the Dead Lands, they are likely to be amazed, incredulous, or both. Regardless, successful completion of the original mission will bring payment as appropriate.

Employers that were especially pleased with the party's performance might offer the PCs further job opportunities (see Further Adventures, below).

Further Adventures

If the party manages to survive their jaunt in the Dead Lands and escape, it was likely back through the greater ring gate or over the Cliffs of Ulyan via glider.

If the PCs came to an agreement with Yughbo and the Blacktooth Maw helped to secure the greater ring gate, they will have agreed to cut off the Black Thunder's supply of new troops - slaying any of the remaining gristlers and destroying the iron ring in the Tablelands. Failure to do so will convince the undead ogre to use the iron ring himself, sending disguised, intelligent, human-sized undead to both act as his own gristlers and act as spotters, attempting to locate the treacherous PCs. Once they are located, strike teams of undead ogres will begin attempting to eliminate the

party. By this point, it will be quite difficult to dissuade Yughbo's agents in the Tablelands and make peace with the undead clan leader - the PCs will need to work hard to find something more valuable to him than revenge.

Should the PCs come to an agreement with The Razor, they will likewise have returned through the iron ring, having promised (possibly assured through the use of *geas* spells) to restart delivery of new troops or some other form of tribute once in the Tablelands. If the PCs take on this responsibility themselves, they could find it an onerous (but profitable) side business acting as the Razor's new gristlers. Moving from settlement to settlement, disposing of (and sometimes creating) dead bodies, and selling mysterious goods should come naturally to any experienced adventurer. Should they find others to act as the Razor's agents, the PCs may eventually find that their hirelings have grown greedy and betrayed the party's trust: perhaps stepping their activities up to murder to increase profits or abandoning the task altogether. Should deliveries of tribute stop or fail to start, the Razor will be quick to send agents (either through the iron ring or up and over the Cliffs of Ulyan again) to resume deliveries and punish the PCs.

If the PCs made a deal with D'thul and the Swift Death clan, he, like Yughbo, will have required the PCs to agree (though under *geas*) to eliminate any of the Razor's remaining gristlers and destroy the iron ring within the Tablelands - cutting off the Black Thunder's

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supply of new troops. While this will satisfy D'thul for a time, eventually the Swift Death clan will be hard pressed and he might contact the PCs for assistance against his foes (either direct combat assistance or perhaps with materials - glider parts and pilots). A relatively fair and intelligent negotiator, however, D'thul will offer to compensate the PCs for the efforts with the same sort of finely crafted obsidian goods that the gristlers were peddling. The undead raider lord would not take it well, should the PCs decline his offer...

In the event the PCs managed to escape the Dead Lands on their own - surmounting the Cliffs of Ulayn or leaving via some type of magic or psionics, the Razor will eventually discover their identities and proceed as if betrayed by the party. Furthermore, if the PCs scaled the Cliffs of Ulyan on their own, D'thul's scouts will alert him to this fact and, intrigued by this source of still-living creatures, he will begin sending scouts on gliders out over the Cliffs to investigate the Tablelands. While this may not amount to much, it may also lead to a full-scale invasion of the southern Tablelands by the Swift Death clan as a means to augment their forces.

Should the PCs fail to escape the Dead Lands alive, that may not be the end of their story. In the Dead Lands, bodies do not lie quiet for long, with most reanimating (within 24 hours), and the PCs will likely reanimate as undead, perhaps even as Unbound (see the Unbound template in *Faces of the Dead Lands* for more details). Once reanimated, the PCs might continue attempting to return home, or may choose to remain in and explore the Dead Lands.

Once the PCs mission is completed, the local Veiled Alliance might later ask the party for any possible links between rumors of a new arcane power source -

graycasting - and the undead of the Dead Lands. The Veiled Alliance would likely be greatly concerned and intrigued by the possible consequences and ramifications of drawing spell energy from the Gray.

If they believe the stories of a land of the dead, the templars might later hire the party to procure some of these ancient undead, thinking them a convenient source of labor, bodyguards, or assassins. The templars (and the PCs) will likely be in over their heads trying to capture and enslave powerful undead creatures, but that's unlikely to stop an ambitious templar or their pawns...er, um 'allies'.

Local merchants and elven tribes will, of course, still be intrigued by the source of the gristlers' expertly-crafted obsidian goods. Though dismayed by the source being the Dead Lands, trade might be brokered through third parties (i.e., the PCs). Both groups might be a ready source of new gristlers, if necessary, though such a situation might require a great deal of trust on the part of the PCs - trust that may later turn out to be misplaced.

Should The Gristler survive his encounter with the PCs, his future plans will vary greatly, depending on his circumstances. If he somehow still retains possession of the greater ring gate, The Gristler will carry on as if nothing had happened, continuing to lead his contingent of elves or recruiting a new group as appropriate. If the PCs destroy or keep the iron ring for themselves, The Gristler will consider his obligation to the Black Thunder clan at an end and making a new unlife for himself in the Tablelands, perhaps founding a raiding tribe of his own or establishing himself as a new player in the Athasian black market. Regardless of his actions, The Gristler will keep an eye out for the PCs, and will take his revenge upon them, given the chance.





Appendix 1: Monsters & NPCs

Black Thunder Subordinate Cavaliers CR 6

Male human Thinking Zombie Fighter 5

Chaotic Evil Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Human)

Init: +3; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft; Listen +10, Spot +10

Languages: Goblin, Ulyanese

AC: 22, touch 14, flat-footed 19
(+3 Dex, +4 Nat, +4 armor, +1 Def)

hp 37 (5d12+5); **Fast Healing** 3

Resistances: Cold and Electricity 10

Immune: **Turning**, Undead Traits; **Weakness:** **Phobia (Water)**, Vulnerability to Blessed Elements

Saves: Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +1

Speed: 30 ft (6 squares)

Melee: Longspear +11 (1d8+7; 20/x3) or Claw +10 (1d4+5; 20/x2) or Bite +10 (1d6+5; 20/x2)

Full Melee: Longspear +11 (1d8+7; 20/x3) and Bite +5 (1d6+2; 20/x2) or 2x Claw +10 (1d4+5; 20/x2) and Bite +5 (1d6+2; 20/x2)

Ranged: Comp. Shortbow +9 (1d6+5; Range 105 ft.; 20/x3)

Full Ranged: Comp. Shortbow +9 (1d6+5; Range 105 ft.; 20/x3)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +5; **Grapple:** +10

Combat Options: Combat Reflexes (4/round), Disease (DC 11), Mounted Combat, Mounted Archery, Point Blank Shot, Ride-By Attack

Combat Gear: MW Composite Shortbow (+5), MW Longspear, Obsidian Arrows 50x, Studded Leather Armor +1; Zombie Crodlu

Abilities: Str 21, Dex 16, Con --, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 9

SQ: Darkvision 60 ft., **Fast Healing** 3, Gray toughness 1, **Immunity to Turning**, **Phobia (water)**, Resistance to Cold and Electricity, Vulnerability to Blessed Elements

Feats: Combat Reflexes, Far Shot ^B, Mounted Combat, Mounted Archery, Ride-by Attack ^B, Point Black Shot ^B.

Skills: Climb +9, Handle Animal +7, Jump +9, Listen +4, Ride +11, Search +5, Sense Motive +4, Spot +8.

Possessions: 4,300 cp or Combat Gear plus: Psionic Tattoo of *Force Screen* x2, Ring of Protection +1.



Blacktooth Maw Reavers, Lesser CR 5

Male Ogre Fael Barbarian 1

Chaotic Evil Large Undead (Augmented Giant)

Init: +1; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +13, Spot +11

Aura: -

Languages: Ulyanese Giant

AC: 27, touch 10, flat-footed 26
(-1 size, +1 Dex, +9+1 Nat, +4 armor, +3 shield)

hp 42 (5d12+10); **Fast Healing** 3

Damage Reduction: 10/magic

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** **Craving**

Saves: Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +1

Speed: 50 ft (10 squares)

Melee: Bite +11 (2d8+8; 18-20/x3) or Slam +11 (1d8+8) or Touch +11 (by spell)

Full Melee: Slam +11 (1d8+8) and Bite +9 (2d8+4; 18-20/x3)

Ranged: Javelin +4 (1d8+8; Range 30 ft.; 20/x2)

Space: 10 ft.; **Reach:** 10 ft.

Base Attack: +4; **Grapple:** +16

Combat Options: Power Attack, Rage (1/day; +4 Str, +2 Will saves, AC -2), **Rotting Touch**

Combat Gear: Large Hide Armor +1, Large Heavy Shield +1.

Abilities: Str 26, Dex 12, Con -, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 12

SQ: **Craving (flesh)**, **Damage Reduction**, Darkvision 60 ft., **Fast Healing**, Fast Movement, Gray Toughness 2, Rage, Skills, Undead Traits

Feats: Multiattack, Power Attack.

Skills: Climb +9, Intimidate +3, Jump +5, Listen +6, Search +3, Sense Motive +4, Spot +6

Adventures in the Dead Lands

Possessions: 4,300 cp or combat gear plus: Amulet of Natural Armor +1.

Rotting Touch (Su): The creature's touch turns living plants into a useless, rotting mess. Within hours of the undead's touch, plants wither and die, fruits become inedible, and water even becomes sulfurous, dealing a creature that drinks it 1d4 points of nonlethal damage per gallon. The undead can make a touch attack against a plant creature, dealing 1d4 points of damage per CR (adjusted by special abilities and weaknesses).

Vulnerability to Blessed Elements (Ex): A thinking zombie takes half again as much (+50%) damage as normal from blessed elements.



Crodlu, Zombie CR 1

Neutral Evil Large Undead

Init: +4; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft

Languages: –

AC: 18, touch 13, flat footed 14
(-1 size, +4 Dex, +5 Natural)
hp 29 (4d12+3)

Damage Reduction: 5/Slashing

Immune: Undead Traits

Saves: Fort +1, Ref +5, Will +4

Speed: 50 ft (10 squares)

Melee: Slam +6 (1d8+5) or Claw +6 (1d6+5)

Full Melee: 2x Slam +6 (1d8+5) and Bite +1 (1d8+2) or
2 claws +6 (1d6+5) and Bite +1 (1d8+2)

Space: 10 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +2; **Grapple:** +11

Combat Options: –

Combat Gear: None

Abilities: Str 20, Dex 18, Con –, Int –, Wis 10, Cha 1
SQ: Damage Reduction 5/Slashing, Darkvision 60 ft.,
Single Actions Only

Feats: Toughness

Skills: –

Possessions: –



The Gristler CR 6

The Gristler, Elf Fael Rogue 5

Lawful Evil Medium Undead (Elf)

Init: +4; **Senses:** Low Light Vision; Listen +10, Spot +10

Aura: –

Languages: Elven, Common, Ulyanese

AC: 22, touch 14, flat footed 14; **Uncanny Dodge**
(+4 Dex, +4 armor, +4 natural armor)

hp 42 (5d12+10)

Damage Reduction: 5/magic;

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** **Phobia (Insects)**

Saves: Fort +1, Ref +8, Will +1; **Evasion**

Speed: 40 ft (8 squares)

Melee: Dagger +8 (1d4+2; 19-20/x2) or Bite +7 (2d6+2;
18-20/x3) or Claw +7 (1d6+2; 20/x2)

Full Melee: Dagger +8 (1d4+2; 19-20/x2) and Bite +5
(2d6+2; 18-20/x3) and Claw +5 (1d6+2; 20/x2)

Ranged: Crossbow +8 (1d8; Range 80 ft; 19-20/x2)

Space: 5 ft; **Reach:** 5 ft

Base Attack: +3; **Grapple:** +5

Combat Options: **Combat Reflexes** (4/round), **Sneak**
Attack (+3d6), **Disease (DC 14, filth fever 50% or red**
ache 50%)

Combat Gear: MW Dagger +1, MW Light Crossbow
with 50 obsidian bolts, Studded Leather Armor +1

Abilities: Str 15, Dex 18, Con –, Int 15, Wis 10, Cha 14

SQ: **Damage Reduction**, **Elf Traits**, **Enhanced Ability**
(feat), **Evasion**, **Gray Toughness 2**, **Phobia (Insects)**,
Trap Sense +1, **Trapfinding**, **Uncanny Dodge**,
Undead Traits.

Feats: **Combat Reflexes**, **Multiattack**, **Weapon Finesse**.

Skills: **Appraise +8**, **Bluff +10**, **Diplomacy +6**, **Disguise**
+10, **Forgery +4**, **Gather Information +8**, **Hide +10**,
Knowledge (Local - Tablelands) +6, **Listen +10**,
Move Silently +10, **Open Lock +6**, **Search +10**, **Sense**
Motive +8, **Sleight of Hand +8**, **Spot +10**, **Use Magic**
Device +10

Possessions: 4,300cp or **Combat Gear** plus: **potion-orb**
of **hide from undead**, **wand of acid arrow** (13
charges, labeled), **wand of inflict light wounds** (5
charges, labeled), **wand of magic missile** (CL 5th,
20 charges, labeled), **wand of shield** (10 charges,
labeled); 10 cp.

Disease (Su): The undead's natural attacks infect their
victims with a disease. A creature dealt damage by the
undead must make a Fortitude save or contract either
filth fever (50%) or **red ache (50%)**.

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Gristlers, Elven CR 1/2

Male or Female Elf Expert 1

Lawful Evil Medium Humanoid (Elf)

Init: +2; Senses: Low Light Vision

Languages: Elven, Common

AC: 14, touch 12, flat footed 12

(+2 Dex, +2 armor)

hp 4

Saves: Fort +0, Ref +2, Will +1

Speed: 40 ft (8 squares)

Melee: Heavy Mace +0 (1d8)

Ranged: Light Crossbow +2 (1d8; Range 80 ft; 19-20 x2)

Space: 5 ft; Reach: 5ft

Base Attack: +0; Grapple: +0

Combat Options: Combat Reflexes (2/round)

Combat Gear: Leather Armor, Obsidian Heavy Mace, light crossbow with 10 bolts.

Abilities: Str 11, Dex 14, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 8

SQ: Elf Traits

Feats: Combat Reflexes

Skills: Bluff +3, Handle Animal +1, Listen +3, Search +4, Sleight of Hand +6, Spot +3, Survival +3, Tumble +6

Possessions: Combat Gear plus potion-orb of *cure light wounds*



The Lurking Blood CR 14

CE Gargantuan Ooze

Initiative: -5; Senses: Blindsight 60 ft.; Listen +21, Spot -2

Languages: -

AC: 4, touch 4, flat-footed 4

(-4 size, -2 Dex)

hp 290 (20d10+180)

Immune: Ooze Traits, Necromantic Ooze; Weakness:

Vulnerability to Sunlight, Vulnerability to Turning

Saves: Fort +15, Ref +4, Will +6

Speed: 20 ft. (4 squares), Climb 20 ft.

Melee: Slam +20 melee (4d6+12 plus 3d6 Acid)

Space: 20 ft.; Reach: 20 ft.

Base Attack: +15; Grapple: +35

Combat Options: Acid (DC 29), Awesome Blow, Constrict, Energy Drain (DC 29), Great Cleave, Improved Grab, Power Attack

Abilities: Str 26, Dex 7, Con 28, Int 10, Wis 7, Cha 7

SQ: Blindsight 60 ft., Ooze Traits, Necromantic Ooze, Split and Reform, Vulnerability to Sunlight, Vulnerability to Turning.

Feats: Awesome Blow, Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Natural Attack (Slam)^B, Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (Slam).

Skills: Climb +18, Hide +10, Listen +21, Move Silently +21, Spot -2.

Advancement: 37-54 HD (Gargantuan)

Possessions: -

Environment: Underground Warm Aquatic or Marshes

Organization: Solitary

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 37-54 HD (Gargantuan)

Level Adjustment: -

Acid (Ex): The Lurking Blood secretes a digestive acid that dissolves organic material and metal quickly, but does not affect stone. Any melee hit or constrict attack deals acid damage, and the opponent's armor and clothing dissolve and become useless immediately unless they succeed on a Reflex save. A metal or wooden weapon that strikes the Lurking Blood also dissolves immediately unless it succeeds on a Reflex save. The save DCs are Constitution-based.

The Lurking Blood's acidic touch deals 21 points of damage per round to wooden or metal objects, but the ooze must remain in contact with the object for 1 full round to deal this damage.

Constrict (Ex): The Lurking Blood deals automatic slam and acid damage with a successful grapple check. The opponent's clothing and armor take a -4 penalty on Reflex saves against the acid.

Energy Drain (Su): Living creatures hit by the Lurking Blood's natural attacks gain one negative level. For each negative level bestowed, the Lurking Blood gains 5 temporary hit points. The Lurking Blood can use its energy drain ability once per round.

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Necromantic Ooze (Ex): Due to the Lurking Blood's exposure to the negative energy of the Dead Lands, it has gained traits normally associated with undead creatures.

- Immunity to all mind-affecting effects (charms, compulsions, phantasms, patterns, and morale effects).
- Immunity to poison, sleep effects, paralysis, stunning, disease, and death effects.
- Not subject to energy drain.

Skills: The Lurking Blood has a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks and can always choose to take 10 on a Climb check, even if rushed or threatened.

Split and Reform (Ex): Slashing and piercing weapons deal no damage to the Lurking Blood. Instead the creature splits into two identical puddings, each with half of the original's current hit points (round down). A pudding with 10 hit points or less cannot be further split and dies if reduced to 0 hit points.

The Lurking Blood can recombine any or all of its separated parts back into a single mass again as a Full-round action.

Vulnerability to Sunlight (Ex): direct sunlight (or magic which simulates sunlight), deals the Lurking Blood 1d6 points of damage each round.

Vulnerability to Turning (Ex): the Lurking Blood can be turned/rebuked as undead of its Hit Dice, but cannot be not controlled or destroyed.



Lurking Clot CR 8

CE Large Ooze

Initiative: -1; **Senses:** Blindsight 60 ft.; Listen +11, Spot -2

Languages: -

AC: 8, touch 8, flat-footed 8

(-1 size, -1 Dex)

hp 125 (10d10+100)

Immune: Ooze Traits, Necromantic Ooze; **Weakness:** Vulnerability to Sunlight, Vulnerability to Turning

Saves: Fort +10, Ref +3, Will +1

Speed: 20 ft. (4 squares), Climb 20 ft.

Melee: Slam +6 melee (2d6-1 plus 1d8 Acid)

Space: 15 ft.; **Reach:** 10 ft.

Base Attack: +7; **Grapple:** +10

Combat Options: Acid (DC 22), Cleave, Constrict, Energy Drain (DC 22), Improved Grab, Power Attack

Abilities: Str 9, Dex 9, Con 24, Int 10, Wis 7, Cha 7

SQ: Blindsight 60 ft., Ooze Traits, Necromantic Ooze, Split and Reform, Vulnerability to Sunlight, Vulnerability to Turning.

Feats: Cleave, Improved Natural Attack (Slam), Power Attack, Weapon Focus (Slam).

Skills: Climb +7, Hide -5, Listen +11, Move Silently +11, Spot -2.

Possessions: -

Environment: Underground Warm Aquatic or Marshes

Organization: Solitary

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 11-30 HD (Huge); 31-54 HD (Gargantuan)

Level Adjustment: -

Acid (Ex): A Lurking Clot secretes a digestive acid that dissolves organic material and metal quickly, but does not affect stone. Any melee hit or constrict attack deals acid damage, and the opponent's armor and clothing dissolve and become useless immediately unless they succeed on a Reflex save. A metal or wooden weapon that strikes a Lurking Clot also dissolves immediately unless it succeeds on a Reflex save. The save DCs are Constitution-based.

A Lurking Clot's acidic touch deals 21 points of damage per round to wooden or metal objects, but the ooze must remain in contact with the object for 1 full round to deal this damage.

Constrict (Ex): A Lurking Clot deals automatic slam and acid damage with a successful grapple check. The opponent's clothing and armor take a -4 penalty on Reflex saves against the acid.

Energy Drain (Su): Living creatures hit by a Lurking Clot's natural attacks gain one negative level. For each negative level bestowed, a Lurking Clot gains 5 temporary hit points. A Lurking Clot can use its energy drain ability once per round.

Necromantic Ooze (Ex): Due to a Lurking Clot's exposure to the negative energy of the Dead Lands, it

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has gained traits normally associated with undead creatures.

- Immunity to all mind-affecting effects (charms, compulsions, phantasms, patterns, and morale effects).
- Immunity to poison, sleep effects, paralysis, stunning, disease, and death effects.
- Not subject to energy drain.

Skills: A Lurking Clot has a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks and can always choose to take 10 on a Climb check, even if rushed or threatened.

Split and Reform (Ex): Slashing and piercing weapons deal no damage to a Lurking Clot. Instead the creature splits into two identical puddings, each with half of the original's current hit points (round down). A pudding with 10 hit points or less cannot be further split and dies if reduced to 0 hit points.

A Lurking Clot can recombine any or all of its separated parts back into a single mass again as a Full-round action.

Vulnerability to Sunlight (Ex): direct sunlight (or magic which simulates sunlight), deals a Lurking Clot 1d6 points of damage each round.

Vulnerability to Turning (Ex): A Lurking Clot can be turned/rebuked as undead of its Hit Dice but cannot be not controlled or destroyed.



Soldier Kank (Domestic), Zombie Bugdead CR3

NE Large Undead

Init: -1; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft., Tremorsense 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0.

Languages: -

AC: 14; touch 8, flat-footed 14

(-1 size, -1 Dex, +6 natural)

hp 13 (2 HD; 2d12)

Damage Reduction: 3/metal; **Resistance:** Fire 5

Immunities: Cold, Undead Traits

Saves: Fort +0, Ref -1, Will +3

Speed: 40 ft. (8 squares)

Melee: Bite +5 (1d8+7 plus poison)

Space: 10 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +1; **Grapple:** +10

Combat Options: Improved Grab, Poison (DC 11)

Abilities: Str 20, Dex 9, Con -, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 1

SQ: Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60 ft., Immunity to Cold and Electricity, Resistance to Fire 5, Tremorsense 60 ft., Undead Traits.

Feats: -

Skills: -

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a zombie bugdead kank must hit with its bite attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 11, initial and secondary damage 1d6 Str. The save DC is Constitution-based.



Swift Death Scouts CR 6

Male and Female Human Zhen Rogue 2 / Psychic Warrior 1

Neutral Evil Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Human, Psionic)

Init: +5; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft., Low-Light Vision; Listen +12, Spot +18

Aura: -

Languages: Classic Elven, Ulyanese

AC: 28, touch 14, flat-footed 24**

(+4 Dex, +4 armor, +10 Nat)

hp 23 (3d12+3); Fast Healing 3

Damage Reduction: 5/magic

Immune: Spells (Protection from Evil, Dispel Magic), Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Cast No Shadow, Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects

Saves: Fort +2, Ref +7, Will +5; Evasion

Speed: 30 ft (6 squares); Obsidian Climb

Melee: Alhulak +5 (1d6+3; 20/x3) or Dagger +4 (1d4+3; 19-20/x2) or Slam +4 (1d8+3; 20/x2)

Full: Melee Alhulak +5 (1d6+3; 20/x3) or 2x Slam +4 (1d8+3; 20/x2)

Ranged: Lt. Crossbow +6 (1d8; Range 80 ft.; 19-20/x2) or Javelin +5 (1d6+3; Range 30 ft.; 20/x2)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft. (10 ft. w/ Alhulak)

Base Attack: +1; **Grapple:** +4

Combat Actions: Point Blank Shot, Psionic Shot (+1d6), Sneak Attack (+1d6)

Adventures in the Dead Lands

Combat Gear: Bolts x50, Javelin x6, Leather Armor +1 and cap, MW Light Crossbow (mounted on Glider), MW Alhulak, Obsidian Dagger x6, Cholute Glider (see Chapter 6 - New Magic Items)

Psionics: (ML 1st, 1 Power Point/Day)
Level 1: Metaphysical Weapon

Psi-Like Abilities (ML 3rd, DC Charisma Based): At will—aura sight*, body adjustment*, body equilibrium, catfall*, control light, elfsight**, false sensory input*, psionic charm*, psionic daze*, psionic suggestion*, ubiquitous vision**. ML = HD. The save DCs are Charisma-based. *Power can be augmented.

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 3rd, DC Charisma Based): At will - whispering wind.

Abilities: Str 17, Dex 18, Con -, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 13
SQ: Cast **No Shadow**, Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60 ft., **Enhanced Ability (bonus feat)**, **Enhanced Senses**, Evasion, Fast Healing 3, Gray toughness 1, Low-Light Vision, Obsidian Climb, **Spell Immunity**, Trapfinding, Undead Traits, Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects
Feats: Aerial Pilot, Dodge ^B, Point Blank Shot, Psionic Shot ^B
Skills: Balance +9, Climb +8, Hide +8, Jump +8, Knowledge (geography) +2, Listen +12, Move Silently +8, Ride +9, Search +16, Sense Motive +11, Spot +18, Use Rope +9
Possessions: 2500 cp or combat gear plus: psionic tattoo of *Psionic Levitate* (ML 3rd), psionic tattoo of *know direction and location* (ML 1st) x2.



Worker Kank, Exoskeleton Bugdead CR 1

NE Medium Undead
Init: -1; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft., Tremorsense 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0.
Languages: -

AC: 12; touch 9, flat-footed 12 (-1 size, -1 Dex, +6 natural)
hp 6 (1 HD; 1d12)
Immunities: Cold, Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Brittle
Saves: Fort +0, Ref -1, Will +2

Speed: 15 ft. (3 squares)
Melee: Bite +1 (1d6+1 plus poison)
Full Melee: Bite +1 (1d6+1 plus poison)
Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.
Base Attack: +0; **Grapple:** +1
Combat Options: Improved Grab

Abilities: Str 12, Dex 8, Con -, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 1
SQ: Brittle, Darkvision 60 ft., Immunity to Cold, Tremorsense 60 ft., Undead Traits.
Feats: -
Skills: -

Brittle (Ex): Bludgeoning weapons deal an additional 2 points of damage per die to exoskeleton bugdead.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a zombie bugdead kank must hit with its bite attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity.



Xemoķepper, Undead CR 9

NE Large Undead (Augmented Magical Beast, Aquatic, Psionic)
Init: +5; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft., Low-Light Vision, Scent; Listen +11, Search +9, Spot +17
Aura: -
Languages: -

AC: 27; touch 10, flat-footed 26** (-1 size, +1 Dex, +17 Nat)
hp 30, usually 60 (8 HD; 8d12+8); **Fast Healing:** 3
Damage Reduction: 15/magic; **Turn Resistance** (+2; as 10 HD undead)
Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects
Saves: Fort +9, Ref +7, Will +7

Speed: 20 ft., Swim 30 ft.; Obsidian Climb
Melee: Tentacle Slam +14 (1d8+7) or Bite +14 (1d8+7)
Full Melee: 2x Tentacle Slam +14 (1d8+7) and Bite +9 (1d8+3)
Space: 10 ft.; **Reach:** 10 ft.
Base Attack: +8; **Grapple:** +27
Combat Options: Constrict (2d6+10), Improved Grab, Trample (DC 21; 2d6+10)

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Psi-Like Abilities: At will - aura sight*, body adjustment*, body equilibrium, catfall*, control light, elfsight**, false sensory input*, psionic charm*, psionic daze*, psionic suggestion*, ubiquitous vision**. ML = HD. The save DCs are Charisma-based. *Power can be augmented.

Abilities: Str 25, Dex 12, Con 17, Int 5, Wis 14, Cha 18
SQ: Amphibious, Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60 ft., Enhanced Senses**, Fast Healing 3, Gray Toughness, Low-Light Vision, Obsidian Climb, Scent, Turn Resistance, Undead Traits, Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects.

Feats: Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Track.

Skills: Hide +6(+20), Listen +11, Search +9, Sense Motive +10, Spot +17, Survival +4, Swim +15.

Environment: Warm Aquatic or Marshes

Organization: Solitary or pair

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always neutral

Advancement: 9-16 HD (Large); 17-24 HD (Huge)

Level Adjustment: -

Amphibious (Ex): Xemokeppers can breathe both air and water, although they rarely travel more than a few feet from the water's edge.

Constrict (Ex): With a successful grapple check, a xemokepper can crush a grabbed opponent, dealing bludgeoning damage equal to bite damage of one size category larger (1d8 @ Large → 2d6 @ Huge) plus 1.5x its Strength modifier.

Improved Grab (Ex): If a xemokepper hits an opponent that is at least one size category smaller than itself with a tentacle attack, it deals normal damage and attempts to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it gets a hold, it

also constricts in the same round. Thereafter, the xemokepper has the option to conduct the grapple normally, or simply use its tentacle to hold the opponent (-20 penalty on grapple check, but the xemokepper is not considered grappled). In either case, each successful grapple check it makes during successive rounds automatically deals tentacle damage. Xemokeppers have a +8 racial bonus on grapple checks

Scent (Ex): In either air or water, a xemokepper can detect approaching enemies, sniff out hidden foes, and track by sense of smell.

Skills: A xemokepper has a +8 racial bonus on any Swim check to perform some special action or avoid a hazard. It can always choose to take 10 on a Swim check, even if distracted or endangered. It can use the run action while swimming, provided it swims in a straight line. A xemokepper receives a +20 bonus on Hide checks when submerged in silt/mud (underwater) or water (against land-bound foes).

Trample (Ex): When trampling, a xemokepper deals bludgeoning damage equal to bite damage of one size category larger (1d8 @ Large → 2d6 @ Huge) plus 1.5x its Strength modifier, with a DC (10 + ½ HD + Str modifier) Reflex save for half damage.

Zhen: Zhen that were not originally a Giant, Humanoid or Monstrous Humanoid are possible but have some differences from humanoid Zhen:

- Turn Resistance +2: Non-Humanoid Zhen are harder to Turn/Reubke than one might expect. This replaces the Rebuke Undead ability.



Appendix 2: New Feats & Items

New Feats

Aerial Pilot [General]

You have spent countless hours riding flying creatures and/or piloting personal flying devices, such as the gliders Cholite Marauders use.

Benefit: You gain a +5 bonus to Ride checks when riding a flying mount. You may also use Ride checks to pilot personal flying devices, you do not take non-proficiency penalties when flying with such devices, and you do not automatically plummet if you fail a Ride check while flying such devices. (*see the Cholite Glider entry in Ch10 Part 2 – New Magic Items.*)

Normal: You take a -10 penalty to Ride checks to pilot a glider, and you plummet if you fail a Ride check to pilot a glider.

New Items

Cholite Glider

(from Faces of the Dead Lands)

Cholite gliders provide a clear example of how far Ulyanese technology advanced before the Cleansing Wars and Boiling Ruin destroyed everything. Skin membranes stretch over a complex lattice of bone wings controlled from a backpack like leather harness with connected pulleys.

Riding Air over Dead Glass

When not in use, the wings can be disassembled and contained within a large backpack but with about 10 rounds of assembly, the glider achieves its full wingspan of 20' of leather, bone, and skin. Resembling pterax wings, the psionically empowered gliders are far stronger than their base materials would normally allow.

Taking off, controlling and landing a glider involve making a Ride check. A failed Ride check may send the glider in a random direction (ST determines, roll 1d8 to determine their new facing) and causes them to lose 10-30 feet per round (1d3 x 10) until they make another successful Ride check. A failed takeoff or landing check

results in a crash, causing 3d6 damage to both the pilot and the glider and stunning the pilot for 1d6 rounds.

Without the appropriate training (via the Aerial Pilot feat, *see Ch10 Part 3 – New Feats*), users who have been shown or puzzled out the basic use of a glider suffer a -10 penalty to their takeoff, control, and landing checks. Failure of any Ride check will result in the novice falling from whatever height they reached, inflicting falling damage (1d6 points of damage for every 10 feet fallen, to a maximum of 20d6) to the pilot and glider, possibly destroying the glider on impact. Due to centuries of practice and training the undead of the Cholite Marauders do not suffer these penalties. Trained pilots fly the glider with Average maneuverability, untrained pilots can only achieve Poor maneuverability.

Given typical wind speeds of 10-30 mph along the smooth obsidian plains and low hills of the Dead Lands, it is possible for a human-sized (Medium) glider pilot to achieve standing takeoff through the use of *levitation* or flight effects and a successful Ride check (DC 20), or by being pulled along behind a mount or vehicle, often cavalry or a chariot (Ride check, DC 15).

Any magic or psionics that controls wind or moves a body (including *levitate*) can be used to add additional forward or upwards propulsion. Flying with the wind (DM discretion) causes the glider to not lose altitude, flying against the wind requires a DC 20 Ride check, and causes the glider to descend an extra 10 feet per round, though psionic or magic lift negates this loss of altitude.

Typically, a glider pilot rises on the wind, floating upwards and backwards (30 feet up and 5 feet back per round) until they've reached a height of at least 90-150' (which will typically take 3-5 rounds), though for long journeys they may rise as high as 1,000'. After reaching the desired altitude, the glider flies with a forward movement speed of at least 60' per round while losing 10' of height, but they can choose to increase this to as much as 120' per round while losing 20' of height.

Aerial Battles

While in flight, a glider pilot can attack with one-handed ranged weapons or ranged spells or powers. Ranged weapons may also be mounted on the glider for use by the pilot. All ranged attacks made while piloting a glider suffer a -2 penalty (possibly offset by

Adventures in the Dead Lands

the +1 bonus on melee attacks for being on higher 'ground'). The pilot is considered to have Soft Cover, providing a +4 bonus to AC but no bonus on Reflex saves, nor allowing the pilot to make a Hide check.

The pilot can choose to dive bomb targets with melee weapons if they wish, which is treated as a Charge. The Cholite Marauder gains a +4 bonus to Move Silently checks to attack from surprise in this way.

Glider pilots can also attempt to "snatch" targets off the ground (see the Glider Snatch feat, *see Ch10 Part 3 – New Feats*). Due to centuries of practice and training the undead of the Cholite Marauders do not suffer these penalties.

The gliders have been psionically hardened to an AC of 18 (plus the pilot's Dexterity bonus), a hardness of 5 and they can suffer 30 points of damage before being rendered unable to fly. Some of the most skilled raiders have figured out how to produce superior gliders reinforced with better materials, psionics, and/or magic. These gliders may have ACs as high as 25, as many as 60 hit points, and a hardness of 10. The techniques of constructing, hardening, and repairing these gliders is a jealously guarded secret preserved by oral tradition amongst the Cholite Marauding tribes.

While gliders are specifically enhanced to be harder to tear, they are not meant to be used during glass storms.

Gliders are considered to have a hardness 20 against most environmental effects but have hardness 0 against glass and obsidian storms.

Cost 900 cp.

Greater Ring Gate

Minor Artifact

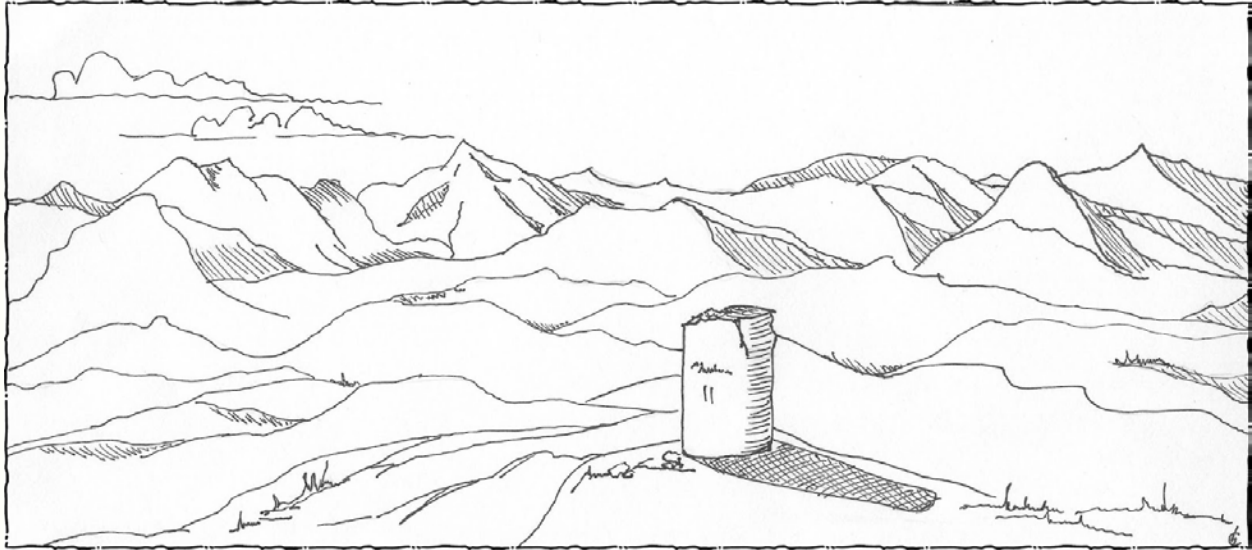
Greater ring gates function much like standard *ring gates* but are much more powerful. Like *ring gates*, they always come in pairs – two iron rings, normally each about 10 feet in diameter, but the rings may be anywhere on the same plane of existence to function. Whatever is put through one ring comes out the other, and an unlimited amount of material can be transferred each day. Like *ring gates*, these devices allow for instantaneous transport of items, creatures, messages, and even attacks. A character can reach through to grab things near the other ring, or even stab a weapon through if so desired. Alternatively, a character could stick his head through to look around. A spellcaster could even cast a spell through a ring gate. Each ring has an "entry side" and an "exit side," both marked with appropriate symbols.

Strong conjuration; CL 20th; Weight 200 lb. each.



A Fool's Errand for the Tohr-Kreen

The Bugdead Cycle, part 1



A Dark Sun 3.5e adventure module for four 12th-level characters

A tohr-kreen sage has requested the PC's aid. Having heard tell of another race of sentient insectoids, he wishes to investigate these rumors and will explore deep into the unfamiliar territory of the Dead Lands to do so...

Credits

WRITING

Henry Giff, Zach McKean

EDITING

Adam Cieszlak, Zach McKean

IMAGES AND MAPS

Toren Atkinson, Scott Harshabarger, Yanick Moreau, Charles Simpson

GRAPHICS AND LAYOUTS

Jack Meyer

PLAYTESTERS

Zsolt

Introduction

A Fool's Errand for the Tohr-Kreen is a short D&D adventure for four 12th-level player characters (PCs). Consult the Scaling the Adventure sidebar for ways to modify the scenario for higher or lower levels of play.

Characters that are or are not familiar with or the Dead Lands may be used in this scenario. It is set in the southern Tablelands and western Dead Lands. DMs are encouraged to adapt some of the details to their players and campaign.

Developer's notes

The initial concept for this "Apocalypse Now" style adventure was easy to come up with, but the details required to make this adventure have the correct feel required a lot of research into all different sources of canon and fanon for the Kreen. Fortunately, we found just the right writers to make this happen—Henry Giff's writing and insights really helped these characters come alive. -JM

Preparation

You (the DM) will need the 3rd edition revised D&D core rulebooks, including the *Player's Handbook*, the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*, as well as the *Expanded Psionics Handbook*. This adventure also uses material from *Faces of the Dead Lands*, *Secrets of the Dead Lands*, *Terrors of the Dead Lands*, and the *Dark Sun 3.5 conversion* rulebook from Athas.org, but all necessary rules are already included.

Adventure Background

With the opening of the Great Rift, the Kreen Empire has become more ambitious in its explorations of the lands above the Jagged Cliffs. Its scouts and explorers have become aware of the Dead Lands and are determined to learn more. Although Kreen abhor the undead, the more curious among Kreen society recognize that the Dead Lands may contain a wealth of

knowledge – if only they can find a way to safely explore it.

Agents of the Kreen have become aware that deep in the Dead Lands there are new types of undead insects, some of which seem to be intelligent. They have begun planning an incredibly dangerous expedition to learn the secrets of these hereto unknown insect-folk.

Led by a zik-chil "priest of change" and making use of several of their tohr-kreen (zik-trin'ta) scouts already in the Tablelands, the Kreen have already made several disastrous forays into the Dead Lands. The Dead Lands are incredibly treacherous for Kreen, as the reanimation into undeath renders them murderously berserk. Therefore, the Kreen are seeking the assistance of non-insectoid mercenaries.

Overview

A very rare visitor has come looking for the PCs. One of the most senior sages of the Kreen Empire has explicitly requested the PC's aid, having heard tell of another race of sentient insectoids who may possibly be long lost distant relatives of the Kreen, and must see them for himself. Unfortunately, this involves a dangerously deep dive into the unfamiliar territory of the Dead Lands...

This adventure can be an introduction to the Dead Lands for PCs who have never ventured there, or it can be used as a return trip to introduce new areas of the Dead Lands and especially the bugdead.

Designed to occur after the events of Free Year 10, the adventure ties in with the increased exploratory activity of the Kreen Empire. PCs may or may not know much about the Kreen Empire, but the adventure should work either way. If the PCs have not previously encountered the Kreen Empire, this adventure will give them awareness of the complexity and intrigue in the Kreen Empire but can be run so that it spoils very little about that world.

In Part I, the PCs are introduced to a number of individuals from the Kreen Empire, including the great tohr-kreen scientist Tet'ka'cha, all of whom are traveling to the edge of the Dead Lands to mount a scientific expedition. They will face a brutal desert ambush and encounter a thri-kreen tribe that hunts

Adventures in the Dead Lands

Glossary

A number of tohr-kreen and thri-kreen names and words are used throughout this adventure. Here is a helpful glossary to keep them straight:

- **Tet'ka'cha**, the tohr-kreen scientist who recruited the PCs for the expedition
- **Zerchakak**, a taciturn tohr-kreen psionicist who accompanies the PCs into the Dead Lands
- **Jalath'gak**, a creature resembling a giant mosquito or fly with a 20-foot wingspan
- **Tondi**, an unusual subspecies of purple thri-kreen
- **Hak'trin**, undead thri-kreen
- **Hak'dre'kalak**, a pack of thri-kreen living near the Dead Lands who have devoted their lives to hunting undead
- **Zik'chil**, the mysterious and extremely powerful priests of the kreen empire.
- **S'thag Zagath**, an ancient race of crab-like beings, the Zagath are the secret rulers of the Buglands and leaders of the bugdead.
- **Ahnthyarka**, a powerful undead S'thag Zagath necromancer and ruler of the bugdead of the Shale Lands

Should the DMs need more words, consult *Thri-kreen of Athas* for a more complete lexicon.

undead before confronting an evil necromancer who possesses some knowledge of the Dead Lands.

In Part II, the PCs visit the kreen encampment, a base camp for the scientific expedition that they have been hired to support. Here they will formulate a plan to enter the Dead Lands (the kreen are in favor of making a flying entrance) and travel first to Small Home which the Kreen mistakenly believe may be a place of refuge.

In Part III, after finding an unexpected resting place, the PCs travel onward to the Shale Lands. Here, they will experience a shocking betrayal, enroute to encountering Ahnthyarka, the powerful leader of the Shale Lands' bugdead, who will present the PCs with an unthinkable dilemma if they want to escape the Dead Lands alive.

Adventure Hooks

As DM, you know best how to involve your players and their characters in an adventure. This adventure is designed to begin at a waypoint just east of Celik, although it may take some effort for the PCs to get there. You can use the following adventure hooks to spur your imagination, modifying them as necessary to make them appropriate for the characters' interests and activities.

- As a fairly high-level party, the PCs may have already made powerful thri-kreen allies. If so, perhaps one of these thri-kreen reaches out to the PCs because he believes they would be well-suited for an important mission, and encourages them to rendezvous with an important leader amongst his

Scaling the Adventure

A Fool's Errand for the Tohr-Kreen is designed for a party of four 12th-level adventurers, but it can be easily modified to present an appropriate challenge for parties of different sizes or levels.

Consider adapting the adventure for PCs of average levels 7 to 11 by adding effective positive or negative levels to the creatures in each encounter to change their effective Challenge Rating. A creature takes the following penalties/bonuses for each positive/negative level it has gained:

- +/-1 on all skill checks and ability checks.
- +/-1 on attack rolls and saving throws.
- +/-5 hit points.
- +/-1 effective level (whenever the creature's level is used in a die roll or calculation, reduce it by one for each negative level).
- If the creature casts spells, she gains/loses one spell slot of her highest-level spells. (If she has more than one spell at her highest level, she chooses which she gains/loses.) In addition, when she next prepares spells or regains spell slots, she gets one more/less spell slot at her highest spell level. If the creature is a manifester, she gains/loses enough power points to manifest her highest-level power once.

Adventures in the Dead Lands

people, the tohr-kreen Tet'ka'cha at the waystone on an appointed day.

- Perhaps the party has signed on as caravan guards for a journey to Celik. Upon arrival they learn that a request has been made for hearty adventurers to undertake a lucrative quest. They are instructed to meet the tohr-kreen at the waystone on an appointed day.
- Perhaps the PCs hear rumors in their travels that a call has been put out for mercenary support, but that no group in Celik has been found suitable. This should be an intriguing rumor, as Celik is

known for tough adventurers, and rumors will also say that the offered purse is supposedly getting quite large.

- If the party has already ventured to the Dead Lands, Tet'ka'cha will have specifically sought them out for their knowledge of the Dead Lands and is looking for partners with experience for his expedition.

Part 1: The Journey South

The adventure begins when the heroes meet at the rendezvous point. Their instructions are unusually specific – to meet 600 yards to the south of Waystone 11, a relatively well-known landmark on the road from Verdant Promise Oasis to Celik. If it is the Year of Priest's Contemplation (FY 12), there is a visible lunar conjunction on the evening of the 26th of Fortuary, which would be an excellent date for the rendezvous, but the meeting can be set in any year and on any date. A party with good directions or working knowledge about the route to Celik should be able to locate the spot without trouble.

Waystone 11

Waystone 11 is an ancient, round, 10-foot-tall plinth of stone, standing alone in the southern deserts of the Tablelands. Made from basalt and carved with only "Waystone 11" in what has been identified as an ancient manner of rendering the Common script. Waystone 11 has become a familiar and convenient landmark for those traveling to or from Celik. Located a little less than 10 miles south from Verdant Promise Oasis, it provides no shade and stands near no source of water.

Magic and psionics, if used (and have been, over the centuries), will reveal that it was the 11th waystone marker on the route between the cities of Indrunay and Taurangis and was placed more than 2000 years ago.

1) The Rendezvous (EL -)

You reach Waystone 11 and turn south into the desert. Though the sun set several hours ago, the sky is clear and bright: the twin moons of Ral and Guthay, crescents this particular evening, are slowly edging toward each other in the sky and clearly illuminating the sandy ground below in pale golden light. There are obvious trail signs showing that others have recently trod this path. Fresh footprints and wagon tracks plainly lead south from the way post, and a wisp of smoke from a campfire can be seen directly to the south.

Keen-eyed PCs can discern (Spot or Survival check, DC 18) that the smoke is likely from a source about 600 yards away. As the PCs might know (past experience or a Knowledge - Nature check, DC 14), that seems somewhat odd, as the kreen don't typically make campfires, but tohr-kreen (Knowledge - Nature check, DC 18), like the one they are set to meet this evening, are different than their thri-kreen brethren: more civilized, in the eyes of non-kreen at least. As they draw nearer, it soon becomes apparent to the PCs that the fire was not set by kreen at all.

When they arrive at the rendezvous spot, the PCs may be surprised to discover two other adventuring parties. The first is a group of five dwarven ex-gladiators led by Vibia: a female dwarf and one-time champion of Balic's Criterion arena who escaped to Celik years ago. The second party is a more motley crew; conversation reveals them to be from Raam originally: a half-elf preserver (Mumtaz), a dwarven Earth cleric (Jahan),

Adventures in the Dead Lands



two human brother-and-sister thieves (rogues, Tradvam and Lanath) and a halfling fighter (Plool).

The PCs may suspect that these adventuring parties have also been summoned to meet the tohr-kreen – this is in fact correct – and if they approach the two other groups on this basis, they will receive a cautious but non-hostile welcome. Of course, the parties' reactions depend on how the PCs approach them. The PCs will likely be able to assess (Sense Motive, DC 20) that both parties are not novices, but that aside from Vibia, they are mostly less experienced than the PCs.

If the party engages in conversation with the two groups, they could learn the following:

- They have also been summoned to undertake a dangerous quest or mission for a tohr-kreen.
- They know that the mission is likely to have a lucrative purse.
- They believe the mission is to go far to the south. Both groups have heard various rumors about the south: It is extremely deadly. It is extremely hot. It is extremely cold. Older adventurers say that the south used to be empty, but that now there are increasing rumors of activity in the region.

- The other parties are largely not thrilled about the idea of teaming up. Each believes they'll be able to handle the mission without help.

If any PC has been keeping guard, they will eventually realize that the parties are being watched at a distance by a pack of thri-kreen. If there are no guards, then the party will be surprised by the appearance of a pack of thri-kreen atop a nearby dune. Regardless, Tet'ka'cha has arrived.

A pack of about a dozen thri-kreen silently stand atop a nearby dune. Even at this distance, the campfire dances across the facets of their inscrutable insect eyes. When they cease milling about, one creature clearly stands above the rest. It is not just his size, though he is nearly two feet taller than the others, nor the elaborate backpack he wears, nor the fact that the other thri-kreen watch him for guidance that sets him apart. His bearing sets him apart, making it obvious to even the uninitiated that he is the type of creature known as tohr-kreen, a mantis noble, as some even have called them.

Adventures in the Dead Lands

While the eyes of the thri-kreen never waver from those of you around the campfire, the tohr-kreen looks toward the sky, studying the arc of the moons and staring at the constellations. He abruptly reaches down with one of his central arms and his claws shoot into the sand, grabbing a small lizard. He studies the creature briefly, then sets it down and looks back at the campfire, almost as if he'd forgotten it was there for a moment.

The thor-kreen slowly approaches and calls out to the groups: *"Thank you for gathering here this evening." Though his voice is unmistakably that of a mantis-folk, he speaks the common tongue as smoothly as any kreen you've ever heard. "I am Tet'ka'cha. It is I who have summoned you here, for I need aid on the most important expedition I've ever undertaken."*

When Tet'ka'cha has finished introducing himself, proceed to Encounter #2 – An Unusual Commission, below.

2) An Unusual Commission (EL -)

Tet'ka'cha will explain his mission. He is part of a great scientific expedition that, he believes, is on the cusp of discovering a new species of insect-folk. He believes this expedition is of incredible importance. Unfortunately, the mission has proved especially treacherous for kreen, and he is in need of humans and demihumans to support the expedition. The reason, he will say, is they have encountered a strange type of necromantic magic that makes kreen go insane.

When asked about payment, Tet'ka'cha will reveal a bag of gems - one gem each for everyone assembled - each worth 5000 cp (Appraise check, DC 15 to confirm) to those who agree to accompany him on this journey, with the promise of much more to come upon completion.

The journey will have two parts: First, they must venture far to the south, about 80 miles south of Celik, to where the kreen have a base camp for their explorations. Along the way, Tet'ka'cha must meet up with some companions who are joining the expedition from the West. Tet'ka'cha will explain that he hopes to gather some additional information on his way to the encampment. Then, at the base camp, they will develop a detailed plan to investigate the new species of insect-folk.

He will encourage the groups to take a moment to decide whether they want to participate. Proceed to Encounter #3 – Dune Reaper Assault, below.

3) Dune Reaper Assault (EL 13+)

Dune Reaper, Drone (CR 6) 5x – See Appendix

Dune Reaper, Warrior (CR 7) 2x – See Appendix

Dune Reaper, Matron (CR 8) 1x – See Appendix

The party of dwarves wander about 100 paces to the east, while the Raamites venture about 100 paces to the west, so that everyone can discuss the tohr-kreen's offer. Suddenly, as everyone is deliberating, a howl pierces the night sky to the east. Then another, and another. One of the Rammites yells out: *"Sand howlers!"*

The dwarves snap to attention, as do the kreen, and everyone watches the eastern dunes as the howls continue. After a few minutes, with all other eyes focused east, Tet'ka'cha abruptly spins around and emits a series of loud clicks and whirrs. A warning - but one sent too late. Behind the thieves from Raam, who had slunk back as far as possible from the howls, two enormous creatures leap from behind the dunes with a burst of sand.

Heads whip around and the giant mandibles and sword-like limbs of the two creatures are visible as they fall upon the rogues, mauling them before they can even grab the blades at their sides. The howls of the sand howlers are joined by the fearsome wail of the blade-limbed creatures, creating an awful chorus, a desert dirge.

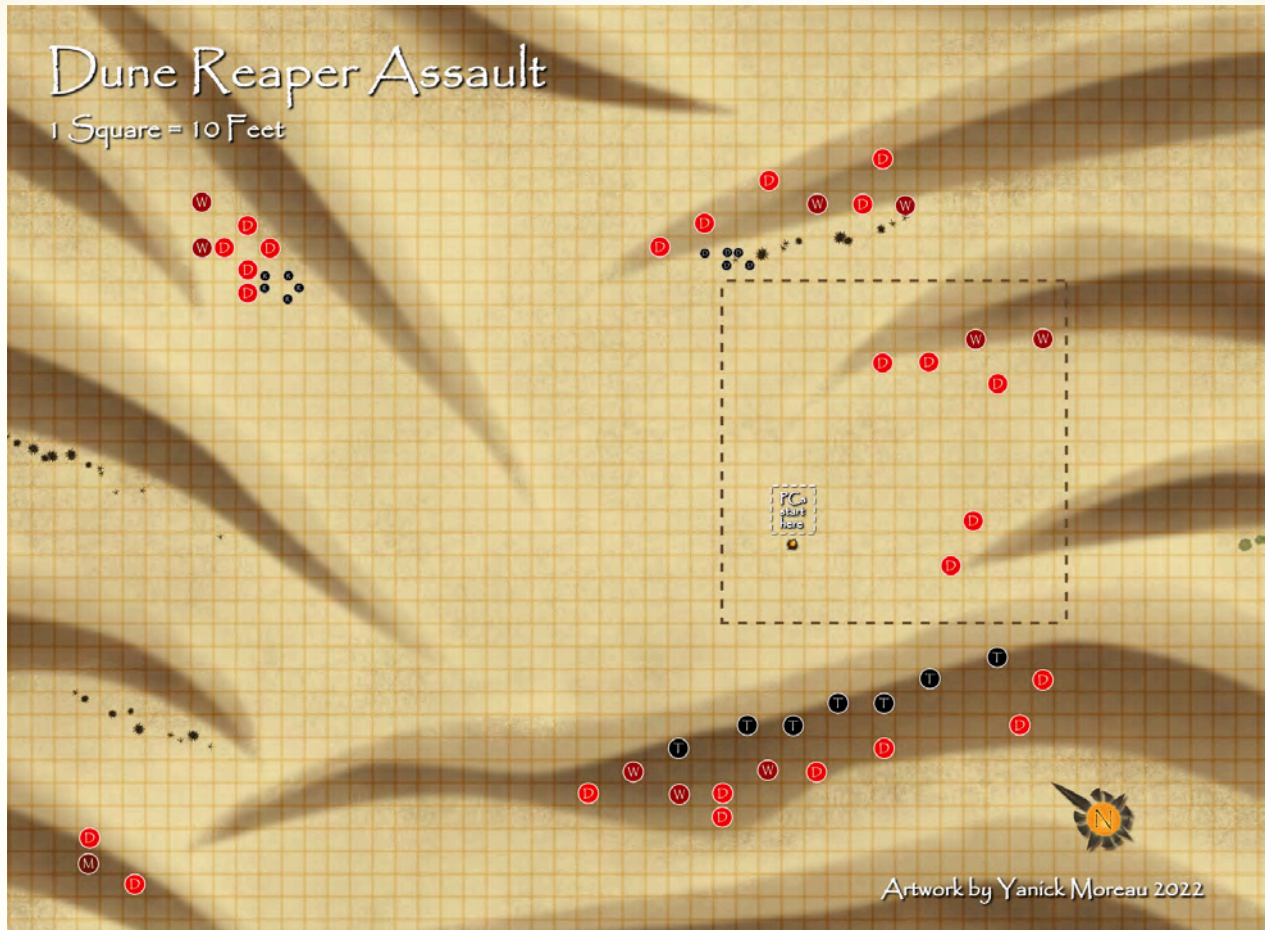
More wails join the chorus from over the dune, as further creatures come into view.

The blade-limbed creatures are dune reapers and the Rammite thieves are dead. No sand howlers have made an appearance to the east, but a large pride of dune reapers has attacked from the west.

Tactics: The dune reaper pack consists of the following:

- The two warriors that attacked the thieves (Tradvam and Lanath) and five drones that are moving to surround the Raamites to the west. It

Adventures in the Dead Lands



will take quick action to save this group from death – with two of their number dead, they are already outnumbered. Dune reapers are faster than dwarves and halflings, so only the half-elf preserver can possibly run away.

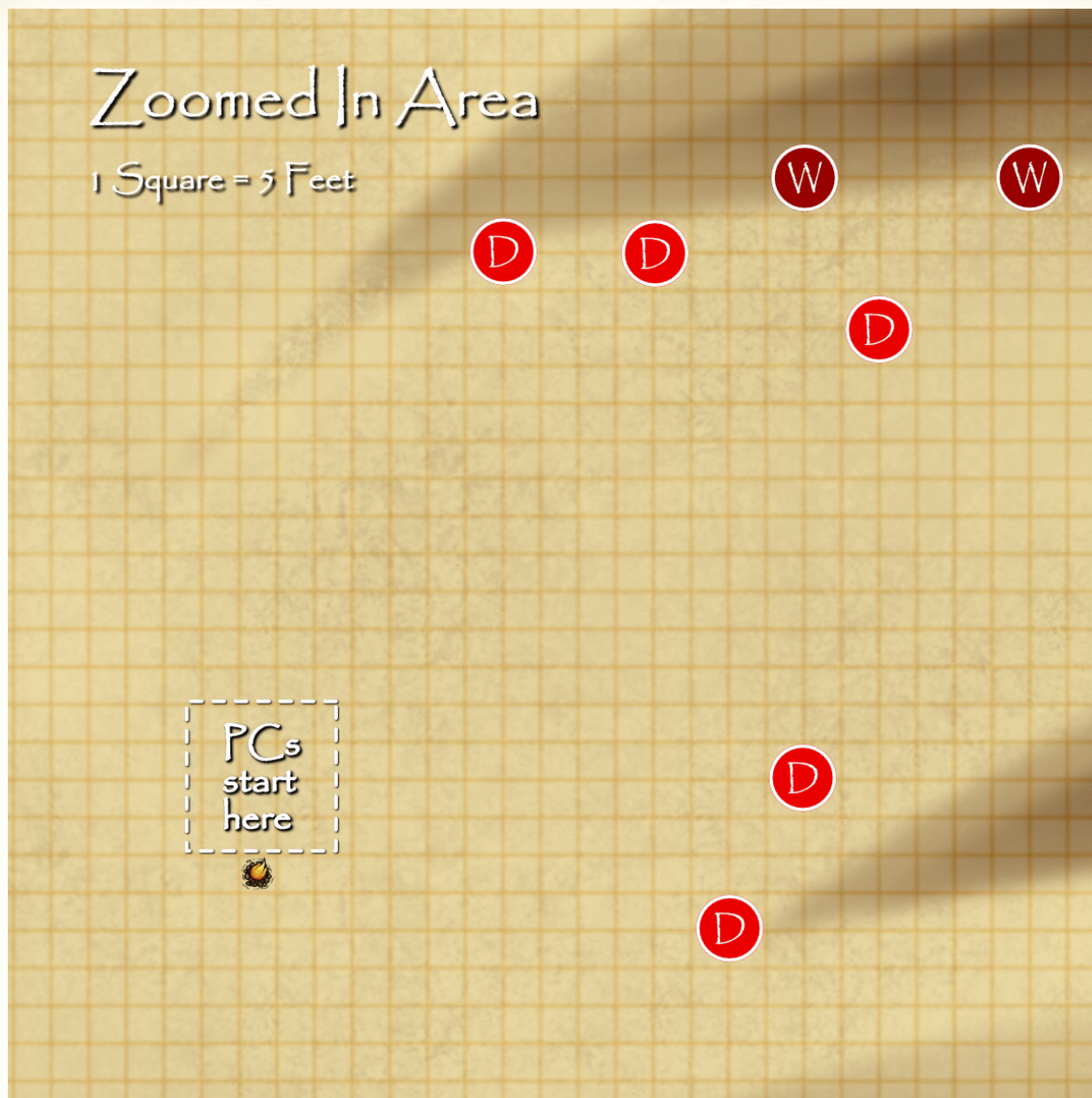
- Two warriors and five drones that will charge toward the dwarves to the east
- Three warriors and seven drones attacking the thri-kreen pack to the south.
- Two warriors and five drones that will charge the PCs.

The DM can run this combat however they like and should of course adjust based on how the PCs respond, but the following outcomes are likely: (Note that no sand howlers will ever appear; more on that later.)

- Round 1: The Raamites are immediately engaged in combat and outnumbered. The half-elf (Mumtaz) will retreat toward the PCs, but the dwarf (Jahan) and halfling (Plool) are not fast enough to escape and are immediately attacked.
- Round 2: The PCs, dwarves, and kreen will have this last round to prepare before the reapers are

upon them. The thri-kreen launch a barrage of chatkchas at the dune reapers approaching them. Tet'ka'cha throws a vicious kyorkcha but can also be witnessed looking away from the approaching reapers and studying the dunes to the south.

- Round 3: Of the Raamites, the halfling Plool is likely dead. One dune reaper warrior and its two drones have turned upon the dwarf, while the others chase the half-elf back toward the center of the melee. This round, the reapers crash into the dwarves, thri-kreen and the PCs, and the battle likely begins in earnest.
- Round 4: Full-fledged combat from all parties.
- Round 5: If the PCs have not moved to assist, one dwarf gladiator will have fallen. The PCs are likely too occupied with their own set of attackers to support the other groups. Tet'ka'cha will call out: *"The pride is led by a matron, we must find her and stop her. She is just beyond this southwestern dune."*
- From here, the PCs actions can greatly affect the outcome of the battle. It will take Tet'ka'cha two rounds to get a line of sight on the matron unless the PCs find a way to attack her first. When he first



is able to see her, he will attack with his kyorkcha and then charge upon her with his gythka. When hit by the kyorkcha (or direct attack from the PCs) the matron will call all her warriors and drones to her defense. This will allow everyone else to attack the flanks of the dune reapers for a round or two.

Development: If the matron is killed, the remaining dune reapers may flee or continue to fight (as the DM wishes, depending on the PCs' status).

In the absence of specific PC heroics to save the other groups, it's likely that only Vibia and one or two other dwarves have survived. Tet'ka'cha should survive the

encounter. He's faster than the dune reapers and if grievously injured, he can leap to a safe distance and continue to make attacks with his kyorkcha.

The PCs will now likely (Listen or Wisdom check, DC 5) realize that the howls of the sand howlers have ceased and no such beasts were ever encountered. (If they choose to look, they will discover no sand howler tracks.)

Tet'ka'cha and the thri-kreen will become engaged in a vigorous, clicking conversation.

Adventures in the Dead Lands

You stand amid the mangled bodies of the dune reapers, tending wounds and assessing the extent of the damage and destruction. Tet'ka'cha approaches and speaks:

"This is very unusual. Dune reapers are known for lying in wait to attack, but not for making surprise attacks. They are not particularly quiet beasts when they move, but the constant howls of a pack of sand howlers are loud and constant enough that they could cover the reapers approach. It was as if the sand howlers and dune reapers were acting in coordination, but this is inconceivable. The sand howler, despite its somewhat canid appearance, is in fact, more closely related to lizards..."

Tet'ka'cha rambles off into a long-discursive discussion of the ecology of sand howlers and dune reapers, noting details like that dune reapers are matriarchal while sand howlers are led by the largest male. He goes on this way for some time, concluding with the thought that "...and the sand howlers, I would think, would be easier prey for the dune reapers than we are, so it's perplexing they wouldn't have gone after them."

One of the thri-kreen, probably the leader of the remaining pack, will interrupt in broken common. *"Tet'ka'cha know much. I know little. I know this. Reaper beasts followed from south. Reaper beasts live south. Reaper beasts no live here. South is death. I protect my clutch now. We no return to this place. People here - your clutch now. Protect Tet'ka'Cha."*

The PCs may recognize this as an unusual exchange. The thri-kreen clearly revere the great tohr-kreen, but they are determined to depart, and he will allow them to do so. He will help tend to the wounded thri-kreen before they depart, and he will not discourage the PCs from speaking to the thri-kreen if they wish. They may learn the following:

- Tet'ka'cha insists that they must head south immediately. He will explain that they have a journey of 80 miles ahead of them and cannot have any delays. He may momentarily forget that non-kreen need sleep ("Oh yes, of course, sleep" will begin a long digression about species that do and don't sleep) but he will strongly insist that they attempt to travel at least five miles tonight before resting.
- Tet'ka'cha will reveal that he and the party must meet a traveling companion in two days' time, 30 miles away. (This is an easy trip for a kreen but only just doable for the PCs.)

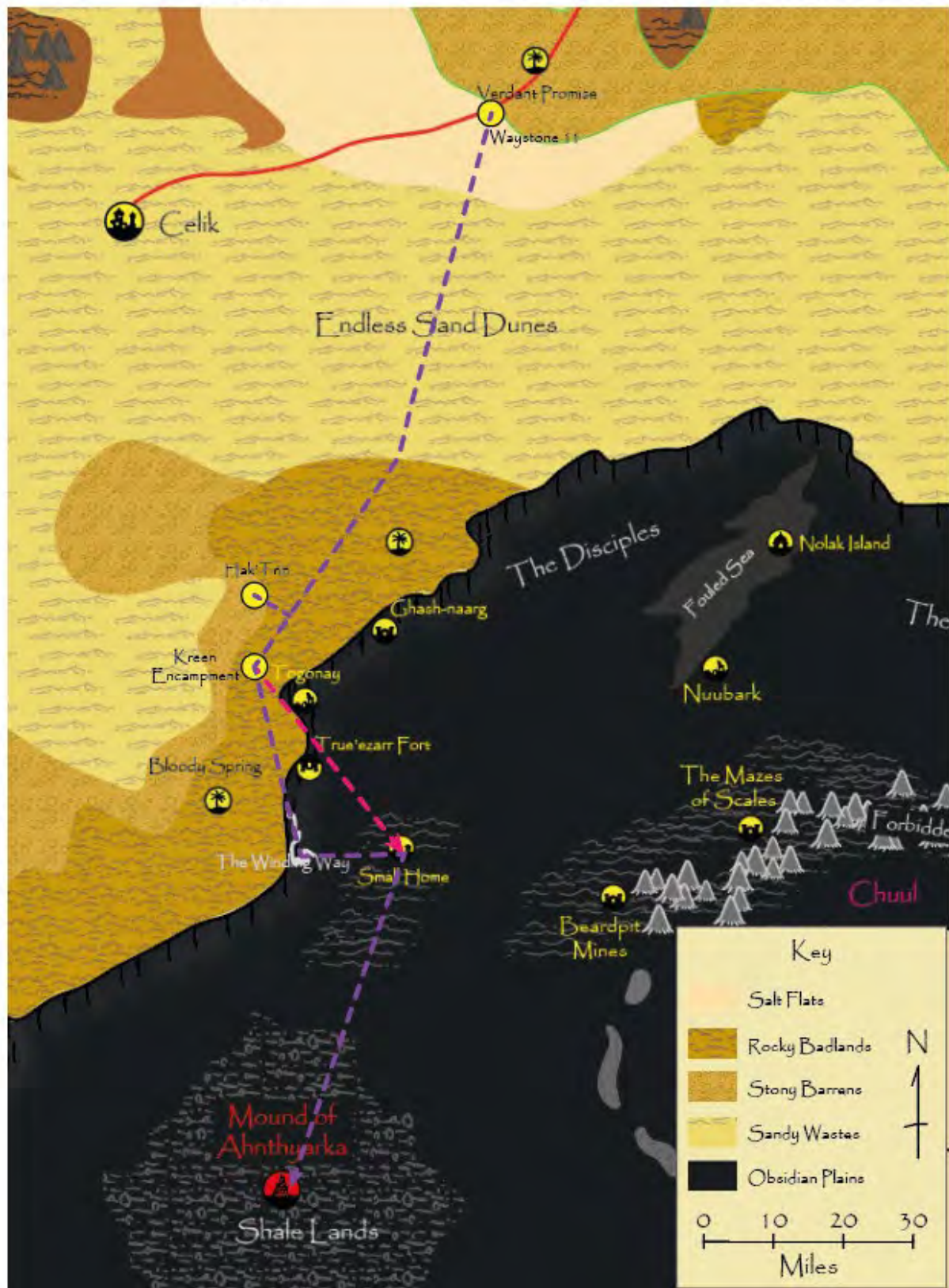
- The thri-kreen do not know much that is of use to the PCs but they will tell them that the south is a land of death. They have resolved to never go back. They encountered dune reapers in the south, yes. "The south is evil. Much worse things there than just dune reapers. Much worse. Evil. Death." The thri-kreen do not know the word in the common tongue, but Tet'ka'cha will translate what they are trying to say: "abomination."
- Vibia and any surviving dwarven gladiators will offer to accompany Tet'ka'cha and the PCs, as will the Rammite half-elf and dwarf, if they survived. But they will not insist; if the PCs do not want their help, they will instead return to Celik.
- The fallen Rammites and dwarves have no magic items, but do have a small selection of mundane weapons and armor. The Raamites wagon, which has sustained heavy damage, contains a 50-gallon ceramic jug of water. The crodlu that was harnessed to the wagon has disappeared, and probably fled into the desert during the combat. The wagon could be repaired (Craft - Carpentry, DC 20) and used if other draft animals could be found.
- To those who agree to begin the journey, Tet'ka'cha will offer the PCs the "first installment" of payment – a ruby worth 1000 cp (though there will be no opportunity for quite some time to spend any of it).

Assuming the PCs agree to the commission, proceed to Encounter #4 – South of Celik, below.

Possible survivors from the other parties

- Vibia, 11th-level female dwarf gladiator
- Philo, 7th-level male dwarf gladiator
- Sabina, 7th-level female dwarf gladiator
- Mumtaz, 8th-level female half-elf preserver
- Jahan, 9th-level dwarven Earth cleric

FROM WAYSTONE 11 TO SHALE LANDS



Adventures in the Dead Lands

4) South of Celik (EL -)

The first leg of the journey to the south is an opportunity for a DM to use a random desert encounter, but they may wish to keep the initial foray into the Endless Sand Dunes uneventful. As Tet'ka'cha is a highly skilled ranger, he may be able to detect many threats and avoid them. At any rate, he is eager to get south, and has no desire for any delays or diversions.

As they travel, the PCs will have the opportunity to ask Tet'ka'cha questions.

- He is a ranger but calls himself a “qhancho'kreen”, a kreen word that roughly translates as “anthropologist”, but refers to the study of kreen and their societies. He is more alert than most humans but extraordinarily absent-minded for a kreen. He is often lost in thought and prone to giving long lectures about the ecology of different species. If the PCs have any questions about the natural world, he is a fount of knowledge.
- If the PCs know of the Kreen Empire and ask him, Tet'ka'cha will be willing to acknowledge that this is where he is originally from. If they are not familiar enough with the Kreen Empire to ask specific questions, he will not lie, but will only say that he is from the west.
- Tet'ka'cha is palpably excited (for a kreen) about the purpose of this expedition. He will be willing to share more about the mission at this stage. Deep to the south, he believes there is an undiscovered species of intelligent and powerful insect-folk, possibly a missing link in the evolution of the thri-kreen. It would be the most important anthropological discovery in generations and could reveal untold secrets about the history of kreen.
- The thri-kreen were right about the “abominations”, which is why he let the pack depart. In the south, there are undead kreen wandering the wastes, and there is a tribe of thri-kreen who have devoted their lives to destroying these atrocities (the PCs likely know that undead kreen are highly unusual, or even unheard of). These undead kreen were once living and some type of evil magic has raised them as undead. He will repeat over and over what an abomination he views this to be - “the opposite of the natural world” in which he is interested.
- At the southern end of the sand dunes is a gigantic “bowl” of black glass. He has stood atop the cliffs

and stared out at the endless plains of glass but has not ventured into it. The thri-kreen undead hunters claim to have seen unidentifiable species of insect-folk out on the glass. Since everything on the glass is dead or undead, these creatures are likely undead too, but as Tet'ka'cha points out: the undead were once alive, and so whatever these creatures on the black glass are, at one point they were living just like the undead kreen.

When the PCs run out of questions to ask Tet'ka'cha or when the group reaches the meeting spot, proceed to Encounter #5 – The Traveling Companion, below.

5) The Traveling Companion (EL -)

Two days later, the party will reach their destination.

For mile after mile the desert dunes have looked exactly the same to all but the best-trained eyes. An endlessly empty sea of yellow sand, filled with repetitive crests of sand. When the winds are calm, the silence of the desert is nearly oppressive. Tet'ka'cha leads the party at a grueling pace, and almost due south without deviation.

With no indication of any landmark or signal, Tet'ka'cha abruptly turns to the southwest and proclaims: *“Our meeting spot is a mile this way. We are meeting the others who have been summoned to assist with our expedition.”*

The landscape never changes and yet somehow Tet'ka'cha knows exactly where he's traveling. In the distance, the first variation of the landscape in days, there is a cluster of purple rock crystals in the lee of a giant sand dune. In the middle of the crystal growths perches an enormous, winged insect, resembling a gigantic mosquito or locust. Perhaps 13 feet in length, it has 20-foot wings that appear so fine as to be nearly transparent and its abdomen is swollen and deep red.

Tet'ka'cha calls out in some tongue that is not intelligible as the Kreen language and suddenly the purple rock crystals begin to move. As you get closer, it becomes apparent that these are not rock crystals at all, but rather some unusual sort of purple thri-kreen, with yellow eyes that glint like giant faceted almonds.

Amid the purple kreen, standing next to the giant insect, is another mantis-noble, nearly identical in

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appearance to Tet'ka'cha, but with an elaborate backpack of his own that is entirely different from your guide's. The main distinguishing characteristic between the two is that the new tohr-kreen's backpack is somewhat more ostentatious, with straps of a vibrant purple, perhaps dyed to match the purple of his companions, while Tet'ka'cha's backpack is a dull brown. The two tohr-kreen converse briefly in this strange tongue and then Tet'ka'cha introduces his new companion:

"This is Zerchakak, my 'cousin' who has been sent to assist us. Now we must continue on to the encampment."

The tohr-kreen Zerchakak, the giant insect, and the purple thri-kreen will leave with Tet'ka'cha and the party. Zerchakak is not friendly, and will not carry on conversations of any length with the PCs or NPCs, unless they are dwarves. With dwarves, he will discuss how important the expedition is and how deeply necessary their assistance is. (Zerchakak is solicitous toward dwarves because he is aware of their obsessive nature and believes he can use this to his advantage.) Any information of use will come from Tet'ka'cha:

- Zerchakak is a psionist who has been summoned to join the expedition because he has certain useful skills. If they press, the PCs may learn that Zerchakak is not literally Tet'ka'cha's cousin.
- The giant flying insect he is traveling with is a jalath'gak. If the PCs have ever encountered the giant insects known as jalath'gak, it was likely the undomesticated variety that sometimes plague farms of the Tablelands. The sight of a docile jalath'gak traveling peacefully among companions is likely nearly as strange for the PCs as the sight of the purple thri-kreen.
- If they have never ventured to the thri-kreen empire before, then the only purple thri-kreen the PCs may have encountered is Durwadala, the druid of Lost Oasis near Kalidnay. Tet'ka'cha is happy to explain that the purple thri-kreen are a subspecies known as Tondi. He is eager to share that, unlike other thri-kreen species, all Tondi are female, and reproduce through parthenogenesis, a process he will discuss at great length. He will explain that they have come on the journey as they tend to be nature lovers – drawn to arts like herbalism and are generally druids or rangers – as the purpose of this expedition is, after all, to study unusual terrain and species.
- If they inquire about different thri-kreen types, Tet'ka'cha will begin to discuss "the six subspecies

of thri-kreen" only to be interrupted by Zerchakak: *"Be careful what you say of our secrets, cousin."*

- It may become apparent through this or other interactions that Tet'ka'cha and Zerchakak do not particularly like nor trust each other.
- The PCs might realize that this is an expedition of unusual importance to the kreen, for it to have attracted such an unusual coterie of participants. It may also become apparent that the kreen have more complex hierarchies and social systems than expected if a person were only familiar with the thri-kreen packs of the Tablelands.

Development: After meeting up with Zerchakak and the tondi, it is an 80-mile journey to the kreen encampment. Proceed to Encounter #6 – The Hak'trin, below.

6) The Hak'trin (EL 12+)

Intelligent Hak'trin (CR 7) 2x – See Appendix

Mindless Hak'trin (CR 2) 18x – See Appendix 2

Kank Soldier, Zombie Bugdead (CR 3) 2x – Appendix 2

As they near their final destination, perhaps with 5 miles to go, Tet'ka'cha will spot tracks on a nearby dune and wander off to study them. He will return excitedly, saying that he has reason to believe the tracks are those of the Hak'dre'kalak - the undead hunting pack. A Survival check (DC 20) will reveal they are recently made kreen tracks but will give no indication of what pack or group the kreen belonged to.

Tet'ka'cha will argue in favor of seeking out this pack. Zerchakak will argue in favor of proceeding to the encampment. Zerchakak will suggest any dwarves come with him. (The PCs may or may not decide this is suspicious; Tet'ka'cha is not concerned about it.) Zerchakak, the jalath'gak, the Tondi kreen, and the dwarven gladiators will depart and make their way to the main encampment, while Tet'ka'cha leads the PCs in following the tracks of the thri-kreen pack.

After no more than an hour following the tracks, the PCs detect an unusual smell wafting toward them on a headwind. Tet'ka'cha will confirm that he smells it too. He will encourage the party to make haste as they

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follow the smell and tracks, and then to move more slowly as they crest a particularly large sand dune.

You smell it before you hear it or see it. As you slowly peak your heads above the crest of the dune, the unmistakable and extremely pungent scent of dead kank blows across the dune. This is a smell all-too-familiar – downwind from a decaying kank carcass. But as your eyes focus amid the gently blowing sands, you see and hear the combat of two packs of thri-kreen, fighting viciously.

One group of thri-kreen moves as you might expect, but the others are moving in chaotic zig-zags. Frenzied. You see the kanks too, they smell of death and are clearly deeply wounded, with giant slashes and chips across their carapaces, but they are still moving. The crazed thri-kreen appear heavily wounded as well.

Then you realize: these thri-kreen aren't wounded. They're undead and they outnumber the other pack by quite a bit.

The PCs have come across a pitched battle between the Hak'dre'kalak, a pack of thri-kreen devoted to stamping out the undead thri-kreen, and their sworn enemies – the hak'trin, undead thri-kreen.

Although the hak'trin are more numerous, it is clear they largely fight with no strategy whatsoever, and the Hak'dre'kalak are skilled at systematically exploiting this. Despite their inferior numbers, the Hak'dre'kalak are mostly unwounded, while a number of the hak'trin already lay dead in the sand. There are still 30 mindless hak'trin, 2 intelligent hak'trin, and 2 undead kanks, all battling 16 Hak'dre'kalak.

When the PCs arrive, the intelligent hak'trin, undead kanks, and 18 mindless hak'trin will move to confront them, while the remaining 12 mindless hak'trin will continue to battle the Hak'dre'kalak.

Tactics: The mindless hak'trin will rush into melee, heedless of their own safety. The intelligent hak'trin will allow their mindless brethren lead the charge, taking the time to throw all of their chatkcha before moving in for melee.

Development: When combat is over, the Hak'dre'kalak will be grateful for the parties' assistance. They will insist that they could have handled their enemies, but they will admit it was not an easy battle. As everyone tends to their wounds, Tet'ka'cha will lead a discussion with the

Hak'dre'kalak. They are the source of some of the key information behind the expedition and he is keen to press them for more information.

- The Hak'dre'kalak have patrolled the southern wastes for generations; they know more about the undead to the south than nearly any living creatures on Athas.
- They will say that undead thri-kreen have become more numerous in recent years.
- At the edge of the desert are great cliffs, 2,000 feet in height, that descend onto a great plain of obsidian. No living creatures survive on the blackglass, it is the domain of the dead.
- The Hak'dre'kalak know that there is a pathway leading down from the sand dunes to the elevation of the basin. (this is the trail known as the Winding Way on maps, though they don't know this name). The pathway is full of horrible monsters, and sometimes the undead come up into the dunes through this path. The Hak'dre'kalak do not enter the basin – they have learned years ago that when thri-kreen die too close to the blackglass they are likely to arise as insane, murderous undead.
- Most exciting to Tet'ka'cha, the Hak'dre'kalak periodically patrol the edges of the cliffs and from a great distance they have seen species of unusual scarlet bugs on the plains – they appear to be enormous eight-legged crab-like creatures with a deep red carapace. No known creature fits the description, as Tet'ka'cha will enthusiastically observe. They are surely dead because everything on the black glass is dead, the thri-kreen say. But unlike the hak'trin atop the cliffs, these scarlet creatures on the black glass are organized and alert.
- The Hak'dre'kalak know some basic geography – they have seen the scarlet bugs to the south and southeast of the trail (the Winding Way) into the obsidian basin. To the east, there are hills upon which a small village can be seen (this is Small Home). The black glass does not appear to entirely cover the village, so it may be a safe haven from the undead (the thri-kreen surmise this but are entirely wrong).
- The thri-kreen have a note of caution: the black glass attracts the worst people from the Tablelands. Becoming obsessed with the obsidian lands is the way of death. Defilers come to study death magic and necromancy and become even more evil than before. To look upon the black

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glass, to become obsessed with it, is to risk evil overtaking you.

- An evil defiler experiments on the kreen nearby. It is where some of the hak'trin come from.

Once he learns of them, Tet'ka'cha will insist on investigating the necromancer and the source of the undead kreen. Proceed to Encounter #7 – Necromancer's Refuge, below.

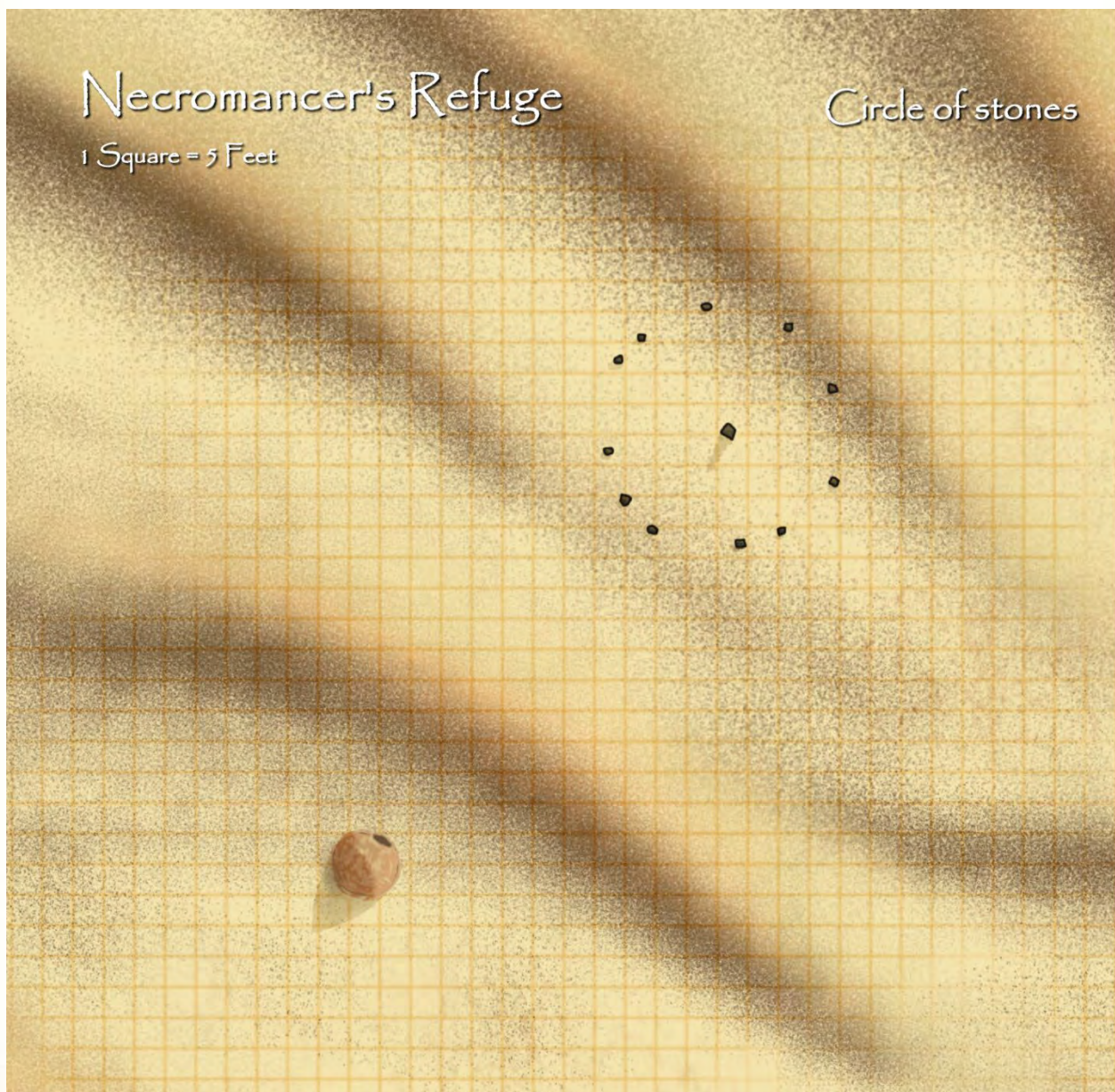
7) Necromancer's Refuge (EL 12)

Antloid Soldier, Zombie Bugdead (CR 5) 3x – See Appendix 2

Kank Soldier, Zombie Bugdead (CR 3) 5x – See Appendix 2

Mindless Hak'trin (CR 2) 12x – See Appendix 2

Umona (CR 8) 1x – See Appendix

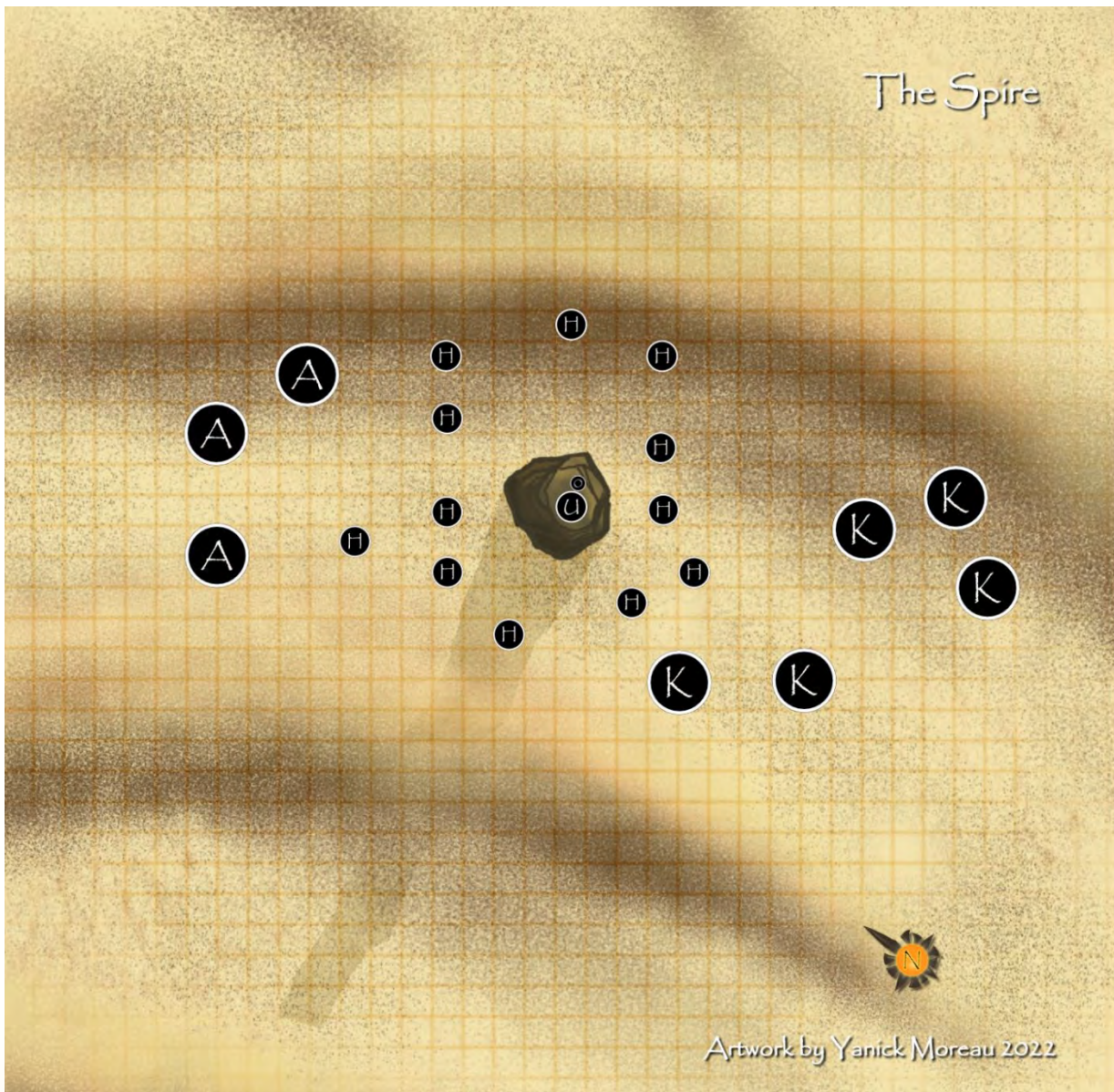


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If the PCs continue the conversation enough to become aware of defiler's experimentation on kreen or simply explore further, they may decide to investigate this situation. They can find the defiler by simply following the trail of the hak'trin. If they search carefully, they might even (Survival check, DC 15) find a single pair of human bootprints that had followed the hak'trin from along the dunes. If the PCs don't suggest this course, Tet'ka'cha could suggest it himself, at the DM's discretion. (Or the party could choose to skip this encounter entirely and try to meet back up with Zerchakak, though if they do, they may be armed with far less information.)

If they follow the hak'trin tracks, they will find that the trail leads back to a small circle of stones, surrounding



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a small obsidian cairn. This is one site to which an evil defiler named Umona transports insect corpses to be animated, using undead pack animals to drag insect corpses to this location. With some exploration they will discover a small but secure hovel hidden behind a nearby dune, within which Umona lives and sleeps. (Because undead insects become insane and attack when uncontrolled, and because flying swarms of bugdead from the Dead lands are not uncommon, she maintains a secure dwelling.)

Following the tracks further, the PCs will discover another of Umona's sites, where she is currently hiding away. Between the ridges of two large sand dunes, a single giant spire of obsidian rises up from the sand. This plinth of obsidian was somehow transported here since the days when the obsidian first spilled over the Dead Lands; the PCs may not realize it but they are just a mile from the blackglass cliffs.

Umona often hides in black robes atop the spire. In fact, she is hiding there now; the exceptionally smooth glassy surface cannot be easily climbed by the hak'trin, and they will not attempt to climb it, so it offers her a refuge.

As the PCs approach, they will notice a dozen undead hak'trin, three undead antloids, and five undead kanks. Unless they are extremely observant (Spot check, DC 24), they will not notice Umona until she casts a *fireball* at them.

Tactics: During combat, Umona will remain atop the spire, allowing her mindless undead to protect her and casting spells down at the party. She will not consider surrender until she has exhausted all of her magic. During the combat, Tet'ka'cha will express interest in wanting to interrogate the defiler and will advocate for her capture.

Assuming the PCs subdue and question Umona, they can attempt to learn the following:

- She has ventured out into the obsidian basin - it is called the Dead Lands and they are wonderful (true). Everything there is evil and dead (true, as far as she knows).
- She will admit, however, that there is no plant life in the Dead Lands and so it is impossible for wizards to draw energy to cast spells there (true).
- The name of the settlement that can sometimes be seen in the distance is Small Home (true). It is not the far edge of the Dead Lands; a great chain of obsidian mountains rises further to the east (true).

She has been told that some parts of Small Home are not covered in obsidian (she was told this, it is not true).

- If the PCs ask, and force her to answer, she admits that Small Home is crawling with incorporeal undead (true).
- She knows of the Winding Way and believes it is too dangerous to enter the Dead Lands this way. She uses magic to enter instead (true, as far as she knows).
- She will not be eager to disclose it, but her current research is this: she is trying to animate undead kreen but when she does they are always completely berserk and difficult to control, requiring constant, specific instructions to be around safely (true). She seeks to be able to create undead kreen that are sane, but so far cannot; they are too crazy (true).
- She has managed to create more powerful and cunning undead kreen by leaving them out on the obsidian to reanimate on their own, but they were still insane and required her to maintain constant magical control (true).
- She has had limited interactions with intelligent undead in the Dead Lands and has been told that in the south of the Dead Lands there are big, strange undead insects that often lead invasions of bugdead and are therefore possibly intelligent. This is the reason that she believes it must be possible to animate kreen that are not insane (true).
- She has seen these big, strange undead insects and bugdead at a distance. She is deeply ignorant of biology, however, and cannot name or describe well what she's seen.

Development: The PCs must decide what to do with Umona after their interrogation. Tet'ka'cha will allow them to decide. If they search Umona's hut or force the information out of her (skills vary, DC 18) the PCs will find Umona's stash of supplies for descending into the Dead Lands, hidden beneath her bedding: dose of bugdead rebarbative x5, potion-orb of *bear's endurance* x2, scroll of *fireball* (CL 5th) x1, scroll of *levitate* (CL 3rd) x6, scroll of *mage armor* (CL 8th) x2, wand of *magic missile* (CL 5th, 33 charges).

Once the party leaves for the kreen camp, proceed to Part 2 – Out of the Base Camp, Onto the Black Glass, below.

Part 2: Out of the Base Camp, Onto the Black Glass

8) Kreen Scientists (EL -)

After their battle(s) with the hak'trin, Tet'ka'cha will lead the PCs to the encampment of the kreen scientists.

As you approach the kreen encampment, small scrubs begin to poke out from the desert sands in places, a sure sign that some water, perhaps no more than half an inch a year, falls on this stretch of land. From a distance, kreen scouts clearly watch your approach. Tet'ka'cha greets them with a click and wave, but they remain alert. The scrubs are a contrast from most of what you've seen in the journey from Celik – 80 miles of empty sand. Over the next ridge, an unusual site appears. The scrubs become thicker, and dozens of kreen patrol the edges of a fortified encampment. Fences, made of mekillot ribs, with hides stretched across it surround a small but clear oasis of water.

Two giant jalath'gak can be seen sinking their stingers into the body of a sand howler, their abdomens swelling and growing bright red from the meal. Zerchakak stands next to them, watching you approach.

On the far edge of the small oasis, is the most unusual site of all. A small cluster of... giant globules? Little round huts, of some sort, clearly built by insects. The strange, somewhat macabre insect glob huts seem to emerge directly from the sand, with translucent amber membranes stretching between the structures.

Through an opening, you can see the strange purple thri-kreen milling about and at the entrance you spot another creature watching you from the doorway. He is smaller than the other kreen, slender and pale, a sickly washed-out shade of green that you've never seen before. Its lower legs look just like kreen, but its upper arm has the most unusual claws, with five (or perhaps six) fingers on each hand, bent into an exquisitely complex configuration. The day is searing hot, but something about the creature's piercing gaze sends shivers through your arms. The creature just seems cold.

The PCs are safe here. They may rest for a night or two, heal, drink and eat. The encampment has plenty of food. Tet'ka'cha, normally so communicative, is now quiet. He will tell the PCs that they may discuss things further at a meeting tomorrow evening, where they will plan their next steps. He spends most of his day inside the globules. Zerchakak continues to only be friendly to dwarves. If Vibia is still with the party she will have made it her focus to help Zerchakak complete this quest.

On the second evening within the encampment, the planning council will begin. The PCs, Tet'ka'cha, Zerchakak, the mysterious pale kreen, and about a dozen other kreen will crowd into the largest of the globules. The insects don't mind the proximity, but for humans and demi-humans the experience could be incredibly uncomfortable.

The globule is made even more crowded by the presence of the pale kreen, around whom the other kreen do not crowd. It sits silently, almost without motion, as the council begins.

- Tet'ka'cha will open the meeting saying that the purpose of their expedition is to venture into the black glass to retrieve specimens of the unusual insect-folk. This is a mission of incredible importance, as it may establish the existence of previously unknown species of insect-folk.
- Tet'ka'cha will open a bag and give each PC their promised reward for traveling here with him (the 5,000cp gem promised earlier) and then will display a further collection of priceless gems (Appraise check, DC 20 to know that each gem is worth 7,500 cp). He knows that science alone may not motivate such a journey. Six such gems will be the reward awaiting each of the PCs upon their return (totaling 30,000cp). Assuming they agree, the bizarre six-fingered zik-chil will reach out, wordlessly, grabbing one gem with each finger, and twirling them back into a small burlap pouch.
- For the next phase of the meeting, a deeply injured thri-kreen (Pop'ka) speaks. If the PCs don't understand Thri-Kreen, then Tet'ka'cha will translate: "Several packs of thri-kreen have attempted to enter the blackglass basin by the Winding Way. Two

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packs disappeared entirely and are presumed lost. My (Pop'ka's) pack made it down to the floor of the black glass but we encountered horrible undead warriors at the bottom and the pack was nearly entirely killed. I (Pop'ka) and one of my companions survived and fled back up the Winding Way. By this point, several of our companions had reanimated into undeath and were chasing us, as were a string of awful undead beasts. We were fast enough to outrun them and escape back to the encampment. In the dark of night, my companion succumbed to his wounds and reanimated as an insane hak'trin (undead), murdering several more kreen in the encampment before he was stopped."

- At this point of the conversation, the zik-chil will not speak but will motion the crowd to part so the PCs can see into the next room – here stretched across a flat mound of amber sand is the dismembered body of the undead kreen, clearly being dissected and studied. The disturbing room is full of kreen body parts, and the PCs are likely grateful when they can no longer see it.
- The journey, they have decided, is too dangerous for thri-kreen. Only the PCs, Vibia, any other surviving mercenaries, and the two tohr-kreen Tet'ka'cha and Zerchakak will make the journey. The whole reason the PCs were summoned is that it was decided the journey is too dangerous for

thri-kreen who too quickly become insane on the obsidian.

- They will discuss with the PCs various ways onto the black glass. The kreen favor a flying entrance, though they can be convinced other methods are suitable, including an entrance via the Winding Way. If they agree to fly, Zerchakak will make clear his intentions to bring along a jalath'gak as well.
- Zerchakak is a psionist with the ability to *levitate*, and Tet'ka'cha is a ranger. Both have been selected for their comfort with this plan.
- Once on the obsidian, the plan will be to travel to the village that escaped the obsidian. Once there, assess the safety of this waypoint, establish a new camp if possible, and then venture south to where the undead bugs have been spotted.
- Once on the obsidian, the plan will be to travel to the village that escaped the obsidian. Once there, assess the safety of this waypoint, establish a new camp if possible, and then venture south to where the undead bugs have been spotted.

After some discussion about necessary spells and supplies to prepare, the PCs will have one last evening of rest. They set out at dawn the next morning.

If the PCs decide to descend into the Dead Lands via the land route, proceed to Encounter #9 - The Winding Way. If they decide to fly into the Dead Lands, proceed to Encounter #10 - A Flying Entrance.

A note on Zik'chil

The PC's have just encountered a powerful zik'chil, one of the mysterious high priests and mad scientists of the tohr-kreen empire. Those familiar with the Kreen Empire will realize that a zik'chil would only travel to an encampment like this if the expedition is considered extremely important by the empire. Those unfamiliar with the Empire, may only realize that there is more of a hierarchy to the world of kreen than they ever imagined. It always seemed like the tohr'kreen mantis nobles were the pinnacle of kreen society, but the tohr'kreen are fawning and even nervous in the presence of the great zik'chil.

Note: some DMs may find that it is not suitable to introduce the zik'chil at this stage of their campaign (perhaps a secret they wish to save for later). While there is no reason to reveal any secrets about zik'chil other than their existence for this encounter, the zik'chil could also be substituted with a third tohr-kreen, if the DM desires, who is the leader of the encampment and cannot venture into the Dead Lands because he must oversee the research station.

9) The Winding Way (EL 11)

Huge Monstrous Scorpion, Zombie Bugdead (CR 8) 3x – See Appendix

If the player character's wish to enter via the Winding Way, they will quickly discover what type of horrible monsters exist on the ancient roadway.

Deciding to traverse the Winding Way (despite your kreen allies' urgings), you find it to be a wide, gentle road descending to the obsidian below. Carved into the cliffs as a series of ledges and tunnels, it remains an ancient wonder of engineering.

Approximately a third of the way down, you hear the clamor of falling rocks from below.

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Assuming the PCs look down the path for the source of the noise, read:

Coming up the road are several scorpions. The distance makes it hard to tell how big or far away they are, but if the width of the roadbed is any guide, they must each be the size of mekillots! Each seems to have a largely shattered carapace but seems unfazed by the mortal wounds.

Sometimes giant scorpions such as these stumble into the Dead Lands and die. These particular creatures chased prey over the cliffs long ago and reanimated as bugdead, still following the patterns of hunt centuries after their deaths. A Listen check dictates how far away the scorpions are when the PCs notice them - success (DC 15) indicates the scorpions are 150 feet away, +10 ft for each point by which the DC was beat, while failure reduces the distance by a similar amount (result of 9 equals 90 ft, result of 16 equals 160 ft, result of 20 equals 200 ft, etc).

Assuming the PCs are not making excessive amounts of noise or otherwise drawing attention to themselves, the scorpions will notice them at a distance of 100 ft, potentially giving the party time to hide, prepare an ambush, fly off the road, or otherwise prepare for or avoid the scorpion's arrival.

Development: Once the encounter has been resolved, proceed to Encounter #10 - A Flying Entrance, below.

10) A Flying Entrance (EL 12)

Wezer Storm (CR 8) 4x – See Appendix

If the PCs enter the Dead Lands by air, read:

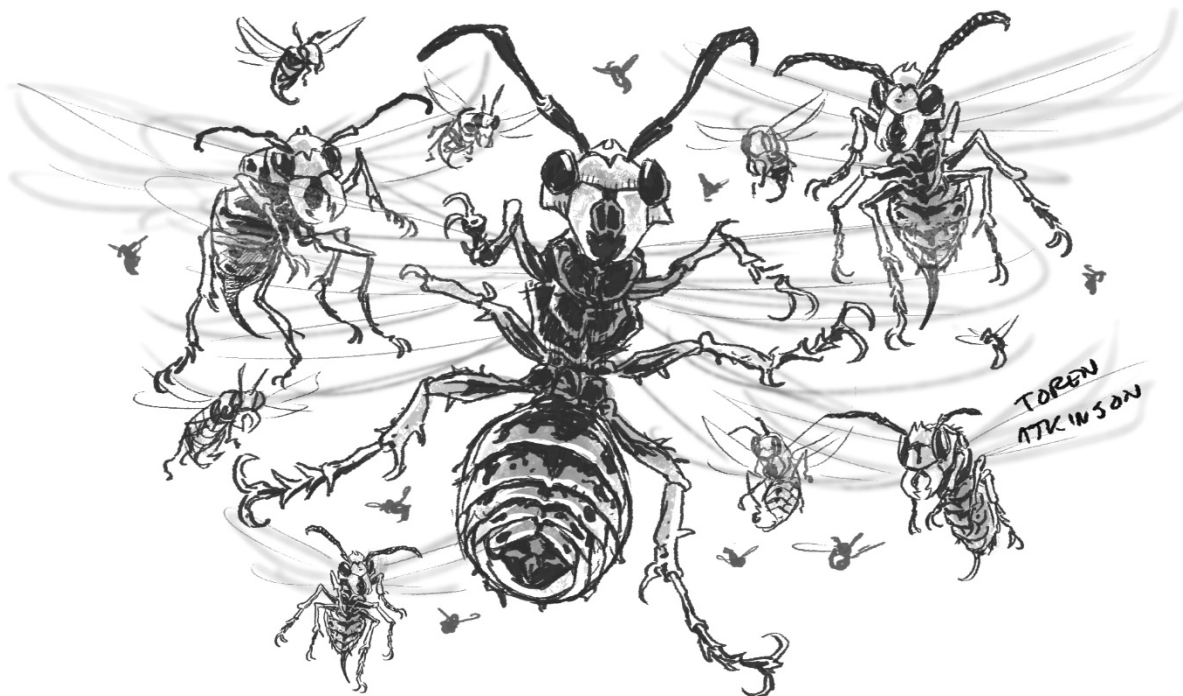
The sand dunes drop away, and you stand on the edge of what appears to be a gigantic crater. Giant cliffs seemingly coated with pure obsidian drop hundreds, if not thousands of feet down to the surface of an enormous obsidian plain. The day is slightly hazy, but the obsidian stretches as far as the eye can see in every direction. The sun has only been up for about an hour and already the air seems to shimmer across the obsidian plain, from the incredible heat pouring off.

Squinting off in the distance, far to the east, and slightly to the south, you can make out what is likely the village of Small Home- your first stop.

There is no need to hesitate. It's time to leap off the cliffs and dive into a sea of black glass.

Whether the PCs enter via the Winding Way or by air, they will encounter undead wezers just the same.

At a distance, specks appear in the sky. Perhaps you won't have to search very far for these bugdead after all? Alas no, as the swarm gets closer,



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Tet'ka'cha will observe with disappointment that these are ordinary wezers.

The bugdead approaching the party are vicious, undead wezers in an enormous swarm and they're about to engage the PCs in vicious aerial combat, but Tet'ka'cha is right, the wezers' biology before undeath was entirely ordinary.

Tactics: The wezer swarms will surround the PCs and attack relentlessly until destroyed.

Development: After surviving the Wezer Storm, the party may continue to venture to the east. (It doesn't matter if they're flying or walking at this point, although they may decide there's wisdom in laying low.) Proceed to Encounter #11 - Tiny Little Houses, below.

11) Tiny Little Houses (EL -)

As the party approaches closer to Small Home, read:

This close to your destination, you can clearly see structures protruding from the obsidian on the hills, as you were told. Climbing the ridge, you walk amongst a strange field of obsidian spires, some standing proud and tall while many others litter the ground. Eventually, Tet'ka'cha exclaims: *"This must once have been a forest! These spires were likely trees of such size as few have seen. But look, the black glass here is so thin and delicate - it could not have struck with enough force to destroy half the trees, burning, and tumbling the others like this! What could have created this bizarre formation? Could the forest have somehow predated the existence of the obsidian here?"*

The PCs might not realize it, but as they explore the forests of Small Home, they are being stalked by a former resident - a Pixie who is trying to drive them insane with mental effects and illusions (Will save, DC 21 to disbelieve). While here, they encounter the following illusions:

- Freshly sliced fruits and nuts laid out on a small wooden table beneath a lonely living tree (the sliced fruits are undead grubs, the nuts are shards of obsidian, and the tree is dead and coated with obsidian).
- A cart laden with carved wooden goods: cups, bowls, fanciful animals with four legs and long

faces. Hitched to the cart is a snorting and restless (living) crodlu. The cart stands in the shadow of a small cottage with brightly painted shutters and a window box full of flowers. (The cart is coated in obsidian and, should the obsidian be removed, the wood is rotten. The "fanciful animal" carvings are of horses. The crodlu is a pile of bones buried beneath the obsidian and the cottage is a burnt-out, tumble-down ruin).

- Child-sized creatures wearing home-spun brown clothes and smelling of fresh earth, dancing and capering around a massive living tree. The small beings laugh and sing, inviting visitors to join in the revelry. If any characters join in, the dance and singing quickly become frantic and pained, with the creatures' appearances growing feral and cruel. Soon the great tree bursts into flames and the small folk's skin melts off as they surround and taunt the characters before finally fading away completely. (The creatures are brownies and the tree was a God-Tree - now burnt and long dead).

Between one step and the next, the PCs are seemingly transported into a warzone - leering human defilers drain the life from a rich forest around them to power devastating spells: fireballs explode amongst the majestic trees and acid and frost sizzle and rime cozy stone cottages that stand amongst the trees. Laughingly fantastical and pathetic creatures flee the woodland as it burns: small, plump, fuzzy creatures with long teeth and longer ears; lithe, limber creatures with a rack of dagger-like spikes leap and run over the fallen trees; small, jarringly-colorful avians devoid of both fangs and talons flit through the woods in mixed swarms, ignoring the still-warm flesh all around them. If the PCs remain within the scene long enough, the landscape looks much as it did before the illusion began - only lacking the obsidian skim-coat on everything. (The scene is the pixie's version of the Cleansing Wars battles waged here. The creatures are rabbits, stag deer, and songbirds - goldfinches, cardinals, etc.)

Development: If the ruins are searched (Search check, DC 28), the following can be found: 1828 cp in gems and a Cognizance Crystal (5 points) (9000 cp).

Eventually, the party draws the full attention of a Small Home pixie; proceed to Encounter #12 - What's Worse than a Wezer Swarm?, below.

12) What's Worse than a Wezer Swarm? (EL 12)

Pixie Small Homer (CR 12) 1x – See Appendix

At some point, if the PCs attempt to rest or if they ascertain the source of the illusions, they will face a full-fledged attack from their tormentor.

From seemingly out of nowhere, a small, hideous, partially transparent, winged humanoid creature fades into view. It brandishes a thin blade and bow, and a hateful crimson fire burns in its tiny eyes.

The ghostly creature leers cruelly, and then begins stalking slowly towards you.

Development: Assuming the PCs defeat their foe, they will attract the attention of additional pixies: first two, then four, then 10 more pixies will show themselves and approach menacingly. If the PCs have not already realized it, Tet'ka'cha will announce *"This is a cursed place and not safe. We must leave, now!"*

The tohr-kreen will lead the party south to carry on their mission, moving as quickly as possible to stay ahead of the growing horde of angry undead. Proceed to Encounter #13 – Anak of Obsidian Gables, below.

13) Anak of Obsidian Gables (EL -)

Anak of Obsidian Gables (CR 9) 1x – See Appendix 2

After heading south from Small Home for some time, the party will come upon the partially rebuilt ranch of the undead dwarf Anak.

The hills of the haunted village gradually give way to flat and empty plains. You can no longer see the horrid little undead following you but the unshakable feeling of their hateful eyes upon your back spurs your stops onward. As you trek further south, you are able to make out what appears to be a small farm house ringed by a fence in the distance. As you get closer, you can see a classic split-rail fence, but fashioned out of obsidian-splashed logs and bones.



In the glassy field enclosed by the fence, you see what appear to be dozens of carru. You can smell them too. The large humps behind their heads have rotted open and the flesh along their torso is torn in many spots, exposing a disgusting array of bones and viscera. Even in undeath, however, these carru seem to be docile.

A figure emerges from the house and begins waving vigorously.

The PCs could continue on to the Shale Lands if they wish, with the pixies still giving pursuit until they reach the edge of the Shale Lands, but if they stop at the farm, they will meet Anak, a delusional undead dwarven rancher with an absurd herd of zombie carru.

In life, Anak was an eccentric dwarven carru rancher, who lived in the last days of the Time of Magic. During the Cleansing of Ulyan, Anak had just completed his focus - reaching 200 carru, when he was slain and his carru butchered on the spot to feed the soldiers. He and his herd were reanimated by the Obsidian Tide, but, with his focus both completed in life and ruined after his death, Anak returned not ashamed by his failure

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but instead obsessed with restoring his previous success - returning not as a dwarven banshee but a thinking zombie.

Anak was odd even in life and thousands of years ranching zombie carru have only left him more insane and delusional. The zombie carru cannot reproduce and few undead carru are left in the Dead Lands, as they have no value to anyone else as they are (many in the Dead Lands would be quite happy to feast upon their flesh, however). His goal is not, strictly-speaking, impossible, but he has no realistic means to achieve it and so he is stuck endlessly trying to obtain more carru and grow his herd. He has been killed dozens of times but always returns whole again with the next sunset to continue trying to achieve his goal.

The pixies and other undead in the region have learned to ignore Anak because if anyone attempts to interfere with his carru, he unleashes his death cry, which they find incredibly irritating, and since he always returns after being killed, they have determined there is no point in dealing with him.

If there are any dwarves or muls left in the party, Anak will become convinced that they are his children, and will chase after them, calling out: *"You have returned at last! Come in, come in! I am greatly in need of your help."*

If the PCs accept his entreaty, he will invite them into his farm, telling them that they are safe here. This is true as long as they don't upset Anak, as any pixies that remain in pursuit of the party will disengage, disinclined to deal with Anak.

Anak knows that cruel fey live to the north and bugs live to the south, but he is mostly interested in discussing his farm and asking his children what they have been doing all these years. He will ask about their childhood friends and will become confused and angry if they say they don't know who he is talking about, but if they make up stories, he will be happy to hear them. Anak will ask how they became friends with each other (assuming the whole party is not composed of dwarves and muls) and will be delighted at having so many visitors. He will offer the PCs food and drink. The food is simply rotten carru flesh: anyone who eats it will immediately be Nauseated (Fortitude save, DC 22 or be unable to attack, cast spells, concentrate on spells, or do anything else requiring attention; limited to single Move actions only) for 1 hour. The drink is undead carru milk, a foul, black sludge, and poisons the drinker as if purple worm poison (injury, Fortitude save, DC 20, initial 1d6 Str, secondary 2d6 Str, 700 gp per dose). If they simply

say they're not hungry or have already eaten Anak will accept this.

Anak will talk endlessly about his farm, but if at any point the PCs ask to rest, he will allow them to retire for the evening. They can heal and rest before moving on to the next stage of their expedition.

The first slivers of crimson sunlight have only just appeared over the obsidian plains to the east when Anak barges into the room. "It's time to wake up! You can't sleep the day away; we must tend to the herd."

"Here, take a bucket." He hands each of you an ancient copper bucket that is more holes than copper. "You know the job - fill up the buckets."

Anak will want everyone to go milk the zombie carru. If the PCs attempt to go along with this, they will need different buckets (any type of open container will do, and discover the milk is toxic (as above)).

Anak will eventually become angry that the PCs are not coming back with buckets full of milk. There is no way of satisfying him and at some point, the party will need to just leave.

Development: If the party tells him it is time for them to leave, Anak will be irritated but ask them to come back soon with more carru for the ranch. If the PCs kill him, Anak will come back at sunset. He will greet them as he did the first day, excited to see his long-lost children.

If they wish to enrage Anak, the PCs can kill his carru. The carru are docile, no challenge to cut down at all, and blithely ignorant to the slaughter, but Anak will become the party's enemy forever and haunt them relentlessly for years, wherever they choose to go. If, however, the PCs slay his entire herd of carru, Anak will be released from his obsession and will remain dead and at peace the next time he is slain (he will not be happy about it though).

Anak's milk buckets, should the PCs keep them, are worth 50 cp each for their copper alone. If any of the undead carru milk is collected, it can be used to produce a poison similar to purple worm poison (injury, Fortitude save DC 20, initial 1d6 Str, secondary 2d6 Str, 700 cp per dose), with each gallon of milk worth 50 cp of crafting materials (Appraise or Craft - Alchemy, DC 20 to know).

When the party leaves Anak's farm, proceed to Encounter #14 - Entering the Shale Lands, below.

14) Entering the Shale Lands (EL -)

As you make your way further to the south, bluffs or hills seem to be visible at a distance. As you continue the obsidian becomes cracked and broken, as if shattered in places by absent boulders. Soon the nature of the hills becomes more apparent: they are not hills but strange mounds, constructed from piled obsidian shards large and small.

For as far as you can see to the south, all sorts of mounds and spires of varying sizes and shapes can be made out. No two are alike but they are far from random. Whatever strange logic and purpose governed their creation seems impossible to fathom.

The mounds range in size, from a few feet tall to those in the distance that appear as if they may stretch 100 feet or more into the sky. There must be some logic in how the mounds are distributed, but this too is elusive. None are touching, but some are close together, and some stand far apart. There are thousands of them, stretching as far to the south as the eye can see.

The smallest mounds are incredibly ornate up close, resembling intricate hives. The man-sized mounds have a range of bizarre shapes, spiraling or twisted little towers, pyramids, pentagons, hexagonal lattices. Several of the mounds have visible openings large enough for a child or halfling to crawl inside.

"It is so quiet," Tet'ka'cha remarks. "Are they abandoned?"

He's right: there is an eerie silence to this place. There are mounds as far as the eye can see, yet no bugdead are visible anywhere.

The party can explore the borders of the Shale Lands for as long as they wish. The first few mounds will be empty, but at some point, the party will catch the unmistakable scent of dead kank.

In the distance, the party will be able to see several undead kanks. Closer observation of the kanks will reveal that the kanks are marching in a straight line, towards one of the larger mounds, carrying humanoid carcasses.

If it doesn't occur to the PCs (Knowledge - Dungeoneering, DC 15), Tet'ka'cha will observe that the kanks must be transporting this cargo to someone,

as normally kanks would eat such carrion on the spot, rather than transport it. The kanks will continue into the mound, with the rest of the area remaining eerily silent. If the players don't suggest it, Tet'ka'cha will express a desire to follow the kanks to investigate.

Assuming the party follows the undead kanks, proceed to Encounter #15 - The Mound Expedition, below.

15) The Mound Expedition (EL 12)

Worker Kank, Exoskeleton Bugdead (CR 1) 6x – See Appendix

Scarlet Warden (CR 12) 1x – See Appendix 2

1) The mound has a fairly large entrance, opening into a large round room. It is large enough for the jalath'gak to enter, allowing the entire party to hide away from the heat (and the bugdead). The mound is surprisingly well-ventilated, and the PCs will instantly notice how cool the mound's interior is.

2) The jalath'gak is too large to proceed deeper into the mound, so Zerchakak will offer to wait with the jalath'gak and stand guard at the entrance. He will suggest, but not insist, that Vibia stays with him as well. (This shouldn't be presented as suspicious – it is reasonable to have someone stand guard.)

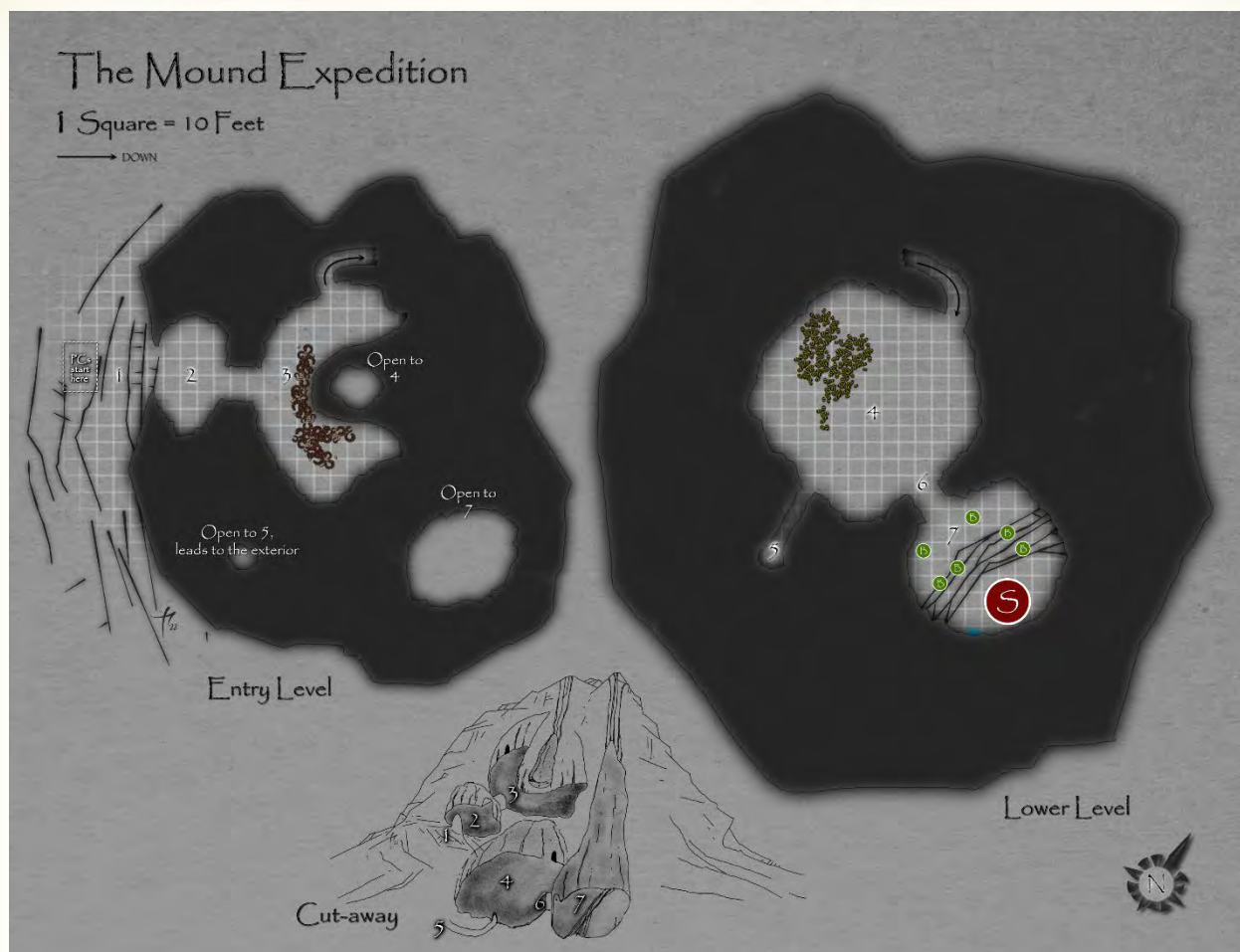
3) This room contains hundreds of dried insect husks, seemingly stored deliberately, though who knows for what purpose. If anyone stops to Listen (DC 20) they might hear the clicking of kank feet on the obsidian floor below them, a sign that kanks are milling about.

4) Dozens of kank honey globules rest in this chamber. They are foul-smelling, nearly dried out, and obviously not safe for consumption. The grotesque globes are gathered nonetheless and piled high, in the same fashion as living kanks pile their globes. However, the foul globes are not as worthless as they might appear (Appraise or Craft - Alchemy, DC 18) - if gathered up, there are 1000 cp worth of raw materials here for the production of Bugdead Kank Broy (see *Terrors of the Dead Lands* for details).

5) There is a small light/ventilation shaft here from which the structure can easily be exited.

6) Just before turning into the farthest chamber yet, an intensely foul stench wafts out from the room.

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7) Upon entering or spying on the chamber, read the following:

In the center of a cavernous hollowed out space, a giant eight-legged beast with a deep red carapace is feasting on one of the carcasses the undead the kanks carried in earlier. Two whip-like antennae sprout from its head, above a set of large mandibles that open sideways to reveal sharp fangs, making quick work of its meal. It is impossible to identify from here what type of humanoid it is consuming.

Tet'ka'cha makes a soft, almost inaudible clicking noise, that you recognize as the tohr-kreen equivalent of a gasp: Here, at last, is one of the creatures that he has been seeking. This is what you have traveled all this way to find.

His quiet click is completely drowned out by the sound of undead kanks are milling about the chamber, apparently reorganizing large piles of objects. The kanks seem to be crisscrossing the

chamber, moving the pile to the other side of the chamber.

The giant red creature suddenly pauses its meal, as if aware that it's being watched.

At this point, either due to some predatory instinct or just bad luck, the scarlet warden will get the feeling it is being watched. Any concealed characters (Hiding, Invisible, etc) must make a Hide check, opposed by the scarlet warden's Spot check (1d20+21). Those that fail will immediately be attacked by the scarlet warden and undead kanks.

If no characters are detected in the room, either because they're using magic/psionics to scry on the chamber, or because they beat the scarlet warden's Spot check, the scarlet warden will send the undead kanks to search the mound for intruders.

Development: After defeating the scarlet warden, the party can inspect the chamber. They will see that an elaborate series of air shafts run up through the

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chamber's ceiling and around them form small droplets of water, which run into a pool in one corner of the chamber. The drops must have been accumulating for some time as the pool contains about 15 gallons of water. The water is foul but can easily be made safe for drinking with a spell or filtered through cloth and boiled.

If examined, the large piles of objects contain the remains of insects, large bits of chitin and some simple tools and weapons (crafted from obsidian or bone, nothing especially valuable). At the bottom of the pile, however, is what will likely pique the PCs' interest: 80 pp, 1350 cp in gems, a brass statuette (of a goddess of death) (1300 cp), a false eye (carved from jade) (700 cp), a marble vase (1400 cp), an arcane scroll of *hypnotic pattern* (150 cp), *gloves of dexterity +2* (2000 cp), small bone longsword +1 (2315 cp), *potion-orb of eagle's splendor* (300 gp), *wand of shocking grasp* (41 of 50 charges; inscription provides clue to function) (615 gp), *cognizance crystal* (1 point) (1000 gp), *dorje of elfsight* (26 of 50 charges) (2340 gp), power stone of *psionic daze, sense link, telepathic projection* (total 75 gp), power stone *astral traveler* and *psionic tongues* (total 175 gp), power stone of *forced sense link, swarm of crystals*, and *energy retort* (total 675 gp), psionic tattoo of *mind thrust* (50 gp).

Tet'ka'cha will comb through the supply of chitin, picking out a handful of giant insect body parts that he does not recognize, packing them away for further study. He will then set about securing large pieces of chitin underneath the dead scarlet warden, fashioning a makeshift sledge so he can drag it out of the mound. Proceed to Encounter #16 - Zerchakak's Betrayal, below.

16) Zerchakak's Betrayal

As the party emerges back into the outermost chamber, Tet'ka'cha will be distracted, continuing to organize the various body parts and exoskeletons that he has collected. He will leave marks with his claws, some sort of labels, on all the different specimens, bundle them together, and bind them all tightly with a black rope. The makeshift sledge has been fastened so that the jalath-gak can pull the cargo.

Zerchakak will look around outside the mound quickly and then lead the jalath-gak and the cargo out, negotiating the exit to the mound carefully.

Zerchakak's Secrets

Without time to investigate, the PCs will likely not be able to piece together everything that has happened.

Zerchakak had orders to immediately bring specimens back to the zik'chil if anything of interest was obtained, even if it meant abandoning the rest of the party. Zerchakak had the powers to make an escape himself, but no means to bring along the rest of the party.

Tet'ka'cha will know that the jalath'gak will not normally fly with cargo, and so would initially assume that Zerchakak, the jalath'gak, and the precious cargo must have been captured somehow by the bugdead. In fact, Zerchakak is a psionist with a specialty in beast mastery. He not only uses these abilities to control the jalath'gak, but he also used it to control the sand howlers to feed his jalath'gak, and he even used it to control the dune reapers that attacked near Waystone 11. (Zerchakak was under orders to ensure that any parties recruited by Tet'ka'cha were sufficiently tough.)

If Tet'ka'cha and the party unravel any of this, Tet'ka'cha will be crestfallen by the betrayal and will realize that Zerchakak had orders to betray him all along.

Vibia takes point, being the first to emerge from the mound, followed by Zerchakak and his jalath'gak, and the cargo. Tet'ka'cha is still within the mound, studying the construction techniques used.

Suddenly, the sound of thousands of pieces of glass shattering fills the space, as an avalanche of obsidian falls down across the entrance, completely blocking out the sunlight and closing off the mound's entrance. Shards of blackglass spray across the chamber, with chunks both large and small slashing into unprotected flesh. The deeper chambers seem stable, but the entry chamber has completely collapsed.

The sound of the mound collapsing must have been audible for miles. Outside, you can still hear pieces of obsidian breaking off and tumbling down the mound. If there was eerie silence here before, there's not now.

Zerchakak's voice can be heard through the rubble. "Stay calm. We are safe and the structure is stable. There

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are several other exits on the higher levels that haven't collapsed."

Everyone in the antechamber suffers 3d6 damage (Reflex save for half, DC 20) from the obsidian shards.

The PCs will likely not realize it immediately, but Zerchakak has betrayed them. He stabbed Vibia through the neck with a poison dagger to silence her, used an augmented *concussion blast* to explode the mound, and trap them inside, and then used *psionic levitation* to flee into the skies with the jalath'gak and Tet'ka'cha's cargo. By the time they emerge, he is likely to be long gone. Zerchakak will flee at all costs and likely cannot be caught. Even if the PCs are determined to pursue him, the collapsing mound has alerted the bugdead hordes to their presence.

There are several ways to escape the mound. The party could use magic or psionics, using transmutation to reshape the mound or themselves, or *disintegration* (although this may risk further damaging the structure.) They could also carefully dig out through the rubble, or follow Zerchakak's suggestion to find one of the other exits.

When they do finally emerge, Zerchakak is nowhere to be seen, and Vibia is lying on the ground, covered in small obsidian shards and bleeding profusely. If her wounds are inspected (Heal check, DC 24), it can be seen that she has been injected with a mortal dose of poison (equal to purple worm poison).

Even if the PCs realize Vibia has been poisoned and have the means to neutralize it, she does not know that she was stabbed by Zerchakak, thinking that she was struck by the obsidian. An additional Heal check (DC 25) could discern what happened, but the party will have little time for such things: already, the buzzing of an insect swarm in the skies can be heard (Listen check, DC 15) and it is growing louder as the bugdead draw nearer.

Even if the party realizes that Zerchakak is to blame and attempt a pursuit, Zerchakak likely has quite the head start, and the PCs will find themselves surrounded by a swarm of bugdead dragonflies very soon (3 rounds). Proceed to Encounter #17 – Toward the Great Mound, below.

17) Toward the Great Mound (EL 12-14+)

Antloid Soldier, Bugdead Zombie (CR 5) 5x – See Appendix 2

Giant Dragonfly, Bugdead Zombie (CR 5) 7x – See Appendix 2

Scarlet Warden (CR 12) 1x – See Appendix 2

Whether or not they attempt to chase Zerchakak, the PCs will soon find themselves surrounded by a horde of bugdead.

The droning of insect wings has grown nearly deafening now, as hundreds of undead insects swarm all around your group and the damaged mound - the swarms seem to be thinnest to the south.

The bugdead dragonflies will reach the party first, with several moving to attack. 5 rounds later, undead antloids will arrive from other mounds to reinforce the attacking dragonflies.

During the battle, hundreds more dragonflies will be in the air around the PCs, clearly agitated but holding off for some reason. If the party takes a moment to look around further (Spot check, DC 15), they will see antloids milling about the damaged mound, affecting repairs and, at a distance, a growing number of scarlet wardens.

The scarlet wardens will not initially attack, content to watch from a distance as the PCs face the hordes of lesser bugdead. If the party attempts to flee in any direction except to the south, a scarlet warden will move to attack, disengaging if the PCs flee towards the south.

Development: If the PCs kill one of the scarlet wardens, the other scarlet wardens will back off, generally giving the PCs a wide berth. Afterwards, each time the party deviates from a southerly course, one of the scarlet wardens will launch long-range spells at them while another swarm of six bugdead dragonflies move in to attack. Even casual observation will show that the path to the south is relatively clear (the scarlet wardens have orders to herd the party towards Ahntharyarka.

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So long as they head toward the great mound, the party will face no attacks. Even if they pause to cast healing spells or so on, the bugdead will not resume the attack. Proceed to Encounter #18 – Ahnthyarka’s Choice, below.

18) Ahnthyarka’s Choice (EL 27+ or -)

Ahnthyarka (CR 27) 1x – See Appendix 1

Antloid Soldier, Bugdead Zombie (CR 5) 50x – See Appendix 2

Giant Dragonfly, Bugdead Zombie (CR 5) 70x – See Appendix 2

Scarlet Warden (CR 12) 10x – See Appendix 2

The PCs have been noticed by Ahnthyarka and they are curious to meet these intruders. Something of a student of the world themselves, living PCs who are loyal companions to a kreen are a strange novelty to Ahnthyarka. They have instructed their minions to give the PCs an unobstructed path to the Great Mound.

As you continue along, the great swarms of bugdead seem to remain content to herd you to the south, seemingly guiding to what must be the largest mound in the Shale Lands. Rising from the obsidian plain like a massive castle, it is a work of wonder – built with incredible patterning and detail, in a stunning variety of shapes and forms.

The base of the mound looks to be composed of six spokes that radiate out from a central shaft. From the central shaft and each spoke, the construction rises from the ground like a bizarre obsidian plant growing up to meet the green-tinted sky. Each portion twists and curves, splits into multiple shafts, or comes together seemingly without the hindrance of an intelligent plan. The base stretches 300 yards from the tip of one spoke to the far end of its counterpart. The highest towers jut more than 500 yards into the air.

Activity in the Great Mound is constant. The base levels swarm with undead worker antloids, carrying blocks of obsidian in miles-long trains from distant quarries. Other antloids fashion these into precise building blocks in a series of pits, before they are

removed and carried straight up the sides of the structure, to be put into place. The bottom third of the Great Mound literally crawls with thousands of worker antloids, so much so that, in places, the grays and reds of their carapaces completely obscure the gleaming black obsidian. Encased in this living shell, construction, destruction, and reconstruction are nearly constant, and a patient observer can watch sections of the mighty structure slowly change form, beneath the workers, over a matter of hours.

At this point, Ahnthyarka may make contact via a spell or psionics and make their invitation explicit. The party may make an Intelligence check (DC 20) to detect the magical sensor associated with Ahnthyarka’s *screaming* spell.

As you walk towards the great spire of obsidian, a voice speaks out from thin air: *“Greetings visitors. Such a pleasure to see vertebrates that can behave themselves and living ones at that!*

“You have impressed and intrigued me - come inside so that we might speak. You shall not be harmed - Ahnthyarka has spoken.”

The party may walk into the Great Mound and proceed to the throne room (all other passages are blocked off by masses of bugdead). They will find themselves undisturbed as long as they stick to the proper route.

Many of the halls of the mound are small and narrow, some so narrow that all creatures in a hallway must travel in the same direction (clever PCs may recognize the opportunity this creates later on).

Within the mound, you travel through a maze of passages to a gigantic chamber, possibly the largest enclosed chamber you’ve ever seen, containing hundreds of bugdead, including several of the unknown scarlet creatures you had been searching for.

In the center of the chamber is an oversized scarlet bugdead, with a palpable air of majesty. Enormous and crab-like, its carapace is a deep shade of red. Its head sports two whip-like antennae above large mandibles that open sideways to reveal even larger fangs. Opposite the head, a third antenna sprouts like a tail where the other creatures have only stubs. Eight legs support its large, shelled body, with color shading to a deep brown beneath the beast. This must be Ahnthyarka.

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Nearby, you notice a pair of undead thri-kreen. Tet'ka'cha whispers quietly *"I recognize these kreen - they are from one of the thri-kreen packs that disappeared into the Dead Lands."*

The Conversation

Ahnthyarka is genuinely curious about the group. No living adventurers have ever made it this far into their kingdom and this is too intriguing to pass up. Ahnthyarka will offer to answer one question of the PCs in exchange for them answering one of theirs:

- Where has the party come from and what brought them to the Shale Lands?
- It is fascinating that humans and the kreen are cooperating, for it is unheard of for humanoids and insectoids to coexist peacefully in the Dead Lands. Is this common in the lands of the living?
- Yes, Ahnthyarka has captured several thri-kreen that were foolish enough to venture into the Dead Lands and die; they make interesting servants.
- While Ahnthyarka has captured undead specimens of thri-kreen who have foolishly ventured down the cliffs, Ahnthyarka has never seen one alive. They have also never seen a tohr-kreen either (living or undead) and want to know about tohr-kreen biology. Despite the threatening circumstances, Tet'ka'cha will be eager to discuss kreen biology and physiology at length.
- Ahnthyarka will be curious to learn about kreen society, but Tet'ka'cha will not divulge any secrets of the Kreen Empire, instead expounding on nomadic thri-kreen societal structure.
- Ahnthyarka will be interested that Tet'ka'cha considers himself a scientist and "anthropologist" as they consider themselves something similar.
- Ahnthyarka will happily share that they and the other creatures like themselves, are a species known as S'thag Zagath - known as scarlet wardens to the undead humanoids of the Dead Lands.
- Ahnthyarka will share some information about the geography of the Dead Lands. They can discuss their kingdom, Small Home, the Forbidden Mountains, the Kingdoms of Gretch and the Disciples. Ahnthyarka also knows of the existence of the City of a Thousand Dead, far to the east - a humanoid undead metropolis.
- Ahnthyarka will make it clear that they are trying to maintain a delicate balance in the Dead Lands, countering both the foolish, brutal savagery of the

humanoid undead to the north and the oppressive tyranny of the bugdead leaders to the south.

- Ahnthyarka will question the party about their powers, trying to assess if they could be allies against the humanoid undead.

If they inquire about Zerchakak, the party can learn the following: Ahnthyarka's scarlet wardens reported that the other tohr-kreen is the one who destroyed the mound, and he and his giant insect escaped. Ahnthyarka will dangle this information in front of them and it may prompt Tet'ka'cha to realize he was betrayed, if he had not previously realized it.

The Choice

Ahnthyarka will entertain questions for some time and will allow the PCs to rest a little if they ask: tending to wounds, eating and drinking if they desire (though she has no food or drink for them). Finally Ahnthyarka will make the PCs an offer: *"You are free to go, upon only one condition. Tet'ka'cha must stay with me. He has traveled here for a great scientific expedition, but the science experiments shall be mine. You may now leave."*

Ahnthyarka will be perplexed if the PCs resist. *"Leave Tet'ka'cha with me. He is one of my kind, not yours. His place is here. Would you really turn down an offer as generous as this?"*

The PCs must think fast. Tet'ka'cha will be afraid but silent. The party really is free to go if they leave Tet'ka'cha behind. Ahnthyarka will remain open to further negotiation, if the PCs attempt it.

How this plays out should depend on the cleverness of the PCs' roleplaying and the DM's discretion. A number of potential outcomes are possible:

- The PCs could relinquish Tet'ka'cha, though the look of betrayal will be plain, even on his kreen face. If they do so, they may depart the Shale Lands undisturbed.
- The PCs may be able to bargain with Ahnthyarka, providing something else of value. Ahnthyarka will have little use for their treasure, but is interested in their knowledge. If they can come up with something interesting enough, Ahnthyarka may be persuaded to allow them to leave.
- Ahnthyarka would be open to a proposal that would allow themselves and the party to stay in touch in the future, and if Ahnthyarka can be convinced that such a line of communication and intelligence will remain open, then they may be willing to let Tet'ka'cha go in exchange for this future communication.

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- Ahnthyarka will be intrigued by displays of stubborn and reckless loyalty, and may allow the PCs to depart with Tet'ka'cha simply out of fascination at the apparent bond between humanoid and insect. Ahnthyarka might be especially persuaded if the PCs offer to carry out some quest on her behalf.

Development: If the PCs agree to leave Tet'ka'cha behind or otherwise come to terms with Ahnthyarka, they are free to leave the throne room (and the Shale Lands) unmolested by Ahnthyarka's bugdead. Proceed to Part 3 – Escaping the Dead Lands.

If they try to fight their way out or otherwise escape, proceed to Encounter #19 - Out of the Mound, below.

19) Out of the Mound (EL 12+)

Antloid Soldier, Bugdead Zombie (CR 5) 8x – See Appendix 2

Giant Dragonfly, Bugdead Zombie (CR 5) 4x – See Appendix 2

The PCs may decide to fight their way out. It might seem like an impossible task but an enterprising party could come up with a plan. Although the forces gathered in Ahnthyarka's throne room are far too powerful to confront directly in combat, creating some sort of diversion or chaos would allow the PCs to flee into the narrow tunnels of the Great Mound.

Attempting to damage or destroy the throne room in some way, such as an area-effect spell or power aimed at the ceiling, could create a tremendous amount of chaos and give the PCs the distraction they need to escape.

Attacking Ahnthyarka directly would cause all the present bugdead to immediately swarm the PCs in an attempt to end their threat.

Ahnthyarka has worked protective magics on the Great Mound, filling it with a *dimensional lock* effect, preventing teleportation and other forms of dimensional travel (whether psionic or magical in nature). Once outside the Great Mound, such effects may be used freely, allowing the PCs to simply teleport back to the Tablelands (if they thought to prepare such spells or powers ahead of time). In order to escape the mound, however, the party will need to fight their way out.

There are multiple routes out of the Great Mound, but all of them twist and turn as if constructed by a madman and they all look the same. Each tunnel segment is 10 to 15 feet wide (50% chance of each) and 100 feet long. While escaping, the party will travel through 2d4+1 intersections (each 100 ft apart) before escaping the tunnels, through attentive PCs might be able to navigate the tunnels faster than usual (Survival or Intelligence check, DC 20) reducing the number of intersections by 1, removing an additional intersection for each 5 points that the DC was exceeded by (2 less intersections for a result of 25, 3 less for a result of 30, etc), to a minimum of 3 intersections traveled.

When leaving the throne room, the party will be pursued by 2 bugdead antloids and 1 bugdead dragonfly (see above). At each intersection, the party will encounter 2 additional antloids and 1 dragonfly that will join the battle. If not destroyed, these undead insects will pursue the PCs all the way out of the Great Mound, through the Shale Lands, and to the very Cliffs of Ulyan if allowed to do so. Only magic or psionics (*invisibility, teleportation, etc.*) will allow the party to evade these enraged bugdead.

Once the party has successfully escaped from both the Great Mound and the Shale Lands, proceed to Part 3 – Escaping the Dead Lands.

Part 3: Escaping the Dead Lands

20) Up the Cliffs (EL 12)

Wezer Storm (CR 8) 4x – See Appendix

As the party ascends the Cliffs (either via flight or the Winding Way), a wezer cloud will detect and attack them one last time.

Concluding the Adventure

The adventure concludes when the party emerges from the Dead Lands back into the southern reaches of the Tablelands. They will need to return to the Kreen Encampment in the Endless Sand Dunes to receive payment for the expedition but, if the PCs return without Tet'ka'cha, the kreen there will remind the PCs that the agreement was struck with Tet'ka'cha, not with them. An especially persuasive argument (Diplomacy, DC 28) will get them to pay out half the promised sum, for "a task half completed". Either way, the tohr-kreen will, however, graciously allow the party to rest and heal at the encampment for a day.

If Tet'ka'cha returned with the party back to the encampment, he makes good on his promises, paying each PC their 30,000 cp in gems for what he calls "a successful research expedition".

Further Adventures

Assuming the party survives to return from the Dead Lands, various other adventures might follow:

Being capable and resourceful mercenaries, the tohr-kreen might invite the PCs to accompany their next journey - west to the Jagged Cliffs. The kreen will not be ready to move on for several days yet, requiring time to study and secure their new samples, giving the PCs plenty of time to recuperate before a grueling journey west.

After this small taste of their internal politics, the PCs may have become intrigued with the machinations of the Kreen Empire and seek to learn more. Who are the mysterious zik'chil and what were they hoping to find? The answers to these questions could send the PCs far to the west and serve as an entry point to exploring the Crimson Savannah and Kreen Empire.

With such a "successful" expedition behind him, Tet'ka'cha might engage the PCs to provide protection on his next expedition - to the southern Dead Lands! Has the party had their fill of the bugdead or will they accompany Tet'ka'cha on his expedition to locate Ahnthiyarka's bitter enemies, whom he reasons might be living zagath and the mysterious leaders of the Buglands?

After such a stunning betrayal by his fellows, perhaps Tet'ka'cha will leave them behind and accompany the PCs back north to the Tablelands and on further adventures - happy to further study the flora and fauna while doing so (all secretly at the behest of his zik-chil masters, of course).

When they return to the kreen encampment, Zerchakak will already be gone, off to undertake his next mission. If they felt particularly betrayed by his actions (perhaps especially if they led to Tet'ka'cha being left behind with Ahnthiyarka), the PCs may decide to chase him down across the Tablelands. Zerchakak will harbor no particular animosity for the party he betrayed, but he will become a powerful and dangerous enemy if pursued.

Umona, the defiler, must have a source of dead kanks, kreen and other insectoids to reanimate - perhaps trading with a local elven tribe for spellcasting services or hunting for them herself from a nearby kank hive. If they left her alive, Umona might serve as a useful contact for the party. If not, the area around her hut might serve as an excellent base camp for further exploration of the regions southwest of Celik.

The party may also decide to hunt for other defilers attempting to study necromancy along the periphery of the Dead Lands; Umona is unlikely to be the only evil necromancer who has been drawn to this evil place.

PCs knowledgeable in alchemy might realize that Umona was likely incapable of producing her Bugdead Rebarbative - both due to a complete lack of ranike sap and due to her lacking the necessary experience to produce such a substance reliably. Tracking down Umona's source of Bugdead Rebarbative might take considerable effort, as they are not likely nearby, but perhaps there might be undiscovered clues hidden within her hut.

After their first interaction, the PCs might attempt to contact the Hak'dre'kalak again, eager to learn further secrets for effectively hunting undead. The pack ranges far and wide across the deep southern Tablelands and would not be easy to find - but doing so might be well worth the effort - especially if the PCs have slain the defiler Umona.

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If they survived, the other humanoid NPCs (Vibia, Philo, Sabina, Mumtaz, and Jahan) may have traveled to the kreen encampment or perhaps even to Ahnthyarka's mound and back. Afterwards, they might seek to join the PCs for further adventures or hunt the PCs down, somehow blaming them for the loss of their companions. If they did not accompany the PCs, they will likely have returned to Celik or Fort Sharprock to nurse their wounds.

If they slaughtered some of his herd, Anak will become the PCs relentless foe; incapable of being permanently killed, he will follow them wherever they go and attempt to harass or slay them to the best of his (limited) abilities. The best way to placate Anak would be for the party to purchase him enough carru (living or dead, he cares not) to increase his herd to 200 (he

knows exactly how many he still possesses) and 'drive' the herd to Anak's ranch, thereby completing his task and releasing his soul to the Gray. If they do so, Anak might even tell the PCs where he hid their grandfather's "fancy steel axe".

Though they might wait an indeterminate length of time to make contact (i.e., as long as the DM wants), Ahnthyarka continues to be intrigued by the PCs, and will eventually seek their assistance on an even more dangerous quest (see A Mother's Plea).

Having learned a bit about the Dead Lands, the PCs might seek to explore other parts of it, perhaps exploring deeper and deeper into the Dead Lands as they learn from their experiences.





Appendix 1: Important NPCs

Anak of Obsidian Gables CR 9

Thinking Zombie Dwarf Warrior 8

LE Medium undead

Init: +4; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +4, Spot +4

Aura: -

Languages: Common, Dwarven

AC: 17; touch 14, flat-footed 13

(+4 nat, +3 armor)

hp 60 (8 HD; 8d12+8)

Resistances: Cold 10, Electricity 10

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Delusional (still alive), Vulnerability to Blessed Elements

Saves: Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +2; +2 against spells and spell-like effects

Speed: 20 ft. (4 squares)

Melee: Club +13 (1d6+4) or Bite +12 (1d6+4 plus Disease)

Full Melee: Club +13/+8 (1d6+4) and 1x Claw +7 (1d4+2) and Bite +7 (1d6+2 plus Disease)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +8/+3; **Grapple:** +12

Combat Options: Disease (DC 13), Death Cry (DC 13)

Combat Gear: Studded Leather Armor, Carru Jawbone Club

Abilities: Str 18, Dex 11, Con -, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 8

SQ: Darkvision 60 ft., Delusional (still alive), Disease, Dwarf Traits, Enduring Focus (carru herd), Resistance to Cold and Electricity, Undead Traits.

Feats: Animal Affinity, Weapon Focus (club), Improved Initiative

Skills: Climb +6, Handle Animal +9, Intimidate +1, Jump +6, Listen +4, Ride +10, Search +4, Sense Motive +4, Spot +4.

Death Cry (Su): The sound of the undead's voice is enough to kill lesser creatures. Twice per day as a standard action, the undead can scream and wail. This unholy scream slays a total number of HD equal to half the undead's HD, affecting a 30-ft. radius and killing creatures with the least HD first unless they make a

Fortitude save (DC 13). Deaf creatures are immune to this power.

Delusional (Ex): The undead may believe it is still alive, thinks that it is still the time of the Green Age, or believe some other falsehood. Typically, its strong desire for that fact to be true, causes it to delude itself into believing the lie. Characters aware of the undead's beliefs, possibly by knowing its origins, can reason with and manipulate the creature. The undead receives a -4 penalty on Sense Motive checks against such characters.

Disease (Su): A thinking zombie's bite delivers one of the following diseases (50% chance of either). The save DC is 13

- Filth fever—bite, Fortitude save, incubation period 1d3 days, damage 1d3 Dex and 1d3 Con.
- Red ache—bite, Fortitude save, incubation period 1d3 days, damage 1d6 Str.

Enduring Focus (Su): The undead's life force is tied to a focus, either an object or an unfulfilled task. As long as this object (usually called a phylactery) is intact or the task unfinished, the undead cannot be permanently killed and it reforms 1d100 days after its apparent death. The phylactery has the hardness and hit points of a normal object of its kind.

Killing the undead in the Gray prevents it from returning from destruction.

Stability: A dwarf gains a +4 bonus on ability checks made to resist being bull rushed or tripped when standing on the ground (but not when climbing, flying, riding, or otherwise not standing firmly on the ground).

Vulnerability to Blessed Elements (Ex): A thinking zombie takes half again as much (+50%) damage as normal from blessed elements.

Weapons Familiarity: To dwarves, the urgrosh is treated as a martial rather than exotic weapon.



Anthyarka, Queen of the Great Mound CR 27

Unreclaimed Scarlet Warden Necromant 10

Neutral Evil Huge Undead (Psionic)

Init: +13; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +31, Spot +35

Aura: -

Languages: Classic Dwarven, Classic Elven, Terran, Ulyanese, Zagath,

AC: 35, touch 17, flat-footed 31**

(-2 size, +5 Dex, +10 natural, +8 armor, Def +4)

hp 210 (28 HD; 18d12+18)

Spell Resistance: 36

Immune: Turning, Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Vulnerability to Sunlight

Saves: Fort +14, Ref +19, Will +25

Speed: 40 ft (8 squares), Climb 20 ft.

Melee: Claw +22 (2d6+9) or Tentacle +21 (1d4+9) or Touch +21 (by spell)

Full Melee: 2x Claw +22 (2d6+9) and Bite +20 (1d6+4 plus Poison) and 3x Tentacle +19 (1d4+4)

Ranged: Ranged Touch +19 (by spell)

Space: 15 ft.; **Reach:** 10 ft. (15 ft. with tentacles)

Base Attack: +14; **Grapple:** +31

Combat Options: **Ability Drain (DC 29)**, Create Spawn, **Enhanced Spells (+1 dmg/die)**, Improved Grab, Poison (DC 29)

Combat Gear: Metamagic Rod of *Extend* (3/day, 1st - 6th level)

Psi-Like Abilities: 3/day - burst, catfall, claws of the vampire, mind probe, mindlink, psionic blast, schism; ML = HD; The save DCs are Charisma-based.

Spell-Like Abilities (Sp): 1/day - animate dead, command undead (DC 16); CL 20th.

Wizard Spells: (CL 20th, DC 20 + spell level):

10th - *quicken*ed chain lightning, *quicken*ed true seeing

9th - mage's disjunction, magma tunnel, prismatic sphere, *quicken*ed cone of cold, time stop

8th - create greater undead, ghostform, maze, prismatic wall, *quicken*ed greater invisibility

7th - greater arcane sight, greater teleport, mage's sword, reverse gravity, unliving identity

6th - antimagic field, forceful hand, chain lightning, disintegrate, true seeing, undeath to death

5th - cone of cold, magic jar, overland flight, persistent image, teleport, transmute rock to mud.



4th - animate dead, dimension door, fire shield, greater invisibility, scrying, shout

3rd - clairaudience/clairvoyance, dispel magic, halt undead, haste, invisibility sphere, lightning bolt

2nd - command undead, false life, ghoul touch, mirror image, see invisibility, spectral hand, web

1st - alarm, chill touch (2), mage armor, ray of enfeeblement, shield, shocking grasp

0 - dancing lights, disrupt undead (3), detect magic

Abilities: Str 28, Dex 20, Con -, Int 31, Wis 16, Cha 20

SQ: All-Around Vision, Darkvision 60 ft., Dead Lord, **Enhanced Ability (Int)**, Gravespeaker, Gray Casting, **Gray Toughness 1**, **Immunity to Turning**, Spell Resistance, Undead Traits, **Vulnerability to Sunlight**.

Feats: Alertness, Automatic Quicken Spell, Combat Reflexes, Deflect Arrows ^B, Improved Initiative, Improved Spell Capacity (10th), Multiattack, Quicken Spell, Superior Initiative, Weapon Focus (Bite, Claw).

Skills: Bluff +36, Climb +17, Concentration +36, Diplomacy +24, Hide +22, Listen +31, Knowledge (Arcana) +41, Knowledge (Psionics) +26, Knowledge (Warcraft) +25, Move Silently +26, Psicraft +11, Search +17, Sense Motive +24, Spellcraft +41, Spot +35.

Possessions: 170,000cp or Combat Gear plus: Bracers of Armor +8, Headband of intellect +6, Ring of Protection +4, Vest of Resistance +5.

Ability Drain (Su): Living creatures hit by the undead's natural attacks must succeed on a Fortitude save or take 1d6 points of ability drain. On each such

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successful attack, the undead gains 5 temporary hit points.

All-Around Vision (Ex): A scarlet warden's eyes give it 360-degree vision, granting a +4 racial bonus on Spot and Search checks and preventing the beast from becoming flanked.**

Create Spawn (Su): A humanoid reduced to 0 Constitution by scarlet warden poison dies but continues to breathe shallowly as if alive. After 1d6 days, the corpse rises as a namech under the scarlet warden's command.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a scarlet warden must hit with a claw attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 21, initial and secondary damage 1d6 Con. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Skills: Unreclaimed have a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks and can always choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened.

Spell Resistance (Ex): Scarlet wardens have spell resistance equal to 20 + class levels.

Vulnerability to Sunlight (Ex): Direct sunlight deals the undead 1d6 points of damage each round. The bright light of the dark sun reminds the creature of its former life; the creature cannot stand the brightness of the sun when compared to its eternal existence of pain and hunger.



Jalath'gak CR 5

N Large Vermin

Init: +2; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft., Listen +0, Spot +0

Languages: -

AC: 15; touch 11, flat-footed 13

(-1 size, +2 Dex, +4 Nat)

hp 52 (8 HD; 8d8+16)

Saves: Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +2

Speed: 20 ft. (4 squares), Fly 60ft. (good)

Melee: Claw +10 (1d6+5)

Full Melee: 6 Claws +10 (1d6+5) and Bite +5 (1d8+2)

Space: 10 ft. **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +6; **Grapple:** +15

Combat Options: Blood Drain, Improved Grab, Poison

Abilities: Str 20, Dex 14, Con 14, Int -, Wis 11, Cha 11

SQ: Darkvision 60 ft., Vermin Traits

Feats: Hover^B, Wingover^B

Skills: -

Blood Drain (Ex): A jalath'gak drains blood from a grappled opponent, dealing 1d6 points of Constitution damage each round it maintains the hold.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a jalath'gak must hit with a claw attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can drain blood from its opponent.

Poison (Ex): Inhaled, Fortitude DC 16, initial damage paralysis 2d6 rounds, secondary damage none. The save DC is Constitution-based. A jalath'gak can exhale a burst of poisonous gas up to three times per day, filling a 15-foot-radius cloud centered on the jalath'gak.

Carrying Capacity: A light load for a jalath'gak is up to 266 pounds if airborne or 400 pounds when earthbound; a medium load, 267-530 pounds when airborne or 401-800 pounds when earthbound; a heavy load, 531-800 pounds when airborne or 800-1,200 pounds when earthbound. A jalath'gak can drag 4,000 pounds when airborne and 6,000 pounds when earthbound.



Tet'ka'cha CR 12

Male Zik-trin'ta "Tohr-kreen" Ranger 6

LN Large Monstrous Humanoid

Init: +10; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +13, Spot +13

Languages: Common, Dwarven, Scrab, Thri-kreen, Thor-kreen

AC: 22; touch 15, flat-footed 16

(-1 size, +6 Dex, +7 Nat)

hp 84 (13 HD; 13d8+26)

Immune: *sleep*

Saves: Fort +9, Ref +16, Will +9

Speed: 60 ft. (12 squares)

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Melee: Claw +16 (1d6+3) or Bite +16 (1d6+3 plus Poison)

Full Melee: 4x Claw +15 (1d6+3) and Bite +13 (1d6+1 plus Poison)

Ranged: Kyorkcha +18 (1d10+3) or (with Manyshot, x4) Kyorkcha +10 (4d10+12)

Full Ranged: Kyorkcha +16/+11/+6 (1d10+3, Range 20 ft., 20/x2) and 3x Kyorkcha +16 (1d10+1, Range 20 ft., 20/x2)

or (with Rapid Shot) Kyorkcha +14/+14/+9/+4 (1d10+3, Range 20 ft., 20/x2) and 3x Kyorkcha +14 (1d10+1, Range 20 ft., 20/x2)

Space: 10 ft.; **Reach:** 10 ft.

Base Attack: +13/+8/+3; **Grapple:** +20

Combat Options: Poison (3/day, DC 15), Favored Enemy (animals +4, vermin +2), Manyshot, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot

Combat Gear: Large Kyorkcha x8

Ranger Spells Prepared (CL 3, DC 12 + spell lvl)

1st - read magic, speak with animals

Abilities: Str 17, Dex 22, Con 14, Int 18, Wis 14, Cha 8

SQ: Darkvision 60 ft., Immunity to *sleep*, and mind-affecting effects, Animal Companion, Wild Empathy +6,

Feats: Kiltektet, Deflect Arrows, Multiattack, Endurance ^B, Track ^B, Rapid Shot ^B, Manyshot ^B, Multiweapon Fighting, Quick Draw, Point Blank Shot

Skills: Balance +12, Climb +8, Hide +11 (+4 sandy terrain), Jump +43, Knowledge (psionics) +5, Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +5, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +5, Knowledge (geography) +10, Knowledge (history) +10, Knowledge (local) +10, Knowledge (nature) +17, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +5, Knowledge (religion) +12, Knowledge (ancient history) +5, Listen +13, Literacy (Common, Thri-kreen, Tohr-kreen), Search +10, Spot +13, Survival +4.

Possessions: Combat gear plus backpack, bag of gems, and field notebook.

Poison (Ex): Tohr-kreen venom - Injury, Fortitude DC 15, initial damage paralysis for 2d6 minutes, secondary damage 2d6 Con. Zik-trin'ta produce enough poison for three venomous bites per day. The save DC is Constitution based.



Zerchakak CR 12

Tohr-kreen "Zik-trin'ta" Psion (Telepath) 3 / Cornac 3

LN Large

Init: +5; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +5, Spot +5

Languages: Common, Dwarven, Tohr-kreen, Thri-kreen

AC: 21; touch 14, flat-footed 16

(-1 size, +5 Dex, +7 natural)

hp 75 (13 HD; 7d8+3d6+3d4+26)

Immune: *sleep*

Saves: Fort +8, Ref +16, Will +12

Speed: 60 ft. (12 squares)

Melee: Claw +13 (1d6+3) or Bite +13 (1d6+3 plus tohr-kreen poison) or Dagger +13 (1d6+3 plus purple worm poison) or Touch (Jolting Pole) +13 (1 nonlethal)

Full Melee: 4x Claws +13 (1d6+3) and Bite +11 (1d6+1 plus poison)

Ranged: Kyorkcha +15 (1d10+3) or Ranged Touch (Net) +15 (0 plus Entangle)

Space: 10 ft.; **Reach:** 10 ft.

Base Attack: +10/+5; **Grapple:** +17

Combat Options: Poison (3/day, DC 15)

Combat Gear: 4x Kyorkcha, Poisoned Obsidian Dagger, Jolting Pole, Net

Psion Powers (Power Points/Day 44; Powers Known (ML 6th):

3rd - dispel psionics, hostile empathic transfer, false sensory input, psionic lighten load

2nd—concussion blast, read thoughts, psionic suggestion, psionic levitate

1st—aura reading, empathy, telepathic projection, psionic charm, mindlink

Abilities: Str 17, Dex 20, Con 14, Int 18, Wis 10, Cha 14

SQ: Darkvision 60 ft., Empathic, immunity to sleep and mind-affecting effects, Telepathic

Feats: Deflect Arrows, Multiattack, Extend Power ^B, Bug Trainer, Animal Affinity

Skills: Balance +11, Bluff +4, Climb +8, Concentration +4, Diplomacy +4, Handle Animal +10, Heal +2, Hide +10 (+4 in sandy terrain), Intimidate +8, Jump +43, Knowledge (psionics) +6, Knowledge (geography) +6, Knowledge (nature) +13, Knowledge (religion) +11, Listen +5, Ride +9, Spot +5, Survival +2, Use Rope +7.

Possessions: 3,300 cp or Combat Gear backpack, purple worm poison 3 doses.

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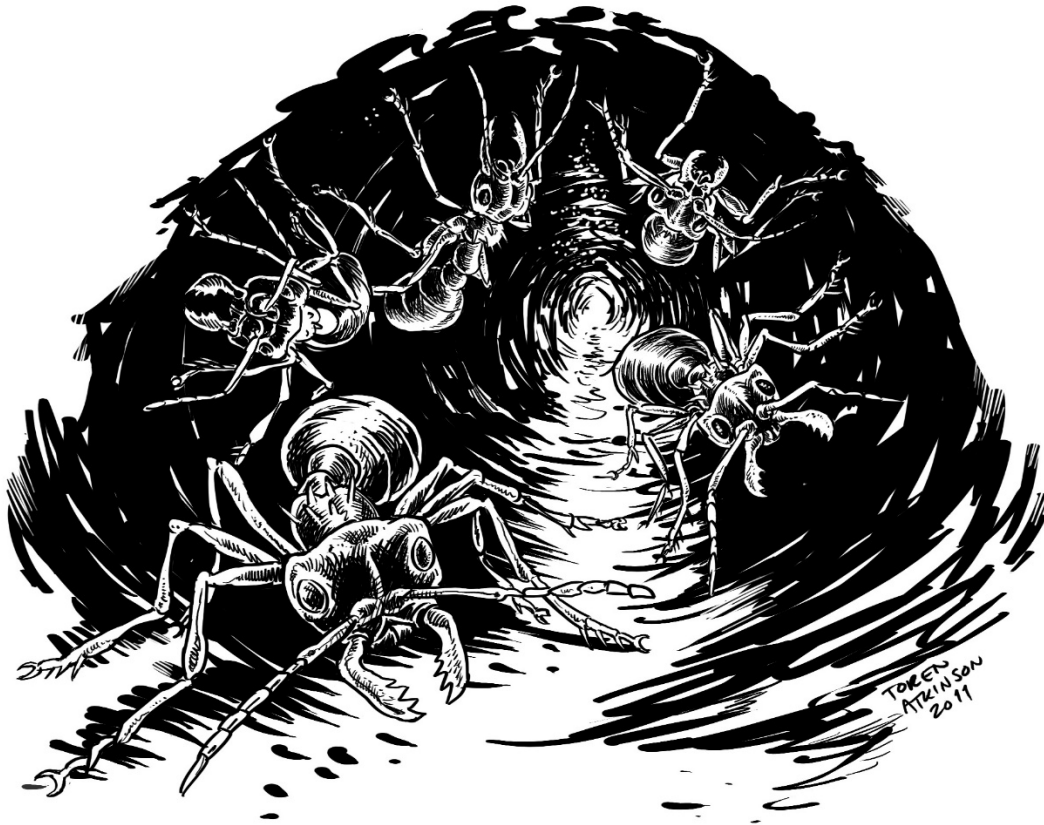
Tohr-kreen Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 15, initial damage paralysis for 2d6 minutes, secondary damage 2d6 Con. Zik-trin'ta produce enough poison for three venomous bites per day. The save DC is Constitution based.

Purple Worm Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 25, initial damage 1d6 Str, secondary damage 2d6 Str. Save DC is Con based. Zerchaka's dagger is coated with this and he will only use this to help him escape.

Empathic (Su): Every time Zerchaka manifests *empathy* or *telepathic projection*, he can apply the bonuses or penalties to Handle Animal checks as well.

Telepathic: Whenever Zerchaka uses *telepathic projection* on an animal or magical beast creature, he alters the creature's attitude towards him by two steps in a positive direction, instead of one. Additionally, he gains an augmentation option unavailable to other manifesters of this power.

Augment: If you spend 2 additional power points, this power's maximum duration increases to 1 hour/level.



Appendix 2: Enemies and Monsters

Antloid Soldier, Bugdead Zombie CR 5

NE Large undead

Init: +2; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft.; Tremorsense 60 ft.,

Listen +0, Spot +0

Languages: -

AC: 17; touch 11, flat-footed 15

(-1 size, +2 Dex, +6 natural)

hp 39 (6 HD; 6d12)

DR: 3/metal; **Resist:** Fire 5

Immune: Cold, Electricity, Undead Traits

Saves: Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +5

Speed: 40 ft. (8 squares)

Melee: Bite +7 (2d6+5) or Spray +4 ranged touch (poison)

Full Melee: Bite +7 (2d6+5) and Sting +2 (1d4+2 plus poison) or Spray +4 ranged touch (poison)

Space: 10 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +3; **Grapple:** +12

Combat Options: Poison (DC 15)

Abilities: Str 20, Dex 14, Con -, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 1

SQ: Damage reduction 3/metal, Darkvision 60 ft., Immunity to Cold and Electricity, Resistance to Fire 5, Tremorsense 60 ft., Undead Traits.

Feats: -

Skills: -

Poison (Ex): A bugdead antloid soldier can deliver poison through its bite (injury) or spray (contact). Fortitude DC 15, initial damage 2d6 Con, secondary damage none. The save DC is Constitution-based and includes a +2 racial bonus.



Dune Reaper, Drone CR 6

TN Large Aberration

Init: +7; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0

Languages: -

AC: 18; touch 12, flat-footed 15

(-1 size, +3 Dex, +6 Nat)

hp 60 (8 HD; 8d8+24)

Spell Resistance: 13

Saves: Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +6; Fear Resistance

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee: Claw +12 (3d6+7)

Full Melee: 2x Claw +12 (3d6+7) and Bite +10 (1d8+3)

Space: 10 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +6; **Grapple:** +17

Combat Options: Pounce, Rake (+12 to hit, 3d6+3 dmg)

Abilities: Str 24, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 1, Wis 10, Cha 6

SQ: Darkvision 60 ft., Fear Resistance, Spell Resistance.

Feats: Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (Claw), Multiattack.

Skills: Hide +5, Jump +12.



Dune Reaper, Warrior CR 7

TN Large Aberration

Init: +6; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0

Languages: -

AC: 19; touch 11, flat-footed 17

(-1 size, +2 Dex, +8 Nat)

hp 85 (10 HD; 10d8+40)

Power Resistance: 15; **Spell Resistance:** 15

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +7; Fear Resistance

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee: Claw +14 (3d6+8)

Full Melee: 2x Claw +14 (3d6+8) and Bite +12 (2d6+4)

Space: 10 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +7; **Grapple:** +19

Combat Options: Pounce, Rake (+14 to hit, 3d6+4 dmg)

Psi-Like Abilities: At will - cloud mind, concussion blast (4d6*), ego whip (2d4, DC 12*), inertial barrier, matter agitation, mindlink (9 targets*), psionic daze (13 HD*), tower of iron will (2 rounds, PR 20); ML 10th; The save DCs are Charisma-based. *Includes augmentation for dune reaper's manifester level.

Abilities: Str 26, Dex 15, Con 18, Int 3, Wis 10, Cha 8

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SQ: Darkvision 60 ft., Fear Resistance, Power Resistance, Spell Resistance.

Feats: Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (Bite), Improved Natural Attack (Claw), Multiattack.

Skills: Hide +6, Jump +13.

Fear Resistance (Ex): Because of their ruthlessness when in search of prey, dune reapers benefit from a +4 racial bonus on Will saves against fear effects.

Pounce (Ex): If a dune reaper charges, it can make a full attack, including two Rake attacks.



Dune Reaper, Matron CR 8

TN Large Aberration

Init: +6; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0

Languages: -

AC: 19; touch 11, flat-footed 17

(-1 size, +2 Dex, +8 Nat)

hp 120 (10 HD; 10d8+40)

Power Resistance: 15; **Spell Resistance:** 15

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +7; Fear Resistance

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee: Claw +14 (3d6+8)

Full Melee: 2x Claw +14 (3d6+8) and Bite +12 (2d6+4)

Space: 10 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +7; **Grapple:** +19

Combat Options: Pounce, Rake (+14 to hit, 3d6+4 dmg)

Psi-Like Abilities: At will - cloud mind, concussion blast (4d6*), ego whip (2d4, DC 12*), inertial barrier, matter agitation, mindlink (9 targets*), psionic daze (13 HD*), tower of iron will (2 rounds, PR 20); ML 10th; The save DCs are Charisma-based. *Includes augmentation for dune reaper's manifester level.

Abilities: Str 26, Dex 15, Con 18, Int 3, Wis 10, Cha 8

SQ: Darkvision 60 ft., Fear Resistance, Power Resistance, Spell Resistance.

Feats: Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (Bite), Improved Natural Attack (Claw), Multiattack.

Skills: Hide +6, Jump +13.

Fear Resistance (Ex): Because of their ruthlessness when in search of prey, dune reapers benefit from a +4 racial bonus on Will saves against fear effects.

Pounce (Ex): If a dune reaper charges, it can make a full attack, including two Rake attacks.



Giant Dragonfly, Bugdead Zombie CR 5

NE Large Undead

Init: +3; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft., Listen +0, Spot +0

Languages: -

AC: 17; touch 12, flat-footed 14

(-1 size, +3 Dex, +5 natural)

hp 45 (7 HD; 7d12)

Damage Reduction: 3/metal; **Resistances:** Fire 5

Immune: Cold, Electricity, Undead Traits

Saves: Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +5

Speed: 10 ft. (2 squares), Fly 60 ft. (poor)

Melee: Bite +6 (1d8+6)

Full Melee: Bite +6 (1d8+6)

Space: 10 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +3; **Grapple:** +11

Combat Options: Devour, Improved Grab, Rake (1d6+2)

Abilities: Str 18, Dex 16, Con -, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 1

SQ: Damage reduction 3/metal, Darkvision 60 ft., Immunity to Cold and Electricity, Resistance to Fire 5, Undead Traits.

Feats: -

Skills: -

Devour (Ex): Once a giant dragonfly has achieved a hold, it automatically deals bite damage each round it maintains the hold.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a giant dragonfly must hit with its bite attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can rake with two claws.

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Rake (Ex): On a successful grapple check, a giant bugdead zombie dragonfly deals damage as follows: Attack bonus +6 melee, damage 1d6+2.



Mindless Hak'trin CR 2

Zombie Bugdead Thri-kreen

NE Medium Undead

Init: +2; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0

Languages: -

AC: 15; touch 12, flat-footed 13

(+2 Dex, +3 natural)

hp 13 (2 HD; 2d12)

Damage Redcution: 3/metal; **Resistances:** Fire 5

Immune: Cold, Electricity, Undead Traits

Saves: Fort +0, Ref +2, Will +3

Speed: 40 ft. (8 squares)

Melee: Claw +3 (1d4+2) or Bite +3 (1d4+2 plus Poison)

Full Melee: 4x Claws +3 (1d4+2) and Bite +0 melee (1d4 plus Poison);

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +1; **Grapple:** +3

Combat Options: Poison

Abilities: Str 14, Dex 14, Con -, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 1

SQ: Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60 ft., Immunity to Cold and Electricity, Resistance to Fire, Undead Traits.

Feats: -

Skills: -

Poison (Ex): A thri-kreen delivers its poison (Fortitude save DC 11) with a successful bite attack. The initial damage is 1d6 Dex, and the secondary damage is paralysis. A thri-kreen produces enough poison for one bite per day.



Intelligent Hak'trin CR 7

Thinking Zombie Thri-kreen Ranger 4

NE Medium Undead

Init: +9; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft., Listen +12, Spot +12

Languages: Common, Thri-kreen

AC: 23; touch 15, flat-footed 18

(+5 Dex, +8 natural)

hp 45 (6 HD; 6d12+6)

Resistances: Cold 10, Electricity 10

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Vulnerability to Blessed Elements

Saves: Fort +5, Ref +13, Will +7

Speed: 40 ft. (8 squares)

Melee: Gythka +11 (1d8+8) or Claw +10 (1d4+5) or Bite +10 (1d6+5 plus Poison)

Full Melee: 2x Gythka +9 (1d8+6 and 1d8+2) and 2x Claws +8 (1d4+2) and Bite +8 (1d6+2 plus Poison) or 4x Claws +10 (1d4+5) and Bite +8 (1d6+2 plus Poison)

Ranged: Chatkcha +8 (1d6+5)

Full Ranged: 4x Chatkcha +8 (1d6+5)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +5; **Grapple:** +10

Combat Options: Favored Enemy (humans +2), Poison (1/day, DC 11), Disease (DC 12), Insanity (DC 12)

Combat Gear: Gythka +1/MW, Chatkcha x6

Abilities: Str 20, Dex 20, Con -, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 8

SQ: Damage Reduction, Gray Toughness 1, Resistances, Thri-kreen Traits, Undead Traits, Vulnerability to Blessed Elements.

Feats: Deflect Arrows ^B, Endurance ^B, Improved Initiative, Track ^B, Multiweapon Fighting ^B, Improved Natural Armor, Multiattack.

Skills: - Climb +10, Hide +10 (+4 in sandy or arid areas), Jump +35, Knowledge Nature +6, Listen +12, Move Silently +10, Search +11, Sense Motive +6, Spot +12, Survival +7.

Possessions: 3,300 cp or Combat Gear plus: Cloak of Resistance +1.

Disease (Su): A thinking zombie's bite delivers one of the following diseases (50% chance of either). The save DC is 12

- Filth fever—bite, Fortitude save, incubation period 1d3 days, damage 1d3 Dex and 1d3 Con.
- Red ache—bite, Fortitude save, incubation period 1d3 days, damage 1d6 Str.

Insanity (Su): The undead's natural attacks afflict its victim with temporary insanity. If the creature fails a Will save DC 12, it is confused for 2d10 minutes. The victim has no sense of right or wrong and behaves unpredictably.

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Poison (Ex): A thri-kreen delivers its poison (Fortitude save DC 11 + Con modifier) with a successful bite attack. The initial damage is 1d6 Dex, and the secondary damage is paralysis. A thri-kreen produces enough poison for one bite per day.

Thri-Kreen Traits:

- **Skills:** Thri-kreen have a +30 racial bonus on Jump checks and have a +4 racial bonus on Hide checks in sandy or arid areas.
- **Sleep immunity:** Thri-kreen do not sleep and are immune to spells and effects that cause sleep. Thri-kreen spellcasters and manifesters still require 8 hours of rest before preparing spells.
- **Weapon Familiarity:** Thri-kreen treat the gythka and chatkcha as martial weapons instead of exotic weapons.

Vulnerability to Blessed Elements (Ex): A thinking zombie takes half again as much (+50%) damage as normal from blessed elements.



Monstrous Scorpion, Huge Zombie Bugdead CR 8

NE Huge undead

Init: +0; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft.; Tremorsense 60 ft., Listen +0, Spot +0

Languages: -

AC: 20; touch 8, flat-footed 20
(-2 size, +12 Nat)

hp 104 (10 HD; 10d12)

Damage Reduction: 3/metal; **Resistances:** Fire 5

Immune: Cold, Electricity, Undead Traits

Saves: Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +7

Speed: 50 ft. (10 squares)

Melee: Claw +12 (1d8+7)

Full Melee: 2x Claw +12 (1d8+7) and Sting +7 (2d4+3 plus Poison)

Space: 15 ft.; **Reach:** 10 ft.

Base Attack: +5; **Grapple:** +20

Combat Options: Constrict, 1d8+7, Improved Grab, Poison

Abilities: Str 25, Dex 10, Con -, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 1

SQ: Damage Reduction 3/metal, Darkvision 60 ft., Immunity to Cold and Electricity, Resistance to Fire 5, Tremorsense 60 ft., Undead Traits.

Feats: -

Skills: -

Constrict (Ex): A monstrous scorpion deals automatic claw damage on a successful grapple check.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a monstrous scorpion must hit with a claw attack. A monstrous scorpion can use either its Strength modifier or Dexterity modifier for grapple checks, whichever is better.

Poison (Ex): A huge monstrous scorpion has a poisonous sting. Save is Constitution-based, DC 15. Initial and secondary damage both 1d6 Con.



Odoka CR -

Kes'trekel Familiar (8th level)

N Tiny Magical Beast (Augmented Animal, Psionic)

Init +1; **Senses:** Low-Light Vision; Spot +4

Languages: -; Empathic Link, Speak with Birds, Speak with Master

AC: 15, touch 13, flat-footed 14

(+2 size, +1 Dex, +6 natural)

hp 18 (8 HD; half of master's hp)

Saves: Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +6; Improved Evasion

Speed: 10 ft. (2 squares), Fly 60 ft. (8 squares) (average)

Melee: Bite +5 (1d3+1) or Touch +5 (by spell)

Full Melee: Bite +5 (1d3+1)

Space: 2.5 ft.; **Reach:** 0 ft.

Base Attack: +4; **Grapple:** -3

Combat Options: Flyby-Attack, Aversion, Deliver Touch Spells

Abilities: Str 12, Dex 12, Con 13, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 8

SQ: Empathic Link, Improved Evasion, Low-Light Vision, Share Spells, Speak with Birds, Speak with Master

Feats: Flyby Attack

Skills: Bluff +2, Concentration +7, Craft (alchemy) +4, Decipher Script +0, Handle Animal +4, Knowledge (arcana) +6, Knowledge (geography) +2, Knowledge (history) +2, Knowledge (local) +3,

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Knowledge (nature) +4, Knowledge (the planes) +4, Listen +2, Literacy (Common), Spellcraft +6, Spot +4

Aversion (Ps): A group of 20 or more kes'trekels can manifest aversion three times per day (Will DC 11 negates). For every 10 additional kes'trekel, increase the save DC by 1. Manifester level 3rd. The save DC is Charisma-based.



Scarlet Warden CR 12

LE Huge Undead

Init: +8; **Senses:** All-Around Vision; Darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +17, Spot +21

Languages: -

AC: 22; touch 12, flat-footed 18 (-2 size, +4 Dex, +10 natural)

hp: 78 (12 HD; 12d12)

Spell Resistance: 20

Saves: Fort +4, Ref +8, Will +10

Speed: 40 ft. (8 squares)

Melee: Claw +12 (2d6+7)

Full Melee: 2 Claws +12 (2d6+7) and Bite +7 (1d6+3 plus Poison)

Space 15 ft. **Reach:** 10 ft.

Base Attack: +6; **Grapple:** +21

Combat Options: Create Spawn, Improved Grab, Poison, Spells

Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 10th, necromancer, defiler, DC 12 + spell level):

5th—cone of cold, magic jar, overland flight

4th—animate dead, dimension door, fire shield, shout

3rd—clairaudience/clairvoyance, halt undead, haste, invisibility sphere

2nd—command undead, false life, ghoul touch (+11 melee touch), mirror image, see invisibility, spectral hand

1st—*alarm*, *chill touch* (+11 melee touch) (2), *mage armor*, *ray of enfeeblement* (+8 ranged touch), *shocking grasp* (+11 melee touch)

0—dancing lights, disrupt undead (+8 ranged touch) (3), detect magic

Abilities: Str 24, Dex 18, Con —, Int 15, Wis 14, Cha 16

SQ: Darkvision 60 ft., Spell Resistance 20, Undead Traits

Feats: Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Deflect Arrows ^B, Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (bite, claw)

Skills: Concentration +18, Diplomacy +5, Hide +11, Listen +17, Move Silently +19, Search +6, Sense Motive +17, Spot +21

Possessions: -

All-Around Vision (Ex): A scarlet warden's eyes give it 360-degree vision, granting a +4 racial bonus on Spot and Search checks and preventing the beast from becoming flanked.

Create Spawn (Su): A humanoid reduced to 0 Constitution by scarlet warden poison dies but continues to breathe shallowly as if alive. After 1d6 days, the corpse rises as a namech under the scarlet warden's command.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a scarlet warden must hit with a claw attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a

free action without provoking an attack of opportunity.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 21, initial and secondary damage 1d6 Con. The save DC is Constitution-based.



Small Homer, Pixie CR 12

Male and Female Pixie Racked Spirit Psion (Telepath) 8

Chaotic Evil Small Undead (Augmented Fey, Incorporeal, Psionic)

Init: +7; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft., Low-Light Vision; Listen +17, Spot +17

Aura: -

Languages: Gnomish, Sylvan, Ulyanese Giant, Ulyanese

AC: 23, touch 23, flat-footed 16; Incorporeal (50% miss chance)

(+1 size, +7 Dex, +5 deflection)

hp 60 (8d12 +8); **Fast Healing** 3

Damage Reduction: 10/steel; **Spell Resistance:** 23

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects, Vulnerability to Raise Dead

Saves: Fort +2, Ref +9, Will +11

Speed: Fly 60 (perfect)

Melee: Touch +12 (1d4 plus Energy Drain)

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Ranged: -

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +5; **Grapple:** -

Combat Options: **Brand** (3/day, 1d8 plus penalty), Energy Drain (DC 19), Greater Invisibility, **Guilt Gaze** (DC 19), Psionic Meditation (Move action), **Taint Weapon** (DC 19)

Combat Gear: -

Psi-Like Abilities: At will—*aura sight**, *empathy**, *mindlink**, *psionic dominate**; 3/day—*recall agony**, *telekinetic force**; ML = HD; The save DCs are Charisma-based.

Spell-Like Abilities: 1/day - *lesser confusion*, *dancing lights*, *detect chaos*, *detect good*, *detect evil*, *detect law*, *detect thoughts*, *dispel magic*, *entangle*, *permanent image* (visual and auditory elements only). CL = HD. The save DCs are Charisma-based.

Psion Powers: (ML 8th (+2 vs. PR), 78 PP, DC 15 + power level)

4th - *Power Leech*, *Psionic Modify Memory*

3rd - *dispel psionics*, *Energy Retort*, *False Sensory Input*

2nd - *Brain Lock*, *ID Insinuation*, *Psionic Suggestion*, *Serenity*, *Swarm of Crystals*

1st - *Deceleration*, *Detect Psionics*, *Entangling Ectoplasm*, *Mind Thrust*, *Psionic Charm*

Abilities: Str 10, Dex 24, Con -, Int 21, Wis 20, Cha 20

SQ: **Enhanced Ability** (feat), **Fast Healing** 3, Gray Toughness 1, **Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects**, Vulnerability to Raise Dead

Feats: Dodge [Ⓢ], Combat Manifestation, Greater Power Penetration [Ⓢ], Power Penetration, Psionic Meditation, Maximize Power [Ⓢ], Quicken Power [Ⓢ], Weapon Finesse [Ⓢ].

Skills: Bluff +9, Concentration +12(+4), Hide +11, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (Local) +10, Knowledge (Psionics) +13, Listen +17, Search +19, Sense Motive +11, Spot +17, Psicraft +15

Possessions: 9,400cp or Combat Gear plus: Cloak of Charisma +2, Dust of Illusion, Headband of Intelligence +2.

Brand (Su): Up to three times per day, the creature can trace a lasting mark on a creature's skin with its fingers by making a touch attack. This touch deals 1d8 points of damage and inflicts a -2 penalty on any interaction checks the victim makes (such as Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate, and Sense Motive); the brand leaves a disturbing impression on anyone who sees it. Both the damage and penalty are permanent. A

remove curse or heal spell removes the brand and its negative effects.

Energy Drain (Su): Living creatures hit by a racked spirit's incorporeal touch attack gain one negative level. For each negative level bestowed, the racked spirit gains 5 temporary hit points. A racked spirit can use its energy drain ability once per round. The DC for the Fortitude save to remove the negative level after 24 hours is 10 + 1/2 racked spirit's HD + racked spirit's Cha modifier.

Guilt Gaze (Su): The undead's gaze attack causes grief to intelligent creatures within 30 ft. Unless a victim makes a Will save, its most painful memories surface, wracking the victim with guilt over small incidents that happened years ago in its life. The guilt nauseates a creature for 1d4 rounds.

Taint Weapon (Su): The undead can taint magic and psionic weapons by touching them. It makes a touch attack against the weapon. The touch does not provoke an attack of opportunity. If the undead hits, the weapon or its wielder must make a Will save. Failure means the weapon permanently loses one point of its enhancement bonus. A weapon drained to a +0 enhancement bonus loses all other magic and psionic properties.

Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects (Ex): The undead, unlike most others of its type, is susceptible to mind-affecting effects, which affect the undead as though its type were the same as that of a living version of the creature (or as a humanoid, if it has no living analog).

Vulnerability to Raise Dead (Ex): A spellcaster can target a racked spirit with a raise dead spell, destroying the creature with a successful touch attack unless the racked spirit makes a Will save. On a successful save, the racked spirit still takes 6d6 points of damage.



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Soldier Kank (Domestic), Zombie Bugdead CR3

NE Large Undead

Init: -1; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft., Tremorsense 60 ft.;
Listen +0, Spot +0.

Languages: -

AC: 14; touch 8, flat-footed 14

(-1 size, -1 Dex, +6 natural)

hp 13 (2 HD; 2d12)

Damage Reduction: 3/metal; **Resistance:** Fire 5

Immunities: Cold, Undead Traits

Saves: Fort +0, Ref -1, Will +3

Speed: 40 ft. (8 squares)

Melee: Bite +5 (1d8+7 plus Poison)

Full Melee: Bite +5 (1d8+7 plus Poison)

Space: 10 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +1; **Grapple:** +10

Combat Options: Improved Grab, Poison (DC 11)

Abilities: Str 20, Dex 9, Con -, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 1

SQ: Damage Reduction 3/metal, Darkvision 60 ft.,
Immunity to Cold and Electricity, Resistance to Fire
5, Tremorsense 60 ft., Undead Traits.

Feats: -

Skills: -

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a zombie bugdead kank must hit with its bite attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 11, initial and secondary damage 1d6 Str. The save DC is Constitution-based.



Wezers Storm (Mob of Zombie Bugdead Wezers) CR 8

NE Gargantuan undead (mob of Medium undead wezers)

Init: +0; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0

Languages: -

AC: 11, touch 7, flat-footed 10

(-4 size, +1 Dex, +4 natural)

hp 195 (30 HD; 30d12)

Damage Reduction: 3/metal; **Resistances:** Fire 5

Immune: Cold, Electricity, Mob Anatomy, Undead
Traits

Saves: Fort +9, Ref +10, Will +17

Speed: 5 ft. (1 squares), Fly 50 ft (average)

Melee: Mob (5d6 plus Poison)

Space: 20 ft.; **Reach:** 0 ft.

Base Attack: +15; **Grapple:** +30

Combat Options: Expert Grappler, Poison, Trample
2d6

Abilities: Str 17, Dex 12, Con -, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 1

SQ: Damage Reduction, Fire Resistance, Immunities,
Mob Anatomy, Undead Traits

Feats: Improved Bull Rush^B, Improved Overrun^B

Skills: -

Expert Grappler (Ex): A mob can maintain a grapple without penalty and still make attacks against other targets (normally, attacking other targets while grappling imposes a -20 penalty on grapple checks). A mob is never considered flat-footed while grappling.

Mob Anatomy (Ex): A mob has no clear front or back and no discernible anatomy, so it is not subject to critical hits or sneak attacks. A mob cannot be flanked, tripped, grappled, or bull rushed.

Unlike standard swarms, mobs are made up of relatively small numbers of individual creatures, so spells or effects that target specific numbers of creatures can have an effect on a mob. Each specific creature that is slain, disabled, or otherwise incapacitated by spells or effects that target specific creatures bestows two negative levels on the mob. A mob that gains negative levels equal to its Hit Dice breaks up as if reduced to 0 hit points. Negative levels gained in this manner are not the result of negative energy (and thus cannot be blocked by *death ward* or removed by *restoration*), but never result in permanent level loss. A mob takes half again as much damage (+50%) from spells or effects that affect an area, such as splash weapons and evocation spells.

Although mobs are treated as one creature, it sometimes becomes necessary to determine the fate of a specific individual caught up in the mob. If a mob is dispersed by nonlethal attacks, there are no casualties. If the mob is dispersed by lethal attacks, assume that 30% of its number are slain and 30% are reduced to 0 hit points. To determine a specific individual's fate, simply roll d%: a result of 01-30 indicates death, 31-60

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indicates the victim is reduced to 0 hit points, and a roll of 61–100 indicates the victim escapes relatively unscathed.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 13, initial damage unconsciousness for 1 minute, secondary damage unconsciousness for 2d4 days. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Trample (Ex): A mob that simply moves over a creature and doesn't end its movement with that creature in one of its occupied squares can trample the creature. A trampled creature takes damage equal to 2d6 points + 1-1/2 times the mob's Strength modifier. The victim can either make an attack of opportunity against the mob or make a Reflex save (DC 25 + the mob's Str modifier) to take half damage.



Umona CR8

Female Human Wizard (Defiler) 8

NE Medium Humanoid (Human)

Init: +6; **Senses:** Listen +2, Spot +2.

Languages: Common, Gith, Kreen

AC: 14; touch 12, flat-footed 12

(+2 Dex, +2 armor)

hp 36 (8 HD; 8d6+8)

Saves: Fort +4, Ref +7, Will +7

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee: Club +4 (1d6-1)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +4; **Grapple:** +3

Combat Options: *robe of bones*

Combat Gear: Masterwork Club

Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 8th, DC 13 + spell level):

4th — animate dead, heightened command undead (CL 9th)

3rd— fireball (CL 9th) x2, summon monster III x2

2nd— command undead (CL 9th) x2, protection from arrows, levitate

1st— cause fear x2, magic missile x2, shield

0— detect magic, disrupt undead x2, ghost sound

Spellbook: spells prepared plus 1st - chill touch, ray of enfeeblement, sleep; 2nd - ghoul touch; 3rd - vampiric touch; 4th - bestow curse, contagion

Abilities: Str 8, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 17, Wis 10, Cha 13

SQ: Familiar, Share Spells

Feats: Alertness ^B, Heightened Spell ^B, Improved Initiative, Path Sinister (command undead, fireball) ^{*}, Scribe Scroll ^B, Silent Spell, Bug Trainer ^{*}

Skills: Bluff +4, Concentration +7, Craft (alchemy) +8, Decipher Script +4, Handle Animal +6, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Knowledge (geography) +6, Knowledge (history) +6, Knowledge (local) +8, Knowledge (nature) +8, Knowledge (the planes) +8, Listen +2, Literacy (Common), Spellcraft +10, Spot +2.

Possessions: 9,400cp or Combat Gear plus: bracers of armor +2, cloak of resistance +1, potion-orb of cure light wounds, ring of protection +1, robe of bones, spellbook, dose of Bugdead Rebarbative x1.



Wezers Storm (Mob of Zombie Bugdead Wezers) CR 8

NE Gargantuan undead (mob of Medium undead wezers)

Init: +0; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0

Languages: -

AC: 11, touch 7, flat-footed 10

(-4 size, +1 Dex, +4 natural)

hp 195 (30 HD; 30d12)

Damage Reduction: 3/metal; **Resistances:** Fire 5

Immune: Cold, Electricity, Mob Anatomy, Undead Traits

Saves: Fort +9, Ref +10, Will +17

Speed: 5 ft. (1 squares), Fly 50 ft (average)

Melee: Mob (5d6 plus poison)

Space: 20 ft.; **Reach:** 0 ft.

Base Attack: +15; **Grapple:** +30

Combat Options: Expert Grappler, Poison, Trample 2d6

Abilities: Str 17, Dex 12, Con -, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 1

SQ: Damage Reduction, Fire Resistance, Immunities, Mob Anatomy, Undead Traits

Feats: Improved Bull Rush ^B, Improved Overrun ^B

Skills: -

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 13, initial damage unconsciousness for 1 minute, secondary damage

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unconsciousness for 2d4 days. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Expert Grapppler (Ex): A mob can maintain a grapple without penalty and still make attacks against other targets (normally, attacking other targets while grappling imposes a -20 penalty on grapple checks). A mob is never considered flat-footed while grappling.

Trample (Ex): A mob that simply moves over a creature and doesn't end its movement with that creature in one of its occupied squares can trample the creature. A trampled creature takes damage equal to 2d6 points + 1-1/2 times the mob's Strength modifier. The victim can either make an attack of opportunity against the mob or make a Reflex save (DC 25 + the mob's Str modifier) to take half damage.

Mob Anatomy (Ex): A mob has no clear front or back and no discernible anatomy, so it is not subject to critical hits or sneak attacks. A mob cannot be flanked, tripped, grappled, or bull rushed.

Unlike standard swarms, mobs are made up of relatively small numbers of individual creatures, so spells or effects that target specific numbers of

creatures can have an effect on a mob. Each specific creature that is slain, disabled, or otherwise incapacitated by spells or effects that target specific creatures bestows two negative levels on the mob. A mob that gains negative levels equal to its Hit Dice breaks up as if reduced to 0 hit points. Negative levels gained in this manner are not the result of negative energy (and thus cannot be blocked by *death ward* or removed by *restoration*), but never result in permanent level loss. A mob takes half again as much damage (+50%) from spells or effects that affect an area, such as splash weapons and evocation spells.

Although mobs are treated as one creature, it sometimes becomes necessary to determine the fate of a specific individual caught up in the mob. If a mob is dispersed by nonlethal attacks, there are no casualties. If the mob is dispersed by lethal attacks, assume that 30% of its number are slain and 30% are reduced to 0 hit points. To determine a specific individual's fate, simply roll d%: a result of 01–30 indicates death, 31–60 indicates the victim is reduced to 0 hit points, and a roll of 61–100 indicates the victim escapes relatively unscathed.



Appendix 3: New Items

Bugdead Rebarbative

Alchemical item

Usually contained within a small, well-sealed clay pot, this foul-smelling black paste is crafted from the innards of undead kanks and sap from the ranike tree.

One dose of bugdead repellent may be smeared on a medium-sized creature or object, or a surface 5 x 5 ft. A small creature only requires half as much rebarbative as a medium-size creature, while a large creature requires twice as much as a Medium-size creature. The repellent remains effective for 1 hour after it is applied, after which the effect ends.

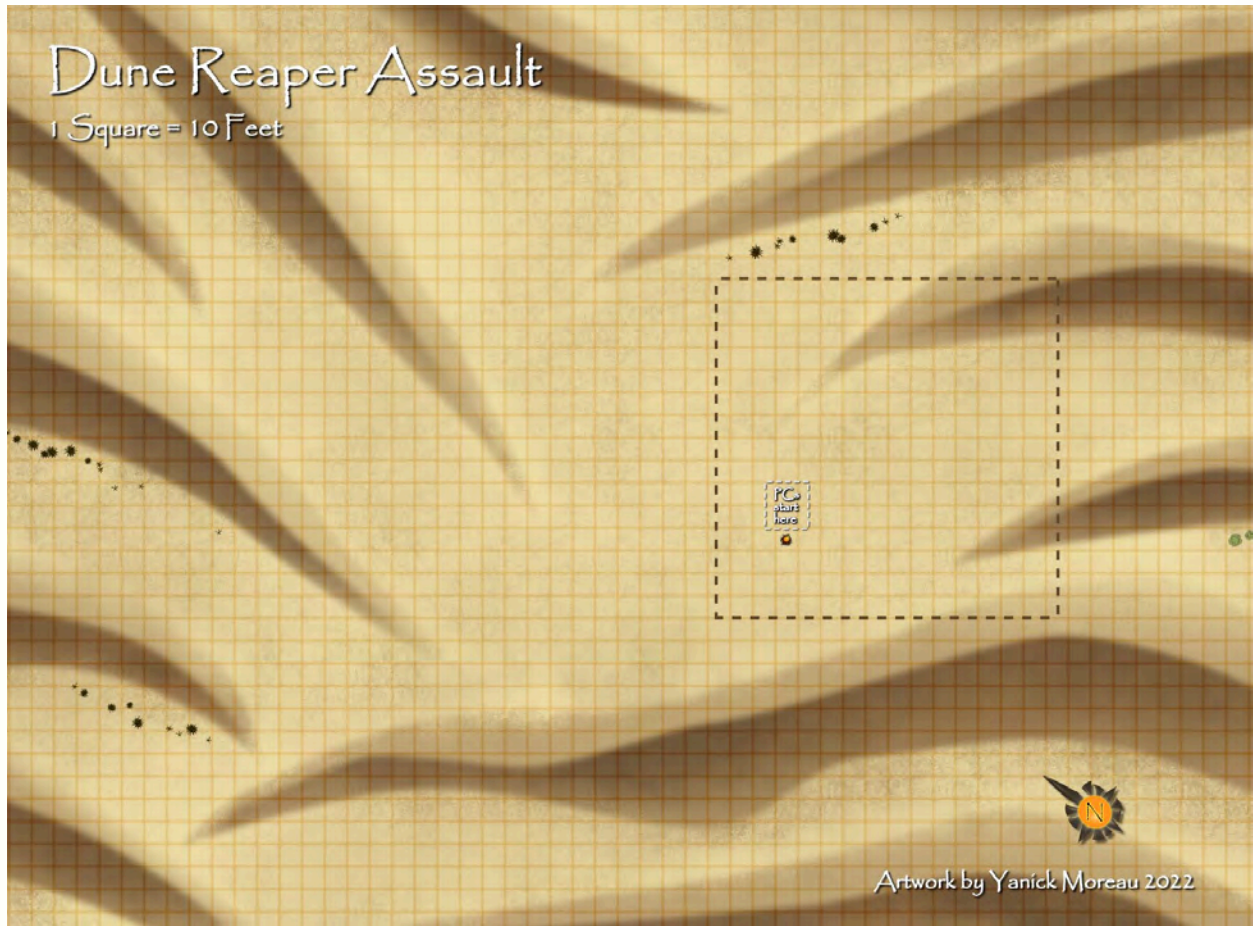
Bugdead rebarbative, as the name suggests, was specially designed to repel undead insectoid creatures. Bugdead must make a Will save (DC 15) when exposed to the scent of the repellent. Mindless bugdead that fail their save will flee as if affected by a *fear* spell (though the effect is non-magical); those that make their save

do not flee but will not approach the source of the repellent, even when under magical compulsion. Intelligent bugdead (those with Int 3+) that fail their save do not flee but will also not approach the source of the scent; those intelligent bugdead that make their save may act normally.

Living insects are repulsed by bugdead rebarbative as if it was ranike sap (see Athasian Emporium) and must make a Fortitude save (DC 15) each round they are within 5ft of the repellent or be sickened. Non-insectoid undead, such as the humanoid undead of the Dead Lands, react to bugdead repellent as if it were undead unguent (see Faces of the Dead Lands), ignoring the characteristic taint of life otherwise detectable by undead creatures through mundane means (spells and psionics will still reveal a wearer's living state).

Cost 250 cp (Medium creature); Alchemy DC to create: 28.

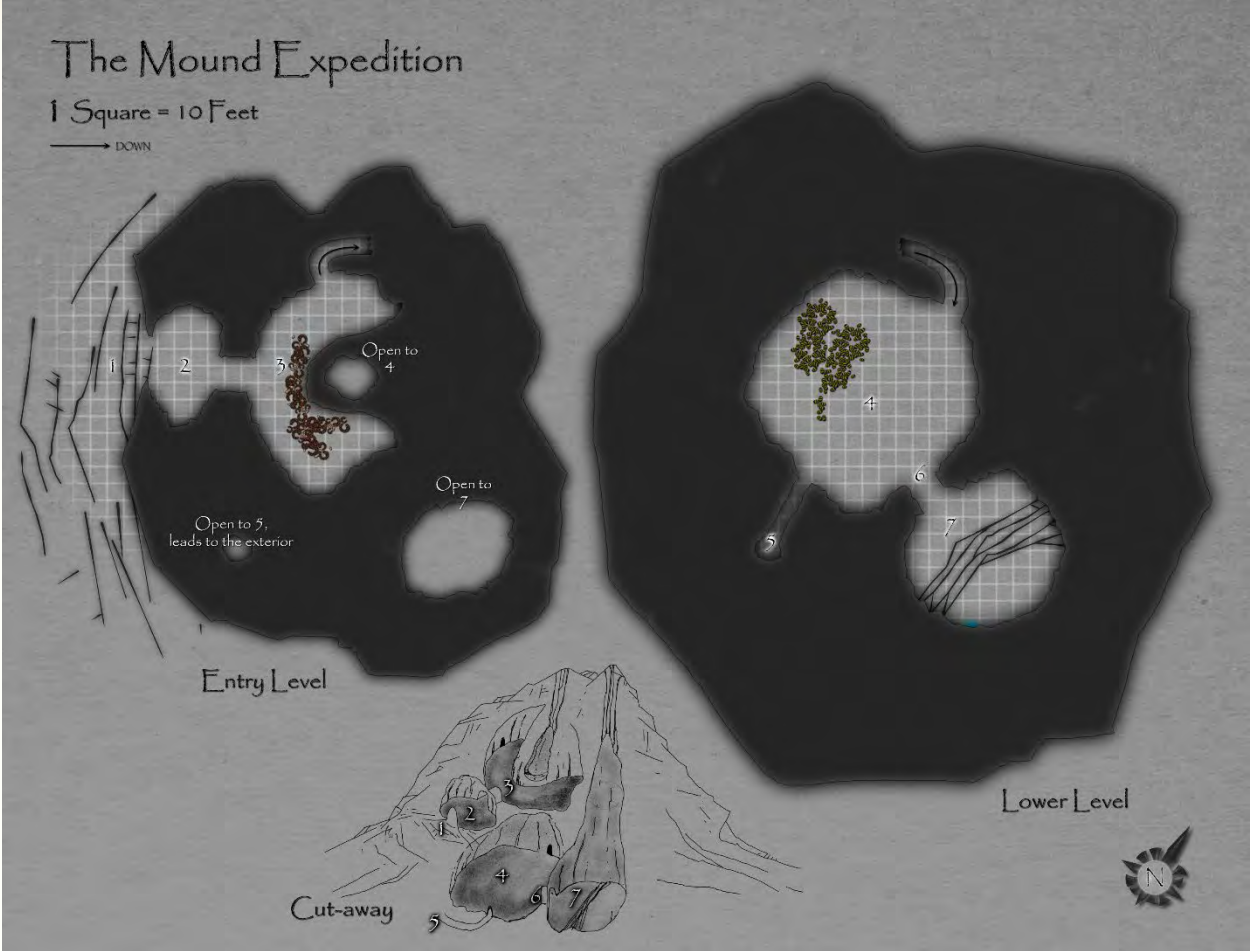
Appendix 4: Player's Maps



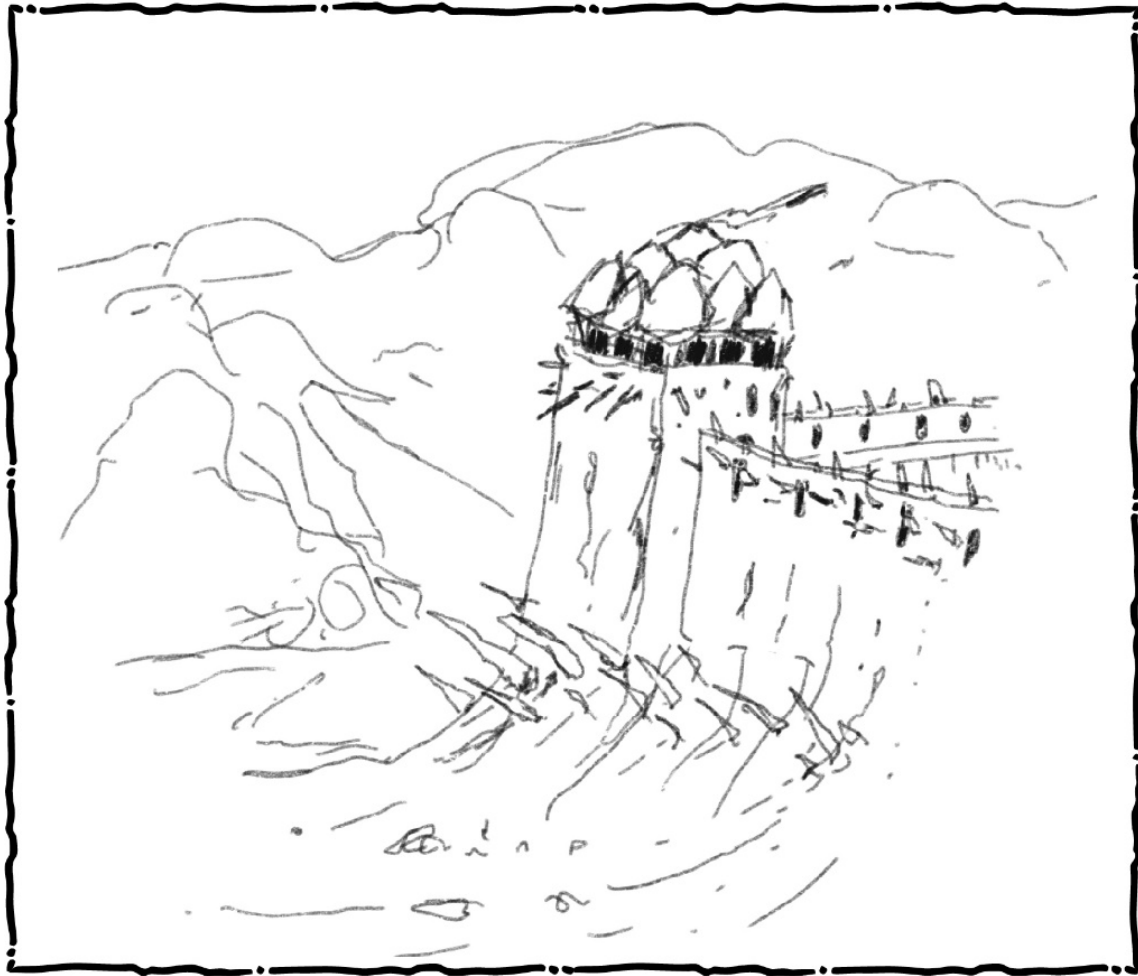
Adventures in the Dead Lands



Adventures in the Dead Lands



The Tunnel Beneath



A Dark Sun 3.5e adventure module for four 13th-level characters

Creatures unknown in the Tablelands have emerged to terrorize Altaruk. Now the PCs and the town must race to find the source of a threat unlike anything the land has ever seen before.

Credits

WRITING

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Introduction

The Tunnel Beneath is a short D&D adventure for four 13th-level player characters (PCs). Consult the Scaling the Adventure sidebar for ways to modify the scenario for higher or lower levels of play.

This scenario is designed as an introduction to the Dead Lands. It is set in Altaruk, a trade town centrally located in the Tablelands, so it easily can be placed in any *Dark Sun* game. DMs are encouraged to adapt some of the details to their players and campaign.

Developer's notes

This was the first adventure idea I had when working on Faces of the Dead Lands. Once I had decided what horror lurked at the bottom of the Beardpit Mines, it was a natural extension to make it want to seek out more living matter outside of its territory. After we combined it with Adam's knowledge of the underground Rhulisti tunnels the whole thing just clicked.

I didn't originally want it to be set in Altaruk, but since I wanted a busy coastal town that wasn't a full-size city, it was as good a choice as any. And it also gave us the opportunity to resolve the persistent inconsistencies between Altaruk maps over the years -JM

Scaling the Adventure

The Tunnel Beneath is designed for a party of four 13th-level adventurers, but it can be modified easily to present an appropriate challenge for parties of different sizes or levels.

Consider adapting the adventure for PCs of average levels 11 to 15 by adding effective positive or negative levels to the creatures in each encounter to change their effective **Challenge Rating**. A creature takes the following penalties/bonuses for each positive/negative level it has gained:

+/-1 on all skill checks and ability checks.

+/-1 on attack rolls and saving throws.

+/-5 hit points.

+/-1 effective level (whenever the creature's level is used in a die roll or calculation, reduce it by one for each negative level). If the creature casts spells, she gains/loses one spell slot of her highest-level spells. (If she has more than one spell at her highest level, she chooses which she gains/loses.) In addition, when she next prepares spells or regains spell slots, she gets one more/less spell slot at her highest spell level. If the creature is a manifester, she gains/loses enough power points to manifest her highest-level power once.

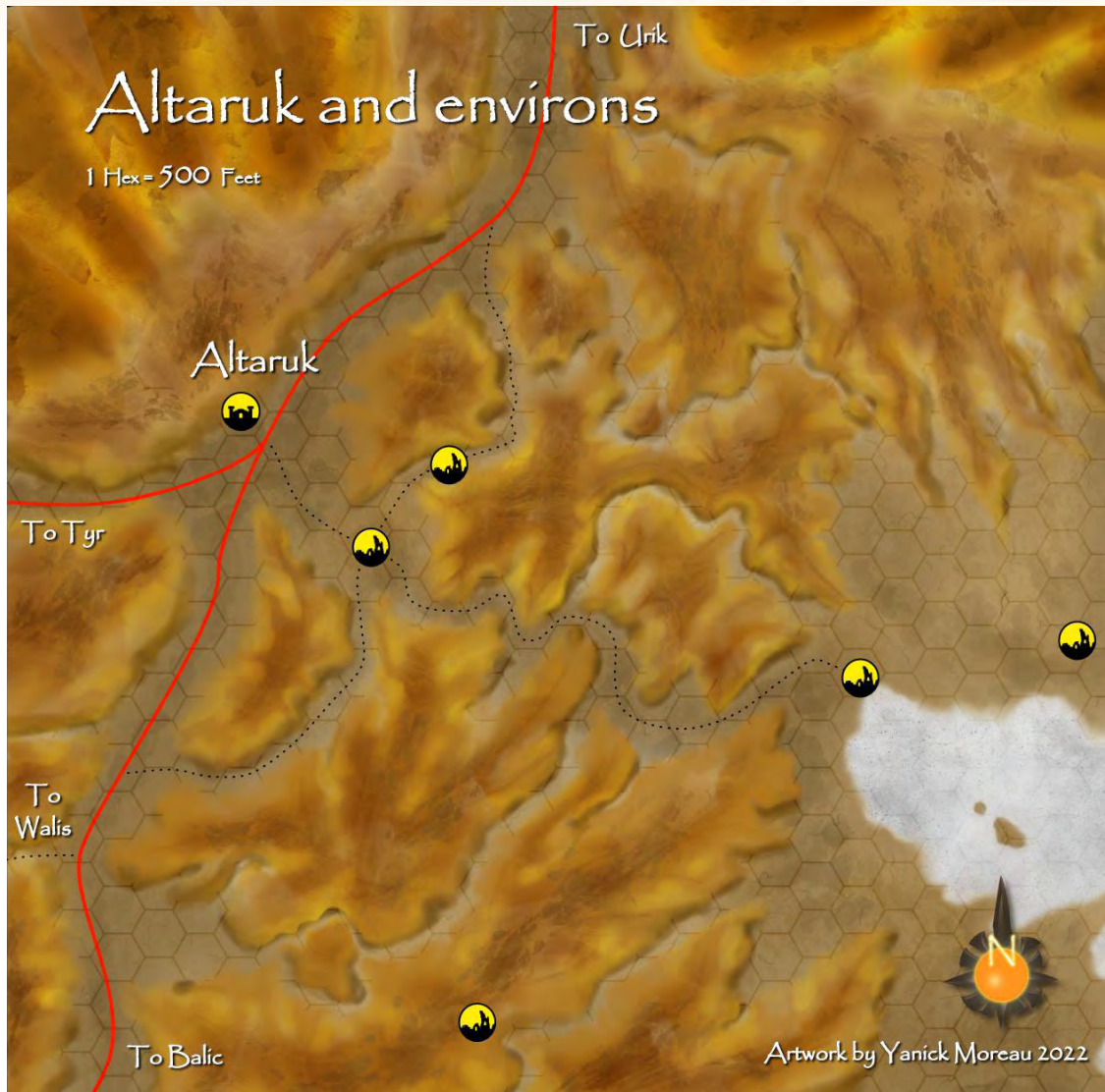
Preparation

You (the DM) will need the 3rd edition revised D&D core rulebooks, including the *Player's Handbook*, the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*, as well as the *Expanded Psionics Handbook*. This adventure also uses material from *Faces of the Dead Lands*, *Secrets of the Dead Lands*, *Terrors of the Dead Lands*, and the *Dark Sun 3.5 conversion* rulebook from Athas.org, but all necessary rules are already included.

Overview

Gu's zombies from the Beardpit Mines (in the Dead Lands) have been tunneling northwards for quite some time. They stumbled upon an ancient Rhulisti travel tube, which eventually deposited their excavators at a forgotten travel hub just underneath Altaruk. The PCs and the whole town now face an entity and a threat unlike anything they have ever seen before.

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Adventure Hooks

The party is in Altaruk for some reason unrelated to the adventure, likely having spent the day there:

- They recently arrived as caravan guards and are waiting for their caravan to leave.
- They are between jobs and looking for work.
- They've come to meet with a Veiled Alliance contact.

Which Altaruk is the Real Altaruk?

Multiple maps exist for Altaruk, notably the fort version in the 2e adventure *Forest Maker* and the caravan district and arena maps from the 4e adventure *Bloodsand Arena* - so why did we make another one?

Altaruk is described as having been destroyed and rebuilt many times. To consolidate and unify the differing visions of Altaruk, we decided that each map represents a different version of Altaruk, as each time the settlement is destroyed, it might have been rebuilt in a slightly different location or with a different layout. So, there have been multiple Altaruks, and each might look slightly different.

The regional map above shows ruins in the area surrounding Altaruk - each intended to be the abandoned ruins of a former version of Altaruk.

Part 1: Discovery

1) A Night Out (EL 10)

Small Gu'as Fungus Zombies (CR 5) 6x – See Appendix 1

The party, whatever their reason for being in Altaruk, are returning from a tavern to their inn for the night when they hear a merchant being accosted nearby.

You're all returning from The Mirage, a tavern here in Altaruk, working your way back to your accommodations for the night. Enjoying the evening coolness, you can appreciate why the town is a popular caravan stop – strong walls, vigilant guard patrols, and a flurry of merchant activity unburdened by the oppression of the City States.

Your reverie is suddenly broken by a shout of pain from around the corner.

Assuming the party follows the shout:

Rounding the corner, you're greeted by a sight more suited to the road than behind the stout walls of Altaruk: a half-elf merchant is under attack by several creatures. The assailants are small like halflings and strange looking, but you'd have to get closer to get a better look at them. "Agh! Help me! I'll pay you!" you hear the merchant shout.

The party can help or not, as they wish. The creatures, gu'as fungus zombies - which the PCs will have never heard of or seen before, will turn to attack the PCs after the merchant falls (unconscious or dead) or if they interfere.

Tactics: Gu'as fungus zombies prefer uneven odds that favor them, ganging up on a solitary individual whenever possible in battle. Defeated foes will be dragged back to their lair.

When the party examines the creatures more closely:

These unfamiliar humanoids are about the size of a halfling. A mesh of fine white fibers grows all over their clothes, throughout their hair and beards, and across their deathly gray-green skin.

After several rounds of combat, the fungus zombies withdraw. If any have been dropped, their regeneration allows them to get back up and retreat. The tether-vines of dead zombies quickly detach and retract back to their source, as do any that were severed. Any attempt to follow them at this time fails, as guards arrive to question the PCs.

Development: If the half-elf merchant survives, he can be convinced to hand over 10 sp (all he has on his person) to the party, grumbling about greedy mercenaries the whole time. If the merchant dies, the PCs will find the silver pieces on his body. In addition, one of the small fungus zombies has a plain brass brooch on it (see Further Adventures, at the end of the adventure, for more information), worth 100 cp. After being questioned by guards and receiving their reward, the PCs may go on with their night without further incident.

Proceed to Encounter #2 – A Job Offer, below.

DM's Note: If the players are enjoying the hunt for the fungus zombies, feel free to extend out this section of the adventure by inserting multiple fights with wandering groups of the fungus zombies before the PCs can follow them back to the source. Multiple Altaruk street maps have been included to accommodate multiple separate encounters.

If the players cannot or prefer not to follow the fungus zombies, they can instead make a Gather Information or Listen check (DC 20) - success alerts the PCs to faint ghostly noises emanating from around the tunnel entrance - screams, moans, and grumbles (the complaints of Serlog as the fungus zombies pass through his torso).

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2) A Job Offer

The next morning, the party's presence is requested by Altaruk's leader, Arisphistaneles, via messenger at their inn. In the message, Arisphistaneles refers to the meeting as a "personal favor" and "financial opportunity". If the party declines the meeting, guards arrive soon after to take the PCs into custody and escort them to see Arisphistaneles, who is then in a far less charitable mood for the meeting (his initial financial offer is halved in this case but might be increased again with successful negotiation).

You have been summoned to the offices of Arisphistaneles, leader of Altaruk: "Ah, good - thank you for coming. Problems with creatures like those you fought yesterday only started occurring a day ago, but have been happening with increasing frequency and, frankly, my guards can barely handle the situation. More and more people are disappearing, and we can't figure out how the creatures are making it into town. I need you to find out how the creatures are getting in, track them to the source and eliminate the threat."

The PCs will probably have questions. Likely questions and their responses are:

- **Why us?** "You've faced these creatures before and survived."
- **Why not your guards?** "My guards are overtaxed as it is, and anyway, this is more of a task for mercenaries than town guards."
- **Why not just leave?** "What and abandon Altaruk? The trade houses would see me dead for that; besides, if we don't know where the creatures are coming from, we won't know which direction to flee in."
- **What's in it for us?** "To prevent the complete loss of a major trade hub? I'll pay you 900 silver pieces and buy you into one (or each) of Altaruk's merchant houses to the sum of another 3000 silver pieces in total, if you can identify the origin of the creatures and eliminate the threat. And, of course, you can keep whatever goods you find with the creatures."

When the PCs are finished speaking with Arisphistaneles, proceed to Encounter #3 – On the Hunt, below.

3) On the Hunt (EL 13)

Small Gu'as Fungus Zombies (CR 5) 4x – See Appendix 1

Medium Gu'as Fungus Zombies (CR 9) 3x – See Appendix 1

The PCs search for more of the creatures hunting for victims in Altaruk. With Altaruk's guards largely occupied with protecting important personnel and facilities, gangs of fungus zombies are free to roam the streets of the trade fort in search of prey. While the PCs may attempt to come up with a cunning plan, locating some fungus zombies is as simple as wandering through Altaruk waiting to be accosted by the creatures.

If the PCs keep some of the creatures disabled or sever their tether-vines, they might examine the creatures further or even work divinations on their fallen foes. The medium-sized fungus zombies are clearly 'fresher' than the others and resemble medium-sized humanoids that the characters are familiar with (humans, half-elves, etc). The small fungus zombies are *much* older looking and were once creatures the PCs are not familiar with. Powerful divinations or clairvoyance powers may reveal that they were once gnomes, an extinct race from before the Cleansing Wars.

Development: During the battle, gemstones (7500cp worth) will spill from one of the fungus zombies - a former gem merchant.

At least one of the fungus zombies will likely survive combat with the party and withdraw back to the tunnel, and the PCs can follow or track it to discover the tunnel for themselves.

Once the PCs find the tunnel leading under Altaruk, proceed to Encounter #4 – The Giant's Crawlspace, below.



Part 2: Beneath Altaruk

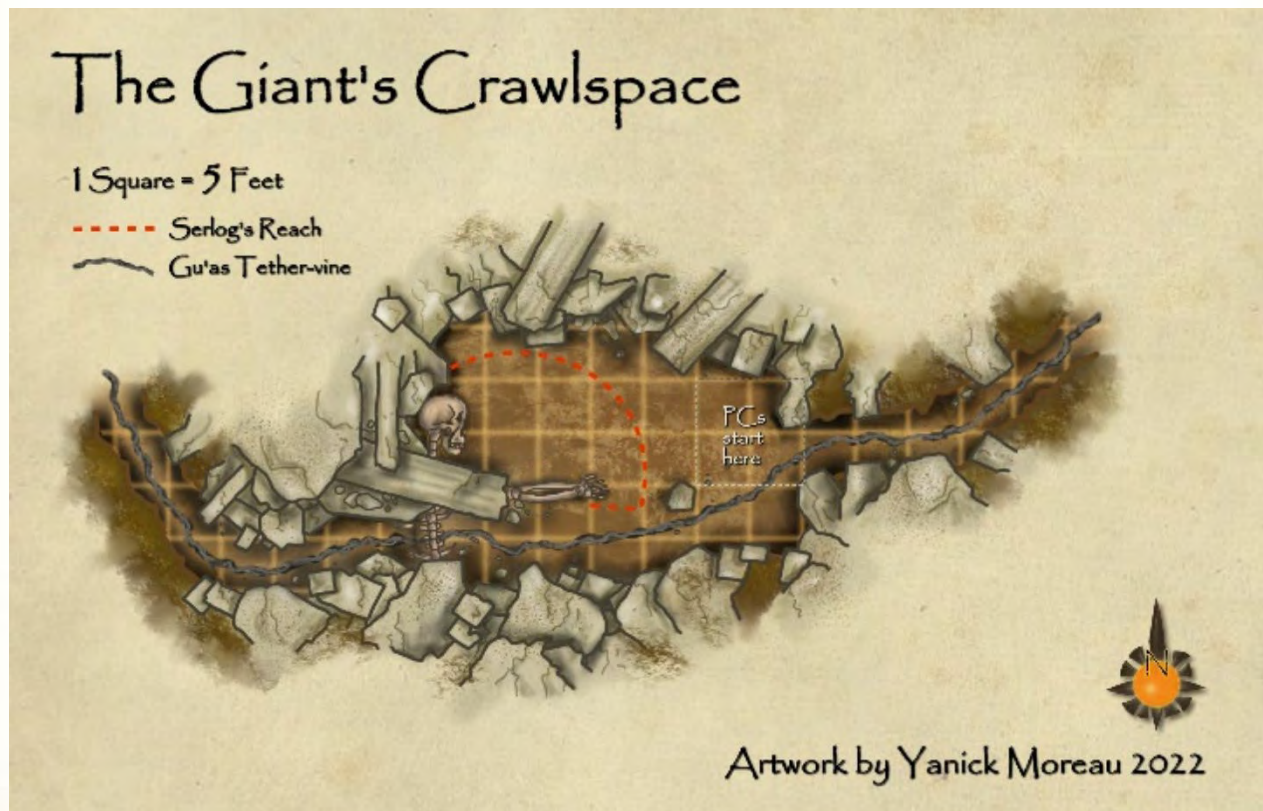
4) The Giant's Crawlspace (EL 11)

Serlog - Fallen Desert Giant (CR 12) 1x - See Appendix

The PCs track and/or follow the creatures to a back alley, where they find the hand-hewn tunnel through which the fungus zombies have been entering Altaruk. The tunnel leads down beneath Altaruk and meanders a bit, seeming more to follow the preexisting cavities in the rubble and sediment beneath the town than an intentional course. The tunnel ceiling and walls are largely composed of detritus (intact segments of wall, doors, stone lintels, etc.) from previous incarnations of the settlement, lending credence to the rumors that Altaruk has been razed and rebuilt multiple times in the past. The tunnel finally exits into a relatively spacious but oddly shaped chamber.

Ahead, you see a chamber that, like the tunnel before it, is supported by tumbled pillars and partially intact slabs of wall. On the far side, you can see a tunnel continuing down further beneath Altaruk. What most commands your attention though, is the huge skeletal arm and skull protruding from the far wall - the arm gropes about the chamber, seemingly searching for something. The skull twists about to look at you, speaking in a deep guttural voice, but you can't quite make out the words.

The arm and skull belong to Serlog, a desert giant fallen trapped within the wall. Serlog is happy to converse with the PCs, as long as they do not attempt to pass through the tunnel beyond, but he only speaks an old Desert Giant dialect of Giant. If he cannot successfully speak to them, Serlog will attempt to *mindlink* with the PCs.



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Tactics: Serlog will not willingly allow anyone to traverse the tunnel in the far wall, as it passes directly through his (now skeletal) body and he finds the sensation *extremely* disconcerting and unpleasant - he will attack anyone who tries. Serlog will also not willingly discuss *how* the strange creatures pass through the chamber, as they would require him to admit he cannot reach the chamber's southern wall, though a canny character might be able to trick the information out of him (Bluff or Diplomacy check - DC 25).

The chamber is roughly 20 ft. long, 20 ft. feet wide and 15 ft. high. Serlog's arm looks to be able to reach all of the chamber except the first 5 feet outside the entry tunnel (Large-size creatures can hug the wall to avoid Serlog's reach). A DC (24) check (using Spot, Heal, Wisdom or Intelligence) notes that Serlog's arm cannot rotate to effectively reach the chamber's left-hand wall or the far tunnel, allowing a possible path forward.

Development: Scattered amongst Serlog's ribs and just sitting on the path going further down is the loot he was carrying when he died - a rotted chest still containing two iron short swords and 13,000cp worth of silver trade bars (weighing about 26 pounds).

When the PCs pass beyond Serlog's chamber, proceed to Encounter #5 – Ancient Protector, below.

5) Ancient Protector (EL 11)

Guardian 412 - Laborer Guardian (CR 11) 1x – See Appendix

The tunnel here passes through another preexisting cavity in the earth beneath Altaruk. The space is the resting place of Guardian 412, a guardian orb. Guardian 412 was once the resident protector and assistant of the ancient rhulisti travel hub below. It has long since gone insane and now attacks all creatures it encounters. It has, however, given up on attacking the gu'as fungus zombies, as they have no minds to assault, and their regeneration has made it pointless to otherwise attack them.

The tunnel through the rubble widens here into a large space, sheltered beneath a collection of tumbled pillars. As you glance about the space, a vaguely humanoid shape coalesces out of thin air - the size of a half-giant, the creature lifts its three arms menacingly as it rushes at you.

The chamber is 30 ft. x 30 ft. x 15 ft. high.

PCs who take the time to make a Spot check (DC 19) will notice a gleaming obsidian orb wedged into a crevice in the chamber's ceiling (Guardian 412).

Tactics: The astral construct will appear within range to charge the party immediately, making a full attack with its *Pounce* ability, and preferentially targeting spellcasters and psions.

Guardian 412 has manifested *astral construct* (augmented to 9 PP) and a quickened *inertial armor* (augmented to 9 PP) and used a Move action to restore its psionic focus. In following rounds, it will attack PCs with psionics, only pausing to either manifest another *astral construct* when the first is gone or to activate defensive powers if the PCs discover and successfully attack it.

The guardian's goal is to drive intruders from the tunnels, in particular the hub which it has been charged with defending. It will go to great pains to avoid collateral damage on its protectorate.

Development: Once Guardian 412 is located and destroyed (or at least bypassed), the tunnel can be followed down to the source of the mysterious creatures. Proceed to Encounter #6 – The Terror Below, below.





6) The Terror Below (EL 15)

Gu'as Mother Host (CR 13) 1x – See Appendix

Medium Gu'as Fungus Zombie (CR 9) 1x – See Appendix 1

Large Gu'as Fungus Zombie (CR 12) 1x – See Appendix 1

The party has reached the source of the attacks on Altaruk – a gu'as mother host and a group of its fungus zombie spawn have been tunneling north from the depths of the Beardpit Mines for king's ages and finally stumbled across a rhulisti travel tube, leading them straight to this travel hub beneath Altaruk.

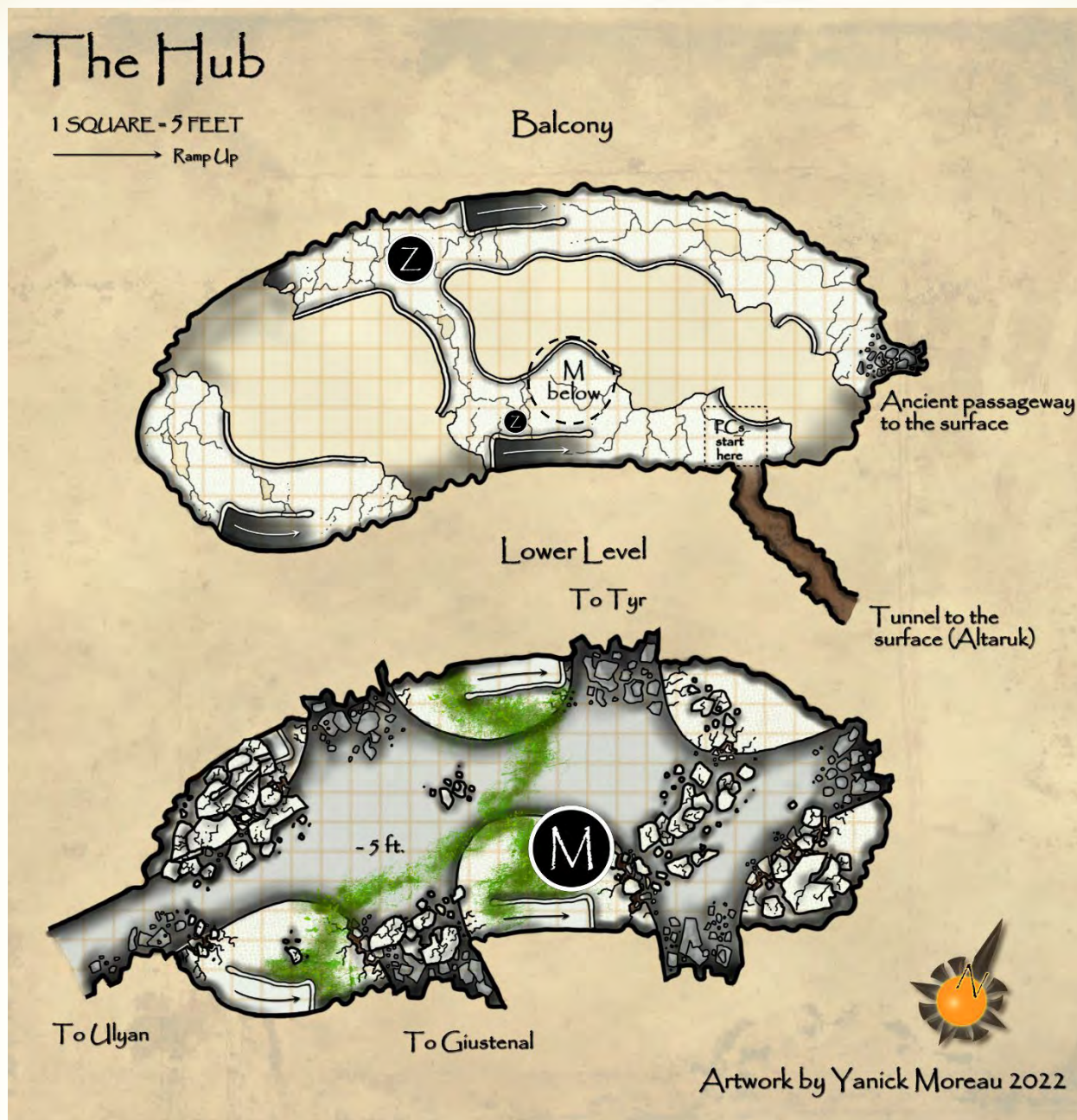
You exit the tunnel in another chamber. Whatever you had expected to find beneath Altaruk, this wasn't it. The tunnel passes through a fissure in the wall into a chamber easily 100 feet across. The ceiling rises up in a graceful arch above you. The walls, floor, and ceiling curve into one another without the benefit of visible distinctions like corners and right angles. The stone is of a strange type you've never seen before – porous and white.

The walls and floor are covered in some kind of strange plant growth – spongy, soft, and pale white, you can see it slowly growing across the floor and walls even now.

You appear to stand on an upper level of the chamber, and several stairways descend to the level below.

Evenly spaced along the walls of the lower level are spacious archways that seem to have once led away

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from this chamber; all but one of the passages look to be impassibly blocked by rubble.

When the PCs catch sight of the mother host read the following:

You catch a glimpse of a dark grayish-green mass lurking on the level below. It has many pseudopods rising out of the top of it and does not seem to have an identifiable front or back.

The chamber (see the Hub map) is roughly 30 ft. tall, with both the lower level and balcony level each having a ceiling height of 15'. The tunnel from the surface enters the Hub in the lower right corner of the balcony level.

The fungus zombies begin on the balcony level with the PCs, while the mother host lurks on the level below (note that between its 15 ft. height and 15 ft. reach, the mother host can attack anyone on that side of the chamber, even on the balcony, with very little movement).

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Tactics: The fungus zombie will attempt to stay between the PCs and the mother host (or the stairs down to it). The mother host will stay on the lower level, attempting to attack and grapple with as many targets as possible.

A DC (15) Spot check will easily identify a section of cracks running up the wall and support pillars and across the chamber's ceiling. A Knowledge – Arcana or Architecture & Engineering check (DC 25) will allow a player to surmise that enough damage (20 points, but hardness 5) done to the weakened surfaces would cause the entire chamber to collapse, likely killing everything inside.

A gu'as mother host will stay secluded in one secure location deep underground for as long as it can reasonably find nourishment. It sends out raiding parties of gu'as fungus zombies that bring back organic matter for nourishment and captured living or undead victims to create more gu'as fungus zombies. If a foe comes within 15 feet of a mother host itself, it lashes out with its pseudopods and attempts to grapple the

foe. A grappled foe is then subjected to additional damage as the gu'as mother host crushes it with its pseudopod. Occasionally a mother host works in concert with its zombies, grabbing a foe and holding it while its fungus zombies attack them enmasse. Defeated creatures are either transformed into fungus zombies or used as nourishment, depending on the needs of the mother host.

Should a gu'as fungus zombie's tether-vine become detached, a gu'as mother host will extend a pseudopod to reattach to it at the first opportunity. Whether the mother host actually thinks to reattach to severed fungus zombies or it simply attaches pseudopods to all nearby creatures remains to be seen.

Development: If the chamber collapses, whether purposefully or on accident, the PCs will have 1 round to escape to the surface tunnel and must make a Reflex save (DC 20) or take 2d6 damage from the falling debris.



Concluding the Adventure

If the PCs manage to defeat the fungus zombies, then they can look forward to receiving the full reward from Arisphistaneles, who will be very intrigued to learn about the ancient Hub (either from the PCs or when his guards go down to verify the threat has been eliminated).

If the PCs instead destroyed the Hub to end the threat of the fungus zombies, Altaruk is rocked by tremors, but survives with only minor damage and a few collapsed buildings. Between the lack of proof and damage to town, Arisphistaneles will provide a reduced reward (70%) to the PCs.

Further Adventures

Depending on the final status of the Hub or the manner of its destruction, many subsequent adventures could follow.

If the Hub remains intact, the tunnel to Ulyan likely remains open, a tantalizing opportunity for both exploration and new trade markets. The tunnel might still lead all the way to the Beardpit Mines, opening a route to the Dead Lands for the PCs. Or the tunnel may have experienced a cave-in along the way, opening up into the Endless Dunes far to the south, or breaching into an underdark cavern inhabited by gith, mindhome folk, or dark spiders. The other tunnels leading from the Hub might also be serviceable with

some effort, leading to other destinations from the Blue or Green Age like Giustenal, Tyr, Thamasku (along the Jagged Cliffs) or other, even more obscure locations, such as:

- Ulaka, west of Tyr under the Forest Ridge
- The Lonely Butte in Marnita
- Basrai and Lusare in the White Mountains
- A former Rhulisti city in the southern Silt Archipelago
- A ruined Rhulisti city in/under the lands of the Elemental Lords (long thought stripped of anything useful by the locals)

If the Hub was destroyed, the resulting destruction of another (undiscovered) guardian orb or a powerful, hidden psionic transport device could result in a shockwave of psionic power that could transport the PCs nearly anywhere (or perhaps even send them on a dream quest to another time).

Additionally, the brass brooch found on the small fungus zombie (in encounter 1: "A Night Out") can eventually be identified (such as with a DC 35 Knowledge - History check, divination spells such as *commune* and *contact other plane*, or clairsentience powers such as *object reading*) as the symbol of Arludas, an ancient gnomish city in western Ulyan, and now the sight of the Beardpit Mines (see *Secrets of the Dead Lands*, chapter 2). This knowledge could lead the PCs to explore the Dead Lands with a bit of research.





Appendix 1: NPCs/Monsters

Astral Construct (5th-Level) CR -



Created with Boost Construct
TN Large Construct

Init: +1; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft., Low-Light Vision;
Listen +0, Spot +0

Aura: -

Languages: -

AC: 23; touch 10, flat-footed 22
(-1 size, +1 Dex, +13 Nat)

hp 68 (7 HD; 7d10+30)

Damage Reduction: 5/magic

Immunities: Construct Traits

Saves: Fort +2 Ref +3, Will +2

Speed: 40 ft.

Melee: Slam +13 (1d8+9; 20/x2)

Full Melee: 3x Slam +13 (1d8+9; 20/x2)

Space: 10 ft.; **Reach:** 10 ft.

Base Attack: +5; **Grapple:** +18

Combat Options: Pounce

Abilities: Str 29, Dex 13, Con -, Int -, Wis 11, Cha 10

SQ: Construct Traits, Damage Reduction, Darkvision
60 ft., Extra Attack, Low-Light Vision.

Feats: -

Skills: -

Construct Traits: A construct has immunity to poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, necromancy effects, mind-affecting effects (charms, compulsions, phantasms, patterns, and morale effects), and any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless it also works on objects or is harmless. It is not subject to critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability damage, ability drain, fatigue, exhaustion, or energy drain. It cannot heal damage, but it can be repaired.

Pounce (Ex): If the astral construct charges a foe, it can make a full attack.

Guardian 412 CR 11

Laborer Guardian

TN Small Construct (Augmented Humanoid, Psionic)

Init: +0; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft., Low-Light Vision;
Listen +1, Spot +15

Aura: -

Languages: -

AC: 16; touch 6, flat-footed 16
(+1 size, -5 Dex, +10 Nat)

hp 65 (10 HD; 10d10+10)

Damage Reduction: 10/metal; **Power Resistance:** 15;
Spell Resistance: 15

Immunities: Construct Traits

Saves: Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +4

Speed: 0 ft.

Melee: -

Ranged: -

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** -

Base Attack: +5; **Grapple:** -

Combat Options: Psionic Meditation (Move action)

Psion Powers (ML 10th, PP 95-77, DC 12 + power level):
5th - catapsi, hail of crystals, power resistance, psychic
crush.

4th - empathic feedback, energy adaptation, psionic
divination, power leech;



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3rd - dispel psionics, ectoplasmic cocoon, mind trap, telekinetic force;
2nd - mental disruption, psionic levitate, psionic repair damage, thought shield;
1st - astral construct, control light, inertial armor, mind thrust, psionic minor creation;

Abilities: Str --, Dex --, Con --, Int 15, Wis 12, Cha 1
SQ: Construct Traits, Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60 ft., Low-Light Vision, Power Resistance, Spell Resistance.
Feats: Boost Construct, Extend Power, Maximize Power, Psionic Meditation, Psionic Talent x2, Quicken Power.
Skills: Appraise +9, Bluff +7, Concentration +15, Psicraft +15, Sense Motive +8, Search +8, Spot +15.

Construct Traits: A construct has immunity to poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, necromancy effects, mind-affecting effects (charms, compulsions, phantasms, patterns, and morale effects), and any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless it also works on objects or is harmless. It is not subject to critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability damage, ability drain, fatigue, exhaustion, or energy drain. It cannot heal damage, but it can be repaired.

Personality Notes

The trauma of becoming an obsidian orb combined with millennia in isolation have left Guardian 412 quite insane. It cannot be reasoned with.



Gu'as Fungus Zombie, Small CR 5

TN Small Plant

Init: +7; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft., Tremorsense 60 ft.; Listen +6, Spot +6
Languages: Does not speak; understands: Gnomish, Ulyanese

AC: 19, touch 14, flat-footed 15 (+1 size, +3 Dex, +5 natural)
hp 52 (8d8+16); Regeneration 5
Immune: Plant Traits
Saves: Fort +8, Ref +5, Will +3

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)



Melee: Slam +9 melee (1d4+3; 20x/2)
Full Melee: 2x Slams +9 melee (1d4+3; 20/x)
Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Base Attack: +6/+1; **Grapple:** +5
Special Actions: Power Attack, Spore Cloud (DC 16)
Combat Gear: -

Abilities: Str 16, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 4, Wis 12, Cha 1
SQ: Darkvision 60 ft., Plant Traits, Regeneration 5, Tether-Vine, Tremorsense 60 ft., Vitality shield.
Feats: Alertness, Improved Initiative, Power Attack
Skills: Hide +9, Listen +16, Move Silently +6, Spot +6
Possessions: -

Environment: Underground
Organization: Solitary, pair, or gang (2-8)
Treasure: None
Alignment: Always neutral
Advancement: 8-16 HD (Small); 17-24 HD (Medium)
Level Adjustment: -



Adventures in the Dead Lands

Gu'as Fungus Zombie, Medium CR 9

Advanced Gu'as Fungus Zombie
TN Medium Plant

Init: +7; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft., Tremorsense 60 ft.; Listen +6, Spot +6
Languages: Does not speak; understands: Gnomish, Ulyanese

AC: 19, touch 13, flat-footed 16 (+3 Dex, +6 natural)
hp 170 (20d8+80); **Regeneration** 5
Immune: Plant Traits
Saves: Fort +16, Ref +9, Will +7

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)
Melee: Slam +20 melee (1d8+5; 20x/2)
Full Melee: 2x Slams +20 melee (1d8+5; 20/x2)
Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.
Base Attack: +15; **Grapple:** +20
Combat Actions: Cleave, Power Attack, Spore Cloud (DC 24)
Combat Gear: -

Abilities: Str 21, Dex 16, Con 18, Int 4, Wis 12, Cha 1
SQ: Darkvision 60 ft., Plant Traits, Regeneration 5, Tether-Vine, Tremorsense 60 ft., Vitality shield.
Feats: Alertness, Cleave, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Armor, Improved Natural Attack (Slam), Power Attack, Stealthy.
Skills: Hide +11, Listen +10, Move Silently +12, Spot +10
Possessions: -

Environment: Underground
Organization: Solitary, pair, or gang (2-8)
Treasure: None
Alignment: Always neutral
Advancement: 8-16 HD (Small); 17-24 HD (Medium)
Level Adjustment: -



Gu'as Fungus Zombie, Large CR 12

Advanced Gu'as Fungus Zombie
TN Large Plant

Init: +7; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft., Tremorsense 60 ft.; Listen +12, Spot +12
Languages: Does not speak; understands: Gnomish, Ulyanese

AC: 21, touch 13, flat-footed 18 (+3 Dex, +8 natural)
hp 294 (20d8+168); **Regeneration** 5
Immune: Plant Traits
Saves: Fort +22, Ref +13, Will +11

Speed: 40 ft. (8 squares)
Melee: Slam +28 melee (2d6+9; 20x/2)
Full Melee: 2x Slams +28 melee (2d6+9; 20/x2)
Space: 10 ft.; **Reach:** 10 ft.
Base Attack: +19; **Grapple:** +32
Combat Actions: Great Cleave, Power Attack, Spore Cloud (DC 28)
Combat Gear: -

Abilities: Str 29, Dex 16, Con 22, Int 4, Wis 12, Cha 1
SQ: Darkvision 60 ft., Plant Traits, Regeneration 5, Tether-Vine, Tremorsense 60 ft., Vitality shield.
Feats: Alertness, Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Armor, Improved Natural Attack (Slam), Power Attack, Skill Focus (Hide), Stealthy, Weapon Focus (Slam).
Skills: Hide +13, Listen +12, Move Silently +13, Spot +12
Possessions: -

Environment: Underground
Organization: Solitary, pair, or gang (2-8)
Treasure: None
Alignment: Always neutral
Advancement: 25-48 HD (Large); 49-60 HD (Huge)
Level Adjustment: -

Regeneration (Ex): Fire and acid deal normal damage to a gu'as fungus zombie. If a gu'as fungus zombie loses a limb or body part, the lost portion regrows in 3d6 minutes. The creature can reattach the severed member instantly by holding it to the stump.

Spore Cloud (Ex): Three times per day, as a free action, a gu'as fungus zombie can breathe a cloud of greenish spores in a 5-foot cube directly in front of it. Any creature caught in the cloud must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 10 + ½ HD + Con modifier) or be slowed (as the *slow* spell) for 6 rounds. One minute later, the creature must make another Fortitude save or take a penalty (1d3 points) to its Strength score and this penalty can even affect undead creatures. A creature

Adventures in the Dead Lands

reduced to 0 Strength cannot move at all and lies helpless on the ground.

A gu'as zombie must wait at least 1d4 rounds before releasing another spore cloud.

Tether-Vine (Ex): A gu'as fungus zombie is connected to the gu'as mother host that created it by a long sinewy vine. It is not known how far these vines can stretch, but the tether has proven no obstruction to the zombies travelling throughout the Beardpit Mines. The vine has AC 19 (touch 12) and has 10 hit points. Damaging or severing the vine deals no damage to the gu'as fungus zombie or the gu'as mother host itself, but if severed, the zombie loses its regeneration ability.

Once the vine is severed, it will rapidly reel itself back towards its original source at a speed of 50 ft. per round.

Tremorsense (Ex): Gu'as fungus zombies can automatically sense the location of anything within 60 feet in any direction (including through solid dirt or stone), so long as it is touching the ground or walls.

Vitality Shield (Ex): Plant (or fungal) life would have no chance in the Dead Lands if it had not adapted to the life-draining effects of the undead. Gu'as fungus infestation grants immunity to negative energy and energy draining effects. For defiling purposes, the plant behaves like an animal with regards to providing energy for spells.

Appearance

Deep in the Beardpit Mines lurk zombies with deathly gray-green skin that were once humans and gnomes. Mildew and fungi grow upon their bodies and clothes, and long, sinewy, greenish-brown nooses trail down the tunnels behind them. The creatures do not behave like normal zombies, hunting in groups in the darkness and dragging their undead prey screaming down into lower levels; these are gu'as fungus zombies.

Personality Notes

Gu'as fungus zombies show no spark of life in their eyes but are hardly mindless. They are not undead, though their name and appearance would suggest otherwise; they ignore attempts to turned/rebuke them and cannot be controlled with undead-affecting abilities or magics.

Strategy and Tactics

The behavior of gu'as fungus zombies will depend on where they are encountered.

When near the mother host, a cluster of gu'as fungus zombies will lie motionless, appearing dead. If any creatures come within 100 feet of a gu'as mother host, the zombies will rise and move to attack.

If they have been sent away from the mother host, they will always be on a task to bring back fresh meat. In which case, they will attack first and without hesitation.

Gu'as fungus zombies prefer uneven odds that favor them, ganging up on a solitary individual whenever possible in battle. Defeated foes are dragged back to the gu'as mother host to be either devoured or transformed into a fungus zombie by the gu'as mother host to replace any losses in battle.



Gu'as Mother Host CR 13

TN Huge Plant

Init: +5; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft., Tremorsense 360 ft.; Listen +24, Spot +5

Languages: Does not speak; understands: Gnomish, Ulyanese

AC: 24, touch 9, flat-footed 23
(-2 size, +1 Dex, +15 natural)

hp 168 (16d8+96)

Damage Reduction: 10/slashing and magic

Resistances: Fire 10

Immune Flanking, Plant Traits

Saves: Fort +16, Ref +6, Will +8

Speed: 10 ft. (2 squares), burrow 10 ft.

Melee: Pseudopod +19 (2d6+10, 20/x2)

Full Melee: 6x Pseudopod +19 (2d6+10, 20/x2)

Space: 15 ft.; **Reach:** 15 ft.

Base Attack: +10; **Grapple:** +28

Combat Actions: Constrict (2d6+10 dmg), Create Spawn, Improved Grab

Combat Gear: -

Abilities: Str 30, Dex 12, Con 23, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 6

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SQ: Damage Reduction 10/Slashing and Magic, Dark Vision 60 ft., Fungal Body, Plant Traits, Resistance to Fire 10, Tremorsense 360 ft., Vitality shield.

Feats: Alertness, Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (Pseudopod)

Skills: Hide -7, Listen +24, Move Silently +20, Spot +5.

Possessions: -

Environment: Underground

Organization: Solitary

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Always neutral

Advancement 17-32 HD (Huge); 33-48 HD (Gargantuan)

Level Adjustment: -

Constrict (Ex): With a successful grapple check, a gu'as mother host can crush a grabbed opponent, dealing damage equal to a pseudopod attack.

Create Spawn (Ex): When a living or undead creature is killed by a gu'as mother host, it instantly burrows the pseudopod into the creature's body. Any internal organs and fluids are absorbed by gu'as mother host and the corpse is infected with gu'as fungus. Over the next 1d4 days the fungus grows, replacing missing tissues, after which time the slain creature rises as a gu'as fungus zombie connected by the pseudopod - now transformed into a tether-vine - to the gu'as mother host that created it. Gu'as fungus zombies possess none of their former abilities.

Fungal Body: A gu'as mother host's body is composed of millions of hyphae, all entwined together. It has no clear front or back and no discernable anatomy and is not subject to critical hits or flanking. A gu'as mother host is able to lash out with up to 6 pseudopods at a time (a max of 8 if Gargantuan) that deal bludgeoning damage. If a pseudopod is severed, it can extend a new one the following round. Unlike other creatures, a gu'as mother host is shapeable. It can occupy any combination of the appropriate number of contiguous squares.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a gu'as mother host must hit with its slam attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and deals slam damage each round the hold is maintained.

Tremorsense (Ex): A gu'as mother host has tremendous sensitivity to the ground surrounding it. It

can automatically sense the location of anything within 360 ft. in any direction (including through solid dirt or stone), so long as it is touching the ground or walls.

Vitality Shield (Ex): Plant (or fungal) life would have no chance in the Dead Lands if it had not adapted to the life-draining effects of the undead. A gu'as mother host has immunity to negative energy and energy draining effects. For defiling purposes, the plant behaves like an animal with regards to providing energy for spells.

Appearance

It is very difficult to discern what a gu'as mother host actually looks like. It seldom reveals that much of its body at one time, unless facing a large group of enemies. Those who have encountered it describe it as a dark greyish-green mass with many pseudopods rising out of the top of it. It does not seem to have an identifiable front or back.



Serlog CR 12

Fallen Desert Giant

LE Huge Undead (Augmented Giant, Psionic)

Init: +2; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft., Low-Light Vision; Listen +8, Search +13, Spot +8

Aura: Despair (10 ft., DC 17)

Languages: Giant

AC: 28; touch 10, flat-footed 26

(-2 size, +2 Dex, +18 Nat)

hp 147 (14 HD; 14d12+56)

Damage Reduction: 5/magic; **Power Resistance:** 15

Immune: Piercing, Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Bound to Area (Altaruk), Code of Honor, Vulnerability to Wood

Saves: Fort +9, Ref +6, Will +5

Speed: 0 ft. (base 40 ft.)

Melee: Club +22 (1d8+13) or Slam +18 (1d8+10)

Full Melee: Club +22/+17 (1d8+13) or 2x Slam +18 (1d8+10)

Space: 15 ft.; **Reach:** 15 ft.

Base Attack: +10/+5; **Grapple:** +28

Adventures in the Dead Lands

Combat Options: Combat Reflexes (3/round), Create Spawn, Despair (DC 17), Great Cleave, Power Attack

Combat Gear: Large Bone Club +3 (from *call weaponry*)

Psi-Like Abilities: At will - call weaponry*, death knell, deathwatch, mindlink*; 1/day - recall agony*. ML = HD. The save DCs are Charisma-based. *Power can be augmented.

Abilities: Str 31, Dex 15, Con -, Int 7, Wis 12, Cha 11

SQ: Bound to Area (Altaruk), Code of Honor, Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60 ft., Gray Toughness 4, Immunity to Bane (Piercing), Low-Light Vision, Skills, Undead Traits, Vulnerability to Wood.

Feats: Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Great Cleave, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (Club).

Skills: Climb +11, Jump +11, Listen +12, Search +4, Spot +12, Survival +5

Possessions: -

Code of Honor (Ex): Fallen are bound to follow a code of honor reflecting idealized rules of war. Evil fallen attempt to break or twist codes to avoid getting killed.

Create Spawn (Su): A giant, humanoid, or monstrous humanoid slain by a fallen's death knell power rises as fallen after 1d4 rounds. A fallen can have spawn with Hit Dice totaling twice its own.

Despair (Su): Fallen radiate an aura of doom and hopelessness, causing creatures within 10 ft. to make a

Will save (DC 10 + ½ fallen's HD + fallen's Cha modifier). Creatures that fail are shaken. Whether or not the save is successful, that creature cannot be affected again by the same undead's aura for 24 hours. Fallen can suppress or reactivate this ability as a standard action in order to achieve surprise in close quarters.

Vulnerability to Wood (Ex): The undead can be harmed by nonmagical weapons made of wood. No matter the type of damage reduction, it is overcome by these common weapons.

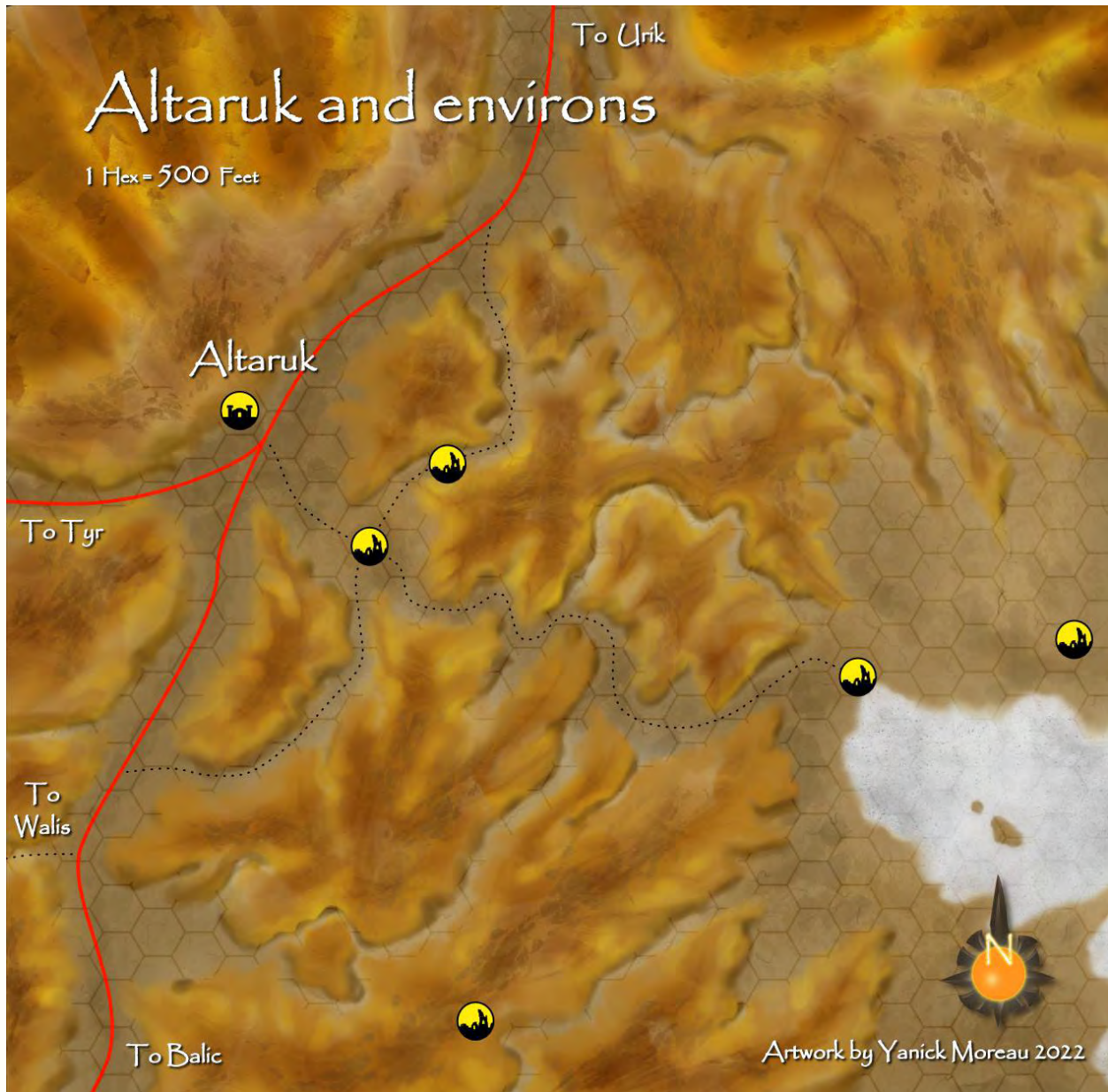
Personality Notes

Serlog was part of a group of giants that raided Altaruk long ago. The raid went well and they destroyed much of the town, but a ballista bolt struck him in the back while they were withdrawing and a burning building fell atop him when he went down. Serlog awakened trapped here centuries later as an undead - he could only move his arm and has had no one to speak to in all that time.

If asked, Serlog can tell the PCs that strange creatures tunneled up into the chamber from below and then up (presumably) to the surface. He doesn't know their exact numbers, but he does know that they usually travel up through the tunnel in groups of five or six and often return with one or two man-sized burdens.



Appendix 2: Maps



Adventures in the Dead Lands





The Giant's Crawlspace

1 Square = 5 Feet



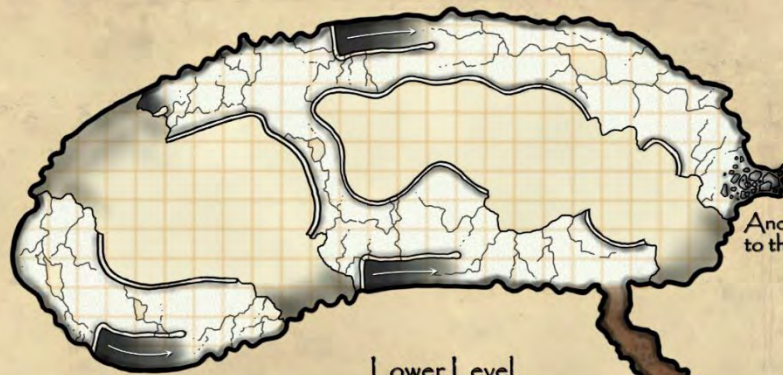
Artwork by Yanick Moreau 2022

The Hub

1 SQUARE = 5 FEET

→ Ramp Up

Balcony



Ancient passageway to the surface

Lower Level

To Tyr

Tunnel to the surface (Altaruk)



To Ulyan

To Giustenal



Artwork by Yanick Moreau 2022



Group 2 - Trouble in the Dead Lands

Adventures in the Dead Lands

Escape from the Dead Lands



A Dark Sun 3.5e adventure module for four 8th-level characters

Held captive within the Mines of Deshentu, the PCs must find a way to escape before they become permanent residents of the Dead Lands.

Credits

WRITING
Adam Cieszlak

EDITING
Alfonso Jimenez, Stuart Lynch

IMAGES/GRAPHICS
Raven Daegmorgan, Jack Meyer, Yanick Moreau

PLAYTESTERS
Ace

Introduction

Escape from the Dead Lands is a short D&D adventure for four 8th-level player characters (PCs). Consult the Scaling the Adventure sidebar for ways to modify the scenario for higher or lower levels of play.

This scenario begins with the PCs already in captivity beneath the Dead Lands. Due to the nature of the Seventh Tree, the party will need to include at least one living PC. While the Seventh Tree can be used as an escape route by a party that includes some undead members, if all of the PCs are undead, they will not be able to detect the Seventh Tree or use it to escape.

Developer's notes

This was Stuart Lynch's original concept. On the face of it the concept almost seemed a no-brainer, but he pointed out there were a lot of very interesting hiding places throughout the Dead Lands which had been underexplored, and an escape trail using them could prove an interesting adventure in and of itself. And as the development went on, the concept got better and better. -JM

Preparation

You (the DM) will need the 3rd edition revised D&D core rulebooks, including the *Player's Handbook*, the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*, as well as the *Expanded Psionics Handbook*. This adventure also uses material from *Faces of the Dead Lands*, *Secrets of the Dead Lands*, *Terrors of the Dead Lands* and the *Dark Sun 3.5 conversion* rulebook from Athas.org, but all necessary rules are already included.

Consult Appendix 4 for additional rules for communicating with the residents of, and surviving in, the Dead Lands.

Adventure Background

Deshentu is a wealthy undead nation in the northern Dead Lands, with a strong military protecting its borders (although it is also a very practical nation and is not above volunteering tribute to neighboring powers to secure (uneasy) peace). But the Deshenten military is always in need of recruits, and in the Dead Lands, fresh recruits must be dug up from beneath the obsidian and reanimated. The Mines of Deshentu are located several miles west of the capital city of Deshentarum, near the center of the kingdom. Within the mines, ancient dead bodies from long-dead civilizations are unearthed before being transported to Deshentarum for reanimation.

The mines of Deshentu are not merely open pits in the obsidian. Ever paranoid, the Vizier has constructed fortresses around the valuable mine shafts and manned them with sufficient forces to hold out a siege lasting for years. These fortresses are also occasionally used to contain high-value individuals and items that the Vizier does not wish to store in the hotbed of intrigue that is Deshentarum.

Overview

The PCs find themselves captives in the Mines of Deshentu. Due to an unrelated power-play in the surface fortress above them, the party's guards are killed, but their route to the surface is also cut off. The PCs must find a way to escape their cell and flee deeper into the Mines in search of another means of escape.

Traveling through the Mines, the party must confront or avoid undead mining crews and guards as they make their way ever deeper. The PCs encounter a series of mysterious circumstances which lead to the discovery of a root of the Seventh Tree. If followed, the tree root becomes ever larger, and the PCs eventually discover the interior of the root is hollow and large enough to accommodate the party, becoming a means by which the party can bypass, and ultimately hide from, the undead of the Mines.

Adventures in the Dead Lands

The hollow root of the Seventh Tree leads the PCs out of the Mines of Deshentu and into a smuggler's cave dating back to the time of the Cleansing Wars. Within the cave, the party will find the undead smugglers still guarding their cache and perhaps a means of escaping the Dead Lands.

Adventure Hooks

When the adventure begins, the party is held captive beneath the nation of Deshentu. They may be in the Dead Lands because:

- They were part of a trade caravan which came to the Dead Lands at the Vizier's request, but the trade opportunity was a ruse to capture living creatures for interrogation and recruitment.
- The PCs are the victims of a teleport mishap or some other type of spell or power-related disaster.
- They were already in the Dead Lands for an unrelated adventure and having been defeated and left for dead, were traded to or captured by Deshenten agents.

Scaling the Adventure

Escape from the Dead Lands is designed for a party of four 8th-level adventurers, but it can be modified easily to present an appropriate challenge for parties of different sizes or levels.

Consider adapting the adventure for PCs of average levels 6 to 10 by adding effective positive or negative levels to the creatures in each encounter to change their effective **Challenge Rating**. A creature takes the following penalties/bonuses for each positive/negative level it has gained:

- +/-1 on all skill checks and ability checks.
- +/-1 on attack rolls and saving throws.
- +/-5 hit points.
- +/-1 effective level (whenever the creature's level is used in a die roll or calculation, reduce it by one for each negative level).
- If the creature casts spells, she gains/loses one spell slot of her highest-level spells. (If she has more than one spell at her highest level, she chooses which she gains/loses.) In addition, when she next prepares spells or regains spell slots, she gets one more/less spell slot at her highest spell level. If the creature is a manifester, she gains/loses enough power points to manifest her highest-level power once.

Part 1: The Escape

The adventure begins with the PCs being held captive in a side tunnel within Deshentu's Mines. While they are held there, a mutiny against the fort's commander by their second in command occurs. Events in the fort above cause the shaft from the surface to collapse, crushing the PCs' jailers beneath falling debris.

1) A Convenient Accident (EL -)

Held in a cell beneath the Dead Lands, the PCs must find a way to escape.

You find yourselves disarmed, stripped of gear, and caged.

Trapped behind bars of sturdy bone, you seem to be in a cavern carved out of solid obsidian. Guards stand just down the tunnel from your cell - fearsome-looking, nearly fleshless undead humanoids with wickedly sharp spears and shields made of some type of shell.

The cell is 20 feet wide and 15 feet deep. The PCs may attempt to examine their prison cell, interact with each other, or try to speak to the guards if they want, but the guards are under orders to not speak to the prisoners and obvious attempts to escape will earn them jabs from the guards' spears (+10 to hit, 1d6+2 dmg).

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When the players are done examining their situation, read:

After several more hours of being trapped in your cell, a reverberating explosion echoes from down the tunnel and the sound of falling rock soon follows. Up ahead, a portion of the ceiling collapses above the guards, crushing them. They do not get back up or continue moving.

This is the PCs' chance to escape: the two guards are dead and 10 feet away. The cell is composed of long, thick bones embedded right into the obsidian, but the collapse has damaged the surrounding obsidian, possibly allowing the PCs to break or dislodge the bone bars and escape (Strength check, DC 15, to break; Hardness 1, 10 hp).

Development: Once free, the PCs' gear can be found just beyond where the guards were standing. The gear is in one of several obsidian boxes. The other boxes hold decayed remains that have been recovered from the mines and are awaiting transfer to the surface, but atop one of the other boxes is a coin-sized acorn - a *seed of life* (see Appendix 2, below).

The guards were nearly fleshless thinking zombies and no longer possess anything of value (their chitin armor, chitin shields, and bone and obsidian spears were all broken by falling rubble).

Just beyond the boxes with the PCs' gear is a tunnel intersection. From the tunnel to the left can be heard (Listen check, DC 20) shuffling and picking sounds (the sounds of mining) and continues out of sight. The right tunnel leads to a large vertical shaft that has collapsed and is now choked with rubble (100 feet worth, the source of the noises heard earlier).

Proceed to Encounter #2 – Into the Mines, below.

2) Into the Mines (EL 8)

Deshenten Mine Overseer (CR 8) 1x - see Appendix 1

Ultimately, heading deeper into the mines is the PCs' only real choice. When they proceed, read:

The tunnels seem to be dug through solid obsidian and have a bed of powdered obsidian underfoot. They branch and turn without cause but always seem to descend, eventually passing beyond the layer of blackglass to the earth and stone beneath.

After some time, you come to a four-way intersection. As you approach, a guard comes around the corner, stares at you for a moment and then barks something at you.

If the PCs understand Ulyanese, the mine overseer said: "Wait, you're not supposed to be here - stop, in the name of the Vizier!"

The mine overseer will attack immediately. The intersection is the simple confluence of four 10-foot-wide tunnels at nearly right angles.

Development: The specific direction the PCs choose to go from here is unimportant - all the tunnels ultimately either lead deeper underground or to the mine entrance (which is blocked).

Proceed to Encounter #3 – Through the Mines, below.

3) Through the Mines (EL 7)

Deshenten Miners (CR 4) 2x - see Appendix 1

Mindless Skeletons (CR ½) 5x - see Appendix 1

or

Deshenten Miners (CR 4) 1x - see Appendix 1

Mindless Skeletons (CR ½) 12x - see Appendix 1

or

Deshenten Miners (CR 4) 3x - see Appendix 1

As the PCs travel through the mines, they will encounter teams of miners moving from location to location or working to locate and free corpses from their ancient graves.

Adventures in the Dead Lands



The Mines of Deshentu

The Mines of Deshentu map (above) details several sections within the mines, for use with the encounters *Into the Mines* (#2) and *Through the Mines* (#3). The connections between sections and those creatures that appear in them have been left undetailed, to allow the DM to choose from them at random.

This is because the encounters in the Mines of Deshentu are few and far between, with several minutes or even hours of travel between any kind of encounter at all. The Mines are unmapped, even by the miners, and sprawling. With no clear destination in mind and no idea of where they are going, the PCs must essentially wander aimlessly until they discover the root of the Seventh Tree (see Part 2, below).

Adventures in the Dead Lands

You see several fleshy undead with picks directing the actions of a group of skeletal workers. When they notice you, they give a yell and direct the skeletons to attack.



Tactics: The thinking zombies will direct the mindless skeletons to attack the party and then engage the PCs themselves. None of the undead are particularly thoughtful combatants and will keep making melee attacks until destroyed or victorious.

Development: This encounter occurs 2-5 (1d4+1) times as the party moves throughout the mines before they discover the Seventh Tree root (see Part 2, below).

Part 2: The Seventh Tree

The Seventh Tree, practically the only living inhabitant of the Dead Lands, is a unique variation of a *tree of life*. Created to be larger and more powerful than the normal strain of *trees of life*, the Seventh Tree has a virtually boundless capacity for growth and regeneration. (For more information about the Seventh Tree, see *SotDL*, Ch. 9).

As in other locations throughout the Dead Lands, the roots of the Seventh Tree lie exposed in the deepest tunnels of Deshentu's mines. Once the roots have been found and identified as part of a living plant, they can be followed to a source of water and perhaps shelter.

A) A Trail of Life

As the PCs move through the depths of the Mines, evading and battling mining crews and overseers, they will eventually come across the roots of the Seventh Tree.

4) A Glimmer of Hope (EL 7)

Deshenten Miners (CR 4) 2x - see Appendix 1

Mindless Skeletons (CR ½) 5x - see Appendix 1

The PCs, if they can grasp the importance of it, may have just found a means of survival.

As you travel through the mines, the earthy, musty air of the mines begins to stick to the back of your throats, reminding you of how long it's been since any of you had something to eat or drink.

When you pause at an intersection to watch for miners, one of your hands lands on something

unusual: a small thread of woody, thick material - a small tree root.

If the players don't realize it, an Intelligence check (DC 5) is enough for the PCs to realize that the root is fresh and alive, and that it could only be so if it has an available source of water. It is a simple matter to follow the root, as it seems to run exposed along the tunnel wall for as far as the eye can see.

As you explore deeper into the mines, the root in the wall slowly grows bigger and bigger; once no thicker than a finger, the root here is as big across as a stout club.

At the intersection ahead, the root branches, with the main root running straight ahead and the offshoot leaping clear across the tunnel to the opposite wall and then continuing down the other tunnel.

A mining team from down that tunnel sights your group and lumbers towards you to intercept.

After the PCs react to the presence of the undead, read:

The undead miners advance, intent on sinking their mining tools and claws into your flesh, but suddenly they stop. The nearest of them have stumbled into the root growing across the tunnel and have stopped.

The undead clearly still wish to attack, muttering curses at you and brandishing weapons, but seem utterly confused about their lack of forward progress. It should be a simple matter for them to duck under the root and advance on your party, but they strain against it as if they do not realize the root is even there.

Development: The undead in fact cannot discern the root and the PCs are free to avoid or proceed with

Adventures in the Dead Lands

combat as they wish - the undead will not find a way to move past the root for several hours.

When the PCs move on, proceed to Encounter #5 – The Deep Mines, below.

5) The Deep Mines (EL 8)

Deshenten Mine Overseer (CR 8) 1x - see Appendix 1

Traveling deeper into the mines, following the recently discovered roots, the PCs have an opportunity to learn that there might be more to the roots than meets the eye.

Following the root deeper into the mines, it branches and continues to grow in girth. Now the root seems to comprise the entirety of one of the tunnel walls.

Up ahead, the tunnel suddenly turns, diving straight through the root.

When the PCs investigate the root, read:

You see that although the tunnel bisects it (likely mined straight through it), the root itself seems to be largely hollow, with enough space for you to walk within it.

Down the tunnel on the other side of the root, however, you can see an undead guard.

The guard, a Deshenten mine overseer, sees PCs not standing within the root at the same time that they see it. It is 100 ft away from the root when the encounter begins. If the PCs stand within the hollow root, read:

Stepping into the space within the hollow root, the undead guard moves to follow you. Suddenly, however, the guard stops short within the root, looking around as if confused. The creature is looking right at you but strangely its gaze passes right over your party - it can't see you!

Tactics: As the PCs may have surmised by now, undead cannot discern the roots of the Seventh Tree or anything within them. While the overseer knows there is a tunnel there (which runs right through the root), he cannot see or detect the root the tunnel goes through, thinking it is simply more of the surrounding earth and stone. Similarly, if the PCs remain within the

hollow root, the overseer can no longer detect them. If the PCs attack from within the hollow root, the overseer will be aware of the attacks, but be forced to conclude that they are coming from the tunnel wall or something similar.

Development: Combat may proceed as normal, but the PCs can also simply move on through the hollow root and completely avoid the undead guard.

The hollow root extends from here in two opposite directions. In one direction, the root proceeds back the way the PCs just came from (because they had been following or moving parallel to the root) and grows smaller and smaller inside until it becomes impassable. If followed in the other direction, the hollow root leads to Encounter #6 - Trapped Chimera, below.

6) Trapped Chimera (EL 8)

Undead Chimera (CR 8) 1x - see Appendix 1

The PCs come upon an undead monster trapped underground and must find a way to eliminate the creature or bypass it to continue on.

The interior of the hollow root gently undulates up and down as you progress through it, sometimes rising quite far before descending further into the earth again. This time, the root's path runs up and up until you reach a gaping hole in the root.

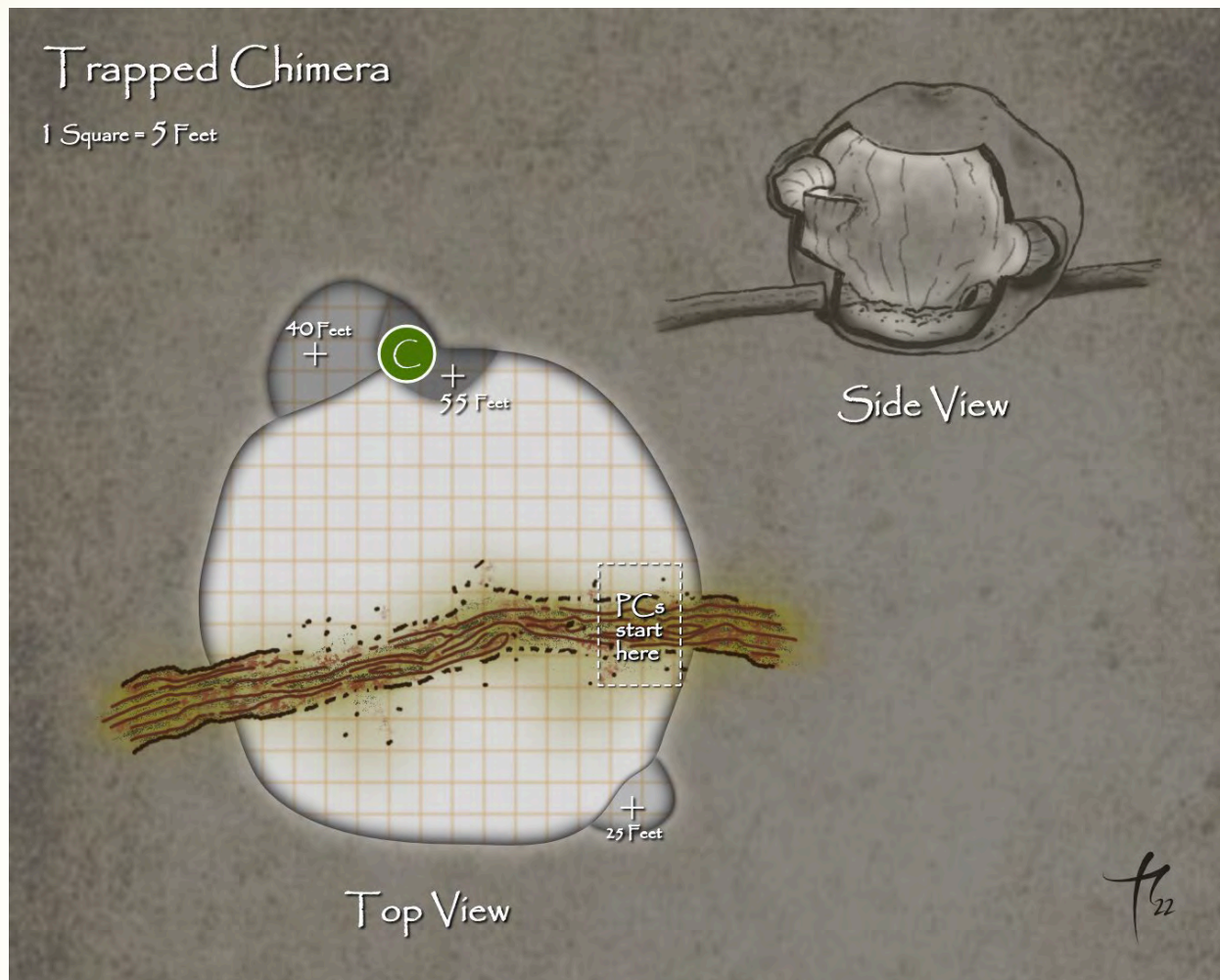
Here, most of the root has been carved away and gives way to a large pocket of space. The bottom segment of the root is the only surviving part and serves as a path to the other side of the bubble-like chamber, where the root wall reforms and continues into the earth.

Within the chamber is a hideous winged creature with three heads. Rotting strips of savaged flesh dangle here and there from its undead body but the creature's claws and teeth still look sharp, and its milky white eyes still somehow possess a predatory gleam.

The undead beast prowls back and forth in the chamber as if agitated, and it appears you will need to get past it to continue on.

Already dead when it was entombed by the Obsidian Tide, the chimera has been trapped here ever since it rose in undeath. It will need to be dealt with or bypassed to continue on through the hollow root.

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Tactics: When combat begins, the undead chimera will happily melee with the party, but as combat wears on and it takes significant damage, the undead chimera will retreat to the ledges above. Once on the ledges, the chimera will focus on hit-and-run attacks and on using its breath weapon.

Unable to detect the hollow root, trapped in this bubble for king's ages, and unsure how the PCs got in, the undead chimera will fight to the death out of sheer frustration.

Development: Once the undead chimera is dealt with, the PCs are free to move on through the hollow root. Proceed to Encounter #7 – Deep Miners, below.

7) Deep Miners (EL 8)

Deshenten Miners (CR 4) 2x - see Appendix 1

Mindless Skeletons (CR ½) 5x - see Appendix 1

Unbeknownst to the PCs, they are close to escaping the Mines of Deshentu, but they must deal with one last group of miners in their way.

As far as you can see ahead, the root is pierced in numerous places, with several tunnels bisecting it. Working in and near these tunnels is a group of miners, slowly freeing ancient remains from their graves.

Tactics: If the PCs step out of the hollow root and into the tunnels dug through it, the miners will see and attack them. The PCs could simply use a teleportation effect to cross this stretch of the root, but clever or resourceful players might instead run from one intact segment of root to the next, using them to hide from undead and avoid combat. Resolving the encounter by combat is of course still a viable option.

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Development: Once they move past this encounter, the PCs have left the Mines of Deshentu and are now somewhere between the surface location of the Mines and the city of Deshentarum. Proceed to Encounter #8 – Refuge, below.

8) Refuge (EL -)

Finally far beyond the reach of the Deshentens, the PCs find a place to rest and recuperate before moving on.

The hollow root seems to just go on and on forever. The space inside the root is now at least 10 feet across and it has been some time since you have run across any gaps in the wall of the root at all or any undead.

Rounding a slight bend in the root, you see a faint shimmer of light coming from the floor.

The shimmer is the faint light from bioluminescent moss growing on the root's interior wall being reflected off a pool of water on the hollow root's floor. The moss is edible (Knowledge - Nature or Survival check, DC 15) and the water tastes strange but safe to drink (it tastes like sap; Knowledge - Nature or Survival check, DC 10). There is enough water and edible moss to provide one day's ration for each PC.

Also growing on the interior wall of the root is another *seed of life* (see Appendix 2, below).

Development: The PCs may rest here for as long as they wish, but more water and moss will not accumulate here for months, if not years, and the PCs will eventually run out of food and water.

When the PCs move on from the refuge, proceed to Part 2B – Dead Mens' Tales, below.

B) Dead Mens' Tales

After walking through the hollow root for nearly a day, the PCs emerge into a cave that predates the Obsidian Tide and meet those that have been trapped here for millennia.

As you travel ever further through the hollow root, you eventually begin to hear voices from up ahead.

The PCs can stop and actively listen for the voices, or they can rush forward to confront the source of the voices. If they stop and listen (Listen check, DC 20),

the PCs will discover that there are two distinct voices and that from their tones, they seem to be bickering. If the party understands Ulyanese, echoes make it difficult to catch all the words, but the discussion centers around who's fault their current situation is and what they will do when they escape.

Rubble seems to have pierced the wall of the root on the left-hand side and the resulting hole opens into a small, natural-looking cavern. A pile of rubble almost completely divides the cavern into two separate chambers, both of which are strewn with rubble and dust, as if they suffered a collapse long ago.

Development: The hole in the root wall is large enough to accommodate Large PCs, if some of the rubble is cleared away and provides access to both caverns. Depending on which cavern the PCs investigate first, proceed to Trapped Smugglers (encounter #9) or A Request (encounter #10), below.

9) Trapped Smugglers (EL 9 or -)

Undead Smuggler (CR 7) 2x - see Appendix 1

The PCs find themselves in a collapsed cave and discover smugglers from the Cleansing Wars era. When the PCs move ahead to discover the source of the voices, read:

As you step from the hollow root, you see two men, both covered in seemingly mortal wounds. When they notice you, they move to stand between you and a pile of crates and other containers behind them.

If the PCs manage to understand the men (who rotate through speaking Classic Tanysh, Melai, Remaan, and Ulyanese), read:

"Hey! Who are you?"

"How did you get in here?"

"You can't have it, it's ours!"

The two men are Vumenu and Kiviok, thinking zombies who still believe themselves to be alive. If they are questioned, the PCs can learn the following:

- They have been trapped here since an "associate" of theirs collapsed the cave, trapping them inside.

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- Vumenu and Kiviok describe themselves as “procurers of hard-to-find luxury items” (aka smugglers).
- This cave is/was the southern terminus of their supply route, allowing them to deliver rare goods to the remaining humans of Cleansed Ulyan.
- Vumenu and Kiviok have nothing against non-humans, often dealing in rare elven or dwarven goods to the nobles of Deshentarum or the researchers of the Navel.
- If there are non-humans in the party, the smugglers are shocked that they would tempt fate by coming to Cleansed Ulyan. Surely there are safer places to hide from the Warbringer’s armies.
- The smugglers do not know that they are undead or that millennia have passed since their deaths, believing themselves and any undead in the party to still be alive.
- The pile of crates and containers at the rear of the cave is the smugglers’ stash of goods. They will not answer questions about it and if the PCs attempt to examine the pile, Vumenu and Kiviok will immediately attack, defending their stash with their unives.
- They have been trapped in this cavern for some time and as part of their escape plan they dug through a smaller cave-in (they indicate the hole through the tree root), but cannot seem to remove the rubble blocking the exit by themselves. They know their associate had some way to escape (he was in charge of transport and regularly *teleported* himself and their goods in and out of Ulyan).

Tactics: The smugglers would prefer to avoid hostilities and simply talk to the PCs, but if the PCs attack them, the smugglers are happy to cut them down. If they can manage it, Vumenu and Kiviok will flank an opponent to deal sneak attack damage; if not, they will resort to feinting.

Development: Vumenu has Besein’s (see encounter #10, A Request, below) ring, though neither of the smugglers will admit to it. If the PCs move to leave the chamber or otherwise explore the cave, the smugglers will ask them to search their associate’s body for a means of escape (seeing as how the PCs can ‘obviously’ walk through walls).

If the party returns from speaking with Besein and attempts to retrieve his ring, Vumenu and Kiviok will resort to combat to keep it - being violently opposed to giving up their only supposed means of escape.

The smugglers’ two steel longswords are badly rusted and suffer penalties in combat such that they are

functionally equivalent to bone longswords (though they do still count as metal weapons for the purposes of bypassing damage reduction). If one could be found, a weaponsmith capable of working metal could reforge the longswords, but the resulting loss of material means that the new weapons would be smaller than the originals, with each reforged longsword resulting in one steel short sword or two steel daggers.

10) A Request (EL 9 or -)

Besein the Dhaot (CR 9) 1x - see Appendix 1

Exploring deeper into the cave, the PCs meet a trapped ghostly spirit and perhaps a means to escape.

Within this second chamber, you can see what was likely the entrance to this cavern but rubble now seals off the exit. On the floor can be seen an ancient corpse, long dead. The body lies near and is partially buried by fallen stones - perhaps they were killed by the cave-in.

If the PCs move to examine the cave-in or the body, read:

As you move deeper into the chamber, a ghostly man fades into view, materializing near the dead body. He speaks to you in a strange tongue.

If the PCs understand Classic Elven, Classic Tanysh, or Ulyanese, or use a spell or power to do so, read:

“Hello,” he says, “Who might you be and how did you get in here?”

The ghostly man is Besein, a dhaot. If the PCs speak to him, they can learn the following:

- Besein remembers being stabbed in the back (literally) by his compatriots Vumenu and Kiviok.
- He remembers triggering a cave-in using one of his pieces of equipment - trapping his killers in the cave.
- Besein is aware that he died long ago and that he is undead, as he cannot interact with the material world.
- He is quite sure that the PCs are trapped in this cave with him (their manner of entrance notwithstanding), as he has not been able to locate

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an exit since he died - though he has nothing against the PCs searching for themselves.

- Besein does know a way to escape the cave, however, and will happily give the party this information for a favor.
- He wishes to have his wedding ring returned to his wife (he assumes that this means delivery to her grave after all this time).
- His ring was taken by his former compatriots (Vumenu and Kiviok), who died after he triggered the cave-in. He knows they still exist as undead and that he is completely incapable of destroying them himself, so he has simply never shown himself to them. He'd like them killed.

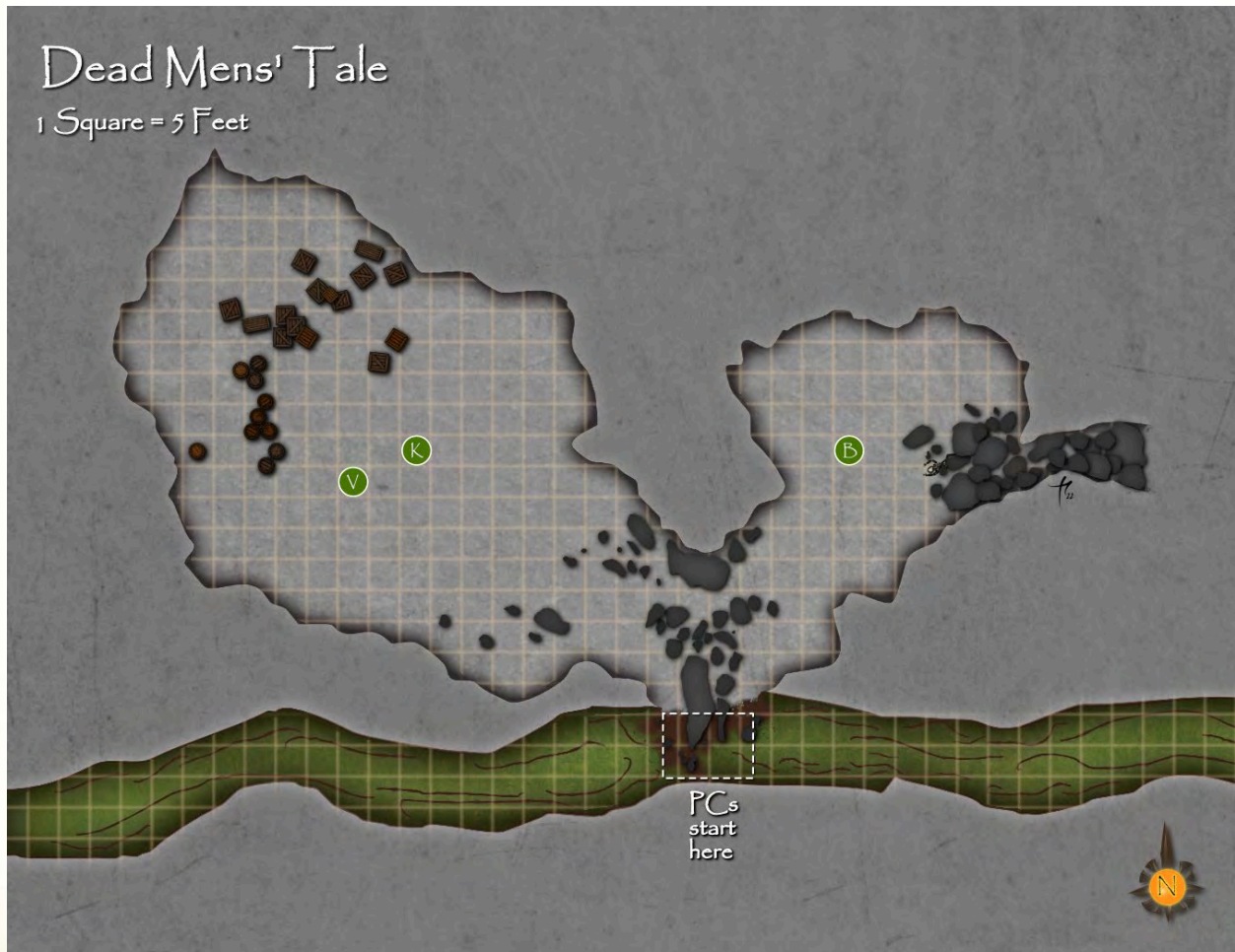


Tactics: If attacked, such as after the PCs come from speaking with Vumenu and Kiviok, Besein begs his attackers to stop and offers them a means to escape the cavern. If the PCs do not cease attacking, Besein will return their attacks using his claws to deliver sneak attack (set up using improved feint or *invisibility* as

necessary). The dhaot knows he needs at least some of the PCs alive to retrieve his ring, however, and deals non-lethal damage with his attacks. If temporarily destroyed, he whispers his wife's name before fading away into the Gray: "Malia".

Development: If the PCs return to Besein with his ring, he will ask them to swear - upon pain of death - to return it to his wife as soon as possible. If they do so, he will explain that his ring is charged with (one remaining) use of *psionic teleport* that anyone can use, assuming they know the command word. The command word is his wife's name: Malia. With that, he attempts to hurry the PCs along - the sooner they leave, the sooner they can return the (now powerless) ring to his wife.

Besein's remains lie on the floor of the cave where they fell. Still on his body are several pieces of equipment: a ruined dagger, rotted leather armor, and the broken, tarnished remains of a copper headband. This was once a *greater circlet of blasting* but was shattered in the cave-in and is now beyond repair.



Concluding the Adventure

Once the PCs have *Besein's wedding ring* (see Appendix 2, below), they need only speak the name of Besein's wife "Malia" to activate a *psionic teleport* to escape both the Mines of Deshentu and the Dead Lands altogether.

Further Adventures

Once the PCs activate Besein's ring, they are free to go wherever they wish (within a 900 mile radius), but they are not necessarily free to do whatever they wish.

If they agreed to deliver his wedding ring, Besein is willing to allow the party a reasonable amount of time to locate his wife and deliver the ring to her, but if they have not started to do so within a few months, Besein will lose patience with the party. He will reappear and begin haunting the PCs, berating them for delaying for so long and demanding that they take the ring to his wife at once. Should his words not suffice, Besein will resort to violence - locating the PCs enemies or local toughs and convincing them to attack the PCs when least expected. Such efforts will continue until the ring is returned as promised.

Particularly crass PCs might simply sell off Besein's ring (it is worth 100 cp). Once Besein returns and discovers they have not returned the ring yet, he will respond as above. In this scenario though, he will also force the party to retrieve the ring for its new owner(s), which is unlikely to be easy.

While locating Besein's wife could be as easy as traveling to the site of his hometown (wherever a DM

might decide to place it), circumstances are rarely that simple. The trip will likely at least involve employing a divination or clairsentient power to locate his wife's grave. If the remains of Besein's wife still lie in a grave after so many King's Ages, then that grave most likely is protected by a meorty who will need to be dealt with to deliver the ring.

It is also entirely possible that Besein's wife no longer rests in a grave. After so many centuries, her remains may have been moved or stolen from her final resting place, and may even have been reanimated. Perhaps Malia's corpse serves a foul defiler in his army of the undead or, in an especially ironic twist, perhaps Besein and his wife lived within Cleansed Ulyan and the PCs must return to the Dead Lands to locate Malia's zombie. If so, Besein will likely ask the PCs to lay his wife to rest by whatever means necessary.

Perhaps instead Malia never truly died: as a powerful psionicist, Besein's wife may have extended her own lifespan to allow her time to locate her missing spouse. Malia might still be roaming Athas, having become a kaisharga or an ageless psion. If true, the PCs might need to endure many trials and adventures just to locate and get close enough to personally return the ring to Malia.

It is possible that this was not the only smuggler's cache that Besein, Vumenu, and Kiviok maintained. Knowing the smuggler's names, it will be possible to divine the locations of other caches, but any caches that remain intact are likely to be well hidden, guarded, and/or trapped, and may have lost all value due to the perishable nature of many of the goods.





Appendix 1: Monsters & NPCs

Besein the Dhaot CR 8

Male Human Dhaot Rogue 7

TN Medium Humanoid (Human, Incorporeal)

Init: +1; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +15, Spot +15

Aura: -

Languages: Classic Elven, Classic Tanysh, Ulyanese

AC: 16, touch 16, flat-footed 15; Incorporeal, Uncanny Dodge

(+1 Dex, +5 Def)

hp 45 (7d12)

Damage Reduction: 5/magic; **Spell Resistance:** 17

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Vulnerability to Fire

Saves: Fort +2, Ref +6, Will +3; Evasion

Speed: Fly 30 ft. (perfect)

Melee: Claw +5 (1d6) or Incorporeal Touch +6 (Life Disruption)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +5; **Grapple:** - (+4)

Combat Options: Combat Expertise, Improved Feint, Life Disruption (DC 18), Sneak Attack (+4d6), Temporary Corporeality.

Combat Gear: -.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*dream, hallucinatory terrain, invisibility, major image, nightmare*; CL = HD; The save DCs are Charisma-based.

Abilities: Str - (10), Dex 13, Con -, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 20

SQ: Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60 ft., Enduring Focus, Evasion, Skills, Spell Resistance, Trapfinding, Trap Sense +2, Uncanny Dodge, Vulnerability to Fire.

Feats: Combat Expertise, Improved Feint, Skill Focus (Bluff), Skill Focus (Sense Motive).

Skills: Appraise +12, Bluff +19, Diplomacy +29, Gather Information +15, Hide +11, Intimidate +17, Listen +15, Move Silently +11, Search +16, Sense Motive +15, Spot +11.

Possessions: none (-1 CR).

Enduring Focus (Su): A dhaot's life force is tied to its mortal remains. As long as the dhaot's remains have not been returned to its home, the undead cannot be permanently killed; it reforms 1d12 days after its apparent death. Killing the undead in the Gray prevents it from returning to life.

Life Disruption (Su): Only incorporeal undead possess this power, which momentarily disrupts the victim's life force. A creature hit by the undead's incorporeal touch attack is stunned for 2d4 rounds unless it makes a Fortitude save.

Skills: A dhaot receives a +10 racial bonus on Diplomacy checks and a +4 racial bonus on Listen and Search checks.

Temporary Corporeality (Su): A dhaot can become corporeal as a standard action, seemingly becoming flesh and blood. In corporeal form, it loses the incorporeal subtype, its deflection bonus to armor class becomes a natural armor bonus, and it has a Strength score equal to the base creature's Strength in life. A corporeal dhaot makes 2 claw attacks (adjusted by its Strength). It can grapple creatures and manipulate objects. The undead can become incorporeal again as a standard action. In the Gray, dhaots are forced into corporeal form; they cannot exist there in incorporeal form.



Deshenten Mine Overseer CR 8

Male or Female Human Thinking Zombie Fighter 7

LE Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid)

Init: +3; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft.; Listen +8, Search +8, Spot +8

Aura: -

Languages: Classic Dwarven, Ulyanese

AC: 26; touch 14, flat-footed 23

(+3 Dex, +5 armor, +3 shield, +4 Nat, +1 Def)

hp 59 (7d12+14)

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Resistances: Cold 10, Electricity 10

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Vulnerability to Blessed Elements, **Vulnerability to Sunlight**

Saves: Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +3

Speed: 30 ft.

Melee: Heartpick +12 (1d8+6; 20/x4) or Claw +11 (1d4+4; 20/x2)

Full Melee: Heartpick +12/+7 (1d8+6; 20/x4) or 2x Claw +11 (1d4+4; 20/x2)

Ranged: Javelin +10 (1d6+4, Range 30ft; 20/x2)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +7/+2; **Grapple:** +11

Combat Options: **Curse (DC 14)**, Combat Reflexes (4/round), Disease (DC 14),

Combat Gear: Bronze Heartpick +1, Chitin Armor +1, Chitin Heavy Shield +1, Bone Javelin x4.

Abilities: Str 18, Dex 16, Con --, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 14

SQ: Darkvision 60 ft., **Gray Toughness 2**, Resistances, Skills, Undead traits, Vulnerability to Blessed Elements, **Vulnerability to Sunlight**.

Feats: Alertness, Combat Reflexes^B, Exotic Weapon Focus (Heartpick)^B, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Intimidate, Sense Motive), Weapon Focus (Heartpick)^B, Weapon Specialization (Heartpick)^B.

Skills: Climb +4, Intimidate +15, Jump +4, Listen +8, Profession (mining) +11, Search +8, Sense Motive +13, Spot +8.

Skills: Climb +4, Intimidate +15, Jump +4, Listen +8, Profession (mining) +11, Search +8, Sense Motive +13, Spot +8.

Possessions: 7,200cp or combat gear plus: Ring of Protection +1.

Curse (Su): The undead can curse an individual when it is destroyed. As the final blow is made that kills the creature, the undead can curse its destroyer, as the bestow curse spell.

Disease (Su): A thinking zombie's bite delivers one of the following diseases (50% chance of either). The save DC is 10 + ½ thinking zombie's HD + thinking zombie's Cha modifier.

- Filth fever—bite, Fortitude save, incubation period 1d3 days, damage 1d3 Dex and 1d3 Con.
- Red ache—bite, Fortitude save, incubation period 1d3 days, damage 1d6 Str.

Vulnerability to Blessed Elements (Ex): A thinking zombie takes half again as much (+50%) damage as normal from blessed elements.



Deshenten Miner CR 4

Male or Female Human Elite Thinking Zombie Warrior 4

NE Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid)

Init: +2; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft.; Listen +6, Search +5, Spot +6

Aura: -

Languages: Classic Dwarven, Ulyanese

AC: 19; touch 12, flat-footed 17

(+2 Dex, +3 armor, +4 Nat)

hp 59 (7d12+14)

Resistances: Cold 10, Electricity 10

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Vulnerability to Blessed Elements, **Vulnerability to Sunlight**

Saves: Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +3

Speed: 30 ft.

Melee: Heartpick +11 (1d8+5; 20/x4) or Claw +9 (1d4+5; 20/x2)

Full Melee: Heartpick +11 (1d8+5; 20/x4) or 2x Claw +9 (1d4+5; 20/x2)

Ranged: -

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +4; **Grapple:** +9

Combat Options: **Blinding Touch (DC 14)**, Disease (DC 14),

Combat Gear: MW Heartpick, MW Studded Leather Armor.

Abilities: Str 20, Dex 14, Con --, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 11

SQ: Darkvision 60 ft., **Gray Toughness 2**, Resistances, Skills, Undead traits, Vulnerability to Blessed Elements, **Vulnerability to Sunlight**.

Feats: Exotic Weapon Focus (Heartpick), Skill Focus (Profession - Miner), Weapon Focus (Heartpick).

Skills: Climb +11, Intimidate +0, Jump +11, Listen +6, Profession (mining) +9, Search +5, Sense Motive +6, Spot +6.

Skills: Climb +11, Intimidate +0, Jump +11, Listen +6, Profession (mining) +9, Search +5, Sense Motive +6, Spot +6.

Possessions: none (-1 CR).

Blinding Touch (Su): The undead can make a touch attack as a standard action that doesn't provoke an

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attack of opportunity. The touch causes blindness in the victim for 2d4 rounds. A Fortitude save negates the effect.

Disease (Su): A thinking zombie's bite delivers one of the following diseases (50% chance of either). The save DC is 10 + ½ thinking zombie's HD + thinking zombie's Cha modifier.

- Filth fever—bite, Fortitude save, incubation period 1d3 days, damage 1d3 Dex and 1d3 Con.
- Red ache—bite, Fortitude save, incubation period 1d3 days, damage 1d6 Str.

Vulnerability to Blessed Elements (Ex): A thinking zombie takes half again as much (+50%) damage as normal from blessed elements.



Undead Chimera CR 8

Male Thinking Zombie Chimera

CE Large Undead (Augmented Magical Beast)

Init: +1; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft., Low-Light Vision, Scent; Listen +9, Spot +9

Aura: -

Languages: Ulyanese

AC: 23; touch 10, flat-footed 22

(-1 size, +1 Dex, +13 Nat)

hp 67 (9d12+9)

Resistances: Cold 10, Electricity 10

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Vulnerability to Blessed Elements, **Vulnerability to Cold**

Saves: Fort +9, Ref +7, Will +6

Speed: 30 ft., Fly 50 ft. (clumsy)

Melee: Bite +14 (3d6+6; 20/x2)

Full Melee: Bite +14 (3d6+6; 20/x2) and Bite +14 (1d8+6; 20/x2) and Gore +14 (1d8+6; 20/x2) and 2x Claw +12 (1d6+3; 20/x2)

Ranged: -

Space: 10 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +9; **Grapple:** +19

Combat Options: Breath Weapon (1d4 rounds, 20-ft cone of acidic gas, 3d8 dmg, DC 15), Disease (DC 15)

Abilities: Str 23, Dex 13, Con -, Int 6, Wis 13, Cha 12

SQ: Darkvision 60ft., **Enhanced Ability (feat)**, **Fangs**, Gray Toughness 1, Low-Light Vision, Resistances,

Scent, Skills, Undead traits, Vulnerability to Blessed Elements, **Vulnerability to Cold**.

Feats: Ability Focus (Breath Weapon) ^B, Alertness, Hover, Iron Will, Multiattack.

Skills: Hide +9(+4), Listen +9, Spot +9.

Breath Weapon (Su): A chimera's breath weapon is usable once every 1d4 rounds, deals 3d8 points of damage, and allows a Reflex save (DC 10 + ½ HD + Con modifier) for half damage.

Disease (Su): A thinking zombie's bite delivers one of the following diseases (50% chance of either). The save DC is 10 + ½ thinking zombie's HD + thinking zombie's Cha modifier.

- Filth fever—bite, Fortitude save, incubation period 1d3 days, damage 1d3 Dex and 1d3 Con.
- Red ache—bite, Fortitude save, incubation period 1d3 days, damage 1d6 Str.

Skills: A chimera's three heads give it a +2 racial bonus on Spot and Listen checks. In areas of scrubland or brush, a chimera gains a +4 racial bonus on Hide checks.

Vulnerability to Blessed Elements (Ex): A thinking zombie takes half again as much (+50%) damage as normal from blessed elements.



Undead Smuggler, Vumenu & Kivioq CR 7

Male Human Thinking Zombie Rogue 5 / Fighter 1

CE Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Human)

Init: +6; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft.; Listen +13, Spot +13

Aura: -

Languages: Classic Tanysh, Melai, Remaan, Ulyanese

AC: 21; touch 12, flat-footed 19

(+2 Dex, +5 armor, +4 Nat)

hp 39 (6d12+6)

Resistances: Cold 10, Electricity 10

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** **Delusion (still alive)**, Vulnerability to Blessed Elements

Saves: Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +1; Evasion

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Speed: 30 ft.

Melee: Longsword +7 (1d8+2; 19-20/x2) or Claw +7 (1d4+3; 20/x2)

Full Melee: Longsword +7 (1d8+3; 19-20/x2) or 2x Claw +7 (1d4+3; 20/x2) and Bite +2 (1d6+1; 20/x2)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +4; **Grapple:** +7

Combat Options: **Create Spawn**, Expertise, Improved Feint (Move action), Disease (DC 16), Sneak Attack (+3d6)

Combat Gear: Rusted Steel Longsword (as Bone), Studded Leather Armor +2.

Abilities: Str 17, Dex 14, Con --, Int 16, Wis 10, Cha 16

SQ: Darkvision 60 ft., **Delusion (still alive)**, Evasion, Gray Toughness 1, Resistances, Skills, Trap Sense +1, Uncanny Dodge, Undead traits, Vulnerability to Blessed Elements.

Feats: Combat Expertise, Improved Feint, Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (Longsword) ^B.

Skills: Appraise +12, Bluff +12, Diplomacy +16, Disguise +6(+2), Forgery +12, Gather Information +12, Intimidate +14, Listen +13, Search +16, Sense Motive +13, Sleight of Hand +13, Spot +13.

Possessions: 5,600cp or combat gear plus: Potion-Orb of Cure Light Wounds x2.

Disease (Su): A thinking zombie's bite delivers one of the following diseases (50% chance of either). The save DC is 10 + ½ thinking zombie's HD + thinking zombie's Cha modifier.

- Filth fever—bite, Fortitude save, incubation period 1d3 days, damage 1d3 Dex and 1d3 Con.
- Red ache—bite, Fortitude save, incubation period 1d3 days, damage 1d6 Str.

Vulnerability to Blessed Elements (Ex): A thinking zombie takes half again as much (+50%) damage as normal from blessed elements.



Appendix 2: New Items

Seeds of Life

(from Faces of the Dead Lands, Chapter 10)

These coin sized acorns are quite literally seeds shed from the Seventh Tree. In a wizard's hand, these behave in a manner akin to *trees of life* for the purposes of providing energy for arcane spells.

If held while casting a spell, the *seed* provides the life energy needed in lieu of the wizard's energy gathering, as if the wizard was casting the spell within a *tree of life's* aura of protection. For spells of 6th level or lower, the bearer may amplify their arcane spells, increasing the abundance of the terrain by one step, or nullifying the effects of their defiling radius.

Each *seed* holds the equivalent energy for 24 spell levels, and when provided with water and sunlight, will regenerate 2d4 spell levels a day (up to a maximum of 24 per seed). Each spell level used to nullify the effects of defiling is permanently lost. Once a *seed* has lost all of its life energy, it will crumble to dust.

A *seed of life* may instead be used to grow a new *tree of life* (*Terrors of the Dead Lands*, Chapter 5). The *seed* must be planted and provided with water and sunlight for many weeks (at least four), but the *seed of life* replaces all the other prerequisites.

Strong transmutation; CL 9th; Craft Wondrous Item, rejuvenate; Cost 90,000 cp.

Besein's Wedding Ring

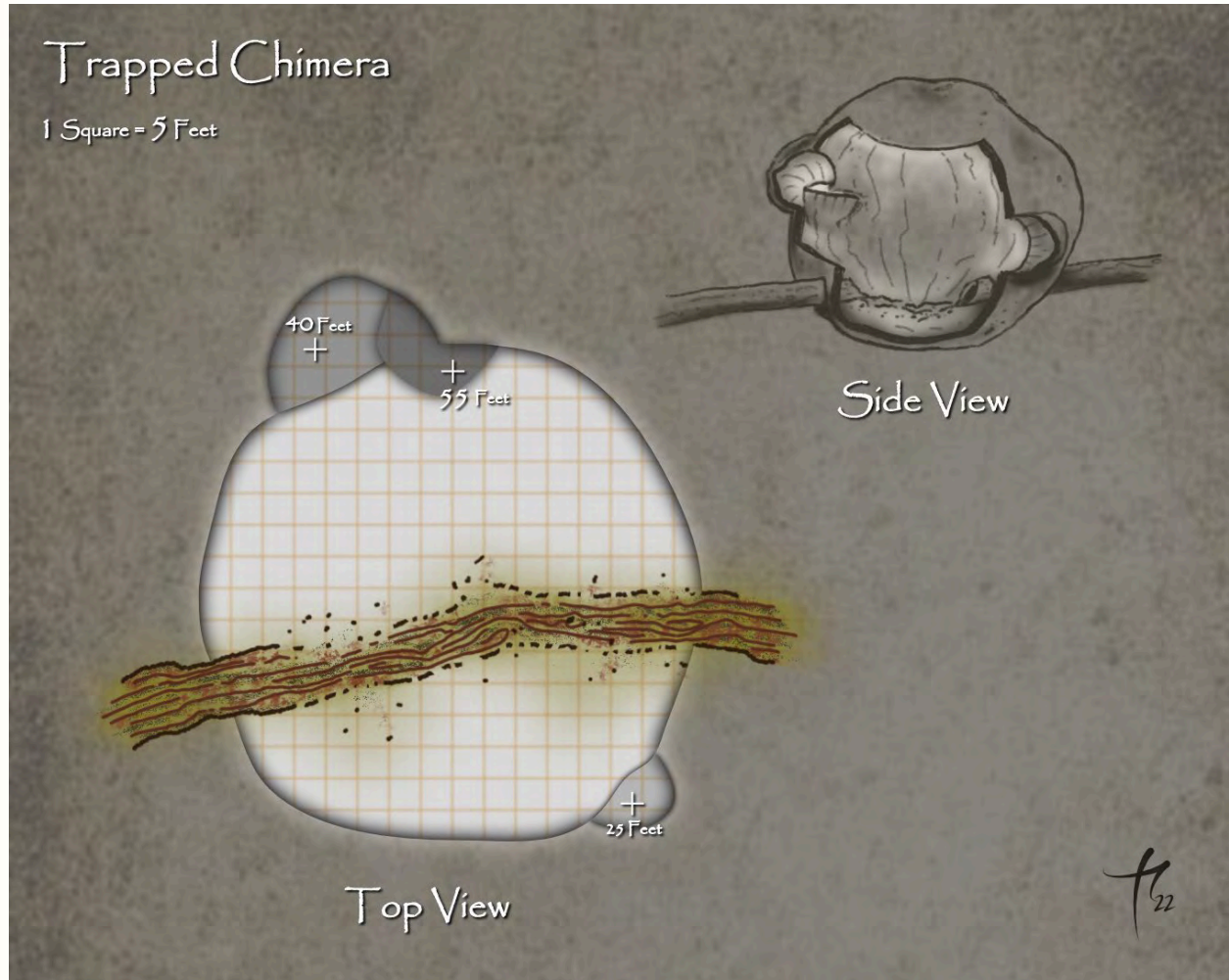
This plain golden band was given to Besein by his wife Malia, a powerful manifester. On its inner surface, the ring bears the inscription in Ulyanese: "Speak my name, love, and come home to me."

Usable by anyone who knows the command word ("Malia," Besein's wife's name), *Besein's wedding ring* is imbued with the *psionic teleport* power. It once contained 50 charges, but will only have one final charge when the PCs obtain it.

Strong psychoportation; ML 9th; Craft Universal Item, *psionic teleport*; Cost 40,500 cp (fully charged).



Appendix 3: Maps



Adventures in the Dead Lands

Dead Mens' Tale

1 Square = 5 Feet



Jewel in the Hive



A Dark Sun 3.5e adventure module for four 11th-level characters

Harkor has made an uncharacteristic request for assistance. The mission will involve delving into the bugdead-controlled lands near ruined Shumash in search of his lost jewel: the Bright Talon.

Credits

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Introduction

Jewel in the Hive is a short D&D adventure for four 11th-level player characters (PCs). Consult the Scaling the Adventure sidebar for ways to modify the scenario for higher or lower levels of play.

Harkor has made an uncharacteristic request for assistance. The mission will involve delving into the bugdead-controlled lands near ruined Shumash in search of his lost jewel: the *bright talon*.

Developer's notes

The purpose of this whole adventure collection was to provide reasons for DMs and players to experience as much of the Dead Lands as possible. This adventure was intended to give players a reason to interact with Harkor. It started from "What would such a domineering control freak want from the living?" and went from there. -JM

Preparation

You (the DM) will need the 3rd edition revised D&D core rulebooks, including the *Player's Handbook*, the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*, as well as the *Expanded Psionics Handbook*. This adventure also uses material from *Faces of the Dead Lands*, *Secrets of the Dead Lands*, *Terrors of the Dead Lands*, and the *Dark Sun 3.5 conversion* rulebook from Athas.org, but all necessary rules are already included.

Consult Appendix 4 for additional rules for communicating with the residents of, and surviving in, the Dead Lands.

Adventure Background

Harkor's bright talon is a gold gem-encrusted brooch and a powerful ancient relic, fashioned by Harkor's courtly lieutenants and named for their master. King's Ages ago, Harkor provided it to aid one of his favored generals, but when that general fell in battle against a

bugdead horde in the Crunch near Chol, the item was lost. Despite Harkor's continuing attempts to locate the *talon*, its current whereabouts are unknown.

The former Dead Lord of Shumash, Jush-Esgar and his men have been fighting the bugdead since the first bugdead invasion many centuries ago. Away from the city on an inspection tour, the bugdead swept Jush-Esgar and his entourage away, never to be seen again; Shumash was completely destroyed by the bugdead. Many residents of the Dead Lands believe Jush-Esgar was killed in the initial invasion of Shumash; instead, Jush-Esgar and his caravan of fighters have been waging a ceaseless guerrilla campaign against the bugdead from within their territory.

Overview

This adventure begins as a relatively straightforward 'find the treasure' type adventure. The PCs are charged with tracking down and recovering Harkor's bright talon, long lost to the bugdead hordes. They start by meeting Rankag Swifteyes, Harkor's captain who was entrusted with it, and receiving the description of the talon.

Rankag is still dazed from his long years in the Gray, so the PCs will be well-advised to retrace his route to refresh his memory. The route will eventually lead them south of Shumash. The PC's become trapped by an army of bugdead, backed up against the hostile and difficult terrain of the Kank Nests. Nearby, the PCs see a group pinned down by the bugdead - a patrol of Jush-Esgar's Guerrillas. The two groups will need to work together to repel the bugdead assault. They then discover the bright talon on the scarlet warden leader of the bugdead horde.

With the bugdead defeated and the talon recovered, the PCs are approached by Jush-Esgar himself, requesting Harkor's bright talon for his own use. They then have a choice: use the talon to help the Guerrillas retake Shumash, or return it to Harkor, and hope he honors his end of the bargain.

Adventures in the Dead Lands

Adventure Hooks

As the invitation from Harkor could conceivably reach the PCs anywhere in the Dead Lands, or even beyond the Dead Lands, the party need not be anywhere in particular at the start of the adventure. Assuming the PCs accept the invitation, they might respond to Harkor's invitation for one of the following reasons:

- They are in need of something from Harkor and are looking for an exchange of favors.
- They have previously angered Harkor and are looking to make peace with the volatile Dead Lord.
- They simply wish to explore the Dead Lands beyond the nations of the humanoid undead, as the Buglands are forbidden per the Bugdead accords.

Scaling the Adventure

Jewel in the Hive is designed for a party of four 11th-level adventurers, but it can be modified easily to present an appropriate challenge for parties of different sizes or levels.

Consider adapting the adventure for PCs of average levels 9 to 13 by adding effective positive or negative levels to the creatures in each encounter to change their effective **Challenge Rating**. A creature takes the following penalties/bonuses for each positive/negative level it has gained:

- +/-1 on all skill checks and ability checks.
- +/-1 on attack rolls and saving throws.
- +/-5 hit points.
- +/-1 effective level (whenever the creature's level is used in a die roll or calculation, reduce it by one for each negative level).
- If the creature casts spells, she gains/loses one spell slot of her highest-level spells. (If she has more than one spell at her highest level, she chooses which she gains/loses.) In addition, when she next prepares spells or regains spell slots, she gets one more/less spell slot at her highest spell level. If the creature is a manifester, she gains/loses enough power points to manifest her highest-level power once.

Part I: Harkor's Invitation

Wherever the PCs are located, the PCs receive a message in the night just before they rest. The PCs will most likely only know of Harkor by reputation.

Just as you are about to settle in to rest, you hear whispered words from a gruff voice: *"You are known in the Dead Lands. Harkor, the Reborn One, seeks your services. Come. Your service will be rewarded."*

Naghak has used a *sending* spell to contact the party and each of the PCs receives the same message.

Development: Harkor's domain is centrally located within the Dead Lands, and the trip to Harkor could be extremely eventful, depending on the PCs' method of travel.

1) An Official Escort (EL -)

The moment the PCs reach Harkor, read:

Upon reaching Harkor's kingdom, you can see that as the pass between the mountains gets wider, the landscape changes from scratched flat obsidian to developed blackglass architecture. It soon becomes clear that the entire land is nothing but one endless necropolis: every building is a mausoleum or crypt, every terrain feature a row of gravestones or garden commemorative statues.

Eventually there is a growing feeling that you are being watched from all sides. Glowing eyes peer out from the buildings as you pass, and you see a group of figures walking towards you on the road ahead.

Adventures in the Dead Lands

Let the PCs decide what to do. Harkor wishes to speak with the PCs before anyone is allowed to touch them, but that won't stop the undead within the tombs from trying to capture them and bring them to Harkor themselves. Regardless, the ambassador and his entourage will approach the PCs:

You see a large heavy-set man in brown armor approaching with an entourage of blackened skeletons. His left arm seems to be fastened to the side of his armor with restraining straps.

When he speaks, you immediately recognize the voice you heard in the magical message: *"You have come to a place of suffering and pain, where death is but the beginning of servitude. Fortunately for you, your reputation precedes you. The Reborn One wishes a personal audience with you. Come."*

If the PCs wish to know more, Naghak is happy to answer questions:

- I am Naghak, ambassador of The Reborn One.
- He is the Reborn One because He died in the shadow of the fire He once worshiped, and now He has become more powerful than the fire itself.
- You must stay close to my escort. Each and every one of His minions fights for His favor and attention. They have been told He wishes to see you, but others may want to take the honor of bringing you to Him themselves, in either one piece or many.
- Only He knows of what you will speak.

If the party agrees to go with Naghak, proceed to Encounter #2 – An Audience with Harkor, below.

2) An Audience with Harkor (EL -)

Harkor's Temple is 12 miles (half a day's walk) from the border. When the party arrives there, read:

You can only assume you have arrived at your destination: the most elaborate tomb in a land of tombs and mausoleums, you stand before a vast obsidian ziggurat. The structure is enormous, standing 100 feet tall and seeming to measure a mile in diameter. Each face is sheer, forbidding, and polished mirror smooth.

As you climb the steps, Naghak moves out in front of you, to a large bronze bowl set into a dais in front of

the carved obsidian doors. As he moves, he unfastens his bound arm. As it begins to come loose, it twitches and spasms, curling into horrid, unnatural shapes. It is painful to watch the contortions, as anything living that moved like that would be broken and in unimaginable pain.

As Naghak steps up to the bowl, he produces a knife. With a swift motion, he slices a gash into the wrist of his left arm in between its spasms. He then drops the knife and seizes his left hand below the wrist, squeezing out black blood into the bowl. As the drops of blood hit the bowl, they immediately start burning.

The burning blood creates a thick crimson smoke. As the smoke coalesces, the skeletons in your escort cry out with shrieking voices and fall to their knees, groveling and bowing as they make imitating motions of cutting their wrists to offer their nonexistent blood.

From this smoke, a figure in all white emerges, as if composed of the very smoke itself. He wears ancient priestly vestments and a tall white miter hat. Arms and palms open, he floats down from the dais, looking the party over. His bare feet never touch the ground.

Naghak rushes down the steps to stand between you and the floating apparition. He is the first to break the ominous silence: *"O Reborn One, Source of the Fires of Vengeance, Conflagrator of All, I have found those you spoke of. Tell us Your bidding, O immortal Harkor..."*

The PCs may respond with whatever kind of courtesy or greeting they wish. Whether the PCs are rude or show some gesture of politeness, Naghak will look visibly worried, attempting to apologize on their behalf and begging for Harkor's mercy. Meanwhile, the other assembled undead fall to the ground, prostrating themselves. They whimper at the expected forthcoming pain and implore their lord to be allowed to punish the PCs in His name. Harkor will merely shake his head and laugh. Read:

Harkor finally speaks. You can feel the power of his voice in your very bones and through the obsidian at your feet: *"Your reputation precedes you. Few creatures have proven as capable of destruction and survival, even in the Land of Death. This is why I have instructed Naghak to bring you here.*

"An item of mine was lost to the south, in battle with the infinite bugdead host. I know because I hold in my hand the

Adventures in the Dead Lands

soul of the captain to whom I had entrusted the item, and he has told me so. I wish this item back.

"Return this item to me, and you shall be rewarded. You shall be gifted riches from my personal treasury should you return what is mine."

If the PCs accept, Harkor will drop a purplish-red gem into the hands of one of the black skeletons, who will carry it down the stairs to the players. He will then say: *"The soul of my captain shall take you to where it was lost."*

Harkor will brook no questions. If asked anything, he will ignore the question and only ask once more: *"Will you retrieve the item for me?"*

If the PCs answer no or otherwise refuse the task, Harkor will respond with stone-faced silence. He will look at Naghak one last time, then turn his back on the PCs and disappear into the smoke. Naghak will give the PCs a pitying look and say: *"The best I can give you is a 10-minute head start. Do not ever come back."*

True to his word, the PCs will have 10 minutes to leave before every undead in the kingdom of Harkor comes after them.

If the PCs accept, Naghak will answer any remaining questions the PCs might have after Harkor disappears:



- Why us? - *"The bugdead are many. He does not wish to waste any more of His strongest captains in a suicide mission."*
- What is this gem? - *"What you hold is captain Rankag. The Reborn One has power over our bodies and souls. Those who die in His lands are blessed to serve Him for all eternity. Captain Rankag's soul resides in that gem until The Reborn One decides his new purpose. For now though, his memories are at your disposal."*
- What is this item? - *"It is a small, gold, jeweled brooch with a black claw set into it like a gemstone. It is quite beautiful."*
- Where was the brooch last seen? - *"Captain Rankag took the brooch southeast of here, to face a incursion of bugdead near the Crunch. That is where we lost contact with him."*
- Why does he want it? - *"We do not ask such things."*

As the PCs are finished asking him questions or when they ask about Rankag, Naghak says:

"You've been granted limited passage to walk through His kingdom for the duration of your task. Do not disturb any mausoleums or urns in our lands. When you have the brooch, return here."

He motions to the gem you hold: *"Direct further questions to your guide, Rankag. Goodbye, and good luck."*

Development: The PCs may safely travel through the land of Harkor for the duration of their mission, assuming they do not tamper with or explore any of the structures or graves within.

When the PCs are ready, move on to Encounter #3 - Questioning Rankag, below.

3) Questioning Rankag (EL -)

When the PCs consult Rankag's gem, read:

Taking the gem in hand and speaking his name, you summon forth the spirit of Rankag. A flickering illusion of a disembodied spirit leaps froth from the gem:

"Captain Rankag, reporting for duty. Oh, you're not lord Harkor..."

Rankag will answer any remaining questions the PCs might have, to the best of his abilities (see the "Rankag's Memory" sidebar for further details):

Adventures in the Dead Lands

Rankag's Memory

Between the circumstances of his death, long ages spent fading away in the Gray, and the shock of his soul getting bound into the gem, Rankag's memory is fuzzy. Familiar locations can, however, jog his memory: at each stop along the northern route out of Harkor (Encounters #4 - 8), Rankag will be reminded of his journey with the *bright talon* and will be more likely to remember where it was lost (Encounter #9).

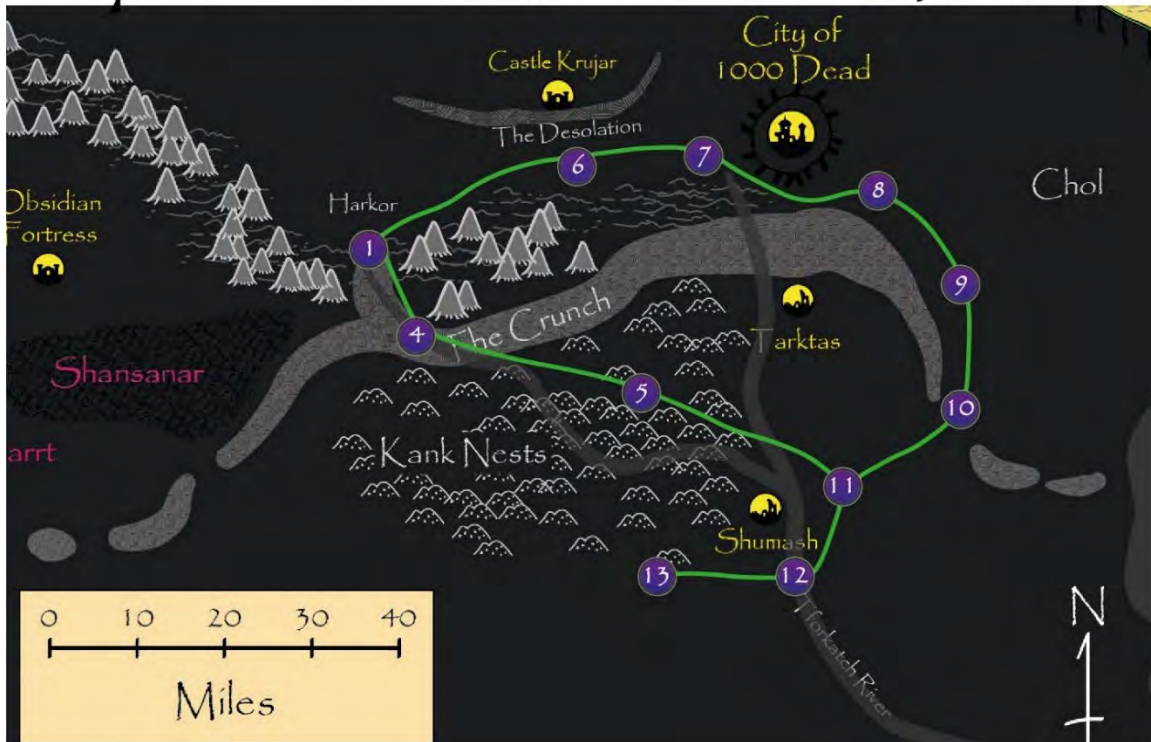
At each location, Rankag may make a DC 30 Intelligence check (with a +0 modifier) to recall where the *talon* was lost, with a +6 bonus on the check for each location along the route visited, including the current one (thus, the roll is 1d20+6 at the location of Encounter #4, 1d20+12 at the location of Encounter #5, etc.). The PCs may assist Rankag, with each PC succeeding at a DC 15 Intelligence check adding a +2 bonus to Rankag's current check.

Once Rankag has regained his memory and reached the location where he died (Encounter location #9), Rankag will be able to sense what direction *Harkor's bright talon* is in and roughly how far away it is (though not its exact location or distance).

- Who are you? - *"I'm captain Rankog, pleased to meet you."*
- What is this gem? - *"Oh, that gem hosts my soul. You should be careful with that."*
- What is this item we're after? - *"It's called Harkor's bright talon - it's a brooch, about the size of a human hand. It confers great power to control undead on the bearer"*
- Where was it lost? - *"I don't actually recall - I can't remember. My time in the Gray seems to have affected my memory. I'm told our mission took us to the southeast."*
- How long were you gone / How long has the *talon* been missing? - *"I don't know, exactly. Feels like a long time?"*
- Where should we go / What should we do? - *"I'm certain that retracing my unit's steps will jog my memory. We'll need to go to wherever I died to find the talon anyway, so following our previous route seems like the best choice to me."*

Development: When the PCs are ready to move on, proceed to Part 2 - Journey to the Buglands.

KANK NESTS AND SURROUNDING AREAS



Part 2: Journey to the Buglands

The PCs must travel to the location where *Harkor's bright talon* was last seen - near the ruined city of Tarktas. Unfortunately, Tarktas now lies within the lands given over to the bugdead - known as the Buglands - as is the region between Harkor and Tarktas.

Additionally, the exact place the *bright talon* was lost and its current whereabouts are unknown to anyone but Rankag, who has forgotten in the intervening ages (consult the "Rankag's Memory" section for more details).

The two main routes to get from the kingdom of Harkor to the vicinity of Tarktas are the direct route (through the Crunch and the Kank Nests, see Part 2a - The Direct Route) or a more circuitous that passes by the City of One Thousand Dead and through Chol (see Part 2b - The Long Way Around).

A) The Direct Route

Though it is not particularly advisable, the PCs might choose to travel directly southeast to the area where the *bright talon* was lost, rather than via the longer northern route.

When the PCs begin traveling south, read:

As you travel south from Harkor, Rankag Swifteyes speaks up and says: "Hmm, we appear to be traveling south. I don't recall having come this way with my unit. I'm not sure how much help I'll be if we take this route."

Development: The PCs are free to travel through the northern Buglands to go east, but doing so makes it much harder for Rankag to find his way (no bonus to his Knowledge - geography DCs from locations previously visited). If they do so, proceed to Encounter #4 - The Crunch.

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4) The Crunch (EL 11)

Athasian Locust Swarm, Zombie (CR 5) 7x - see Appendix 1

Should the PCs decide to take a perceived "shortcut" passing through the Crunch and the Kank Nests, they will have a difficult route ahead of them.

Traveling south, the guard stations grow more and more common until you seem to be passing through one continuous armed encampment. The undead soldiers all appear to be at constant alert status and look at you as if you've gone mad as you pass by them.

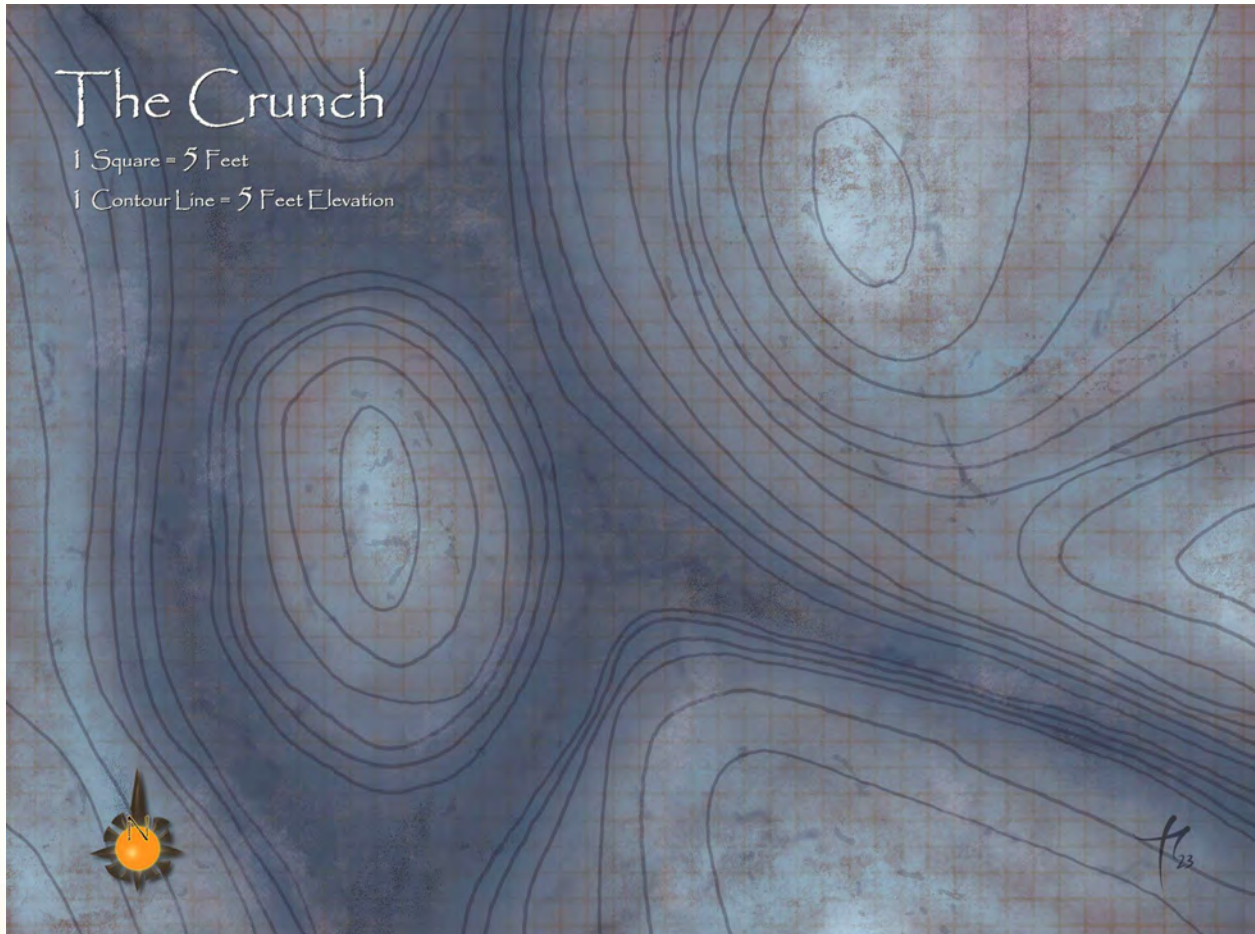
About a mile from the last fortification, the ever-present obsidian just stops, replaced by an expanse of bugdead carcasses. Shells and smeared viscera, severed limbs and shattered carapaces, the ruined bugdead pieces lie in dune-like mounds so large they block the horizon; every step brings the crunch of

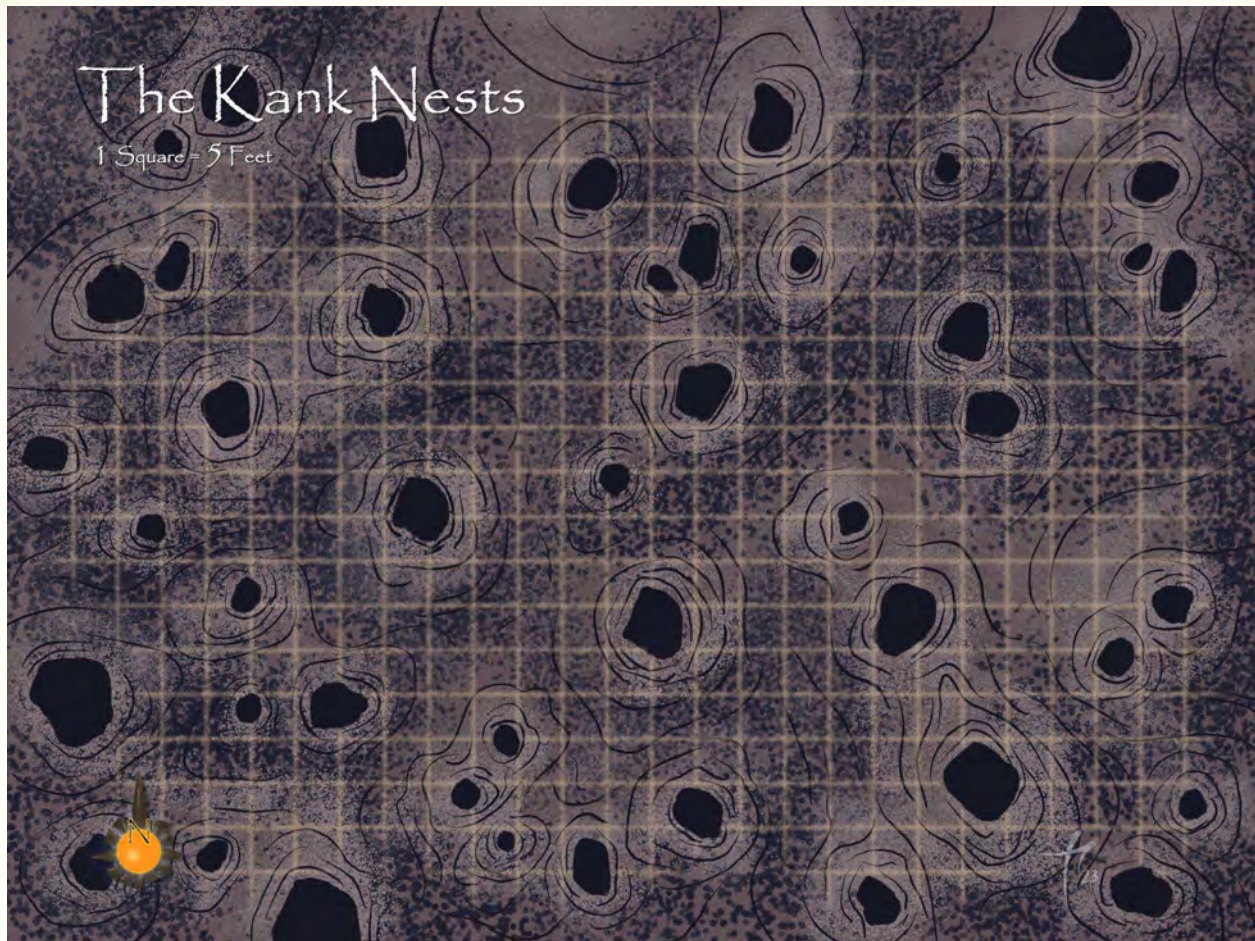
shattering chitin or the risk of slipping on some glob of insectile slime or bit of smooth shell.

Perhaps this was why all the soldiers thought you mad for passing this way.

PCs passing through the Crunch on foot will find the going difficult. Chitin mounds lie everywhere, obscuring the obsidian to a depth of 1d6 feet. All creatures size Large or smaller can only manage half movement on foot. Combat in the Crunch is equally difficult; long weapons simply cannot be used effectively, and suffer an attack penalty of -2, inflicting a maximum of 1d4 damage and non-insectoid creatures suffer a -3 penalty to initiative. Visibility is limited to 90 feet, and encounter range starts at a maximum of 60 feet.

Tactics: Whether by land or air, if the PCs attempt to cross The Crunch, swarms of undead Athasian locusts will cease feeding on the accumulated bugdead ichor and attack the party.





Development: Once the locust swarms are dealt with, the PCs are free to proceed to Encounter #5 - The Kank Nests, below.

5) The Kank Nests (EL 10)

Athasian Locust Swarm, Zombie (CR 5) 1x - see Appendix 1

Soldier Kank Army (CR 8) 2x - see Appendix 1

This territory is dominated by kank nests, which continue to gather here due to the natural kank instinct to cluster in hives.

There is little but scarred and ruined obsidian in the region before you. The surface is pocked with thousands of holes, surrounded by small piles of obsidian chips, extending for many miles in all directions. From where you stand, hundreds of undead kanks can be seen milling about.

Tactics: The terrain of the Kank Nests is treacherous (though easier to traverse than that of the Crunch). There is a 10% chance any single 5-foot square contains a tunnel opening into an undead kank nest - tunnels vary from four to seven feet in diameter and lead to a warren of tunnels and passages twisting in three dimensions beneath the obsidian. Squares free of a tunnel opening have a 25% chance of containing piled obsidian shards. Piles of obsidian shards range from one to ten feet tall and hamper movement, counting as difficult terrain (each square counts as 2 squares of movement; can't run or charge across difficult terrain; -4 penalty to Balance, Hide, Move Silently, Jump, and Tumble checks).

If the PCs continue on into the Kank Nests or otherwise draw attention to themselves, a nest of undead kanks will swarm them, fighting to the death. If the party takes to the air to avoid the kanks, they draw the attention of a locust swarm, which is otherwise happy to remain inconspicuous, feasting on the remains of destroyed kanks.

Adventures in the Dead Lands

Development: Once they've dealt with the kanks, the PCs are free to proceed to Part 3 - Into the Buglands.

A DM might, however, decide that similar encounters continue to occur as the party travels through the Kank Nests until they come to regret their chosen route.

B) The Long Way Around

The northern route around the Kank Nests is a much longer trek to the east but is also much safer - though still not completely safe. The northern route retraces the path taken by Rankag Swifteyes and his battalion when *Harkor's bright talon* was lost - northeast from Harkor, past the City of a Thousand Dead, south through western Chol, and then west past the Crunch into the lands between the ruined cities of Tarktas and Shumash.

6) Shadowmourn (EL -)

Retracing Rankag's previous route first takes the party through the southern outskirts of Shadowmourn, near the Desolation.

As you pass out of Harkor from the north and head east, you pass through what is technically southernmost Shadowmourn, though the Grand Duchess does see fit to claim or defend it. Instead, an increasingly thick array of traps and lurking spells dot the obsidian as one heads north.

"I recall coming this way." Rankag says, "Though it looked then - what's that?" He points north to a jagged scar just visible through the heat shimmer, a region of churned and shattered obsidian running east to west though southern Shadowmourn.

The "jagged scar" of broken obsidian is the Desolation, Grand Duchess Qwith's 'ultimate defense' from attacks from the south. Only half-complete, the Desolation is said to be expected to be two miles wide and stretch completely across Shadowmourn's southern border when finished. A DC 15 (or DC 35 for those new to the Dead Lands) Knowledge (Geography or Local - Dead Lands) check, or simple past experience will reveal this information.

Development: Construction projects aside, Rankag assures the party that they are headed in the right direction and suggests they keep moving. Proceed to

Encounter #7 - The City of One Thousand Dead, when the party moves on.

Once he reaches this location, Rankag may make a DC 30 Intelligence check to recall where the *talon* was lost. The PCs may assist Rankag, with each PC succeeding at a DC 15 Intelligence check adding a +2 bonus to Rankag's current check. Consult the "Rankag's Memory" sidebar for more details.

7) The City of One Thousand Dead (EL -)

Continuing on, Rankag's previous route takes the party through the narrow strip of bare obsidian between the City of One Thousand Dead and the Crunch.

Further east, Rankag stops your party again. "*The City of One Thousand Dead, I remember this as well - my battalion passed by here on our way to engage the bugdead.*"

"*The piles of smashed chitin were much smaller then.*" he says, gazing to the south.

Development: Rankag continues to assure the party that they are headed in the right direction and suggests they keep moving, unless they want to partake of the wonders of the City of One Thousand Dead, that is... Proceed to Encounter #8 - Blacktooth Maw Raiders, when the party moves on.

Once he reaches this location, Rankag may make a DC 30 Intelligence check to recall where the *talon* was lost. The PCs may assist Rankag, with each PC succeeding at a DC 15 Intelligence check adding a +2 bonus to Rankag's current check. Consult the "Rankag's Memory" sidebar for more details.

8) Blacktooth Maw Raiders (EL 9)

Lesser Blacktooth Maw Reavers (CR 5) 5x - Appendix 1

Traveling past the City of One Thousand Dead, Rankag's previous route takes the PCs into Chol. A region of nearly completely flat terrain overrun by hordes of mounted marauders, the party receives a 'standard welcome' upon entering Chol.

Adventures in the Dead Lands

Beyond the City of One Thousand Dead, you come to a seemingly endless region of perfectly flat obsidian. "Ah, yes, Chol." says Rankag, "I remember this place - it was said that the obsidian plains of Chol stretched to the ends of Athas, but that can't be right, can it?"

A PC who makes a DC 15 (or DC 35 for those completely unfamiliar with the Dead Lands) Knowledge (Geography or Local - Dead Lands) check, or has past experience in the Dead Lands, knows that the plains of Chol are in fact bounded by the Cliffs of Ulyan to the north, the Pallid Mere to the east, and the Buglands to the south.

Rankag continues: "When I was last here, Chol was inhabited by roving bands of howling marauders, obsessed with dominating each other and destroying everyone and everything else... Oh, there's some of them now."

Tactics: The obsidian here is extremely flat and featureless.

Not powerful or important enough to possess mounts or chariots, the Blacktooth Maw reavers are approaching on foot. The PCs first catch sight of the reavers from 100 feet or more away (have the PCs make a Spot check, the beginning encounter distance is equal to the Spot check x10 feet away; result of 10 yields 100 feet, a result of 25 yields 250 feet, etc.). The reavers are moving in the party's direction at full speed, 100 feet per round.

The lesser Blacktooth Maw reavers are unsophisticated combatants, raging and then wading into melee with fangs and fists. They are uninterested in negotiation, fight to the death, and will pursue the party unceasingly if necessary.

Development: Once the Cholite marauders are dealt with, Rankag confirms that the party is still headed in the right direction. Proceed to Encounter #9 - Black Thunder Raiders, when the party moves on.

Once he reaches this location, Rankag may make a DC 30 Intelligence check to recall where the *talon* was lost. The PCs may assist Rankag, with each PC succeeding at a DC 15 Intelligence check adding a +2 bonus to Rankag's current check. Consult the "Rankag's Memory" sidebar for more details.

9) Black Thunder Raiders (EL 9)

Black Thunder Subordinate Cavaliers (CR 6) 3x - see Appendix 1

Zombie Crodlu (CR 1) 3x - see Appendix 1

Rounding the northeastern extent of the Crunch, Rankag's previous route takes the PCs further into Chol and exposes them to further raiders.

"Yes, this seems familiar." says Rankag, "I definitely remember having to travel out and around the Crunch to get to where the bugdead were massing. It was near here that we met up with several units of Cholites to push back the bugdead, but those Cholites rode chariots rather than riding beasts, like those raiders over there."

As before, the PCs first catch sight of the raiders from 100 feet or more away (have the PCs make a Spot check, the beginning encounter distance is equal to the Spot check x10 feet away; result of 10 yields 100 feet, a result of 25 yields 250 feet, etc.).

Tactics: The obsidian here is extremely flat and featureless.

The Black Thunder subordinate raiders are mounted on undead mounts and moving in the party's direction at full speed, 100 feet per round. They attack with their bows each round until they reach melee range. Once in melee range, they charge with their spears each round, making full use of their mounted combat abilities.

If knocked off their mount, a Black Thunder cavalier will continue attacking with their spear or claws and bite until reduced to 25% or less hp, in which case the cavalier will retreat while attacking with their bow.

Development: Once the Black Thunder raiders are dealt with, Rankag confirms that the party is still headed in the right direction. Proceed to Encounter #10 - The Crunch-Gap, when the party moves on.

Once he reaches this location, Rankag may make a DC 30 Intelligence check to recall where the *talon* was lost. The PCs may assist Rankag, with each PC succeeding at a DC 15 Intelligence check adding a +2 bonus to Rankag's current check. Consult the "Rankag's Memory" sidebar for more details.

Adventures in the Dead Lands

10) The Crunch-Gap (EL 10)

Antloid Soldier Bugdead Zombie (CR 5) 3x – See Appendix

Wezer Storm (CR 8) 1x - see Appendix 1

At this break in the nearly unbroken expanse that is the Crunch, Rankag and his men faced an incursion of bugdead. Scattered bugdead still haunt this area of the Crunch from time to time.

“Oh, yes, we definitely passed this way. I remember now.” Rankag says. “In my day, there were far more gaps in the Crunch, but this was the one where the battle was joined. In the chaos that followed, the bugdead got behind us and my unit was forced to retreat to the southwest to keep from getting slaughtered.”

Tactics: The obsidian here is fairly flat. Small piles and bits of chitin are scattered about the area, but do not affect movement or lines of sight.

A mixed group of bugdead antloids and wezers is foraging in the area and will happily attack the party. Neither the bugdead nor the PCs are surprised and the encounter begins at 120 feet. The bugdead fight to the death.

Development: Once the bugdead are destroyed, the party may move on. Proceed to Part 3 - Into the Buglands.

Once he reaches this location, Rankag may make a DC 30 Intelligence check to recall where the *talon* was lost. The PCs may assist Rankag, with each PC succeeding at a DC 15 Intelligence check adding a +2 bonus to Rankag’s current check. Consult the “Rankag’s Memory” sidebar for more details.

Part 3: Into the Buglands

Passing beyond the Crunch (and possibly the Kank Nests, depending on their route), the party enters the Buglands and approaches the location where Rankag died and lost *Harkor’s bright talon*.

If the PCs took the southern route or used teleportation to shorten the journey, they may need to back-track along the northern route to refresh Rankag’s memory before he can sense the *bright talon*.

11) Battle Site (EL -)

The party has finally reached the location they’ve been seeking - the site of Rankag’s final battle and the last known location of *Harkor’s bright talon*.

“This is it. This is the worthless patch of blackglass that my men and I were destroyed on.” says Rankag, “We were cut off from our allies, driven south to this location, and torn to pieces in their pincers’.”

Development: Once he reaches this location, Rankag may make a DC 30 Intelligence check to recall where the *talon* was lost. The PCs may assist Rankag, with each PC succeeding at a DC 15 Intelligence check adding a +2 bonus to Rankag’s current check. Consult the “Rankag’s Memory” sidebar for more details.

If the party took the northern route, Rankag should easily be able to make his check (see above), if he hasn’t already, and be able to sense the *bright talon’s* general direction. If so, proceed to Encounter #12 - The Tforkatch.

12) The Tforkatch (EL 11)

Obsidian Quasi-elementals, Huge (CR 7) 4x - see Appendix 1

Traveling southwest through the northern Buglands in search of the *bright talon*, the party comes (likely unknowingly) to what was once the Tforkatch River.

Traveling through the northern Buglands, following Rankag’s sense of where *Harkor’s bright talon* is located, you see a dark black ribbon of coloration running across an otherwise unremarkable patch of obsidian. The dark coloration seems to extend as far as can be seen to both the north and the south.

As the PCs get closer to the vanished river, read:

As you approach the dark ribbon in the obsidian, you can feel additional heat radiating from the dark ribbon, far in excess of the already scorching day-time temperature of the Dead Lands’ obsidian.

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Suddenly you see a vaguely humanoid shape rise up out of the ribbon and glide along the obsidian. The obsidian form has a seemingly half-formed head and jagged arms shaped like shards of obsidian. Its body lacks legs, instead terminating in a trunk that melds into the blackglass like flowing water.

A Knowledge (The Planes) check (DC 15), indicates that the humanoid-shaped obsidian creature is an obsidian quasi-elemental. A DC 25 check reveals that obsidian quasi-elementals hail from the Demiplane of Obsidian (said to be a sub-region of the Paraelemental Plane of Magma) and that many of them were brought to Athas with the Obsidian Tide.

For some unknown reason, the long-buried Tforkatch still retains the burning heat of the Obsidian Tide, despite having solidified into otherwise unremarkable obsidian. Far more similar to their home plane than even the rest of the obsidian-coated Dead Lands, obsidian quasi-elementals prefer to frequent what remains of the Tforkatch, often racing across the eastern Dead Lands along the vanished riverbed.

Tactics: Much like molten obsidian, the Tforkatch causes 1d6 points of fire damage each round to anyone within 5 feet of it. Direct contact with it (walking across it, standing on it, touching it, etc.) deals 2d6 points of fire damage.

Highly territorial about the Tforkatch, the obsidian quasi-elementals will rise up and attack anyone that approaches within 10 feet of the buried riverbed. They will ignore any PCs who teleport, fly or otherwise avoid contact with the riverbed, as long as they stay at least 10 feet from the Tforkatch.

Anyone who intrudes within the 10 foot boundary will enrage the quasi-elementals, who will pursue offenders across the Dead Lands, if necessary.

Development: Once the PCs have crossed the river and defeated or avoided the obsidian quasi-elementals, they are free to move on. Proceed to Encounter #13a - Bugdead Assault - Wave 1.



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13a) Bugdead Assault - Wave 1 (EL 11)

Antloid Soldier, Bugdead Zombie (CR 5) 6x – See Appendix

Near the southern border of the Kank Nests, the PCs grow close to finding the *talon*, but discover more than they bargained for.

Following Rankag's sense for *Harkor's bright talon*, you have traveled south of the Kank Nests - dangerously far into the Buglands. For his part, Rankag continues to tell you that "We're getting close now, I can feel it." and "Not far now, just a bit to the west, we have to be almost on top of it!"

After the PCs have a chance to look around (there's not much to see, mostly just bare obsidian), read:

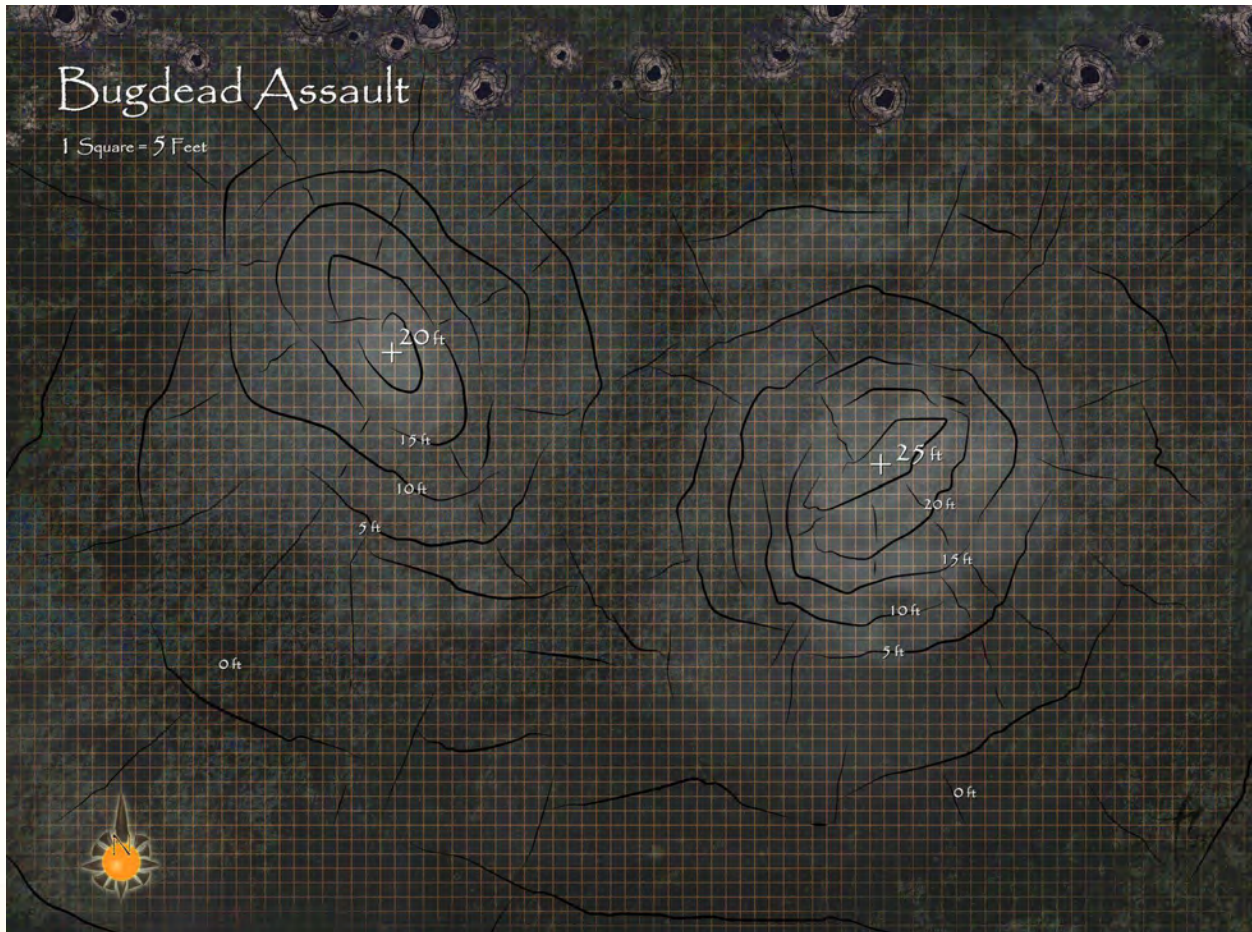
You've yet to see any sign of the talon, and, when even Rankag's faith in his ability to find the relic begins to fade, you see something on the horizon. It is not, however, a jeweled brooch, but is instead a group of large undead insects approaching by land from the west - a group of bugdead.

The bugdead can be identified as antloids with a DC 15 Knowledge (Dungeoneering) check.

Tactics: The PCs first catch sight of the antloids from the west from 100 feet or more away (have the PCs make a Spot check, the beginning encounter distance is equal to the Spot check x10 feet away; result of 10 yields 100 feet, a result of 25 yields 250 feet, etc.).

The antloids will approach at full speed and engage in melee with the party, fighting to the death. Used to working together in life, the undead insects will swarm the PCs if they have trouble hitting, using flanking and Aid Another actions to assist each other.

Development: The area to the north of the party is the Kank Nests - refer to Encounter #3 if the party retreats



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into the Kank Nests. As soon as the antloids are destroyed, or if the PCs decide to make a run for it to the south or back to the east, proceed to Encounter #13b - Bugdead Assault - Wave 2, with the wezers approaching from that direction (having been directed into a flanking maneuver by the scarlet warden directing them).

13b) Bugdead Assault - Wave 2 (EL 11)

Wezer Storm (CR 8) 3x – see Appendix 1

Having dealt with the antloids, a swarm of wezers attack the party.

No sooner did you think the battle with the bugdead was resolved then you see a second group of bugdead approaching. A swarm of flying man-sized undead insects, they are approaching from a slightly different direction than the previous group. If you didn't know it was impossible, you'd swear the bugdead were trying to hem you in.

The bugdead can be identified as wezers with a DC 15 Knowledge (Dungeoneering) check.

Tactics: The PCs first catch sight of the wezer storms from 100 feet or more away (have the PCs make a Spot check, the beginning encounter distance is equal to the Spot check x10 feet away; result of 10 yields 100 feet, a result of 25 yields 250 feet, etc.).

The wezer swarms are absolutely trying to keep the PCs hemmed in (their scarlet warden leader has carefully instructed them to maneuver around the party in this manner). The wezer storms will move to cut off any retreat to the east or south that the PCs might be considering and swarm them, attacking to the death.

Development: The area to the north of the party is the Kank Nests - refer to Encounter #3 if the party retreats into the Kank Nests. As soon as the wezers are destroyed, or if the PCs decide to make a run for it, proceed to Encounter #13c – Potential Allies, with the Guerrillas having come from that direction.

13c) Potential Allies (EL 12 or EL -)

Shumash Guerrilla Banshees (CR 9) 2x - see Appendix 1

Shumash Guerrilla Wraiths (CR 7) 2x - see Appendix 1

Backed up against unfavorable terrain and outnumbered, the PCs discover potential allies.

As the battle with the giant stinging insects winds down, you catch sight of several more swarms of bugdead - this time approaching from both land and air.

Before a sinking feeling can even begin to set in, however, a blast of fire rips through one of the flying bugdead swarms. From the same direction as the bugdead, just over a slight rise in the obsidian, you can hear the sounds of battle joined.

Perhaps there is something other than bugdead beyond the hill.

The sounds of battle are coming from a group of Shumash Guerrillas battling their own group of bugdead on the other side of the hill, only a two hundred feet away.

The bugdead that are not engaged in battle with the Guerrillas can be seen from much further away than usual and are 200 feet or more away (have the PCs make a Spot check, the beginning encounter distance is equal to the Spot check x20 feet away; result of 10 yields 200 feet, a result of 25 yields 500 feet, etc.).

Assuming the PCs seek out the sounds of battle, read:

Rounding the hill, you see a small mixed group of humanoid undead finishing off the group of bugdead you saw beforehand: muscular dwarven banshees and translucent wraiths cut down and blast undead insects with well-practiced precision.

Seeing your group, they immediately tense for battle, only to relax a moment later as they realize you're not more bugdead.

Assuming the PCs don't immediately attack, the Guerrillas are happy to see them and will suggest a temporary alliance if the PCs don't suggest it themselves. If the PCs do attack, the Guerrillas attempt

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to parley with them. If the PCs still cannot be reasoned with, the Guerrillas return the favor, knowing they will likely return in a day.

While they're willing to have a quick discussion with the party, the Guerrillas have seen the oncoming bugdead horde and suspect that it is too much for either group to handle on their own.

Development: Once the PCs are finished with the Guerrillas, one way or the other, proceed to Encounter #13d - Bugdead Assault - Wave 3.

13d) Bugdead Assault - Wave 3 (EL 12 or EL 13)

Scarlet Warden (CR 12) 1x – See Appendix 1

or

Antloid Soldier, Bugdead Zombie (CR 5) 4x – see Appendix 1

Scarlet Warden (CR 12) 1x – See Appendix 1

Wezer Storm (CR 8) 3x – see Appendix 1

Once they find the Shumash Guerrillas, the party only has moments to prepare before the next (and final) group of bugdead arrives.

With the thrum of undead wings and the clacking of legs on obsidian, the swarm of bugdead are almost

upon you. Amidst the horde of bugdead, you can see a giant eight-legged, crab-like beast with a deep red carapace. Its head sports two whip-like antennae and it seems to be directing the other bugdead from the rear.

The PCs catch sight of the scarlet warden from 100 feet or more away (have the PCs make a Spot check, the beginning encounter distance is equal to the Spot check x10 feet away; result of 10 yields 100 feet, a result of 25 yields 250 feet, etc.).

If the PCs have allied with them, the Guerrillas will engage with the antloids and wezers while the PCs handle the scarlet warden. Read:

Your new-found allies stand with you, ready to attack the majority of the bugdead horde while your party attacks the "scarlet warden" leader.

Tactics: The scarlet warden approaches after its attendant bugdead have engaged in combat, using its spells to support them.

If the Shumash Guerrillas are not allied with the PCs, the antloids will advance to melee with the PCs while the wezers swarm around the party.

Development: Once the bugdead are defeated, the PCs find the *talon* on the remains of the scarlet warden. Jush-esgar invites the party to return with his Guerrillas to make camp and recuperate. Proceed to Part 4 – The Decision, below.

Part 4: The Decision

Back at Jush-esgar's camp, the PCs must eventually make a decision regarding the disposition of the *talon*.

14) The Conversation (EL -)

It takes Jush-esgar about 8 hours to return to camp, learn of the PCs, and come find them (enough time for the PCs to rest, regain spells and heal).

You've returned with the Guerrillas to their temporary camp and have been allowed to take your rest. While you recuperate, some of Jush-esgar's men

celebrate their victories while others morosely prepare themselves for the battles to come.

Once the PCs have rested, Jush-esgar comes to them with his demand.

As you consider your next move, a man with what seems like a permanent scowl and cadre of guards stalks up to you. He wears no armor but carries a massive chitin blade edged with sharp bits of metal.

"You! So, you are the ones who recovered the Harkor's bright talon - give it to me. Please."

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Assuming the PCs refuse or ask questions, read:

"I must have the talon - with it, I can turn the bugdead against each other, beat back their lines, and finally start to win this endless war against their hordes. With the bright talon, I can retake Shumash.

"Again, I ask you. Please. Help us."

Development: Jush-esgar will not take "no" for an answer, nor will he allow someone else (the PCs, for example), to wield *Harkor's bright talon* in his stead, demanding to use the *talon* personally (unsurprisingly, Jush-esgar is unwilling to allow the relic to slip from his grasp).

If the PCs refuse to give Jush-esgar the *talon* or agree to do so and then betray him, proceed to Encounter #15 - Guerrillas, below.

If the PCs give Jush-esgar the *talon*, proceed to Encounter #16 - Shumash.

If the PCs somehow escape from Jush-esgar's camp with the *bright talon*, go to Concluding the Adventure.

15) Guerrillas (EL 12)

Shumash Guerrilla Banshees (CR 9) 2x - see Appendix 1

Shumash Guerrilla Wraiths (CR 7) 2x - see Appendix 1

The PCs have either just declined to give Jush-esgar *Harkor's bright talon* or promised to do so, but then betrayed that trust. Either way, they are about to be spared the full might of Jush-esgar's guerrilla by the least likely of serendipitous allies.

"(sigh) I was afraid that might be your answer. You understand, of course, that I must have the bright talon and yourselves in my army, one way or the other - it's simply too important to our goals to let it go and good troops are difficult to find. Kill th...."

Just as Jush-esgar is about to order your deaths, a hew and cry goes up among the Guerrillas: "Bugdead swarm sighted, my lord, headed this way!"

"Ugh, we don't have time for this. You there: kill them, find the bright talon, and bring it to me! Oh, and bring their corpses for reanimation when you regroup with the rest of the army."

With that, Jush-esgar leads the rest of his army away, leaving two banshees and two wraiths moving menacingly towards you.

Tactics: The banshees will immediately wade into melee with the party, hacking away until destroyed. Meanwhile, the wraiths will bombard the PCs with ranged attacks until they exhaust their PSPs and then move into melee as well.

Development: Assuming they defeat the Guerrillas, the PCs are free to leave as Jush-esgar and the balance of his forces have moved on. Go to Concluding the Adventure, below.

If, for some reason, the PCs move to follow Jush-esgar's army and offer to join them, they will be welcomed with open arms. Proceed to Encounter #16 - Shumash.

16) Shumash (EL 12)

Soldier Kank Army (CR 8) 2x - see Appendix 1

Giant Dragonfly, Zombie (CR 10) 1x - see Appendix 1

Once Jush-esgar gets the *talon*, he and his Guerrillas immediately set out to retake Shumash.

As soon as you gave Jush-esgar the *talon*, he ordered his troops to break camp and set out for the ruins of Shumash. After conferring with his advisors, he diverted perilously close to the Kank Nests for more "recruits", as he put it. Now also in command of a sizable army of bugdead, Jush-esgar has led your group and the Guerrillas to the outskirts of Shumash.

As the PCs and Jush-esgar's army get closer to Shumash, read:

The bugdead have not been kind to Shumash. Despite appearing to have been well-crafted from fitted obsidian blocks, the city walls are breached in multiple places and few buildings remain standing. As you approach, bugdead begin to pour out of what remains of the city, intent on defending their ill-gotten home.

Jush-esgar begins barking out orders, directing small groups of Guerrillas here and there to out maneuver or bottle-up the city's bugdead. He even has orders

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for your group: *"You there, come here and hold the center. I need you to keep the bugdead off me - I have my hands full directing my troops and keeping these miserable kanks under control!"*

Having given them an order, Jush-esgar expects the PCs to obey (for the good of them all).

Tactics: A horde of bugdead kanks will swarm past Shumash's, intent on devouring Jush-esgar and the

PCs. Meanwhile, an undead giant dragonfly will zip out from the ruins and attack the PCs. It hovers above the swarming kanks, biting at the PCs until destroyed.

Development: If the PCs fail or refuse to defeat the bugdead attacking them, Jush-esgar easily defeats them but he ceases to direct his forces and the liberation of Shumash fails. If the PCs are successful in defeating their bugdead, the large battle is also a success. Go to Concluding the Adventure, below.

Concluding the Adventure

If the PCs manage to successfully recover *Harkor's bright talon* and return it to Harkor, the Dead Lord has Naghak reward the party with 80,000cp (paid out mostly in metal - scrap, weapons, armor, and coin) from his personal treasury and thank them for their service. The ambassador also offers the PCs positions within Harkor's armies.

If the PCs instead gave the *bright talon* to Jush-esgar and successfully assist his Guerrillas in retaking Shumash, the "Caravan King" eventually rewards them with 80,000cp (a mix of coins, gems, and gear - all scavenged from the ruins). He furthermore offers the PCs places of honor in the city's military (when Shumash is finally rebuilt). However, giving *Harkor's bright talon* to Jush-esgar means they will have made a powerful enemy of Harkor.

If the escaped Jush-esgar's Guerrillas with the *bright talon* without agreeing to give it to him, the nomadic Dead Lord harbors them no ill will, but if they promised Jush-esgar the relic and then went back on their word, the PCs' betrayal of not just Jush-esgar but of Shumash's future will enrage the Dead Lord and he will search for a way to get his revenge.

Further Adventures

Depending on what choices the PCs make regarding *Harkor's bright talon*, many subsequent adventures could follow.

If the PCs turned the *talon* over to Harkor, he immediately begins using it to expand his borders, engaging with and then co-opting his neighbors' troops to fight their former compatriots. Unwilling to make the same mistake twice, Harkor leads the invasions himself, constantly "recruiting" new troops to replace those lost. If the party accepted Harkor's offer, he places them in his honor guard, placing them between himself and the angry enemy armies. If the party declined Harkor's offer, perhaps his neighbors seek the PCs out, hoping they might know of a weakness that might be exploited in the battle against the Harkorian forces.

If the party gave Jush-esgar the *talon* and Shumash was liberated, he is eternally grateful. Rather than an end to his conflicts, however, the reoccupation of Shumash will only be the beginning of Jush-esgar's troubles: the surface city of Shumanh still lies in ruins, the subterranean city is full of morose, antagonistic undead, and the city lies deep in enemy territory. Needing to conserve the power of the bright talon to combat invading bugdead armies, perhaps Jush-esgar sends the PCs to coax the subterranean undead to join the fight to defend the surface city with their brethren. Or perhaps he sends the party to pacify the subvitrine ruins by any means necessary, to provide a more easily defendable position. Either way, Jush-esgar might also send the PCs to speak with the other Dead Lords as his ambassadors, requesting to join the Bugdead Accords and gain aid against the endless waves of bugdead.

If the PCs kept for *Harkor's bright talon* themselves, as word spreads, they quickly become targets for every undead leader wishing to expand their reach. Unless they use the *talon* to quickly build up a following and claim a small patch of the obsidian as their personal fiefdom, assassins and thieves begin hounding the party in an attempt to relieve them of it.

Regardless of whether the PCs kept for *Harkor's bright talon* themselves or gave it to Jush-esgar, Harkor will be enraged by the party's double-dealing. Assassins will be contracted to hunt down the party and Harkor's ambassadors will begin bad-mouthing the party, describing them as oath-breakers, turn-coats, and even agents of the bugdead themselves. In his fury, Harkor will not be satisfied until the party lays at his feet, broken, beaten, and bereft of allies.

Finally, if the PCs failed, they likely either escaped via teleportation or died. If they died, Harkor will have them called back from the Gray to answer for their failure and a suitable amount of groveling might even see the PCs reanimated for a second try. If they teleported away, Harkor assumes the PCs died unless they come to his attention once more. Regardless, the PCs soon hear rumors that a powerful bugdead warlord has subjugated the bugdead of the Kank Nests, settled into the ruins of Shumash, and begun making concerted forays against Chol and the City of One Thousand Dead.





Appendix 1: Monsters & NPCs

Antloid Soldier, Bugdead Zombie CR 5

NE Large undead

Init: +2; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft., Tremorsense 60 ft.;
Listen +0, Spot +0

Aura: -

Languages: -

AC: 17; touch 11, flat-footed 15

(-1 size, +2 Dex, +6 natural)

hp 39 (6 HD; 6d12)

Damage Reduction: 3/metal; **Resistance:** Fire 5

Immunities: Cold, Electricity, Undead Traits

Saves: Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +5

Speed: 40 ft. (8 squares)

Melee: Bite +7 (2d6+5) or Spray +4 ranged touch
(poison)

Full Melee: Bite +7 (2d6+5) and Sting +2 (1d4+2 plus
poison) or Spray +4 ranged touch (poison)

Space: 10 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +3; **Grapple:** +12

Combat Options: poison

Abilities: Str 20, Dex 14, Con -, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 1

SQ: Damage Reduction 3/metal, Darkvision 60 ft.,
Immunity to Cold and Electricity, Resistance to Fire
5, Tremorsense 60 ft., Undead Traits.

Feats: -

Skills: -

Poison (Ex): A bugdead antloid soldier can deliver
poison through its bite (injury) or spray (contact).
Fortitude DC 15, initial damage 2d6 Con, secondary
damage none. The save DC is Constitution-based and
includes a +2 racial bonus.



Athasian Locust Swarm, Zombie CR 5

NE Diminutive Undead (Swarm)

Init: +3; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0

Aura: -

Languages: -

AC: 17, touch 17, flat-footed 14

(+4 size, +3 Dex)

hp 52 (8 HD; 8d12)

Immune: Cold, Electricity, Weapon Damage, Swarm
Traits, Undead Traits

Saves: Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +6

Speed: 10 ft (2 squares), Fly 50 ft. (average)

Melee Swarm (2d6)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach:** -

Base Attack: +4; **Grapple:** -

Combat Options: Distraction (DC 14)

Abilities Str 4, Dex 16, Con -, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 1

SQ: Darkvision 60 ft., Immunity to Cold and
Electricity, Immunity to Weapon Damage, Fire
Resistance 5, Swarm Traits, Undead Traits.

Feats -

Skills: -

Distraction (Ex): Any living creature that begins its
turns with an Athasian locust swarm in its space must
succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 10 + ½ HD + Con
modifier) or be nauseated for 1 round.



Black Thunder Subordinate Cavaliers CR 6

Male human Thinking Zombie Fighter 5

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CE Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Human)

Init: +3; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft; Listen +10, Spot +10

Languages: Goblin, Ulyanese

AC: 22, touch 14, flat-footed 19

(+3 Dex, +4 Nat, +4 armor, +1 Def)

hp 37 (5d12+5); **Fast Healing** 3

Resistances: Cold 10, Electricity 10

Immune: Turning, Undead Traits; **Weakness:** **Phobia (Water)**, Vulnerability to Blessed Elements

Saves: Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +1

Speed: 30 ft (6 squares)

Melee: Longspear +11 (1d8+7; 20/x3) or Claw +10 (1d4+5; 20/x2) or Bite +10 (1d6+5; 20/x2)

Full Melee: Longspear +11 (1d8+7; 20/x3) and Bite +5 (1d6+2; 20/x2) or 2x Claw +10 (1d4+5; 20/x2) and Bite +5 (1d6+2; 20/x2)

Ranged: Comp. Shortbow +9 (1d6+5; Range 105 ft.; 20/x3)

Full Ranged: Comp. Shortbow +9 (1d6+5; Range 105 ft.; 20/x3)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +5; **Grapple:** +10

Combat Options: Combat Reflexes (4/round), Disease (DC 11), Mounted Combat, Mounted Archery, Point Blank Shot, Ride-By Attack

Combat Gear: MW Composite Shortbow (+5), MW Longspear, Obsidian Arrows 50x, Studded Leather Armor +1; Zombie Crodru

Abilities: Str 21, Dex 16, Con --, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 9

SQ: Darkvision 60 ft., **Fast Healing** 3, Gray toughness 1, **Immunity to Turning**, **Phobia (water)**, Resistance to Cold and Electricity, Vulnerability to Blessed Elements

Feats: Combat Reflexes, Far Shot ^B, Mounted Combat, Mounted Archery, Ride-by Attack ^B, Point Black Shot ^B.

Skills: Climb +9, Handle Animal +7, Jump +9, Listen +4, Ride +11, Search +5, Sense Motive +4, Spot +8.

Possessions: 4,300 cp or Combat Gear plus: Psionic Tattoo of *Force Screen* x2, Ring of Protection +1.



Giant Dragonfly, Zombie CR 10

Advanced Bugdead Zombie Giant Dragonfly

NE Large Undead

Init: +4; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0

Languages: -

Aura: -

AC: 20, touch 12, flat-footed 16

(-2 size, +4 Dex, +8 Nat)

hp 136 (21d12)

Damage Reduction: 3/metal; **Resistances:** Fire 5

Immune: Cold, Electricity, Undead Traits

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +11, Will +12

Speed: 10 ft (2 squares), **Fly 60 ft. (good)**

Melee: Bite +16 (2d6+12; 20/x2)

Space: 15 ft.; **Reach:** 10 ft.

Base Attack +10; **Grapple:** +26

Combat Options: Devour, Improved Grab, Rake (2x melee, +16 to hit, 1d8+4)

Abilities: Str 26, Dex 18, Con -, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 1

SQ: Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60 ft., Resistance to Fire, Undead Traits

Feats: Hover ^B.

Skills: -

Devour (Ex): Once a giant dragonfly has achieved a hold, it automatically deals bite damage each round it maintains the hold.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a giant dragonfly must hit with its bite attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can rake with two claws.



Lesser Blacktooth Maw Reavers CR 5

Male Ogre Fael Barbarian 1

CE Large Undead (Augmented Giant)

Init: +1; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +13, Spot +11

Aura: -

Languages: Ulyanese Giant

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AC: 27, touch 10, flat-footed 26
(-1 size, +1 Dex, +9+1 Nat, +4 armor, +3 shield)
hp 42 (5d12+10); **Fast Healing** 3
Damage Reduction: 10/magic
Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Craving
Saves: Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +1

Speed: 50 ft (10 squares)
Melee: Bite +11 (2d8+8; 18-20/x3) or Slam +11 (1d8+8) or Touch +11 (by spell)
Full Melee: Slam +11 (1d8+8) and Bite +9 (2d8+4; 18-20/x3)
Ranged: Javelin +4 (1d8+8; Range 30 ft.; 20/x2)
Space: 10 ft.; **Reach:** 10 ft.
Base Attack: +4; **Grapple:** +16
Combat Options: Power Attack, Rage (1/day; +4 Str, +2 Will saves, AC -2), **Rotting Touch**
Combat Gear: Large Hide Armor +1, Large Heavy Shield +1.

Abilities: Str 26, Dex 12, Con -, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 12
SQ: **Craving (flesh)**, **Damage Reduction**, Darkvision 60 ft., Fast Movement, Gray Toughness 2, Rage, Skills, Undead Traits
Feats: Multiattack, Power Attack.
Skills: Climb +9, Intimidate +3, Jump +5, Listen +6, Search +3, Sense Motive +4, Spot +6.
Possessions: 4,300 cp or combat gear plus: Amulet of Natural Armor +1.



Obsidian Quasi-Elemental, Huge CR 15

TN Huge Elemental (Earth, Fire, Extraplanar)
Init: -1; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +10, Spot +9
Aura: -
Languages: Ignan and Terran

AC: 18, touch 7, flatfooted 18
(-2 size, -1 Dex, +11 natural)
hp 152 (16d8+80)
Damage Reduction: 5/-
Immune: Fire, Elemental Traits; **Weakness:** Vulnerability to Cold
Saves: Fort +15, Ref +4, Will +7

Speed: 30 ft (6 squares); Obsidian Glide
Melee: Claw +19 (2d10+9)

Full Melee: 2x Claw +19 (2d10+9)
Space: 15 ft.; **Reach:** 15 ft.
Base Attack: +12; **Grapple:** +29
Combat Options: -

Abilities: Str 29, Dex 8, Con 21, Int 6, Wis 11, Cha 11
SQ: Damage Reduction 5/-, Darkvision 60 ft., Elemental Traits, Immunity to Fire, Obsidian Glide, Vulnerability to Cold.
Feats: Awesome Blow, Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Iron Will, Power Attack.
Skills: Listen +10, Spot +9.

Elemental Traits (Ex):

- Immunity to bleed, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, and stunning.
- Not subject to critical hits or flanking. Does not take additional damage from precision-based attacks, such as sneak attack.
- Elementals do not breathe, eat, or sleep.

Obsidian Glide (Ex): An obsidian quasi-elemental can glide through obsidian as easily as a fish swims through water. Its burrowing leaves behind no tunnel or hole, nor does it create any ripple or other signs of its presence. A move earth spell cast on an area containing an obsidian quasi-elemental flings it back 30 feet, stunning the creature for 1 round unless it succeeds on a DC 15 Fortitude save.



Scarlet Warden CR 12

LE Huge Undead
Init: +8; **Senses:** all-around vision; darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +17, Spot +21
Languages: -

AC: 22; touch 12, flat-footed 18
(-2 size, +4 Dex, +10 natural)
hp 78 (12 HD; 12d12)
Spell Resistance: 20
Saves: Fort +4, Ref +8, Will +10

Speed: 40 ft. (8 squares)
Melee: Claw +12 (2d6+7)
Full Melee: 2 Claws +12 (2d6+7) and Bite +7 (1d6+3 plus Poison)
Space: 15 ft. **Reach:** 10 ft.

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Base Attack: +6; **Grapple:** +21

Combat Options: Create Spawn, Improved Grab, Poison (DC 21)

Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 10th, necromancer, defiler, DC 12 + spell level):

5th—cone of cold, magic jar, overland flight

4th—animate dead, dimension door, fire shield, shout

3rd—clairaudience/clairvoyance, halt undead, haste, invisibility sphere

2nd—command undead, false life, ghoul touch (+11 melee touch), mirror image, see invisibility, spectral hand

1st—*alarm*, *chill touch* (+11 melee touch) (2), *mage armor*, *ray of enfeeblement* (+8 ranged touch), *shocking grasp* (+11 melee touch)

0—dancing lights, disrupt undead (+8 ranged touch) (3), detect magic

Abilities: Str 24, Dex 18, Con —, Int 15, Wis 14, Cha 16

SQ: Darkvision 60 ft., spell resistance 20, undead traits

Feats: Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Deflect Arrows ^B, Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (bite, claw)

Skills: Concentration +18, Diplomacy +5, Hide +11, Listen +17, Move Silently +19, Search +6, Sense Motive +17, Spot +21

Possessions: -

All-Around Vision (Ex): A scarlet warden's eyes give it 360-degree vision, granting a +4 racial bonus on Spot and Search checks and preventing the beast from becoming flanked.

Create Spawn (Su): A humanoid reduced to 0 Constitution by scarlet warden poison dies but continues to breathe shallowly as if alive. After 1d6 days, the corpse rises as a namech under the scarlet warden's command.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a scarlet warden must hit with a claw attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude save (DC 10 + ½ HD + Constitution modifier), initial and secondary damage 1d6 Con.



Shumash Guerrilla Banshees CR 9

Dwarven Banshee Fighter 6

LE Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Dwarf, Psionic)

Init: +6; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +12, Spot +2

Aura: -

Languages: Classic Dwarven, Ulyanese, Orcish

AC: 25, touch 12, flat-footed 23

(+2 Dex, +6 armor, +2 shield, +5 Nat)

hp 51 (6d12 HD+12)

Damage Reduction: 10/magic; **Resistance:** Fire 10

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** [Stench \(like bugdead\)](#)

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +5

Speed: 30 ft

Melee: Carrikal +17 (1d8+11; 20/x3) or Slam +15 (1d6+9; 20/x2)

Full Melee: Carrikal +17/+12 (1d8+11; 20/x3) or Slam +15/+10 (1d6+9; 20/x2)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +6/+1; **Grapple:** +15

Combat Actions Gaze of Frenzy (30 ft, DC 14), [Putrefying Touch \(DC 14\)](#)

Combat Gear: Breastplate +1, MW Carrikal, MW Heavy Shield

Psi-Like Abilities: 3/day —Hostile Empathic Transfer, Inflict Pain, Recall Agony; ML = HD. DC charisma-based.

Abilities: Str 29, Dex 15, Con -, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 13

SQ: Damage Reduction 10/magic, Darkvision 60 ft., Dwarf Traits, [Enhanced Ability \(speed\)](#), Enduring Focus, Gray toughness 2, Resistance to Fire 10, [Stench](#), Undead Traits.

Feats: Cleave ^B, Great Cleave, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative ^B, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (Carrikal) ^B, Weapon Specialization (Carrikal) ^B.

Skills: Climb +9+0-4, Craft (Weaponsmith) +1+9, Craft (Armorer) +1+9, Intimidate +1+9, Jump +9+0-4, Listen +2+0+10, Search +1+0+10.

Possessions: 59,000cp or Combat Gear plus: Belt of Strength +2.

Dwarf Traits:

- Dwarven base land speed is 20 feet. However, dwarves can move this speed even when wearing

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medium or heavy armor or when carrying a medium or heavy load (unlike other creatures whose speed is reduced in such situations).

- **Stability:** A dwarf gains a +4 bonus on ability checks made to resist being bull rushed or tripped when standing
- on the ground (but not when climbing, flying, riding, or otherwise not standing firmly on the ground).
- +2 racial bonus on saving throws against poison.
- +2 racial bonus on saving throws against spells and spell-like effects.

Enduring Focus (Su): Even if the banshee is destroyed, it rises again the following sunset. The only way to permanently destroy a dwarven banshee is to complete the task it could not. Killing a banshee in the Gray prevents it from returning to life.

Gaze of Frenzy (Su): Living creatures within 30 ft. that meet a dwarven banshee's gaze must make a Will save or enter an uncontrollable frenzy for 2d6 minutes. During this time, victims attack the nearest creature as though confused; if no creatures are nearby, a victim goes in search of foes. An affected creature never attacks the banshee while in a frenzy. Whether or not the save is successful, that creature cannot be affected again by the same banshee's gaze for 24 hours unless the banshee actively gazes at it. Once per day as a full-round action, the banshee can actively gaze at all creatures within 30 ft. Each must make a Will save or frenzy.

Putrefying Touch (Su): A touch from the undead causes flesh to develop boils and sores that ooze sickly yellow-colored pus. Creatures struck by the undead's natural attacks must make a Fortitude save. Creatures that fail receive a -4 penalty to Dexterity and a -4 penalty on interaction checks (such as Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate, and Sense Motive). The wounds last 1d8 days or until cured by a remove disease or heal spell.



Shumash Guerrilla Wraiths CR 7

(Orcish) Athasian Wraith Psion (Kineticist) 1

LE Medium Undead (Incorporeal)

Init: +5; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +14, Spot +14

Aura: -

Languages: Classic Dwarven, Orcish, Ulyanese

AC: 20; touch 20, flat-footed 15; (Incorporeal)
(+5 Dex, +5 Def)

hp 60 (8 HD; 8d12+8)

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Code of Honor, Vulnerability to *raise dead*

Saves: Fort +2, Ref +7, Will +9

Speed: Fly 60 ft. (good)

Melee: Incorporeal Touch +8 (1d4 plus 1 Str dmg)

Ranged: Ranged Touch +8 (by power)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +3; **Grapple:** -- (+8 when corporeal)

Combat Options: Animate object (CL 8th), Combat Reflexes (5/round), Heart Grip (DC 19), Possession (CL 8th, DC 19), Strength Damage, Taint Weapon (DC 19)

Combat Gear: -

Psion Powers: (ML 1st; 2+3+2 PP, DC 16 + power level (+1 vs. PR)):

1st - Energy Ray, Entangling Ectoplasm, Mind Thrust

Abilities: Str --, Dex 20, Con --, Int 22, Wis 15, Cha 20

SQ: Code of Honor, Darkvision 60 ft., Enduring Focus, Gray Toughness, Incorporeal, Necromant, Temporary Corporeality, Undead Traits, Vulnerability to *Raise Dead*.

Feats: Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Psionic Talent^B.

Skills: Concentration +9, Diplomacy +7, Hide +15, Intimidate +15, Knowledge (geography) +6, Knowledge (psionics) +7, Knowledge (religion) +7, Knowledge (warcraft) +7, Listen +14, Search +16, Sense Motive +12, Psicraft +7, Spot +14.

Possessions: -

Animate Object (Su): As a standard action, a wraith can inhabit a single inanimate object. This functions as an animate objects spell (caster level 10th or the wraith's Hit Dice, whichever is higher), except the wraith merges with the object and the duration lasts as long as the wraith concentrates.

Enduring Focus (Su): A wraith's life force is stored in a focus object called its phylactery. As long as this object—typically a gem or book—is intact, a wraith cannot be permanently killed. Unless its phylactery is located and destroyed, a wraith reforms 1d100 days after its apparent death. The phylactery has the hardness and hit points of a normal object of its kind.

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Killing a wraith in the Gray prevents it from returning to life.

Heart Grip (Su): A wraith can reach into a victim and grasp its heart as a standard action that doesn't provoke an attack of opportunity. The victim makes a Will save (DC 10 + ½ HD + Cha modifier). If it fails, the victim is helpless, and the wraith can tell when it is lying and can read its surface thoughts. The heart grip cannot be broken except by dealing damage to the wraith, which causes it to release its grasp.

Necromant (Ex): A wraith draws energy for arcane spells from the Gray instead of from plant life. This ability negates the defiling radius and terrain modifiers on spell DCs and caster level checks. It also allows the wraith to draw spell energy within the Gray.

Possession (Su): Once per round, an Athasian wraith can merge its body with a non-intelligent creature. This ability is similar to a magic jar spell (caster level 10th or the wraith's Hit Dice, whichever is higher), except that it does not require a receptacle. To use this ability, the wraith must move into the target's space, which does not provoke attacks of opportunity. The target can resist the attack with a successful Will save (DC 10 + ½ HD + Cha modifier). A creature that successfully saves is immune to that same wraith's possession for 24 hours, and the wraith cannot enter the target's space. If the save fails, the wraith vanishes into the target's body. The wraith cannot use supernatural special attacks while possessing a creature.

When possessing a creature, the wraith forces it to spiritually enter a mindscape (see Chapter 2: Into the Gray). The wraith can also enter or leave the mindscape as a standard action. When in the mindscape, the victim's physical body falls lifeless. Defeating the wraith's spiritual form in the mindscape allows a possessed creature to return to its body. Only those able to travel to the Astral Plane can aid the creature, except that dispelling the possession or using protection from evil or similar spells returns the creature's spiritual form to its own body. In the mindscape, the wraith becomes corporeal, and if its spiritual copy is killed, the wraith is permanently destroyed. The wraith can also be used as an energy battery as though it were in the Gray.

Strength Damage (Su): Living creatures hit by an Athasian wraith's incorporeal touch attack suffer an additional point of temporary Strength damage. On each such successful attack, the wraith gains 2 temporary hit points.

Taint Weapon (Su): A wraith's connection to the Gray is so strong that it can taint magic and psionic weapons by touching them. The wraith makes a touch attack against the weapon; if successful, the weapon or its wielder must make a Will save (DC 10 + ½ HD + Cha modifier). Failure means the weapon permanently loses one point of its enhancement bonus. A weapon drained to a +0 enhancement bonus loses all other magic and psionic properties.

Temporary Corporeality (Su): The wraith can become corporeal as a standard action, seemingly becoming flesh and blood. In corporeal form, it loses the incorporeal subtype, its deflection bonus to armor class becomes a natural armor bonus, and it has a Strength score of 20. The wraith makes 2 claw attacks instead of an incorporeal touch attack (damage 1d4+5), and it can still use special attacks, except for heart grip. It can grapple creatures and manipulate objects. The wraith can become incorporeal again as a standard action. In the Gray, wraiths are forced into corporeal form; they cannot exist there in incorporeal form.

Vulnerability to Raise Dead (Ex): A spellcaster can target a wraith with a raise dead spell, destroying the creature with a successful touch attack unless the wraith makes a Will save. On a successful save, the wraith still takes 6d6 points of damage.



Soldier Kank Army CR 8

Zombie Bugdead Domestic Soldier Kank Mob

NE Gargantuan Undead (Mob of Large undead kanks)

Init: +0; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft., Tremorsense 60 ft.;

Listen +0, Spot +0

Aura: -

Languages: -

AC: 11; touch 3, flat-footed 11

(-4 size, -1 Dex, +6 natural)

hp 195 (30 HD; 30d12)

Damage Reduction: 3/metal; **Resistance:** Fire 5

Immunities: Cold, Mob Anatomy, Undead Traits

Saves: Fort +9, Ref +8, Will +17

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee: Mob (5d6 plus poison)

Space: 20 ft.; **Reach:** 0 ft.

Base Attack: +15; **Grapple:** +32

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Combat Options: Expert Grappler, Poison (DC 25), Trample 2d6

Abilities: Str 20, Dex 9, Con –, Int –, Wis 10, Cha 1
SQ: Damage Reduction 3/metal, Darkvision 60 ft., Immunity to Cold and Electricity, Mob Anatomy, Resistance to Fire 5, Tremorsense 60 ft., Undead Traits.

Feats: Improved Bull Rush ^B, Improved Overrun ^B

Skills: –

Expert Grappler (Ex): A mob can maintain a grapple without penalty and still make attacks against other targets (normally, attacking other targets while grappling imposes a –20 penalty on grapple checks). A mob is never considered flat-footed while grappling.

Mob Anatomy (Ex): A mob has no clear front or back and no discernible anatomy, so it is not subject to critical hits or sneak attacks. A mob cannot be flanked, tripped, grappled, or bull rushed.

Unlike standard swarms, mobs are made up of relatively small numbers of individual creatures, so spells or effects that target specific numbers of creatures can have an effect on a mob. Each specific creature that is slain, disabled, or otherwise incapacitated by spells or effects that target specific creatures bestows two negative levels on the mob. A mob that gains negative levels equal to its Hit Dice breaks up as if reduced to 0 hit points. Negative levels gained in this manner are not the result of negative energy (and thus cannot be blocked by *death ward* or removed by *restoration*), but never result in permanent level loss. A mob takes half again as much damage (+50%) from spells or effects that affect an area, such as splash weapons and evocation spells.

Although mobs are treated as one creature, it sometimes becomes necessary to determine the fate of a specific individual caught up in the mob. If a mob is dispersed by nonlethal attacks, there are no casualties. If the mob is dispersed by lethal attacks, assume that 30% of its number are slain and 30% are reduced to 0 hit points. To determine a specific individual's fate, simply roll d%: a result of 01–30 indicates death, 31–60 indicates the victim is reduced to 0 hit points, and a roll of 61–100 indicates the victim escapes relatively unscathed.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 11, initial and secondary damage 1d6 Str. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Trample (Ex): A mob that simply moves over a creature and doesn't end its movement with that creature in one of its occupied squares can trample the creature. A trampled creature takes damage equal to 2d6 points + 1-1/2 times the mob's Strength modifier. The victim can either make an attack of opportunity against the mob or make a Reflex save (DC 25 + the mob's Str modifier) to take half damage.



Wezer Storm CR 8

Zombie Bugdead Wezer Mob

NE Gargantuan undead (mob of Medium undead wezers)

Init: +0; **Senses:** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0

Aura: –

Languages: –

AC: 11, touch 7, flat-footed 10

(–4 size, +1 Dex, +4 natural)

hp 195 (30 HD; 30d12)

Damage Reduction: 3/metal; **Resistance:** Fire 5

Immune: Cold, Electricity, Mob Anatomy, Undead Traits

Saves: Fort +9, Ref +10, Will +17

Speed: 5 ft. (1 squares), Fly 50 ft (average)

Melee: mob (5d6 plus poison)

Space: 20 ft.; **Reach:** 0 ft.

Base Attack: +15; **Grapple:** +30

Combat Options: Expert Grappler, Poison, Trample 2d6

Abilities: Str 17, Dex 12, Con –, Int –, Wis 10, Cha 1

SQ: Damage Reduction, Fire Resistance, Immunities, Mob Anatomy, Undead Traits

Feats: Improved Bull Rush ^B, Improved Overrun ^B

Skills: –

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 13, initial damage unconsciousness for 1 minute, secondary damage unconsciousness for 2d4 days. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Expert Grappler (Ex): A mob can maintain a grapple without penalty and still make attacks against other targets (normally, attacking other targets while

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grappling imposes a –20 penalty on grapple checks). A mob is never considered flat-footed while grappling.

Trample (Ex): A mob that simply moves over a creature and doesn't end its movement with that creature in one of its occupied squares can trample the creature. A trampled creature takes damage equal to 2d6 points + 1-1/2 times the mob's Strength modifier. The victim can either make an attack of opportunity against the mob or make a Reflex save (DC 25 + the mob's Str modifier) to take half damage.

Mob Anatomy (Ex): A mob has no clear front or back and no discernible anatomy, so it is not subject to critical hits or sneak attacks. A mob cannot be flanked, tripped, grappled, or bull rushed.

Unlike standard swarms, mobs are made up of relatively small numbers of individual creatures, so spells or effects that target specific numbers of creatures can have an effect on a mob. Each specific creature that is slain, disabled, or otherwise incapacitated by spells or effects that target specific creatures bestows two negative levels on the mob. A mob that gains negative levels equal to its Hit Dice breaks up as if reduced to 0 hit points. Negative levels gained in this manner are not the result of negative energy (and thus cannot be blocked by *death ward* or removed by *restoration*), but never result in permanent level loss. A mob takes half again as much damage (+50%) from spells or effects that affect an area, such as splash weapons and evocation spells.

Although mobs are treated as one creature, it sometimes becomes necessary to determine the fate of a specific individual caught up in the mob. If a mob is dispersed by nonlethal attacks, there are no casualties. If the mob is dispersed by lethal attacks, assume that 30% of its number are slain and 30% are reduced to 0 hit points. To determine a specific individual's fate,

simply roll d%: a result of 01–30 indicates death, 31–60 indicates the victim is reduced to 0 hit points, and a roll of 61–100 indicates the victim escapes relatively unscathed.



Zombie Crodlu CR 1

NE Large Undead

Init: +4; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft; Listen +0, Spot +0

Aura: -

Languages: -

AC: 18, touch 13, flat footed 14

(-1 size, +4 Dex, +5 Natural)

hp 29 (4d12+3)

Damage Reduction: 5/slashing

Immune: Undead Traits

Saves: Fort +1, Ref +5, Will +4

Speed: 50 ft (10 squares)

Melee: Slam +6 (1d8+5) or Claw +6 (1d6+5)

Full Melee: 2 Slams +6 (1d8+5) and Bite +1 (1d8+2) or
2x Claws +6 (1d6+5) and Bite +1 (1d8+2)

Space: 10 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +2; **Grapple:** +11

Combat Options: -

Abilities: Str 20, Dex 18, Con -, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 1

SQ: Damage Reduction 5/Slashing, Darkvision 60 ft.,
Single Actions Only

Feats: Toughness

Skills: -

Possessions: -



Appendix 2: New Items



Harkor's Bright Talon

Minor artifact

(from Faces of the Dead Lands, Chapter 10)

Harkor's bright talon is a gold brooch set with a large sapphire and several smaller gems, and finely worked to look like the claw of some thickly taloned beast. Without closer examination it appears to be simply an expensive piece of jewelry (and might even be sold as such). However, under a *detect magic* spell, the talon-

stone glows luminously with many different types of magic. As it turns out, this special brooch encloses a powerful ancient relic, a fossilized talon from an unknown creature dating back to the Blue Age. Harkor's courtly lieutenants fashioned this brooch around the ancient jewel and named it for their master. Harkor provided it to aid one of his favored generals, but when that general fell in battle in the Crunch not far from Tarktas, the item was lost. Its current whereabouts are unknown.

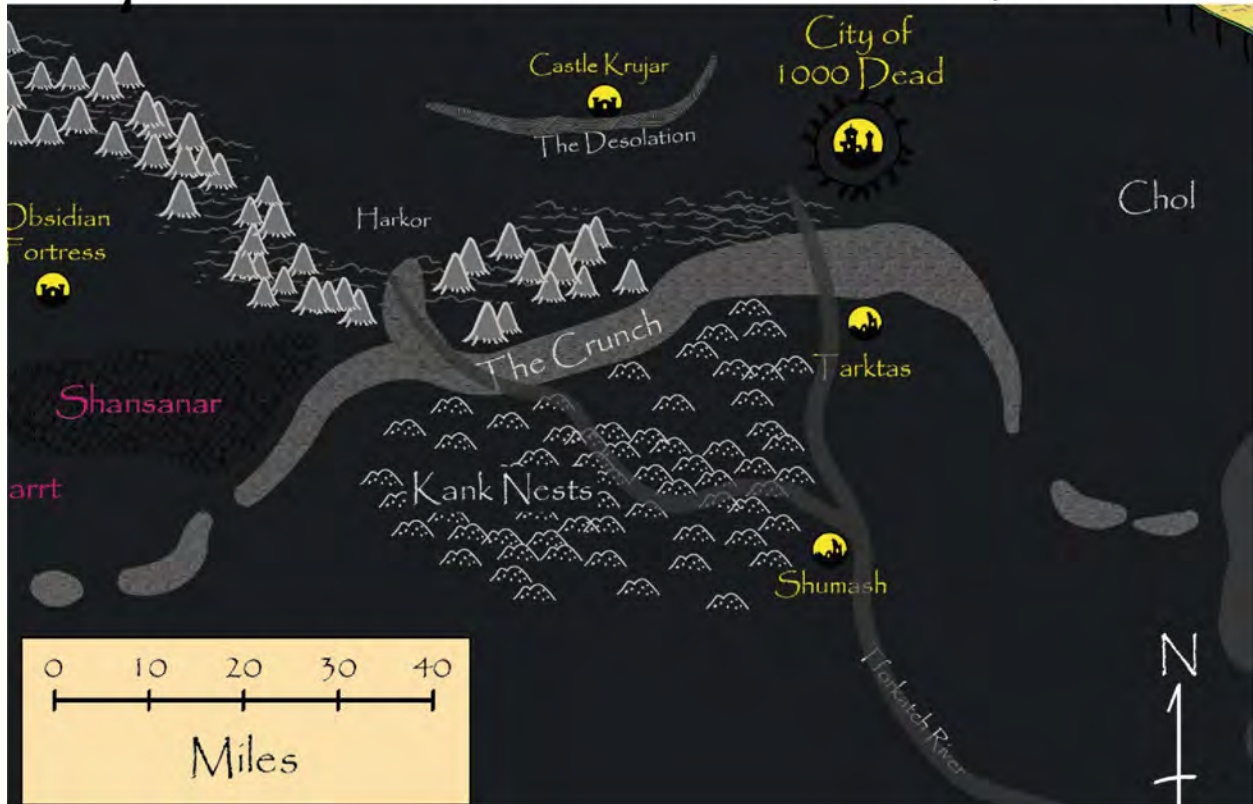
The bearer of *Harkor's bright talon* gains several powers from it.

- First, the bearer gains permanently active *comprehend language* and *read magic* effects.
- The user may use the spell *summon monster V* twice a day, and *summon monster VIII* once per week.
- Finally, at will, the device allows the user to command undead creatures within a 100 feet radius, as the spell *control undead*. Up to 100 HD of undead can be controlled. The control remains in effect on the undead permanently until dispelled or until new undead are controlled above the maximum limit of 100 HD, at which time excess undead from previous uses of the talon become uncontrolled (the bearer chooses which undead are released).

Strong conjuration, divination and necromancy; CL 20th.

Appendix 3: Maps

KANK NESTS AND SURROUNDING AREAS



Banner of the Ancestors



A *Dark Sun* 3.5e adventure module for four 13th-level characters

An artifact has been discovered which could tip the balance of power in the Dead Lands and the PCs must race to get it before it falls into the wrong hands.

Credits

WRITING

Adam Cieszlak, Azog the Defiler

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Dylan Houlette

EDITING

Dylan Houlette

IMAGES/GRAPHICS

Toren Atkinson, Jack Meyer, Yanick Moreau, Jørgen Pedersen, Izhar Ben Yosef

Introduction

Banner of the Ancestors is a short D&D adventure for four 13th-level player characters (PCs). Consult the Scaling the Adventure sidebar for ways to modify the scenario for higher or lower levels of play.

This scenario is designed for characters that are familiar with or well known in the Dead Lands. It is set in the eastern Bone Lands, the territory of the warring clans of Musraaf's Chosen, near the border with Deshentu. DMs are encouraged to adapt some of the details to their players and campaign.

Developer's notes

Azog the Defiler was heavily involved in helping me write all the characters for Musraaf's Chosen for Faces of the Dead Lands. We were both heavily influenced by Central African peoples and their stories of war and heroism. The concept for this adventure was a by-product of Azog's writing, and came entirely from him. Adam Cieszlak helped him develop it all into a fully-fleshed concept. It really puts a fun and original spin on a classic dungeon crawl. -JM

Preparation

You (the DM) will need the 3rd edition revised D&D core rulebooks, including the *Player's Handbook*, the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*, as well as the *Expanded Psionics Handbook*. This adventure also uses material from *Faces of the Dead Lands*, *Secrets of the Dead Lands*, *Terrors of the Dead Lands* and the *Dark Sun 3.5 conversion* rulebook from Athas.org, but all necessary rules are already included.

Adventure Background

The Musraaf's Chosen of the Bone Lands are a group of interrelated warring clans descended from the Neegas (warlord king) Musraaf and his clanspeople - Uylanese nomads who served in the army of Myron during the Cleansing Wars. After the trolls of Ulyan were exterminated, Musraaf and his people inhabited

the conquered lands of the trolls until the Obsidian Tide killed and reanimated everyone and everything in Ulyan.

Musraaf himself was long dead when the Obsidian Tide struck, accidentally killed during a hunt. With his death, the clan leaders - his former honor guard - fell to fighting amongst themselves for supreme leadership of the united clans. All four clan leaders died battling for the title of Neegas and their conflict spilled over to the clans themselves, splitting them in the unending warfare that still continues today, even in undeath.

After the deaths of their leaders, the clans made peace with each other only long enough to construct tombs for them before going their separate ways. Only simple barrows, these tombs appear to be plain hills from the outside and were long lost when the Obsidian Tide obliterated the landscape.

Overview

A recent earthquake has rent a stretch of obsidian in the eastern Bone Lands, opening small cracks and giant crevasses in the blackglass. Within some of these openings, the entrances to the Tombs of the Ancestors have been discovered - the burial places of the leaders of clans Rasiim, Asiim, Achhed, and Shalil, who once served under the Neegas Musraaf himself. Said to be buried with the clan leaders were the four fragments of the war banner of Musraaf, used to unite the clans during the Cleansing Wars. It is said that this "Banner of the Ancestors" will give the bearer the power to unite the clans of Musraaf's Chosen once more in his service.

Unfortunately, the Musraafi are barred from entering the tombs by ancient custom and, being near the Deshenten border, scouts from Deshentu (a nearby undead nation) have been sighted in the area. The PCs must recover the four fragments of the Banner before the Deshentens can enslave the Musraaf's Chosen to the will of the Deshenten Vizier (leader of the nation of Deshentu).

Adventures in the Dead Lands

Adventure Hooks

The party is in the eastern Bone Lands, possibly for one of the following reasons:

- They were recently contacted by the Musraaf's Chosen, seeking trustworthy agents to explore the tombs.

- They are pursuing some other (unrelated) adventure, or are on the run from something - possibly another group of Musraaf's Chosen.

- They have secretly been sent by Deshenten agents looking to outmaneuver those already in place (see Zharrathe below) and their superiors, and steal the glory for themselves.

Scaling the Adventure

The Banner of the Ancestors is designed for a party of four 13th-level adventurers, but it can be modified easily to present an appropriate challenge for parties of different sizes or levels.

Consider adapting the adventure for PCs of average levels 7 to 11 by adding effective positive or negative levels to the creatures in each encounter to change their effective **Challenge Rating**. A creature takes the following penalties/bonuses for each positive/negative level it has gained:

- +/-1 on all skill checks and ability checks.
- +/-1 on attack rolls and saving throws.
- +/-5 hit points.
- +/-1 effective level (whenever the creature's level is used in a die roll or calculation, reduce it by one for each negative level).
- If the creature casts spells, she gains/loses one spell slot of her highest-level spells. (If she has more than one spell at her highest level, she chooses which she gains/loses.) In addition, when she next prepares spells or regains spell slots, she gets one more/less spell slot at her highest spell level. If the creature is a manifester, she gains/loses enough power points to manifest her highest-level power once.

Part I: The Demand

While the PCs travel the obsidian of the eastern Bone Lands, they are approached by a warband of Musraaf's Chosen. The warband is too large and coordinated to avoid, and they move to halt, not attack the party. When the PCs come to a stop, the nomads come forward to parley.

The fearsome undead nomads of Musraaf's Chosen have encircled your group and demanded you stop. Their leader motions for you to approach his chariot, drawn by the nomads' strange skeletal mounts: tall, long-legged creatures with hooved feet and long, narrow heads.

"I am Inbed Achhed, warlord and future leader of Musraaf's Chosen - surely you have heard of my greatness. A great earthquake has struck these eastern plains, ripping great cracks in the blackglass. Within the cracks have been

found tombs; we believe these to be the tombs of our ancestors.

"Even now, Deshenten scum scuttle about the area like vermin, blaspheming the land with their very presence, but we are prohibited from entering the tombs by ancient, sacred tradition. Bah!

"YOU shall go and chase away the weaklings of Deshentu and return to me the treasures of the tombs." At this, Inbed's eyes fairly gleam with avarice. His tone brooks no argument.

Should the PCs refuse, Inbed will grow enraged and threaten an attack against the party with the full might of his forces.

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Some time after they part company with Inbed's forces, but before they reach the area containing the tombs, another large and coordinated warband of Musraafi halt the party. Read:

Once again, nomads of Musraaf's Chosen have encircled your group and demanded you stop. One might imagine that it is Inbed coming to make further demands, but this group has come from a different direction.

Once again, their leader motions for you to approach his chariot: *"I am Tatia Achhed, warlord and rightful leader of Musraaf's Chosen. I understand that you have recently met with my fool brother and that you are to plumb the tombs of our ancestors. And surely he told you that we are barred from entering the tombs by ancient custom.*

"The tombs, long thought to be mere legend, belong to our ancient clan leaders - honor guards for the great Musraaf himself. Buried with these warlords were the broken fragments of Musraaf's war banner - his battle-standard and a symbol of clan unity during the Cleansing Wars. It is said that this banner will give the bearer the power to unite our clans once more in the bearer's service.

"My brother is a fool and, if given the Banner, he would lead our clans to ruin. But, should the forces of Deshentu obtain it, the Vizier will enslave my people forever - that CANNOT be allowed to happen.

"Please, explore the tombs of our ancestors, obtain the fragments of the Banner, and bring them to me. Do so and you shall have as your ally the united clans of Musraaf's Chosen under my leadership."

After his offer, Tatia allows the PCs to go on their way, seeking allies, not cowed underlings.

Despite the warlords' offers, the PCs are ultimately free to keep the *banner of the ancestors* for themselves or hand it over to whichever party they wish, though not without potential consequences (see Concluding the Adventure, at the end of the adventure).

Development: As the PCs locate and explore the tombs, Deshenten forces are doing the same. Zharrathe and his minions arrive in the area soon after the party and, using magic and swiftwing scouts, will take pains to avoid the PCs as long as possible. If the party rests during the adventure (a very likely event), then Zharrathe will explore and loot a randomly selected tomb while they are resting, defeating all traps and monsters, and taking the fragment of the *banner of the ancestors* for himself (which he will later use against them; see Part 4 - Final Battle for more details). Either way, Zharrathe and his guards will confront the party once they exit the last unexplored tomb (see the Part 4 - Final Battle).

Part 2: Ancestral Tombs of the East:

These tombs stand exposed in a canyon in the obsidian and both can be accessed from within the canyon.

You've come to the most obvious of the recent rifts in the obsidian - a massive canyon easily one hundred feet wide. From where you stand, you can just make out an entrance to one of the tombs, and you know there is another tomb entrance nearby. The bottom of the canyon seems to be filled with a bed of shattered obsidian shards and a singularly missive shard of obsidian spans the canyon, forming a bridge of sorts.

When traversing the obsidian 'bridge', PCs moving faster than half speed or who take damage must make a Balance check (DC 15) or slip on the slick surface. Those who lose their balance may attempt a Reflex save (DC 15) to catch themselves or fall 30 feet into the broken obsidian lining the canyon and take 6d6 slashing damage. PCs may climb up out of the canyon

(Climb check, DC 15), but failing the check or moving through the obsidian shards at the bottom of the canyon deals an additional 1d6 slashing damage per attempt or round of movement.

Development: Found and invaded by Deshenten troops, the entrance to the Tomb of Clan Shalil is wide open and its stone doors have been destroyed. The Tomb of Clan Rasiim is still intact.

Adventures in the Dead Lands



Deshenten Scouts (EL 10)

Giant Bombardiers (CR 6) 2x - see Appendix 1

Elven Swiftwings (CR 5) 3x - see Appendix 1

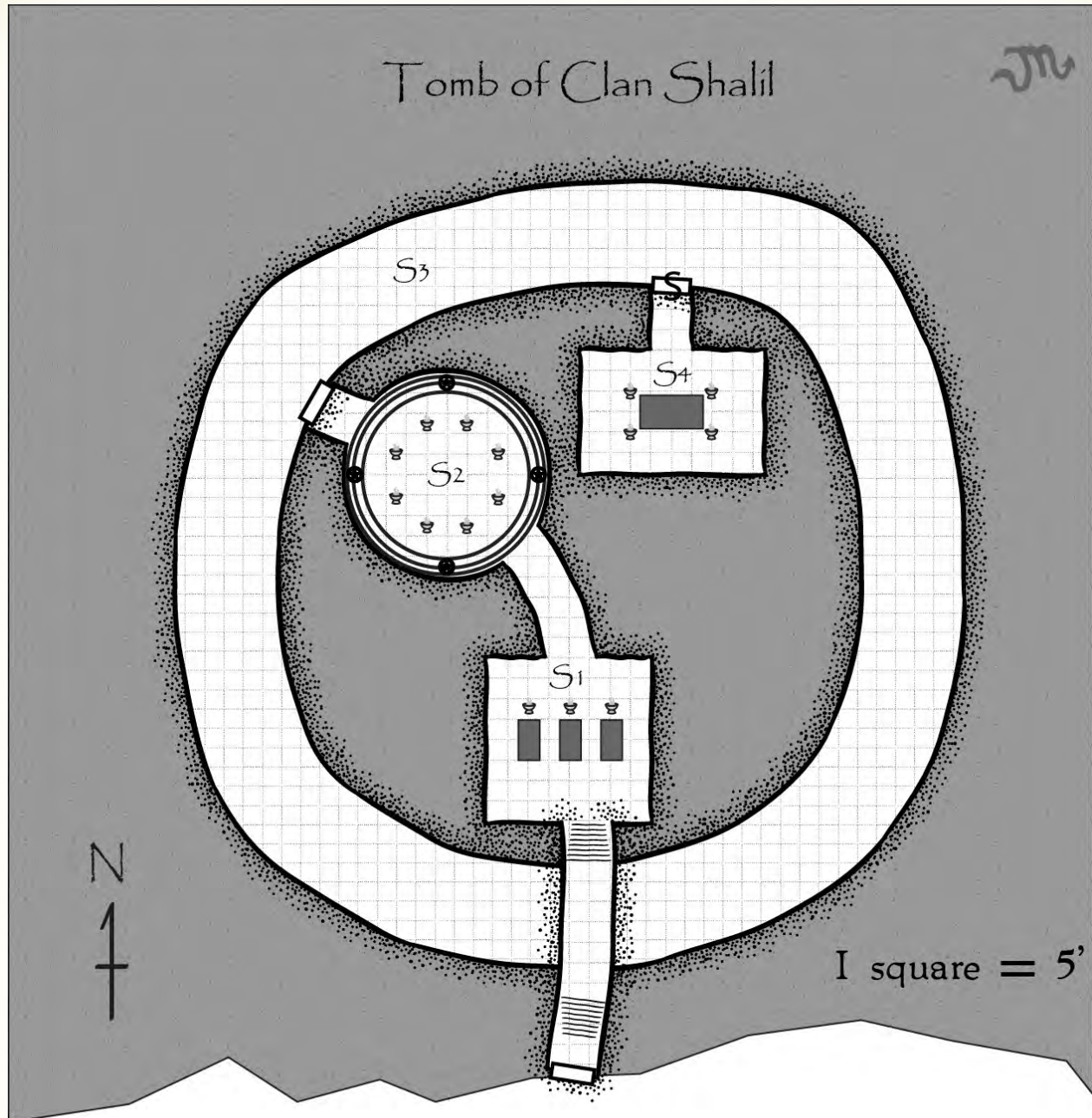
The PCs have a 33% chance of encountering Deshenten scouts while around the ravine (check when entering, exiting or moving between the tombs).

The "swish" of leathery wings and the crash of boulders around you make it plain: Deshenten forces have found you!

Tactics: Each of the swiftwings is armed with a *necklace of fireballs* (type 1: 5d6 x1 and 3d6 x2), which they will use whenever they can avoid catching the bombardiers in the blast.

Development: Check for further encounters with Deshenten scouts **each time** the PCs move around the canyon (as above).





A) Tomb of Clan Shalil

The wall murals of the Shalil Tomb tell the story of how the chariot people once warred with the more settled Ulyuanese but were then defeated in battle and convinced to make peace by the troll sages of Nuubark.

The tomb has been breached and occupied by Deshenten troops, its Musraafi guardians slain.

S1) Guard Burial Room (EL 12)

Deshenten Spider Archer (CR 8) 4x - see Appendix 1

Adventures in the Dead Lands

Black Lotus Vapor Trap (CR 7) 1x - see Appendix 3

Wide Mouth Pit Trap (CR 9) 1x - see Appendix 3

The Musraafi Ancestral guardians of this chamber have been slain and tossed into the Wide Mouth Pit.

You enter a roughly 30 x 30-foot chamber, with a doorway on the opposite wall. Three stone biers stand in this chamber, their slabs empty. The room shows signs of recent combat - pieces of broken weapons and patches of long-dead flesh and drops of ichor are scattered everywhere. Several undead mill around the chamber, wearing the colors of Deshentu.

If the PCs stop to examine the chamber, read:

The walls are covered with murals here - they show scenes of chariot riders attacking merchants on the open plains, riding them down and capturing livestock and prisoners of war.

The chariot peoples depicted in the murals are the ancestors of Musraaf's Chosen.

Tactics: The spider archers will attack in two groups, with a pair moving to melee with the PCs, while the other two hang back to attack at range. None of them will activate their *spider climb* to walk on the walls.

S2) Burning Blood Arena (EL 12)

Deshenten Axe-Guard (CR 10) 2x - see Appendix 1

Two Deshenten axe-guards protect the door into the Hall of Honor and will not let the players pass without a fight. The Musraafi burning blood ancestors that previously occupied this chamber have been slain and tossed into a smoldering pile in the corner.

This chamber is roughly 40 feet across, with a doorway on the opposite wall. It looks much like arenas you've seen, with the circular walls rising like steps or tiered seating. The room shows signs of recent combat - pieces of broken weapons, patches of long-dead flesh and drops of ichor are scattered everywhere. Several large jugs lie smashed on the

floor and soot stains the ceiling and walls. A smoldering pile of bodies lies in one corner. Standing about the chamber are several undead wearing the colors of Deshentu - black and gold.

If the PCs stop to examine the chamber, read:

The wall murals here show great battle scenes on the open prairie between the invading chariot people and an army of very tall, green-skinned and gangly people with fleshy hair, aided by their loyal human followers.

The "very tall, green-skinned and gangly people with fleshy hair" are the troll sages of the Sageocracy and the chariot peoples are the ancestors of Musraaf's Chosen.

S3) Hall of Honor (EL 12)

Deshenten Spider Archer (CR 8) 4x - see Appendix 1

Four Deshenten spider archers protect the hallway to the Sarcophagus Room and will not let the players pass without a fight.

You step into a 25-foot-wide hallway that curves out of sight to both the left and the right. The stones of the floor and walls are far smoother and better laid than elsewhere in the tomb.

When the PCs start down the hallway (in either direction), read:

After walking along the curving hallway for a few moments, arrows begin to streak towards your group from around the bend without warning.

If the PCs stop to examine the chamber, read:

The wall murals here show very tall, green-skinned and gangly people with fleshy hair, victorious in battle but merciful towards the defeated chariot people, signing a truce with their chieftain.

The "very tall, green-skinned and gangly people with fleshy hair" are the troll sages of the Sageocracy and the chariot peoples are the ancestors of Musraaf's Chosen.

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Tactics: The spider archers walk along the ceiling, spread out to avoid area-attacks, and relentlessly fire arrows at the party. If the PCs somehow engage the spider archers on the ceiling or prove immune to missile fire, they will instead switch to melee attacks. If the PCs escape to the Sarcophagus Room, the spider archers will simply wait for them to exit the room again.

Development: The door to the Sarcophagus Room is poorly hidden, requiring a Search check (DC 10) to find but a Disable Device check (DC 22) or 45 points of damage (hardness 8) to break down. The door is located such that the chieftain of the chariot people is framed by the door and the door's trigger is hidden by the chieftain's pen.

S4) Sarcophagus Room (EL 10)

Bestow Curse Trap (CR 4) 1x - see Appendix 3

Chain Lightning Trap (CR 7) 1x - see Appendix 3

Deathblade Scythe Trap (CR 8) 1x - see Appendix 3

Acid Arrow Trap (CR 8) 2x - see Appendix 3

The room contains only the sarcophagus, no creatures are present.

This chamber is 20 x 30 feet and contains nothing but a large sarcophagus. The sarcophagus is a plain stone box with a lid.

The sarcophagus is extensively trapped. The first time the sarcophagus is touched, a *bestow curse* trap will activate. A *chain lightning* trap will activate when the lid is tampered with, affecting any targets within the room. Finally, when someone reaches into the sarcophagus, a *deathblade scythe* trap will activate, slicing up out of the bottom of the sarcophagus while two *acid arrow* traps will activate in the hallway outside, preferentially targeting anyone standing just outside the sarcophagus room.

If the PCs stop to examine the chamber, read:

The murals here show the chariot people now living as merchants, selling meat and livestock to all sorts of

peoples in the open-air markets of two great cities: one a city of tall spires with a giant dome and the other a large walled metropolis at the source of a river. Some of the people are clearly humans, while some look like small giants, and others are very tall, green-skinned and gangly people with fleshy hair.

The chariot peoples are the ancestors of Musraaf's Chosen and the "very tall, green-skinned and gangly people with fleshy hair" are the troll sages of the Sageocracy. The "small giants" are ogres.

Development: The sarcophagus is empty except for a fragment of the *banner of the ancestors - the staff of Shalil* (see Appendix 2)

B) Tomb of Clan Rasiim

The wall murals of the Rasiim Tomb tell the story of the rise of the Neegus Musraaf with the aid of the Champion Myron.

The tomb is intact and has been unopened since it was built.

R1) Guard Burial Room (EL 12)

Musraafi Ancestral Spearmen (CR 8) 2x - see Appendix 1

Musraafi Ancestral Lieutenant Spearmen (CR 9) 1x - see Appendix 1

Black Lotus Vapor Trap (CR 7) 1x - see Appendix 3

Wide Mouth Pit Trap (CR 6) 1x - see Appendix 3

A chamber where warriors were laid in state. The undead of the tomb now use this chamber as a guard room.

You enter a roughly 30 x 30-foot chamber, with a doorway on the opposite wall. Three stone biers

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stand in this chamber and upon each lies an ancient body.

A pressure plate on the floor just inside the entry door will activate the ebony black lotus trap, affecting everyone in the entryway. The undead will attempt to grab paralyzed victims and hurl them into the pit.

When the PCs enter the room, they may not notice that the bodies lying on the biers are undead at rest. It takes a Spot check (DC 20) to notice that some of these bodies are moving or twitching slightly. If unnoticed, the spearmen and lieutenants arise from their biers in the surprise round. If the Spot check is successful, combat proceeds normally. Either way, the ancestors' first action is to stand up (a move action).

If the PCs stop to examine the chamber, read:

The walls are covered with murals here - they show scenes where a solidly built man with eyes of fire travels to meet with various clans and warriors of the chariot peoples.

The "solidly built man with eyes of fire" is the Champion Myron and the chariot peoples are the ancestors of Musraaf's Chosen.

R2) Burning Blood Arena (EL 12)

Musraafi Burning Blood Ancestor (CR 9) 3x - see Appendix 1

Assuming they could hear the battle raging in the Guard Room, the burning blood ancestors will have risen and be ready for the PCs arrival (if the PCs thought to somehow silence the battle, the burning Blood Ancestors will still be at rest - if so, alter the following text accordingly).

This chamber is roughly 40 feet across, with a doorway on the opposite wall. It looks much like arenas you've seen, with the circular walls rising like steps or tiered seating. Several undead stand about the room, each near a large ceramic jug.

Large jugs of ceremonial oil stand around the room and the undead will kick them over as a free action on their 1st round, covering the floor in flammable oil. This oil will ignite when the Burning Blood Ancestors

activate their *fire shields*, causing 1d6 points of fire damage to all individuals on the floor of the chamber.

Large jugs of ceremonial oil stand around the room and the undead will kick them over as a free action on their 1st round, covering the floor in flammable oil. This oil will ignite when the burning blood ancestors activate their *fire shields*, causing 1d6 points of fire damage to all individuals on the floor of the chamber.

If the PCs stop to examine the chamber, read:

The wall murals here show the solidly built man with eyes of fire selecting one tall, barrel-chested warrior, and deems him worthy to serve him and lead the various tribes.

The "solidly built man with eyes of fire" is the Champion Myron and the "tall, barrel-chested warrior" is Musraaf.

R3) Hall of Honor (EL 13)

Musraafi Ancestral Chariot (CR 13) 1x - see Appendix 1

A Musraafi Ancestral Chariot protects the hallway to the Sarcophagus Room and will not let the players pass without a fight.

You step into a 25-foot-wide hallway that curves out of sight to both the left and the right. The stones of the floor and walls are far smoother and better laid than elsewhere in the tomb.

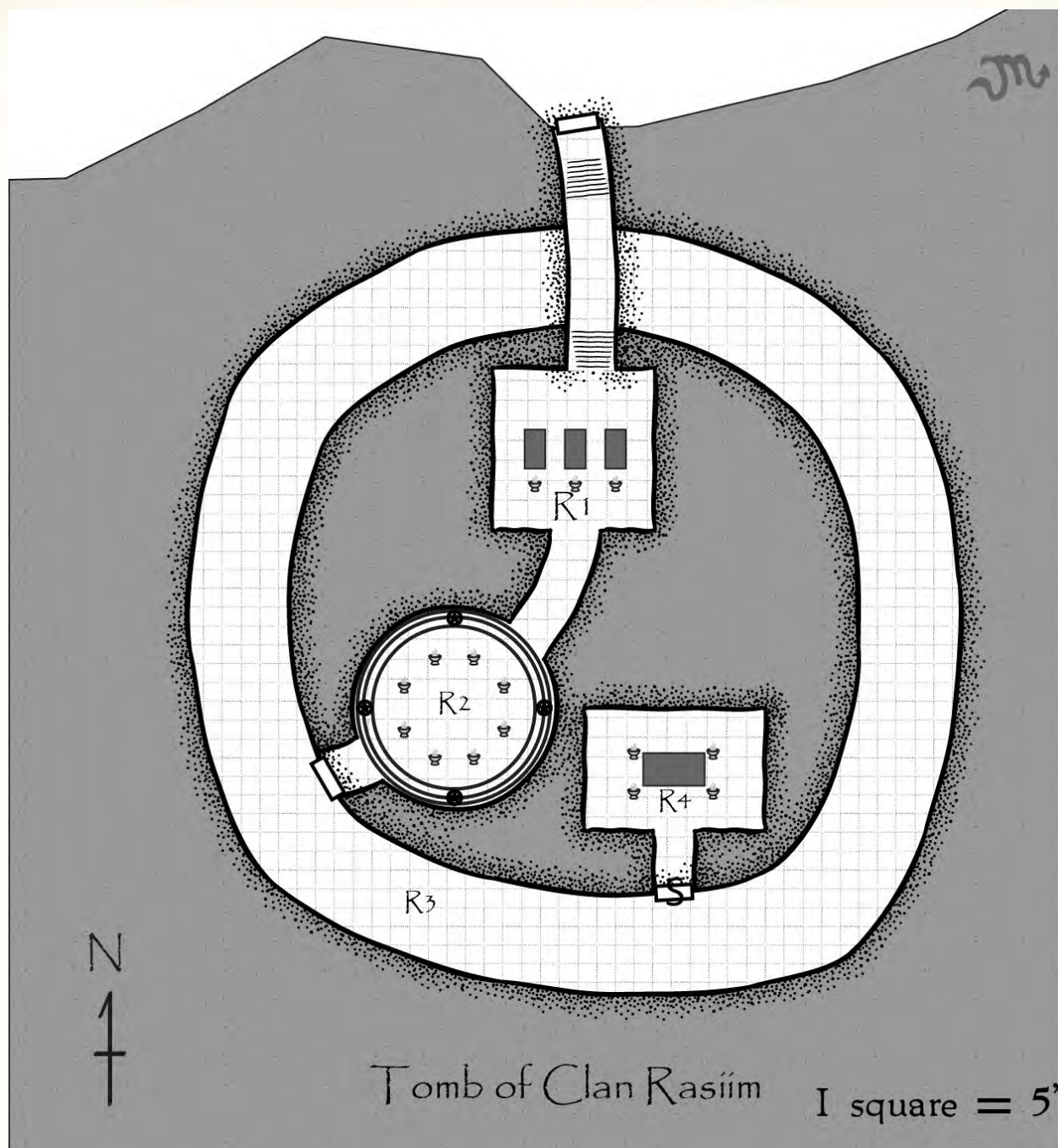
When the PCs start down the hallway (in either direction), read:

Walking along the curving hallway, after a few moments, you can hear a clattering of wheels on stone coming from around the bend.

If the PCs stop to examine the chamber, read:

The wall murals here show scenes of the tall, barrel-chested warrior gaining leadership of his clan and demanding the other clans join him, while the solidly built man with eyes of fire looks on from on-far.

The "solidly built man with eyes of fire" is the Champion Myron and the "tall, barrel-chested warrior" is Musraaf.



Tactics: The Ancestral Chariot can easily drive through the hallway because the floors and walls are so smooth and well paved. The Chariot will drive in a counterclockwise direction, attacking or trampling the PCs until it is destroyed. If the PCs escape to the Sarcophagus Room, the Ancestral Chariot will simply wait for them to exit the room again.

Development: The door to the Sarcophagus Room is poorly hidden, requiring a Search check (DC 10) to find

but a Disable Device check (DC 22) or 45 points of damage (hardness 8) to break down. The door is located such that (Myron) is framed by the door and the door's trigger is hidden by his sword.

R4) Sarcophagus Room (EL 10)

Bestow Curse Trap (CR 4) 1x - see Appendix 3

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Chain Lightning Trap (CR 7) 1x - see Appendix 3

Deathblade Scythe Trap (CR 8) 1x - see Appendix 3

Acid Arrow Trap (CR 8) 2x - see Appendix 3

The room contains only the sarcophagus, no creatures are present.

This chamber is 20 x 30 feet and contains nothing but a large sarcophagus. The sarcophagus is a plain stone box with a lid.

The sarcophagus is extensively trapped. The first time it is touched, a *bestow curse* trap will activate. A *chain lightning* trap will activate when the lid is tampered with, affecting any targets within the room. Finally, when someone reaches into the sarcophagus, a *deathblade scythe* trap will activate, slicing up out of

the bottom of the sarcophagus while two *acid arrow* traps will activate in the hallway outside, preferentially targeting anyone standing just outside the sarcophagus room.

If the PCs stop to examine the chamber, read:

The murals here show scenes where, through both alliances and warfare, all the clans and warriors are united under the tall, barrel-chested warrior while the solidly built man with eyes of fire looks on from afar.

The “solidly built man with eyes of fire” is the Champion Myron and the “tall, barrel-chested warrior” is Musraaf.

Development: The sarcophagus is empty except for a fragment of the Banner of the Ancestors - The Skull of Nuubark (see Appendix 2).

Part 3: Ancestral Tombs of the West

These tombs are still buried beneath the obsidian, but each is accessible through (relatively) small cracks in the obsidian.

The Tomb of Clan Achhed is still intact. The Tomb of Clan Asiim has been burrowed into by the Defiler of Tombs and its undead spawn; the tomb's stone doors have been destroyed and its chambers smashed.

C) Tomb of Clan Achhed

The wall murals of the Achhed Tomb tell the story of the siege of Nuubark and the slaying of King Yorgyanak.

The tomb is intact and has been unopened since it was built.

H1) Guard Room (EL 12)

Musraafi Ancestral Spearmen (CR 8) 2x - see Appendix 1

Musraafi Ancestral Lieutenant Spearmen (CR 9) 1x - see Appendix 1

Black Lotus Vapor Trap (CR 7) 1x - see Appendix 3

Wide Mouth Pit Trap (CR 6) 1x - see Appendix 3

A chamber where warriors were laid in state. The undead of the tomb now use this chamber as a guard room.

You enter a roughly 30 x 30 foot chamber, with a doorway on the opposite wall. Three stone biers stand in this chamber and upon each lies an ancient body.

A pressure plate on the floor just inside the entry door will activate the ebony black lotus trap, affecting everyone in the entryway. The undead will attempt to grab paralyzed victims and hurl them into the pit.

When the PCs enter the room they may not notice that the bodies lying on the biers are undead at rest. It takes a Spot check (DC 20) to notice that some of these bodies are moving or twitching slightly. If unnoticed, the Spearmen and Lieutenants arise from their biers in the Surprise round. If the Spot check is successful, combat

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proceeds normally. Either way, the Ancestors' first action is to stand up (a move action).

If the PCs stop to examine the chamber, read:

The walls are covered with murals here - they show scenes of the tall, barrel-chested warrior and the chariot people crushing the army of very tall, green-skinned and gangly people with fleshy hair and routing them. The battle seems to be occurring near a city of great stone spires built on the shores of a large lake that glitters like sapphires.

The "tall, barrel-chested warrior" is Musraaf and the chariot peoples are the ancestors of Musraaf's Chosen. The "very tall, green-skinned and gangly people with fleshy hair" are the trolls of the Sageocracy and the "city of great stone spires built on the shores of a large lake that glitters like sapphires" is Nubark.

H2) Burning Blood Arena (EL 12)

Musraafi Burning Blood Ancestor (CR 9) 3x - see Appendix 1

Assuming they can hear the battle raging in the Guards' room, the Burning Blood Ancestors will have risen from the biers and be ready for the PCs arrival (if the PCs thought to somehow silence the battle, the Burning Blood Ancestors will still be at rest - if so, alter the following text accordingly).

This chamber is roughly 40 feet across, with a doorway on the opposite wall. It looks much like arenas you've seen, with the circular walls rising like steps or tiered seating. Several undead stand about the room, each near a large ceramic jug.

Large jugs of ceremonial oil stand around the room and the undead will kick them over as a free action on their 1st round, covering the floor in flammable oil. This oil will ignite when the Burning Blood Ancestors activate their *fire shields*, causing 1d6 point of fire damage to all individuals on the floor of the chamber.

If the PCs stop to examine the chamber, read:

The wall murals here show the walls of the city of great stone spires built on the shores of a large lake that glitters like sapphires besieged by the tall, barrel-chested warrior and his chariot people, storming the

walls, slaughtering the defending very tall, green-skinned and gangly people with fleshy hair with burning swords, and smashing the city gates down.

The "city of great stone spires built on the shores of a large lake that glitters like sapphires" is Nubark and the "very tall, green-skinned and gangly people with fleshy hair" are the trolls of the Sageocracy. The "tall, barrel-chested warrior" is Musraaf and the chariot peoples are the ancestors of Musraaf's Chosen.

H3) Hall of Honor (EL 13)

Musraafi Ancestral Chariot (CR 13) 1x - see Appendix 1

You step into a 25-foot-wide hallway that curves out of sight to both the left and the right. The stones of the floor and walls are far smoother and better laid than elsewhere in the tomb.

When the PCs start down the hallway (in either direction), read:

Walking along the curving hallway, after a few moments, you can hear a clattering of wheels on stone coming towards you from the left.

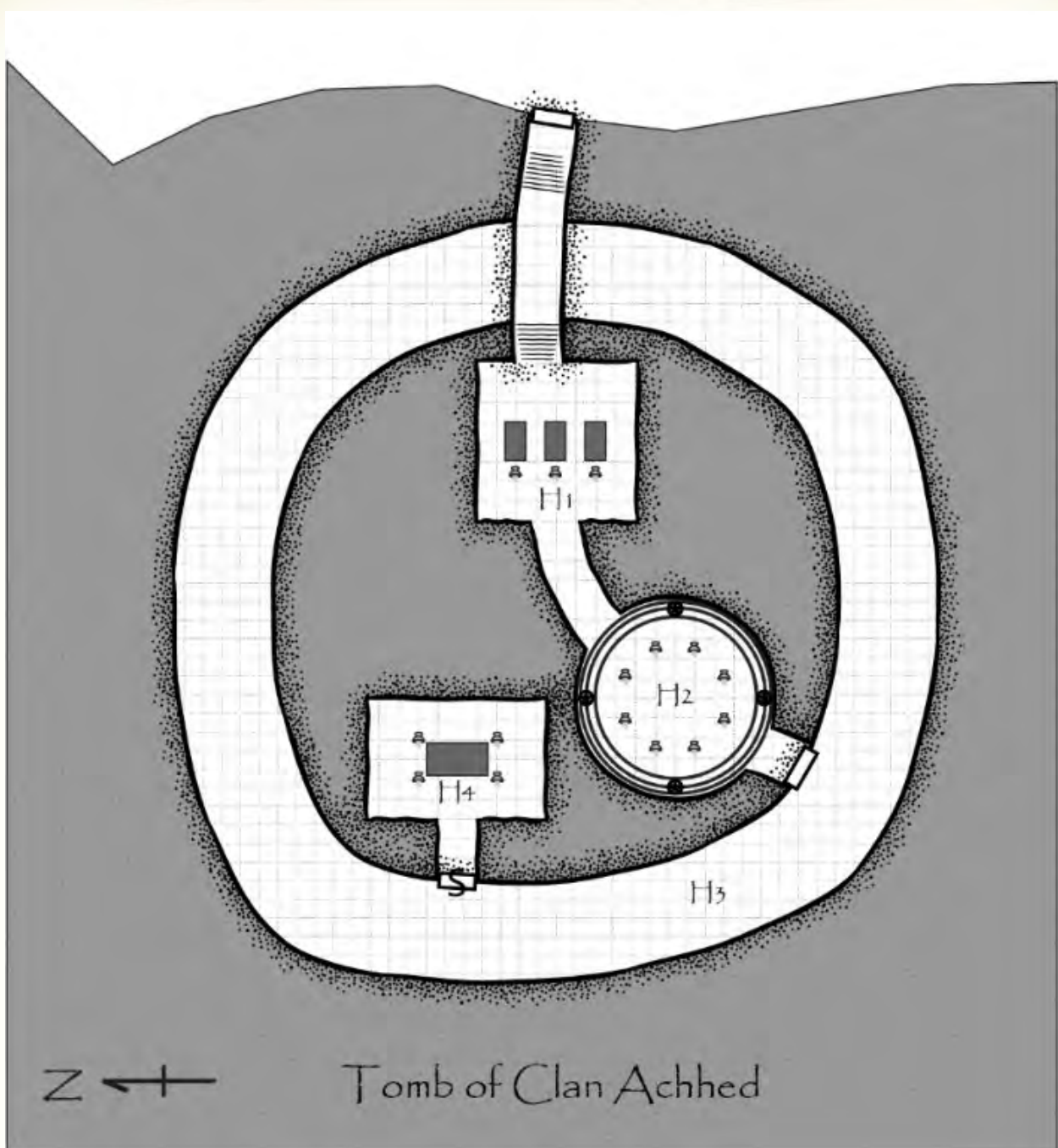
If the PCs stop to examine the chamber, read:

The wall murals here show the tall, barrel-chested warrior fighting a very tall, green-skinned and gangly person with fleshy hair, dressed in great finery, with the battle raging all around them.

The "tall, barrel-chested warrior" is Musraaf and the "very tall, green-skinned and gangly person with fleshy hair, dressed in great finery" is the troll king King Yorg-yanak of the Sageocracy.

Tactics: The Ancestral Chariot can easily drive through the hallway because the floors and walls are so smooth and well paved. The Chariot will drive in a counterclockwise direction, attacking or trampling the PCs until it is destroyed. If the PCs escape to the Sarcophagus Room, the Ancestral Chariot will simply wait for them to exit the room again.

Development: The door to the Sarcophagus Room is poorly hidden, requiring a Search check (DC 10) to find



but a Disable Device check (DC 22) or 45 points of damage (hardness 8) to break down. The door is located such that (Musraaf) is framed by the door and the door's trigger is hidden by his sword.

H4) Sarcophagus Room (EL 10)

Bestow Curse Trap (CR 4) 1x - see Appendix 3

Chain Lightning Trap (CR 7) 1x - see Appendix 3

Deathblade Scythe Trap (CR 8) 1x - see Appendix 3

Acid Arrow Trap (CR 8) 2x - see Appendix 3

The room contains only the sarcophagus, no creatures are present.

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This chamber is 20 x 30 feet and contains nothing but a large sarcophagus. The sarcophagus is a plain stone box with a lid.

The sarcophagus is extensively trapped. The first time it is touched, a *bestow curse* trap will activate. A *chain lightning* trap will activate when the lid is tampered with, affecting any targets within the room. Finally, when someone reaches into the sarcophagus, a deathblade scythe trap will activate, slicing up out of the bottom of the sarcophagus while two *acid arrow* traps will activate in the hallway outside, preferentially targeting anyone standing just outside the sarcophagus room.

If the PCs stop to examine the chamber, read:

The murals here show the victorious tall, barrel-chested warrior beheading a very tall, green-skinned and gangly person with fleshy hair, dressed in great finery, and then standing over the body triumphantly, holding his enemy's head high for all to see.

The "tall, barrel-chested warrior" is Musraaf and the "very tall, green-skinned and gangly person with fleshy hair, dressed in great finery" is the troll king Yorg-yanak of the Sageocracy.

Development: The sarcophagus is empty except for a fragment of the Banner of the Ancestors - The Tapestry of the Inner Eye (see Appendix 2)

D) Tomb of Clan Asiim

The wall murals of the Asiim Tomb tell the story of the death of the Neegus Musraaf and the split of the tribes.

The tomb has been breached by the Defiler of Tombs and its undead spawn.

A1) Defiled Guard Room (EL 12)

Bugdead Centipede Swarm (CR 6) 6x - see Appendix 1

Spawn of the Tomb Defiler (CR 9) 1x - see Appendix 1

The Musraafi Ancestral guardians of this chamber have been slain and consumed by the bugdead centipedes. The undead centipedes will attack the PCs soon after they enter the chamber.

You enter a roughly 30 x 30 foot chamber, with a large uneven opening in the opposite wall. Three stone biers once stood in this chamber, upon each likely laid an ancient body. Now the chamber is in complete disarray - the biers smashed and the corpses torn to pieces and scattered everywhere.

If the PCs stop to examine the chamber, read:

The remaining walls are covered with murals here - they show the tall, barrel-chested warrior and his honor guard on a hunt, with the tall, barrel-chested warrior tragically being crushed under the weight of a slain beast as he drives his lance through the dying creature.

The "tall, barrel-chested warrior" is Musraaf and the honor guards are the four clan heads/honors guards of the Neegus Musraaf: the warlords Rasiim, Asiim, Achhed, and Shalil.

A2) Defiled Burning Blood Arena (EL 12)

Bugdead Centipede Swarm (CR 6) 3x - see Appendix 1

Spawn of the Tomb Defiler (CR 9) 2x - see Appendix 1

This chamber is roughly 40 feet across, with a doorway on the opposite wall. It looks much like arenas you've seen, with the circular walls rising like steps or tiered seating. Several undead insects skitter across the ceiling towards you, avoiding the devastated floor completely.

If the PCs stop to examine the chamber, read:

The wall murals that remain show the tall, barrel-chested warrior's four honor guards begin to argue amongst themselves for leadership, each drawing their blade against the others.

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The “tall, barrel-chested warrior” is Musraaf and the honor guards are the four clan heads/honors guards of the Neegas Musraaf: the warlords Rasiim, Asiim, Achhed, and Shalil.

The floor of the arena has been churned up by the passage of the Tomb Defiler and is now difficult terrain (each square of the floor counts as 2 squares of movement. Running or charging across the floor is impossible). The tiers around the room are still intact, however.

A3) Defiled Hall of Honor (EL 13)

The Defiler of Tombs (CR 13) x1 - see Appendix 1

The massive Defiler of Tombs moved through this hallway and dug out a nest along the way - it blocks the way to the Sarcophagus Room.

You step into a 25-foot-wide hallway that curves out of sight to the right; to the left, the hallway has collapsed. The stones of the walls and floor in this hallway are torn up and scattered about.

The hallway to the left is blocked and has been made completely impassable through mundane means (if the rubble is cleared, more simply tumbles in from above; the rubble pile is 20 feet thick, should the PCs have the means to bypass it. When the PCs start down the hallway to the right, read:

Walking along the curving hallway, after a few moments you come to a large chamber that has been burrowed out of the surrounding earth and stone. Within, a massive insectile horror coils and writhes.

When it notices the PCs, the Defiler of Tombs will immediately attack. It will chase the party back down the hallway and through the rest of the tomb if necessary, but it will not venture out onto the obsidian for any reason. If the PCs escape to the Sarcophagus Room, the Defiler of Tombs will simply wait for them to exit the room again.

If the PCs stop to examine the chamber, read:

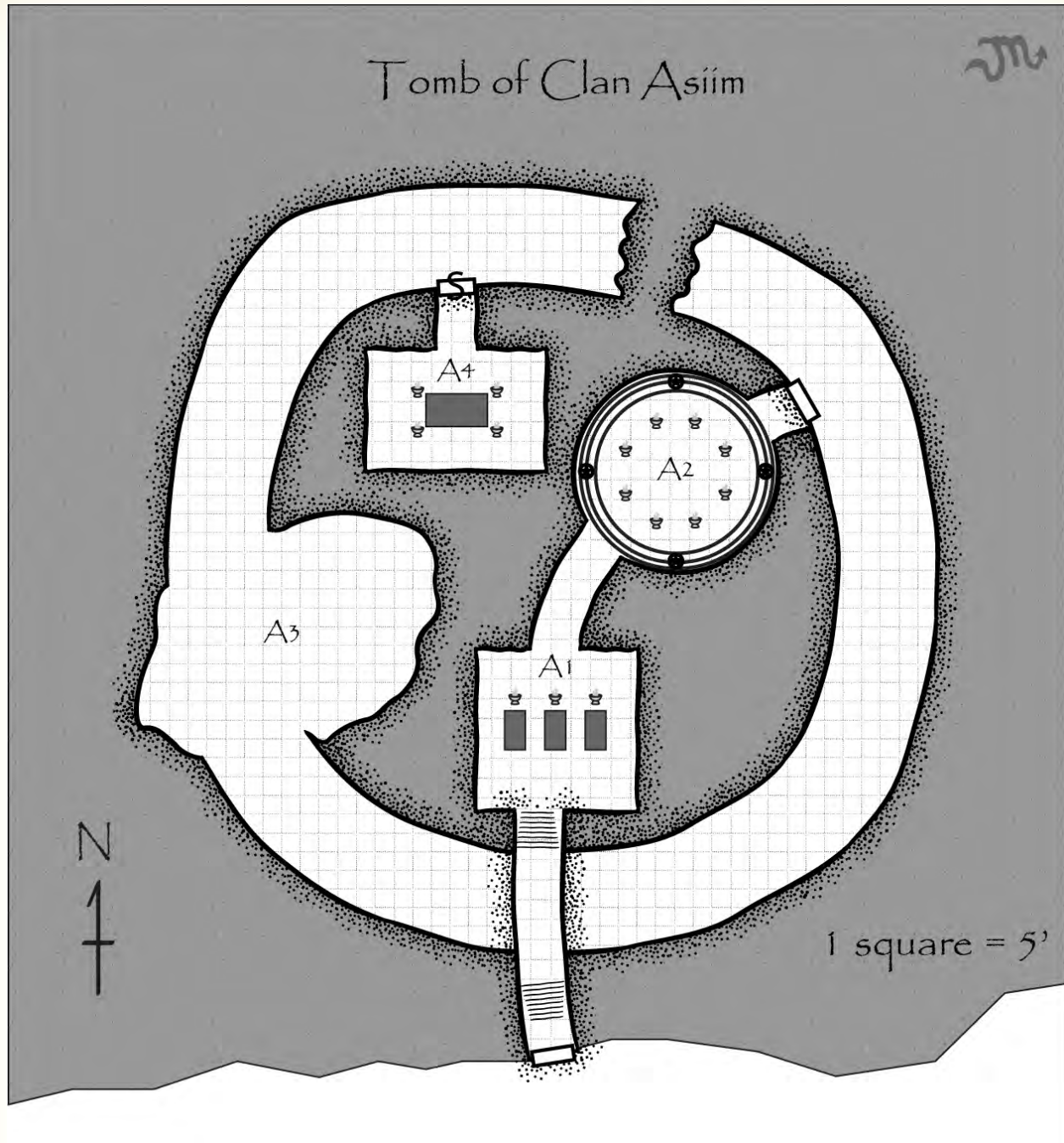
The wall murals here show the deaths of the tall, barrel-chested warrior’s four honor guards in personal combat and the clans of the chariot people coming together to bury their slain leaders before



parting ways. The four tombs are built into man-made hills and arrayed around what looks like a centrally located labor camp.

The “tall, barrel-chested warrior” is Musraaf and the honor guards are the four clan heads/honors guards of the Neegas Musraaf: the warlords Rasiim, Asiim, Achhed, and Shalil. The chariot peoples are the ancestors of Musraaf’s Chosen.

Development: The door to the Sarcophagus Room is poorly hidden, requiring a Search check (DC 10) to find but a Disable Device check (DC 22) or 45 points of damage (hardness 8) to break down. The door is located such that the four tombs frame the door and the door’s trigger is hidden in the center of the work camp.



**A4) Sarcophagus Room
(EL 10)**

Bestow Curse Trap (CR 4) 1x - see Appendix 3

Chain Lightning Trap (CR 7) 1x - see Appendix 3

Deathblade Scythe Trap (CR 8) 1x - see Appendix 3

Acid Arrow Trap (CR 3) 2x - see Appendix 3

The room contains only the sarcophagus, no creatures are present.

This chamber is 20 x 30 feet and contains nothing but a large sarcophagus. The sarcophagus is a plain stone box with a lid.

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The sarcophagus is extensively trapped. The first time it is touched, a *bestow curse* trap will activate. A *chain lightning* trap will activate when the lid is tampered with, affecting any targets within the room. Finally, when someone reaches into the sarcophagus, a deathblade scythe trap will activate, slicing up out of the bottom of the sarcophagus while two *acid arrow* traps will activate in the hallway outside, preferentially targeting anyone standing just outside the sarcophagus room.

If the PCs stop to examine the chamber, read:

The murals here show four tombs being built, with the tribes going their separate ways as each tomb is completed.

Development: The sarcophagus is empty except for a fragment of the Banner of the Ancestors - The Banner of the Burning Blood (see Appendix 2)

Part 4: The Final Battle

Rivals (EL 13)

Zharrathe of the Mask (CR 11) 1x - See Appendix

Deshenten Axe-Guard (CR 10) 2x - see Appendix 1

With the earthquake and the recent discovery of the rifts, interest in the area has grown in Deshentu, and maps and parchments of lore describing the tombs were recently found within the Vizier's vaults. The Vizier has sent Zharrathe and some troops to locate, investigate, secure, and loot the tombs.

As you exit the tomb, you are greeted by a dark mocking laughter. A figure in dark blue robes and a harlequin mask stands upon the obsidian with haggard, armored guardians standing nearby.

"Give me your pieces of the Banner, and perhaps I won't destroy you... Deshentu could always use more slaves."



Zharrathe (the masked figure) has and will use a fragment of the Banner of the Ancestors. If the PCs don't immediately surrender themselves and their fragments, he and his guards will attack the party.

Development: Once Zharrathe and his guards are dealt with, the PCs are free to do what they will with the Banner of the Ancestors.

Concluding the Adventure

If the PCs manage to successfully explore the Tombs of the Ancestors, encounter Zharrathe and survive, they have choices to make. The party can give the Banner to Inbed, Tatia, the Deshentens, or attempt to keep it for themselves.

When they try to leave the area, the PCs will encounter Musraaf's Chosen or the Deshenten forces, depending on the direction of travel. If such an encounter is not desired by the PCs, they are free to attempt to evade

those forces, likely requiring stealth, magic or psionics to do so.

If Inbed is given the Banner, he quickly unites the clans and leads them in a brutal war against their neighbors. The conflict eventually decimates the ranks of Musraaf's Chosen, but pushes the border with the Disciples to the far side of the Fouled Sea and extends the Bone Lands southwest to the ruins of Small Home, ultimately only held back by Ahnthiyarka's bugdead

and the Kingdoms of Gretch. They also force Deshentu to withdraw much further to the east, eventually warring much more strongly with Shadowmourn and Harkor for land and troops.

If Tatia is given the Banner, he also uses it to unite the clans, but moves to strengthen the clans and the borders of the Bone Lands. While less overtly disruptive to the status quo, the new levels of unity and coordination amongst the nomads makes the Musraaf's Chosen far more dangerous in the long run, allowing them to strike out at incursions and enemies more forcefully than ever before. Deshentu's advances into the Bone Lands will be completely halted, leading to hostilities with Shadowmourn and Harkor similar to those seen should Inbed obtain the Banner.

Should Deshentu obtain the Banner, the Vizier quickly installs a puppet Neegas (firmly under his personal, magically compelled, control) and expands to encompass nearly all the Bone Lands. With such armies at his command, the Vizier quickly secures his remaining borders: enhancing the Killing Grounds immensely until they are totally impassable by ground forces and building defensive forts along the eastern edge of the Fouled Sea. Corpse mining operations are implemented throughout the former Bone Lands and New Deshentu's neighbors make concerted diplomatic efforts to maintain their sovereignty (and continued existence).

If the PCs keep the Banner for themselves, they have made enemies of both Inbed and Tatia, but the consequences will depend on the Banner's status. If unassembled, the fragments of the Banner are relatively unremarkable and as long as the PCs avoid the Bone Lands and Deshentu, there will be few consequences. Should the Banner of the Ancestors be assembled, however, it will be a 'lighting rod' for trouble: agents and assassins from every undead nation in the northern Dead Lands will seek out the PCs in an attempt to secure the Banner for themselves. Everywhere the Banner is taken in the Dead Lands, individuals and nations will attempt to capture it and destroy the PCs, whether for glory, personal power, or political favor.

Further Adventures

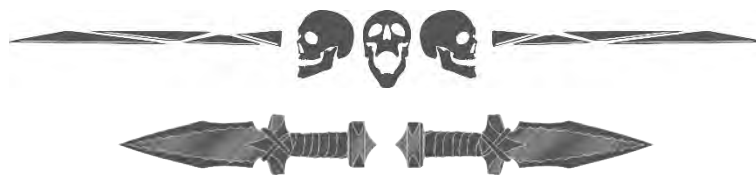
Depending on what choices the PCs make regarding ownership of the Banner of the Ancestors, many subsequent adventures could follow.

If Inbed has the Banner, Gretch might contact the PCs, seeking to force an incursion by the Musraaf's Chosen into the Shale Lands, triggering an invasion of the budgead into the (newly acquired) western Bone Lands and thereby securing his western border against the nomads. As this mess was all their fault, Gretch obviously expects the party's full cooperation in this matter.

If Tatia received the Banner, the Disciples may contact the PCs, seeking ambassadors to the Bone Lands. With Tatia's consolidation of power and strengthening of his borders, combined with the general level of respect that Musraaf's Chosen have for the Black God's face (as the nomads do not normally dig into or otherwise deface the obsidian), the Disciples have decided to make overtures of alliance with the Musraaf's Chosen and wish to do so through the group that brought the Neegas to power.

If Deshentu obtained the Banner, agents from Shadowmourn bring an offer to the PCs. Qwith deeply resents having to treat anyone as her equal, much less having to pretend the Vizier is her better; the duchess of Shadowmourn offers to fund the party in an effort to crumble the Deshenten Empire from within, contacting cells of potential allies hidden at Nuubark, Nolok Island, the Maze of Scales, and Gzhabakr. Qwith's agents will even put the PCs in touch with dissatisfied warlords within Musraaf's Chosen, eager to throw off the yoke of Deshenten slavery.

Finally, if the PCs have the chance to see the restored Banner in the light of both moons, they will see a series of odd symbols and patterns exposed by the combined moonlight. Research and divinations will eventually reveal that the symbols and patterns are a map - a map surely leading to the burial place of the Neegus Musraaf.



Appendix I: Monsters & NPCs

Bugdead Centipede Swarm CR 6

Elite Zombie Bugdead Centipede Swarm

NE Diminutive Undead

Init: +6; Senses: Darkvision 60 ft.; Tremorsense 30 ft.;
Listen +2, Search +0, Spot +2

Languages: -

AC: 20, touch 20, flat-footed 14
(+4 size, +6 Dex)

hp 49 (9d12)

Damage Reduction: 3/metal; **Resistance:** Fire 5

Immune: Cold, Electricity, Swarm Traits, Undead Traits

Saves: Fort +3, Ref +9, Will +8

Speed: 20 ft. (8 squads), Climb 20 ft.

Melee: Swarm (2d6 plus poison)

Space: 10 ft.; **Reach:** 0 ft.

Base Attack: +0; **Grapple:** -

Combat Options: Distraction (DC 13), Swarm (2d6 plus poison DC 13, 1d4 Dex dmg)

Abilities: Str 5, Dex 23, Con -, Int -, Wis 14, Cha 3

SQ: Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60 ft., Fire Resistance, Immune to Weapon Damage, Immunities, Swarm traits, Tremorsense 30 ft., Undead Traits.

Feats: -

Skills: -

Distraction (Ex): Any living creature that begins its turn with a zombie bugdead centipede swarm in its space must succeed on a DC 13 Fortitude save or be nauseated for 1 round. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 13, initial and secondary damage 1d4 Dex. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Skills: Zombie bugdead centipede swarms have a +8 bonus on Climb checks. They can use either their Strength or Dexterity modifier for Climb checks, whichever is higher. Centipede swarms can take 10 on Climb checks, even if threatened or distracted.

Tremorsense (Ex): A zombie bugdead centipede swarm is sensitive to vibrations in the ground and can

automatically pinpoint the location of anything that is in contact with the ground within 60 feet.



Defiler of Tombs CR 13

Elite Zombie Bugdead Colossal Monstrous Centipede

NE Colossal Undead

Init: +1; Senses: Darkvision 60ft.; Listen +0, Search +0, Spot +6

Aura: Fear (60 ft, DC 22)

Languages: -

AC: 25, touch 5, flat-footed 22
(-8 size, +3 Dex, +20 Nat)

hp 204 (24d12+48)

Damage Reduction: 3/metal; **Resistance:** Fire 5

Immune: Cold, Electricity, Undead Traits

Saves: Fort +8, Ref +10, Will +16

Speed: 40 ft. (8 squads), Climb 40 ft.

Melee: Bite +16 (4d6+16 plus Poison; 20/x2)

Space: 30 ft.; **Reach:** 20 ft.

Base Attack: +12; **Grapple:** +39

Combat Options: Acidic Blood (DC 22, 2d6 acid dmg), Poison (DC 22, 2d6 Dex dmg)

Abilities: Str 34, Dex 16, Con -, Int -, Wis 14, Cha 1

SQ: Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60 ft., **Enhanced Ability (Nat AC)**, Fire Resistance, **Gray Toughness 2**, Immunity to Cold and Electricity, **Non-detection** (DC 34), Undead Traits.

Feats: -

Skills: Climb +18, Hide +5, Spot +6.

Acidic Blood (Su): Each time damage is dealt to the Defiler of Tombs with a piercing or slashing attack, its blood sprays outward in a 10 ft cone, dealing 2d6 points of acid damage to all within range (DC 10 + ½ HD + Con modifier) Reflex save for half. The Defiler of Tombs is not harmed by its own blood.

Poison (Ex): A monstrous centipede has a poisonous bite. The details vary by the centipede's size. The save

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DCs are Constitution-based. The indicated damage is both initial and secondary damage.

Skills: Monstrous centipedes have a +4 racial bonus on Spot checks, and a +8 racial bonus on Climb and Hide checks. They can use either their Strength or Dexterity modifier for Climb checks, whichever is higher. Monstrous centipedes can take 10 on Climb checks, even if threatened or distracted.



Deshenten Axe-Guard CR 10

Male or Female Dwarf Thinking Zombie Fighter 7
NE Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Dwarf)
Init: +3; Senses: Darkvision 60ft.; Listen +7, Search +10, Spot +10
Aura: -
Languages: Classic Dwarven, Ulyanese, Ulyanese Giant

AC: 27; touch 14, flat-footed 24; Dodge, Mobility (+3 Dex, +6 armor, +3 shield, +4 Nat, +1 Def)
hp 59 (7d12+14)

Resistances: Cold 10, Electricity 10

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Phobia, Vulnerability to Blessed Elements

Saves: Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +3

Speed: 20 ft.

Melee: Battleaxe +12 (1d8+6; 20/x3) or Claw +11 (1d4+4; 20/x2)

Full Melee: Battleaxe +12/+7 (1d8+6; 20/x3) or 2x Claw +11 (1d4+4; 20/x2)

Ranged: Javelin +10 (1d6+4, Range 30ft; 20/x2)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +7/+2; **Grapple:** +11

Combat Options: Ability Drain (DC 13), Combat Reflexes (4/round), Disease (DC 13),

Combat Gear: Chitin Heavy Shield +1, Obsidian Battleaxe +1, Bone Javelin x4, Scale Mail +1.

Abilities: Str 18, Dex 16, Con --, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 12
SQ: Darkvision 60 ft., Gray Toughness 2, Phobia, Resistances, Skills, Undead traits, Vulnerability to Blessed Elements.

Feats: Combat Reflexes ^B, Dodge ^B, Implacable Defender, Mobility ^B, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (Battleaxe), Weapon Specialization (Battleaxe) ^B.

Skills: Climb +8, Craft (weaponsmithing) +8, Intimidate +4, Jump +7, Listen +7, Search +10, Sense Motive +9, Spot +10.

Possessions: 7,200cp or combat gear plus: Psionic Tattoo of *Concealing Amorpha* (ML 3rd) x2, Ring of Protection +1.

Ability Drain (Su): Living creatures hit by the undead's natural attacks must succeed on a Fortitude save or take 1d6 points of ability drain. On each such successful attack, the undead gains 5 temporary hit points.

Disease (Su): A thinking zombie's bite delivers one of the following diseases (50% chance of either). The save DC is 10 + ½ thinking zombie's HD + thinking zombie's Cha modifier.

- Filth fever—bite, Fortitude save, incubation period 1d3 days, damage 1d3 Dex and 1d3 Con.
- Red ache—bite, Fortitude save, incubation period 1d3 days, damage 1d6 Str.

Dwarf Traits:

- Stability: A dwarf gains a +4 bonus on ability checks made to resist being bull rushed or tripped when standing on the ground (but not when climbing, flying, riding, or otherwise not standing firmly on the ground).
- Weapons Familiarity: To dwarves, the urgrosh is treated as a martial rather than exotic weapon.
- a +2 racial bonus on saving throws against spells and spell-like effects.
- a +1 morale bonus on all checks directly related to their focus. This includes a skill bonus, an attack bonus, a damage bonus, or a saving throw bonus, or even a bonus to manifestation or spell save DCs.

Vulnerability to Blessed Elements (Ex): A thinking zombie takes half again as much (+50%) damage as normal from blessed elements.



Deshenten Giant Skeleton Bombardiers CR 6

Desert Giant Skeletons
Neutral Evil Huge Undead

Adventures in the Dead Lands

Init: +7; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft., Listen +0, and Spot +0

Aura: -

Languages: (Ulyanese Giant)

AC: 14; touch 11, flat-footed 11

(+3 Dex, +3 natural, -2 size)

hp 112 (14 HD; 14d12+14); **Fast Healing:** 3

Damage Reduction: 5/Bludgeoning.

Immune: Cold, Undead Traits; **Weakness:**

Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects

Saves: Fort +4, Ref +7, Will +9

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares)

Melee: Claw +13 (1d8+8) or Slam +13 (1d8+8)

Full Melee: 2x Claw +13 (1d8+8) or 2x Slam +13 (1d8+8)

Ranged: Rocks +8 (2d8+8; 140 ft range; 20/x2)

Full Ranged: Rocks +8 (2d8+8; 140 ft range; 20/x2)

Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.

Base Attack +7/+2; **Grapple** +21

Combat Options: Rock Throwing

Combat Gear: Boulder x6

Abilities: Str 27, Dex 17, Con -, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 1

Special Qualities: **Fast Healing**, **Gray Toughness 1**,

Immunity to Cold, Undead traits, **Vulnerability to**

Mind-Affecting Effects.

Feats: Improved Initiative

Skills: -

Possessions: -

Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects (Ex): The undead, unlike most others of its type, is susceptible to mind-affecting effects, which affect the undead as though its type were the same as that of a living version of the creature (or as a humanoid, if it has no living analog).



Deshenten Spider Archer CR 8

Male or Female Human Feal Fighter 6

NE Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Human)

Init: +8; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft.; Listen +6, Search +4, Spot +6

Aura: -

Languages: Ulyanese

AC: 25, touch 14, flat-footed 21

(+4 Dex, +6 Nat, +5 armor)

hp 51 (6d12 +12); **Fast Healing:** 3

Damage Reduction: 5/magic

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** **Cast No Shadow**

Saves: Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +4

Speed: 30 ft.; Spider Climb

Melee: Great Macahuitl +10 (2d6+4; 19-20/x2) or Slam +10 (1d6+3) or Bite +10 (2d6+3; 18-20/x3)

Full Melee: Great Macahuitl +10/+5 (2d6+4; 19-20/x2) or 2x Slam +10 (1d6+3) and Bite +5 (2d6+1; 18-20/x3)

Ranged: Longbow +12 (1d8+6; Range 110 ft.; 20/x3)

Full Ranged: Longbow +12/+7 (1d8+6; Range 110 ft.; 20/x3)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +6/+1; **Grapple:** +9

Combat Options: Combat Reflexes, Cleave, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Precise Shot

Combat Gear: Chitin Armor +1, Composite (+3) Longbow +1, MW Great Macahuitl, Obsidian Arrows x50

Spell-Like Abilities (Sp): At will - **cat's grace**, spider climb; **CL** = HD.

Abilities: Str 16, Dex 18, Con -, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 14

Special Qualities: **Cast No Shadow**, Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60 ft., **Enhanced Ability (Nat AC)**, **Fast Healing**, Gray Toughness 2, Maw, Skills, Undead Traits.

Feats: Combat Reflexes, Cleave, Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot ^B, Power Attack, Precise Shot ^B, Weapon Focus (Longbow) ^B, Weapon Specialization (Longbow) ^B.

Skills: Climb +8, Craft (weaponsmithing) +6, Jump +8, Listen +6, Search +4, Spot +6.

Possessions: 5600cp or Combat gear plus: Cloak of Resistance +1, Psionic Tattoo of *Dissolving Weapon* (ML 4th).



Deshenten Swiftwings CR 5

Flying Elf Skeleton Creations

Neutral Evil Medium Undead

Adventures in the Dead Lands

Initiative: +7; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft., Listen +0, and Spot +0

Aura: -

Languages: (understand Classic Elven)

AC: 15; touch 13, flat-footed 12

(+3 Dex, +2 natural)

hp 28 (4 HD; 4d12)

Damage Reduction: 5/Bludgeoning; **Spell Resistance:** 15

Immune: Cold, Undead Traits; **Weakness -**

Saves: Fort +1, Ref +4, Will +4

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), Fly 60 ft. (Good)

Melee: **Claw** +4 (1d8+2)

Full Melee: 2x **Claw** +4 (1d8+2)

Ranged: Rocks +5 (1d6+2; 20/x2)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Base Attack +2; **Grapple** +4

Combat Options: Drop Rocks

Combat Gear: Rocks x6

Abilities: Str 14, Dex 16, Con -, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 1

Special Qualities: Immunity to Cold, Undead Traits.

Feats: Improved Initiative

Skills: -

Possessions: -

Description

These strange undead were assembled out of the bones from the skeletons of a short elf-like humanoid (only 6 feet in height) and strange bat-like creatures, both found in a mass grave at the edge of the Bone Lands. Instead of arms, the Swiftwings have bat-like wings covered with stretched leather, and their feet are taloned claws that allow them to grip objects and creatures. Although these undead horrors walk in a humanoid manner, the movement of their upper limbs is disconcertingly uncoordinated with the remainder of the skeleton, suggesting their unnatural status as hybrid creations.



Musraafi Ancestral Chariot

CR 13

NE Huge Undead

Init: +5; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft.; Listen +25, Spot +25

Aura: -

Languages: - (understands Ulyanese)

AC 25, touch 11, flat-footed 24

(+1 Dex, +14 Nat)

hp 170 (20d12+40)

Damage Reduction: 5/magic

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** **Turn Submission** (-4; as 16 HD)

Saves: Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +14

Speed: 60 ft.

Melee: Lance +15 (1d8+10; 20/x3) or Hoof +15 (1d4+7)

Full Melee: Lance +15/+10 (1d8+10; 20/x3) or Hoof +15 (1d4+7) and Bite +10 (1d3+3)

Ranged: Javelin +9 (1d6+7; Range 30 ft.; 20/x3)

Full Ranged: Javelin +9/+4 (1d6+7; Range 30 ft.; 20/x3)

Space: 15 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +10/+5; **Grapple:** +25

Combat Options: Combat Reflexes (2/round), Despair (DC 20), Great Cleave, Multiple Attacks, Power Attack, Trample (DC 20, 2d6+10)

Combat Gear: Bone Lance, Bone Javelins x20

Abilities: Str 24, Dex 12, Con -, Int 6, Wis 14, Cha 10

Special Qualities: Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60 ft., Gray Toughness 2, **Turn Submission**, Undead Traits.

Feats: Combat Reflexes, Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (Lance), Weapon Focus (Shortbow),

Skills: Listen +25, Spot +25.

Possessions: -

Despair (Su): At the mere sight of an ancestral chariot, the viewer must succeed on Will save or be paralyzed with fear for 1d4 rounds. Whether or not the save is successful, that creature cannot be affected again by the same undead's despair ability for 24 hours.

Multiple Attacks (Ex): An ancestral chariot may make two extra standard attacks each round, each with a different weapon, in addition to any Hoof, Bite or Trample attacks it makes. Normally, an ancestral chariot will attempt to Trample foes, and also make a standard attack with both its lance and a javelin.

Trample (Ex): An ancestral chariot can trample Large creatures. Opponents who do not make attacks of opportunity against the object can attempt Reflex saves (DC 10 + ½ object's HD + object's Str modifier) to halve the damage.

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Description

What at first seemed to be a horse-drawn chariot manned by a pair of undead now seems to a horrifying composite creature - animals, conveyance and drivers all fused together in undeath.

The lives (and truly even the identities) of these charioteers were so intertwined with their chariots and draft animals that they were all buried together, and in fact rose into undeath together. Now, they function as a single amalgamated creature, chasing down foes with hoof, lance and javelin.



Musrafi Ancestral Lieutenant Spearmen CR 9

Female Human Fael Psychic Warrior 8

Neutral Evil Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Human, Psionic)

Init: +1; Senses Darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +7, Search +4, Spot +7

Aura: -

Languages: Ulyanese

AC: 23, touch 11, flat-footed 22; Dodge, Mobility (+1 Dex, +4 Nat, +5 armor, +3 shield)

hp 76 (8d12 +24); **Fast Healing:** 3;

Damage Reduction: 5/magic

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Cast No Shadow, Turn Submission (as 4 HD)

Saves: Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +5

Speed: 30 ft (6 squares)

Melee: Shortspear +12 (1d6+5; 20/x2) or Slam +10 (1d6+4) or Bite +10 (2d6+4; 18-20/x3)

Full Melee: Shortspear +12/+7 (1d6+5; 20/x2) or 2x Slam +10 (1d6+4) and Bite +5 (2d6+2; 18-20/x3)

Ranged: Shortspear +8 (1d6+4; Range 20 ft.; 20/x2) or Longbow +8 (1d8; Range 100 ft.; 20/x3)

Full Ranged: Shortspear +8/+3 (1d6+4; Range 20 ft.; 20/x2) or Longbow +8/+3 (1d8; Range 100 ft.; 20/x3)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +6/+1; **Grapple:** +10

Combat Actions Cleave, Greater Psionic Weapon (+4d6), Power Attack, Psionic Meditation (Move action)

Combat Gear: Bone Shortspear +1, Bone Shortspear x4, Chitin Armor +1, Chitin Heavy Shield +1, Longbow, Obsidian Arrows x20

Psi-Warrior Powers (ML 8th, PSP: 19+12, DC 13 + power level):

3rd: Ectoplasmic Form, Mental Barrier

2nd: Animal Affinity, Body Adjustment, Psionic Lion's Charge

1st: Defensive Precognition, Offensive Prescience, Skate

Abilities: Str 18, Dex 13, Con -, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 14

Special Qualities: Cast No Shadow, Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60 ft., Fast Healing, Gray Toughness 3, Maw, Skills, Turn Submission (-4), Undead Traits.

Feats: Cleave, Dodge, Greater Psionic Weapon^B, Mobility, Power Attack, Psionic Meditation^B, Psionic Weapon^B, Weapon Focus (Spear)^B.

Skills: Autohypnosis +14, Climb +3, Concentration +13, Knowledge (Psionics) +11, Listen +7, Search +4, Sense Motive +7, Spot +7.

Possessions: 9400 cp or combat gear plus: Belt of Strength +2, Psionic Tattoo of *Concealing Amorpha* x2.



Musrafi Ancestral Spearmen CR 8

Male or Female Human Fael Fighter 6

NE Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Human, Psionic)

Init: +6; Senses: Darkvision 60ft.; Listen +6, Search +4, Spot +6

Aura: -

Languages: Ulyanese

AC: 26, touch 12, flat-footed 24; Dodge, Mobility (+2 Dex, +6 Nat, +5 armor, +3 shield)

hp 51 (6d12 +12); **Fast Healing** 3

Damage Reduction: 5/magic

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Cast No Shadow

Saves: Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +4

Speed: 30 ft.

Melee: Shortspear +11 (1d6+4; 20/x2) or Slam +9 (1d6+3) or Bite +9 (2d6+3; 18-20/x3)

Full Melee: Shortspear +11/+6 (1d6+4; 20/x2) or 2x Slam +9 (1d6+3) and Bite +4 (2d6+1; 18-20/x3)

Ranged: Shortspear +8 (1d6+3; Range 20 ft.; 20/x2) or Longbow +8 (1d8; Range 100 ft.; 20/x3)

Adventures in the Dead Lands

Full Ranged: Shortspear +8 (1d6+3; Range 20 ft.; 20/x2) or Longbow +8 (1d8; Range 100 ft.; 20/x3)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +6/+1; **Grapple:** +9

Combat Options: Combat Reflexes, Cleave, **Dehydrating Touch (8d6)**, Power Attack, Spring Attack

Combat Gear: Bone Shortspear +1, Bone Shortspear x4, Chitin Armor +1, Chitin Heavy Shield +1, Longbow, Obsidian Arrows x20

Abilities: Str 16, Dex 14, Con -, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 14

Special Qualities: **Cast No Shadow**, Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60 ft., **Enhanced Ability (Nat AC)**, **Fast Healing**, Gray Toughness 2, Maw, Skills, Undead Traits.

Feats: Combat Reflexes, Cleave, Dodge ^B, Improved Initiative, Mobility ^B, Power Attack, Quick Draw ^B, Spring Attack ^B.

Skills: Climb +8, Craft (weaponsmithing) +6, Jump +8, Listen +6, Search +4, Spot +6.

Possessions: 5600cp or Combat gear plus: Cloak of Resistance +1.

Dehydrating Touch (Su): The undead can drain the moisture from a living creature (except for creatures that do not require water to survive). As a standard action, the undead makes a touch attack that does not provoke an attack of opportunity. If it hits, the victim suffers 1d6 points of nonlethal damage per CR (adjusted by special abilities and weaknesses) and becomes fatigued. A creature that makes a Fortitude save reduces the damage by half. The nonlethal damage cannot be recovered until the creature drinks its daily requirement of water.



Musrafi Burning Blood Ancestor CR 9

Female Human Fael Psychic Warrior 8

Neutral Evil Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Human, Psionic)

Init: +1; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +7, Search +4, Spot +7

Aura: -

Languages: Ulyanese

AC: 20, touch 11, flat-footed 19; **Dodge, Mobility** (+1 Dex, +4 Nat, +5 armor)

hp 76 (8d12 +24); **Fast Healing: 3;**

Damage Reduction: 5/magic

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** **Turn Submission (as 4 HD)**, **Vulnerability to Cold**

Saves: Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +5

Speed: 40 ft (8 squares)

Melee: Falchion +12 (2d4+7; 18-20/x2) or Slam +10 (1d6+4) or Bite +10 (2d6+4; 18-20/x3)

Full Melee: Falchion +12/+7 (2d4+7; 18-20/x2) or 2x Slam +10 (1d6+4) and Bite +5 (2d6+2; 18-20/x3)

Ranged: shortspear +7 (1d6+4; Range 20 ft.; 20/x2)

Full Ranged: Shortspear +7/+2 (1d6+4; Range 20 ft.; 20/x2)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +6/+1; **Grapple:** +10

Combat Actions Cleave, *Fire Shield*, Greater Psionic Weapon (+4d6), Power Attack, Psionic Meditation (Move action)

Combat Gear: Bronze Falchion +1, Bone Shortspear x4, Chitin Armor +1, Longbow, Obsidian Arrows x20

Psi-Warrior Powers (ML 8th, PSP: 31, DC 13 + power level):

3rd: Ectoplasmic Form, Mental Barrier

2nd: Animal Affinity, Body Adjustment, Psionic Lion's Charge

1st: Defensive Precognition, Offensive Prescience, Skate

Spell-Like Abilities (Sp): **Fire Shield, Longstrider; CL = HD.**

Abilities Str 18, Dex 13, Con -, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 14

Special Qualities: Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60 ft., **Fast Healing**, **Gray Toughness 3**, Maw, Skills, **Turn Submission (-4)**, Undead Traits, **Vulnerability to Cold.**

Feats: Cleave, Dodge, Greater Psionic Weapon ^B, Mobility, Power Attack, Psionic Meditation ^B, Psionic Weapon ^B, Weapon Focus (Falchion) ^B.

Skills: Autohypnosis +14, Climb +3, Concentration +13, Knowledge (Psionics) +11, Listen +7, Search +4, Sense Motive +7, Spot +7.

Possessions: 9400 cp or combat gear plus: Belt of Strength +2, Psionic Tattoo of *Greater Concealing Amorpha* x2.



Spawn of the Defiler CR 9

Elite Bugdead Zombie Colossal Monstrous Centipede

NE Large Undead

Init: +3; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft.; Listen +1, Search +0, Spot +1

Aura: -

Languages: -

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 13

(-1 size, +3 Dex, +4 Nat)

hp 156 (24d12)

Damage Reduction: 3/metal; **Resistance:** Fire 5

Immune: Cold, Electricity, Undead Traits; **Weakness:**

Vulnerability to Sunlight

Saves: Fort +8, Ref +11, Will +15

Speed: 40 ft. (8 squads), Climb 40 ft.

Melee: Bite +12 (2d6+1 plus Poison; 20/x2)

Space: 10 ft.; Reach: 5 ft.

Base Attack: +12; **Grapple:** +17

Combat Options: Poison (DC 22, 2d6 Dex dmg)

Combat Gear: -

Abilities: Str 13, Dex 17, Con -, Int -, Wis 12, Cha 1

Special Qualities: Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60 ft., **Enhanced Ability (+2 Strength)**, Fire Resistance, Immunity to Cold and Electricity, Undead Traits, **Vulnerability to Sunlight**.

Feats: -

Skills: -

Possessions: -

Poison (Ex): A monstrous centipede has a poisonous bite. The details vary by the centipede's size, as shown on the table. The save DCs are Constitution-based. The indicated damage is both initial and secondary damage.

Skills: Zombie bugdead monstrous centipedes have a +8 bonus on Climb checks. They can use either their Strength or Dexterity modifier for Climb checks, whichever is higher. Monstrous centipedes can take 10 on Climb checks, even if threatened or distracted.



Zharrathe of the Mask (Fael Centurion) CR 11

Fael Human Wizard 9 / Necromant 1

CE Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Human)

Init: -1; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +5, Search +8, Spot +5

Aura: -

Languages: Classic Elven, Classic Tanysh, Ulyanese Giant, Ulyanese

AC: 19; touch 11, flat-footed 19

(-1 Dex, +4 Nat, +4 armor, +2 Def)

hp 85 (10 HD; 10d12+20)

Damage Reduction: 5/magic

Immune: **Turning**, Undead Traits; **Weakness:** -

Saves: Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +8

Speed: 40 ft.

Melee: Slam +8 (1d6+4) or Bite +8 (2d6+4; 18-20/x3) or Touch +8 (by spell)

Full Melee: 2x Slam +8 (1d6+4) and Bite +6 (2d6+2; 18-20/x3)

Ranged: Ranged Touch +3 (by spell)

Space: 5 ft.; Reach: 5 ft.

Base Attack: +4; **Grapple:** +8

Combat Options: **Blinding Touch (DC 17)**, Create Spawn

Combat Gear: -

Wizard Spells (CL 10th (11th vs. SR), DC 14 + spell level):

5th: cone of cold, wall of stone.

4th: greater invisibility, ice storm, stonesskin, wall of fire.

3rd: dispel magic, fireball, halt undead, slow.

2nd: command undead, ~~extended mage armor~~, scorching ray, web.

1st: expeditious retreat, magic missile x3, mage armor, shocking grasp, true strike.

0th: detect magic, disrupt undead, mage hand, message.

Spellbook:

5th: cone of cold, telekinesis, transmute rock to mud, wall of stone.

4th: greater invisibility, ice storm, stonesskin, wall of fire.

3rd: dispel magic, fireball, halt undead, slow.

2nd: command undead, scorching ray, see invisibility, web.

Adventures in the Dead Lands

1st: expeditious retreat, mage armor, magic missile, ray of enfeeblement, shield, shocking grasp, true strike.
0th: detect magic, disrupt undead, mage hand, message.

Abilities: Str 18, Dex 8, Con --, Int 18, Wis 12, Cha 15

Special Qualities: Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60 ft., **Enhanced Ability (+10 speed)**, **Gaseous Form**, Gray Toughness 2, Graycasting, **Immunity to Turning**, Maw, Skills, Undead Traits.

Feats: Combat Casting, Extend Spell ^B, Iron Will, Multiattack, Scribe Scroll ^B, Spell Penetration.

Skills: Bluff +9, Concentration +14(+4), Knowledge (arcana) +15, Knowledge (religion) +4, Knowledge (warcraft) +9, Listen +5, Search +8, Sense Motive +5, Spellcraft +17, Spot +5.

Possessions: 16,000cp or Combat Gear plus: Belt of Giant Strength +2, Headband of Intelligence +2, Ring of Protection +2.

Blinding Touch (Su): The undead can make a touch attack as a standard action that doesn't provoke an attack of opportunity. The touch causes blindness in the victim for 2d4 rounds. A Fortitude save negates the effect.

Create Spawn: The undead can perform a short ritual over a helpless humanoid as a full-round action. The ritual involves a coup de grace, and if the creature dies, it rises after 48 hours as a namech under the original undead's control. At any one time, the undead can have namech spawn with total HD equal to its own.

Gaseous Form (Su): Only corporeal undead have this power. The undead can assume gaseous form at will, as the spell.



Appendix 2: New Items

Banner of the Ancestors

Piece	Body Slot	Ability
Banner of the Burning Blood	Torso	as cloak of resistance +5
Banner of the Inner Eye	Shoulders	as major cloak of displacement
Skull of Nuubark	Head	as helm of telepathy
Staff of Shalil	(held)	as variant staff of healing

Combining fragments of the Banner of the Ancestors: Anyone who holds or possesses two or more fragments of the Banner of the Ancestors gains the following benefits, in addition to the benefits granted by each individual item. Anyone who holds or possesses all four fragments feels an urge to reassemble the Banner, but is not forced to do so.

Banner collection benefits

Pieces Worn	Benefit
2 pieces	gain Fast Healing 3 (or +3 to existing Fast Healing)
4 pieces	(assembled Banner only) continuous <i>prayer</i> effect (as per the spell)

Banner of the Burning Blood: This ragged scrap of cloth is crimson red, with strange golden writing upon it, and looks to be the correct size to be worn as a makeshift shirt or vest. The Banner functions as a Cloak of Resistance +5: offering magic protection in the form of a +5 resistance bonus on all saving throws (Fortitude, Reflex, and Will).

Strong abjuration; Weight 1 lb.

Banner of the Inner Eye: This appears to be a ragged scrap of cloth, albeit big enough for a person to wear as a makeshift cloak. It is embroidered with images of falling stars and pale moons. The Tapestry functions as a Major Cloak of Displacement: When worn by a character its magical properties distort and warp light



waves. This displacement works similar to the displacement spell except that it only grants a 20% miss chance on attacks against the wearer. It functions continually.

Strong illusion; Weight 1 lb.

Skull of Nuubark: This is the skull of a troll, fashioned into a helmet for a human-sized individual. The Skull functions as a Helm of Telepathy: the wearer can use

Adventures in the Dead Lands

detect thoughts at will. Furthermore, he can send a telepathic message to anyone whose surface thoughts he is reading (allowing two-way communication). Once per day, the wearer of the helm can implant a *suggestion* (as the spell, Will DC 14 negates) along with his telepathic message.

Strong divination and enchantment; Weight 3 lb.

Staff of Shalil: *This is a white ash staff, with inlaid silver runes.* This Staff functions as a *Staff of Healing*, except that it can also heal the undead instead of damaging them. It holds a maximum of 15 charges, and regains 1 charge per day. It allows use of the following spells:

- Lesser restoration (1 charge)
- Cure serious wounds (1 charge)
- Remove blindness/deafness (2 charges)
- Remove disease (3 charges)

Moderate conjuration; Weight 4 lb.



Appendix 3: Traps

Acid Arrow Trap: CR 3; magic device; proximity trigger (*alarm*); automatic reset; Atk +2 ranged touch; spell effect (*acid arrow*, 3rd-level wizard, 2d4 acid/round for 2 rounds); Search DC 27; Disable Device DC 27. Cost: 3,000 gp, 240 XP.

Bestow Curse Trap: CR 4; magic device; touch trigger (*alarm*); automatic reset; spell effect (*bestow curse*, 5th-level wizard, DC 14 Will save negates); Search DC 28; Disable Device DC 28. Cost: 8,000 gp, 640 XP.

Black Lotus Vapor Trap: CR 7; mechanical; location trigger; repair reset; gas; multiple targets (all targets in a 10-ft.-by-10-ft. area); never miss; onset delay (3 rounds); poison (black lotus fumes, DC 18 Fortitude save resists, target is paralyzed for 1 minute); Search DC 21; Disable Device DC 21. Market Price: 17,500 gp.

Chain Lightning Trap: CR 7; magic device; proximity trigger (*alarm*); automatic reset; spell effect (*chain lightning*, 11th-level wizard, 11d6 electricity to target nearest center of trigger area plus 5d6 electricity to each of up to eleven secondary targets, DC 19 Reflex Save half damage); Search DC 31; Disable Device DC 31. Cost: 33,000 gp, 2,640 XP.

Deathblade Scythe Trap: CR 8; mechanical; touch trigger; manual reset; Atk +16 melee (2d4+8 plus poison, scythe); poison (deathblade, DC 20 Fortitude save resists, 1d6 Con/2d6 Con); Search DC 24; Disable Device DC 19. Market Price: 31,400 gp.

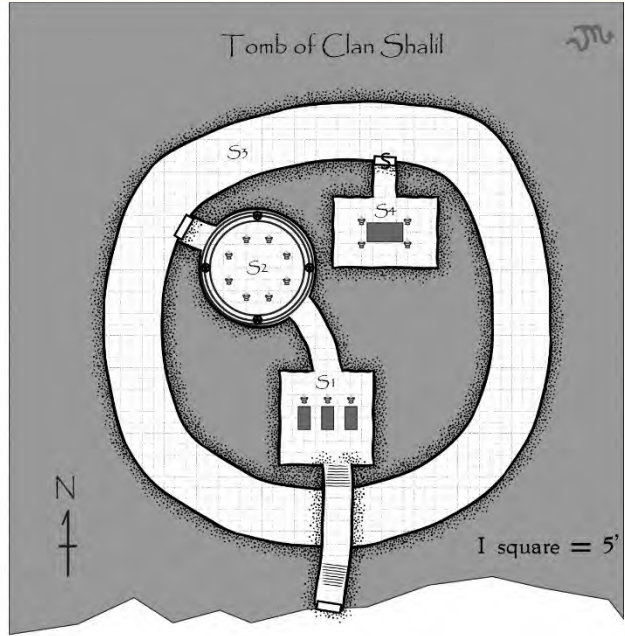
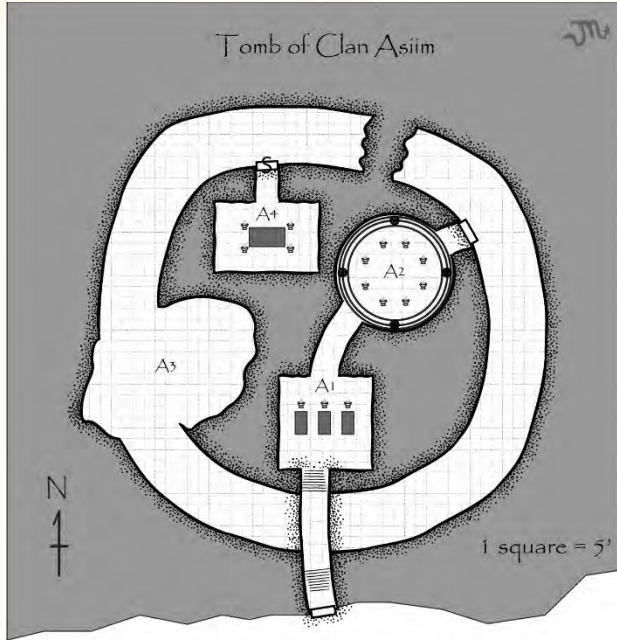
Wide-Mouth Pit Trap: CR 6; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; DC 25 Reflex Save avoids; 40 ft. deep (4d6, fall); multiple targets (all targets within a 10-ft.-by-10-ft. area); Search DC 25; Disable Device DC 25. Market Price: 28,200 gp.



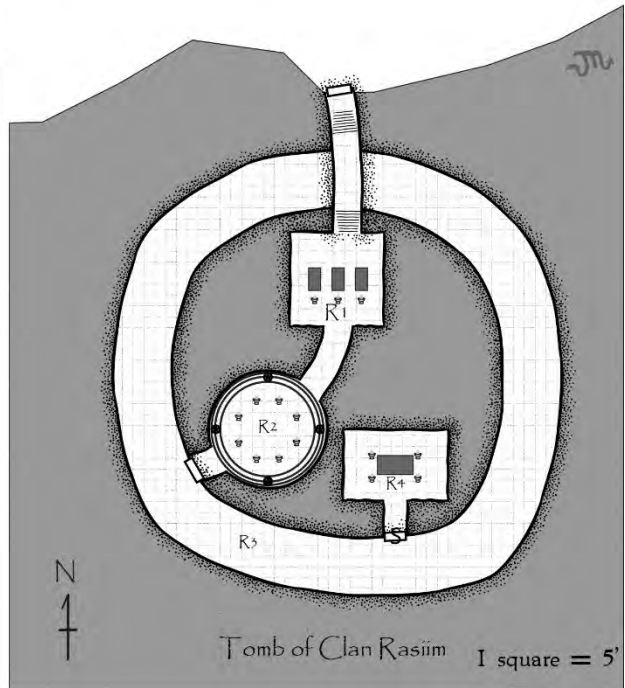
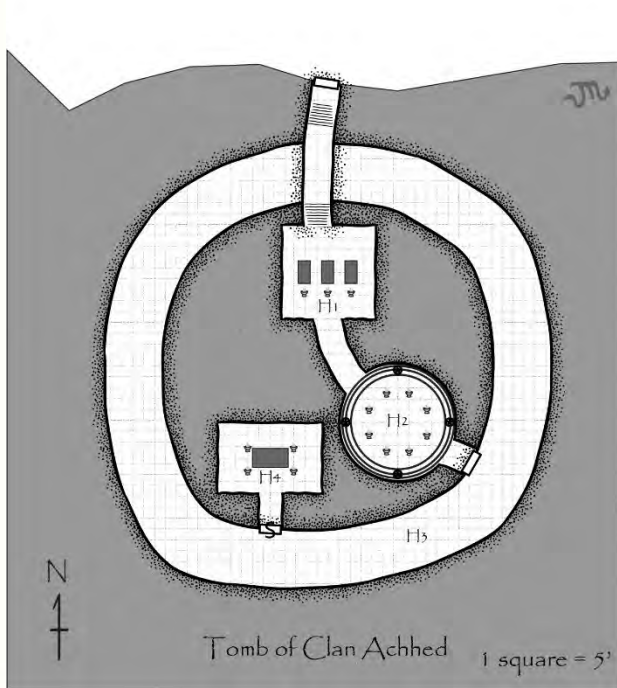
Appendix 4: Maps



Adventures in the Dead Lands



Tombs of the Ancestors



Adventures in the Dead Lands

A Mother's Plea

The Bugdead Cycle, part 2



A Dark Sun 3.5e adventure module for four 17th-level characters

The party receives a request for aid from.... Ahnthyarka?

Ahnthyarka calls upon the party to retrieve something of great personal importance from a former brood-mate.

Credits

WRITING

Adam Cieszlak, Henry Giff

EDITING

Zach McKean

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Jack Meyer

IMAGES/GRAPHICS

Gabriel Eggers, Jack Meyer,
Scott Harshabarger, Yanick Moreau

Introduction

A Mother's Plea is a medium-sized D&D adventure for four 17th-level player characters (PCs). Consult the Scaling the Adventure sidebar for ways to modify the scenario for higher or lower levels of play.

The party must venture deep into the Dead Lands, amid a power struggle between dangerous forces, to uncover an artifact that could upset the delicate balance of power that governs the Dead Lands.

Developer's notes

This adventure almost didn't get made. I had always wanted this to happen as a sequel to "Fool's Errand", but there were concerns about making a high-level delivery quest that wouldn't prove boring. Fortunately, Adam and Giff are very good at what they do, and they found a way to make the concept work. -JM

Suspicion of Ahnthyarka's motives is warranted. Their "young" is in fact a birthstone, one of the incredibly rare artifacts that are capable of creating new s'thag zagath (of which Ahnthyarka was a member before succumbing to undeath). Only a small number of such birthstones survived the Obsidian Tide, and the discovery of such a stone will allow its holder to give birth to an entire army of zagath, giving them terrible, unchecked power.

The birthstone is held in one of the most dangerous regions of the Dead Lands, a place so incredibly treacherous that even the s'thag zagath legions want nothing to do with it: the Web. The Web is not a kingdom, as that implies a level of organization, but it is rather a region where powerful and insane bugdead have built a chaotic maze of lairs. Virtually completely unknown to the humanoid undead of the Dead Lands, the Web is considered impenetrable and unconquerable by the zagath; only the most powerful – or most mad – of parties would even attempt to penetrate the Web.

Preparation

You (the DM) will need the 3rd edition revised D&D core rulebooks, including the *Player's Handbook*, the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*, as well as the *Expanded Psionics Handbook*. This adventure also uses material from *Faces of the Dead Lands*, *Secrets of the Dead Lands*, *Terrors of the Dead Lands*, and the *Dark Sun 3.5 conversion* rulebook from Athas.org, but all necessary rules are already included.

Consult Appendix 4 for additional rules for communicating with the residents of, and surviving in, the Dead Lands.

Adventure Background

One of the most powerful figures in the Dead Lands needs the help of powerful adventurers for a mysterious quest. Ahnthyarka, the 'queen' of the Shale Lands, seeks their lost "young" and needs help retrieving it.

Overview

The PCs are allowed safe passage into the Shale Lands to speak with Ahnthyarka, who offers to reward them in exchange for retrieving something from a broodmate, Agnakh, who had long ago disappeared in the east. Ahnthyarka refers to the lost item as their "young" and wishes for its safe return. Ahnthyarka is unconcerned what happens to the one who stole their "young".

The PCs are given the *kank antennae helmet* - a pair of severed kank antennae that have been magically empowered to lead the PCs to the item they seek. They must then travel beyond the lands controlled by the humanoid undead into the Buglands. Beyond the Shale Lands, the bugdead might only be friendly once they see the *kank antennae helmet*, and the humanoid undead may or may not be friendly until they see the *kank antennae helmet* - likely attacking once they see it. Regardless, the *kank antennae helmet* steadily guides the party to Ahnthyarka's missing item.

Eventually, the PCs find they must venture into a completely unknown region filled with webbing and bugdead spiders - the Web. There they learn that

Adventures in the Dead Lands

Agnakh is a powerful and violently insane type of undead zagath - an unreclaimed - and they very much intend to keep the item for themselves. The PCs also learn the item they seek is a zagath birthstone, which is usable by undead! This means that Agnakh (or even Ahnthyarka) could potentially create a LOT more unreclaimed if the PCs don't take it.

The PCs must decide whether to allow Agnakh to keep the stone, whether or not to kill Agnakh, and whether to take the stone to Ahnthyarka or to keep it from Ahnthyarka as well. Obviously, Ahnthyarka won't take it well if they return empty handed, or don't return at all. And Ahnthyarka has a long memory for grudges...

Adventure Hooks

The adventure begins with the PCs being summoned to the Shale Lands by Ahnthyarka. The opening to this adventure will depend on the previous experiences of the party, but there are several ways that the contact might be made:

- The PCs may have met Ahnthyarka through the events of the previous adventure "A Fool's Errand for the Tohr-Kreen." Depending on how they resolved that adventure, they may already have an alliance with Ahnthyarka or may have at least earned Ahnthyarka's begrudging respect.
- Because this adventure is unlikely to be a party's first experience in the Dead Lands, they may have a reputation that precedes them. If the PCs have not yet met Ahnthyarka, Ahnthyarka may nevertheless have heard of the exploits of such powerful adventurers in the Dead Lands, and concluded that they are capable (and foolhardy) enough to carry out such a quest.
- During an unrelated encounter near the southwestern part of the Kingdoms of Gretch or in the vicinity of the Shale Lands, the party could encounter one of Ahnthyarka's armies. If they put up a valiant fight, they could impress Ahnthyarka enough to call off the army and invite the party for a visit.

Scaling the Adventure

A Mother's Plea is designed for a party of four 17th-level adventurers, but it can be modified easily to present an appropriate challenge for parties of different sizes or levels.

Consider adapting the adventure for PCs of average levels 15 to 19 by adding effective positive or negative levels to the creatures in each encounter to change their effective **Challenge Rating**. A creature takes the following penalties/bonuses for each positive/negative level it has gained:

- +/-1 on all skill checks and ability checks.
- +/-1 on attack rolls and saving throws.
- +/-5 hit points.
- +/-1 effective level (whenever the creature's level is used in a die roll or calculation, reduce it by one for each negative level).
- If the creature casts spells, she gains/loses one spell slot of her highest-level spells. (If she has more than one spell at her highest level, she chooses which she gains/loses.) In addition, when she next prepares spells or regains spell slots, she gets one more/less spell slot at her highest spell level. If the creature is a manifester, she gains/loses enough power points to manifest her highest-level power once.

Part 1: The Request

The adventure begins with the party receiving an invitation from Ahnthyarka to come to the Shale Lands to discuss a request they have for the PCs. Depending on where the party was coming from, some encounters in the Dead Lands may be appropriate before arriving in the Shale Lands.

The expanse of broken obsidian around you fades away, leaving you in your camp once more.

1) The Invitation (EL -)

Ahnthyarka uses *greater scrying* and *message* to contact the PCs and invite them to the Shale Lands to discuss a request:

At the end of another day under the crimson sun, you hear a soft whisper as you sit in your encampment. Try as you might, you cannot quite make out what it is the whisper is saying.

Looking around, you see the land around you change. A broken obsidian plain stretches out all around you, as far as the eye can see. Bizarre towers rise up in the distance, like colossal dead trees. The ground all around you seems to be crawling with giant insects, but as the light reflects off their cracked and discolored chitin, you see that these insects are all dead, animated to unlife by some unseen force.

As you observe this scene, you hear the voice again. It is raspy, high-pitched, and thoroughly inhuman: "I am Ahnthyarka. Come to the Shale Lands, we have an important matter to discuss. You will be rewarded."

The PCs may make a Knowledge (Arcana, Geography, Religion, or The Planes) Intelligence check (DC 20) to recognize the obsidian terrain as the Dead Lands. A Knowledge (Geography) check (DC 30) will allow PCs to recognize the Shale Lands and a Knowledge (Arcana or Religion) check (DC 30) will identify the name Ahnthyarka.

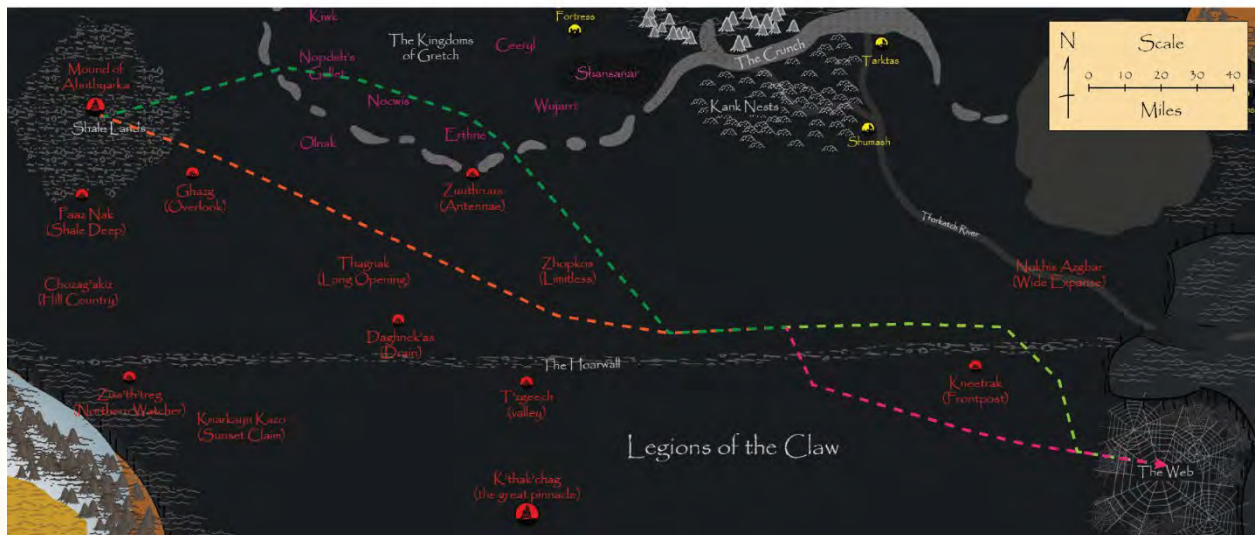
Development: The PCs make their way to Shale Lands, proceed to Encounter #2 - The Shale Lands.

2) The Shale Lands (EL -)

Once the party has decided to accept Ahnthyarka's invitation and arrives in the Shale Lands to discuss the request, they need only traverse the Shale Lands before arriving at Ahnthyarka's Great Mound.

The seemingly endless horizon of smooth obsidian gradually becomes jagged as you travel deeper into the Shale Lands. Soon, their true nature is apparent: the cracked and porous obsidian ground of these lands is adorned with thousands of bizarre spires, some appear as just skinny black burnt tree stumps, some appear as short wide mounds only a few feet tall, and some tower dozens of feet high or more.

FROM THE SHALE LANDS TO THE WEB



Adventures in the Dead Lands

None of these seem to be a natural feature of the landscape, but are likely rather some strange type of structures with an underlying logic that perhaps only the bugdead could understand.

If these structures were built by the bugdead, there are no bugdead present today – the Shale Lands today seem strangely, almost menacingly, quiet.

As you make your way among the mounds, there's an unmistakable feeling that you're being watched. Occasionally, you hear a scuttling off to one side or catch glimpses of figures watching from distant mounds, but none ever approach. It would seem that Ahnthyarka has instructed her minions to keep watch as you approach, but to also keep their distance.

Under orders from Ahnthyarka, none of the bugdead dwelling within the Shale Lands dare to attack the party at this time.

Development: When the PCs arrive at Ahnthyarka's Great Mound, proceed to Encounter #3 - An Audience with Ahnthyarka.

3) An Audience with Ahnthyarka (EL -)

As the party approaches the Great Mound, read the following:

This is without question the mound which serves as Ahnthyarka's seat of power. Unlike the countless other mounds stretching into the sky in the Shale Lands, the mound looming before you is easily a thousand feet tall, stretching far above any tower you've ever seen. Six giant spokes form the base of the Great Mound, which then climb toward the sky with tendril-like towers that wrap around and loop in upon each other, spiraling higher and higher.

If the party has visited Ahnthyarka's Great Mound before, read:

Though you've been here before, the giant and grotesque spire of Ahnthyarka's Great Mound feels like a new structure in some way that is difficult to articulate. Could it be that the constant stream of bugdead working in and about the Great Mound has actually rebuilt it since you were here last? Or is it that when approaching from a slightly new angle, the structure, with its alien twists and turns, looks like a

different shape? Or is it simply too hard for your minds to categorize the mad architectural sense of the bugdead?

The party may proceed directly to the Ahnthyarka's throne room without interference. If the PCs encountered any hostile bugdead in the Shale Lands, they are likely to still be on high alert, and the DM may play up the suspense if they wish, but at this point, Ahnthyarka is firmly in control of the bugdead and they will not attack. In fact, any bugdead present will part ways to allow the party to proceed directly to Ahnthyarka's throne room for an audience.

Ahnthyarka's throne room is a massive spherical chamber, 100 yards in diameter. Like the rest of the interior of the mound, it is honeycombed with thousands of passageways swarming with bugdead going about their business.

Ahnthyarka has a palpable air of majesty. Enormous and crab-like, this eight-legged beast has a deep red carapace. On one end, their head sports two whip-like antennae above large mandibles that open sideways to reveal sharp fangs. Opposite the head, a long whip-like third antenna sprouts like a tail. Eight legs support the shelled body, their color shading to brown beneath the beast.

The throne itself is crafted of fine red and orange marble polished smooth. It is hemispherical, carved and burnished to accept the giant creature's sprawling form, down to every knob and bump on its massive exoskeleton.

"You have come. I am pleased to see you. We have much to discuss."

Speaking with Ahnthyarka

Ahnthyarka is genderless, like all scarlet wardens (and zagath); in this encounter, however, Ahnthyarka presents themselves as a mother seeking help connecting with a child. As Ahnthyarka is unfamiliar with using gender-based pronouns, the conversation will likely seem strange and potentially be confusing to those who are used to male and female pronouns.

- If the PCs were attacked by bugdead on their trip through the Shale Lands and mention it, as an explanation but not an apology, Ahnthyarka will observe *"I command most of the thralls in my lands, but not all of them, and not all of the time."*

Adventures in the Dead Lands

- At the first opportunity, Ahnthyarka will get straight to the point: *"I am like what you would call a 'mother'. I seek my most precious young and I would do anything to have my young returned to me. Will you help?"*
- Ahnthyarka will explain that: *"My most precious young were taken by a brood-mate - I do not care what happens to my broodmate."*
- Ahnthyarka offers both treasure and knowledge for the return of their "young", genuinely possessing and controlling a great deal of both: *"If you can return my most precious young, you will be rewarded."*
- If asked why they or their servants can't retrieve their "young" themselves, Ahnthyarka responds: *"I must stay with my legions or they will become confused and dangerous. My thralls are many, but they cannot defeat even the least of my brood-mates. You are strong enough to take my young from my former brood-mate. No one is better for this task."*
- If asked who this "brood-mate is, Ahnthyarka will become evasive, not willing to speak of or name their brood-mate Agnakh, saying only: *"A brood-mate. Who they are is not important, what they have is."*
- Ahnthyarka will initially present the request as simply wanting to be reunited with their 'young', but if the party seems insufficiently motivated to pursue the mission, Ahnthyarka will explain: *"My precious young are dangerous in the wrong hands. If brood-mate retains my most precious young, it could be disastrous, possibly changing the balance of power on the blackglass."*
- Though it would be rude and dangerous to try, the PCs might use magic or psionics to try and determine Ahnthyarka's true purpose here. If successful, they learn that Ahnthyarka genuinely considers their "most precious young" to be both a powerful object and a part of their family.

Ahnthyarka's "most precious young" in fact refers to a zagath birthstone, but without in-depth knowledge of the zagath and their reproductive process (a subject completely unknown to the greatest sages of the Dead Lands, much less those of the Tablelands), it will be impossible for the PCs to determine this (and Ahnthyarka will not share this information willingly).

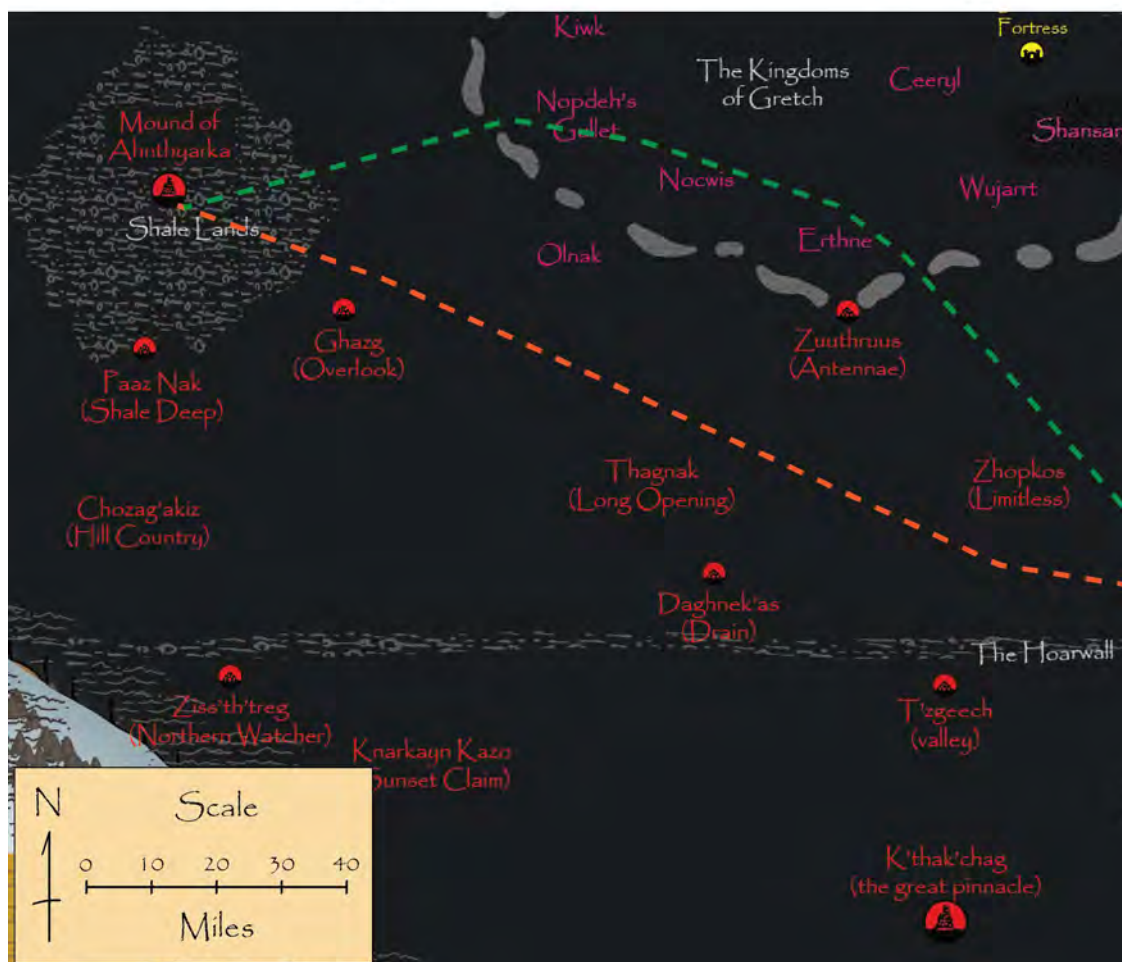
- On the subject of how to find their "young": *"I have for you a gift to help you seek out my most precious young. With its help, you will not be troubled by the lesser thralls of my kin."*
- Ahnthyarka will warn the PCs what to expect on their journey: *"The land to the south is not for your kind. As you travel, you might see great cities, like my mounds but more expansive. Avoid them. Even with my gift, you are not welcome among my kind, and they will attack you."*
- While Ahnthyarka knows about the existence of the Hoarwall and the Web, the *kank antennae helmet* only indicates direction, not distance, so Ahnthyarka only knows that their "young" lie to the southeast, rather than specifically within the Web. Even if they did have this information (or if contacted later by the PCs with questions), Ahnthyarka is unlikely to share the secrets and intimate details of these locations with mere "two-legs", even if they do currently serve Ahnthyarka's purposes. *"My most precious young are far to the east and south of here. My gift will lead you there."*

Development: At the conclusion of their conversation, assuming the party has agreed to their request, Ahnthyarka produces their "gift" for the party, the *kank antennae helmet* (see Appendix 2 for details). *"Take it, it will not harm you."*

Proceed to Part 2.

Part 2: The Journey East

FIRST HALF OF THE JOURNEY

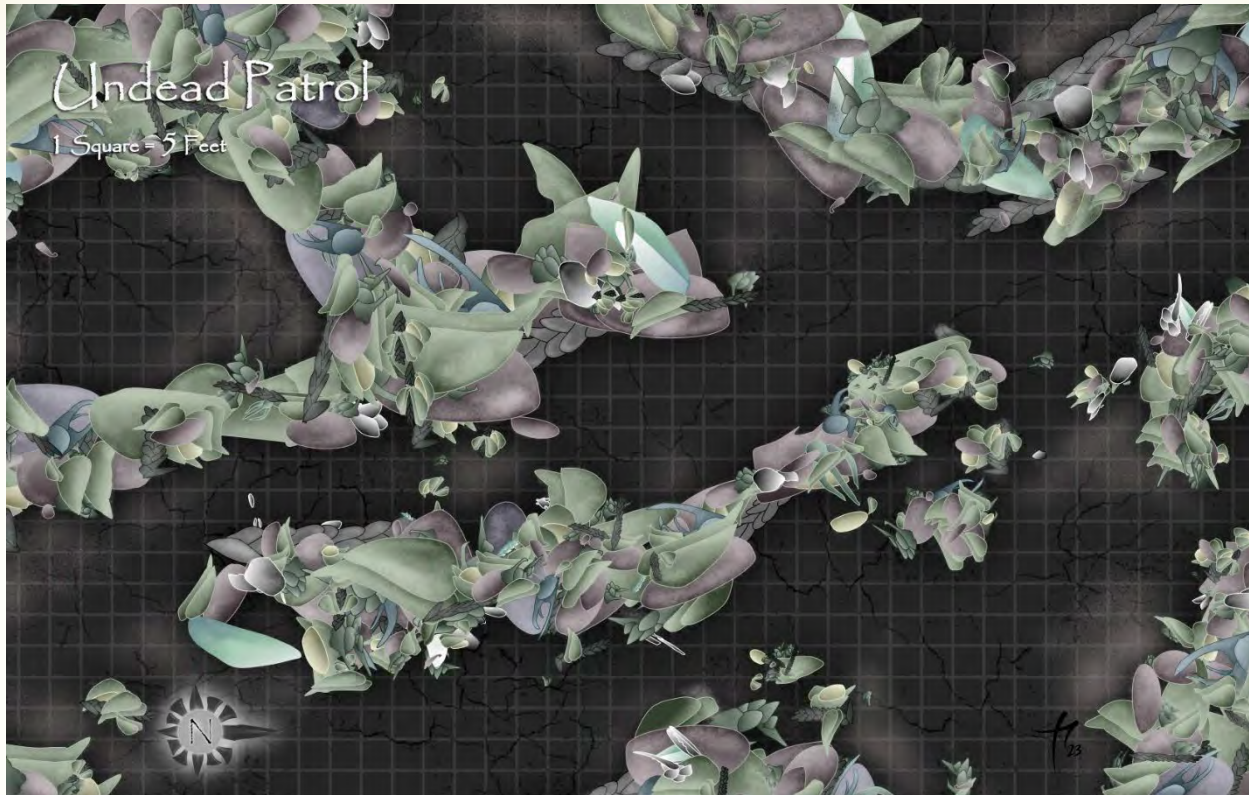


The *kank antennae helmet* leads the party to the east southeast and although the exact distance to the target is unclear, the *antennae* do indicate that the destination is neither extremely close nor impossibly far away. There are many ways that the PCs might approach their journey: as a high-level party, they likely have means of travel available to them that could allow them to avoid many of the difficulties inherent in traveling the Dead Lands (flight, teleportation, etc.).

As noted in Appendix 2, the *kank antennae helmet* reacts poorly to teleportation effects, making schemes like using teleportation to triangulate a destination difficult (to say nothing of the PCs' lack of a map or the likelihood of the PCs knowing such geometry).

A) The Kingdoms of Gretch

If the PCs opt to generally follow the pull of the *kank antennae helmet* across the obsidian, they might head near, or even through, the Kingdoms of Gretch, possibly concluding that it would be safer to cut through the southern part of the humanoid undead lands than to immediately venture into the Buglands. The PCs might also conclude this is one of the only routes along which they could gather any supplies or seek out any maps.



4) Undead Patrol (EL 17)

Nophdeh Sergeant (CR 16) 1x - see Appendix 1

Fallen of Nophdeh (CR 10) 4x - see Appendix 1

or

Giant Dragonfly Swarm (CR 12) 6x - see Appendix 1

If the PCs' chosen route takes them through Kingdoms of Gretch, they will quickly encounter a group of humanoid undead patrolling along the Crunch. If the PCs instead fly over the Crunch, they are attacked by swarms of giant bugdead dragonflies.

As the PCs pass through (or over) the Crunch and into the Kingdoms of Gretch, read the following:

Up ahead, the endless plain of black obsidian is interrupted. From a distance, it appeared to be a crest of white dunes, but up close the nature of this terrain becomes clear: it is piles and piles of debris from slaughtered bugdead. Broken chitin, shattered carapaces, desiccated innards, and severed legs, all bleached white by countless years of exposure to the

scorching sun. On occasion, it feels like you are being watched, but each time it turns out to be a gaping insectoid head or the occasional compound eye, somehow preserved and catching a glimmer of sunlight. There must be hundreds of dead insects worth of chitin just immediately around you, and the dunes stretch off toward the horizon as far as the eye can see in both directions – thousands, perhaps millions, of bugdead lie dead and shattered here.

If the PCs are traveling over land across the Crunch or land to investigate it, continue:

Suddenly, you hear the clattering of shell fragments as figures burst forth from within the chitinous dunes, immediately charging at you.

A patrol from the Kingdom of Nophdeh spotted the PCs from a great distance as they approached this border region (known as the Crunch) and hid in the debris for an ambush. At this point, the PCs may not realize it, but because of the *kank antennae helmet*, the patrol believes that the PCs are a group of bugdead.

If the PCs attempt to converse with the patrol, their entreaties will be rebuffed. If they can understand the patrol members (who are speaking to each other in Ulyanese) the PCs might hear comments like: "*Stinking*

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bugdead. Why can't they just leave us alone." and "Stop them; they can't reach the Gullet."

Should the patrol members realize the PCs are not bugdead, whether because the PCs removed the *kank antennae helmet*, because some of the patrol members made their Will saves (see Appendix #2 for details), or simply due to the PCs communicating with them, the Nophdeh patrol members will still not relent in their attack, assuming (rightly so) that the PCs are simply humanoid servants of Ahnthyarka if they are coming over the Crunch from the Buglands..

Tactics: Whether the PCs face the patrol from Nophdeh or the bugdead dragonfly swarm, their tactics remain the same - moving to engage the PCs in melee as quickly as possible and fighting to the death.

Development: Once the PCs have dealt with the situation along the Crunch (through whatever means), if they continue on through the Kingdoms of Gretch, proceed to Encounter #4 - A Strange Request.

If the PCs avoid the Kingdoms of Gretch, and continue on though the Buglands, proceed to Part 2B: Through the Buglands.

5) A Strange Request (EL -)

Col'raoz (CR 22) 1x - see Appendix 1

Soldiers of Gretch (as Soldiers of the Exilarchate; CR 10) 12x - see Appendix 1

The party continues onward for some time, undisturbed by any further patrols. If necessary, the party may wish to rest and heal (though finding an appropriate place to do so might be difficult, depending on the PCs' abilities). Regardless, the PCs might soon notice a large group of humanoids following them at a distance: traveling when they travel, stopping when they stop. Before traveling too far through the kingdoms of Gretch, however, the pursuing group will close the distance and approach the party.

Leading the group is Col'raoz, a female half-giant morg barbarian, and one of Gretch's "Uncrowned" lieutenants. The Uncrowned do not rule territory for Gretch, but rather are top henchmen sent to do his bidding and deliver his messages. Accompanying her is a large force of warriors. Col'raoz and her troops are under very specific order from Gretch to not engage the

party in combat under *any* circumstances; if the PCs attack, Col'raoz will continue to parley with them while withdrawing.

Gretch has suspicions that the PCs are in league with Ahnthyarka and has informed Col'raoz that the PCs may appear as bugdead.

At the front of the force of undead soldiers is a towering humanoid, at least 12 and a half feet tall. The troops and their leader approach with weapons sheathed. Their leader steps forward and calls out across the distance: "I am Col'raoz, and I bear a message for you!"

Though her accent is unusual, Col'raoz speaks clearly and naturally in both Common or Ulyanese (whichever language the PCs are more likely to understand).

If she speaks in Common, and if they have spent any time traveling in the Dead Lands, the PCs will likely realize (Knowledge [Local] check, DC 10) that few individuals in the Dead Lands speak the Common tongue. Knowledgeable PCs might notice (Knowledge [Local] check, DC 10 or DC 20 for PCs without experience in the Tablelands) that Col'raoz is a half-giant. If they are aware of the history of the Dead Lands, the PCs might also realize (Knowledge [History] check, DC 20 or DC 30 for PCs not from the Dead Lands) that half-giants did not exist yet when the Dead Lands were formed and so there are very few half-giants in the Dead Lands.

If the PCs hold and allow Col'raoz to approach, read:

As she strides closer, you can see that this Col'raoz's clothes and armor are of high quality. She seems to have quite the presence and is quite attractive, especially for an undead. While many undead appear gaunt and emaciated, Col'raoz appears lithe, her skin lacking most of the rot and damage typical of many undead.

The undead platoon stops its march at 40 strides, but Col'raoz walks closer. "I have a message and an offer."

Col'raoz will make it clear that she seeks to offer the party some sort of assistance, but has some questions first.

Speaking with Col'raoz:

- Col'raoz already knows (her master told her) that the PCs have just come from the Shale Lands. "No

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one goes to the Shale Lands, Ahnthiyarka and her bugdead are too dangerous. And absolutely no one survives the visit. What were you doing there and how did you escape?"

- The half-giantess will then inquire why the PCs have now come to the Kingdoms of Gretch: "Why are you now here? Where are you going?"
- At a minimum, Col'raoz will inquire if the PCs have any direct intent to threaten the Kingdoms of Gretch (she does not expect the PCs to give her an honest answer, but Gretch will sift through her memories later to gauge the PCs' intentions, so it matters little).
- Whatever they tell her, her offer is the same: whatever quest they are on, the PCs should be doing it for Gretch instead. "Do you know who I serve?"
- Col'raoz will point out to the PCs that their alliance with the bugdead, and the strange artifact in their possession, allow them an unprecedented opportunity to infiltrate the Buglands. She is hoping that they can be persuaded to gather intelligence for Gretch and wreak a great deal of havoc in the Buglands along the way.
- Regarding payment, Col'raoz takes a two-pronged approach, making the PCs' an offer they can't refuse: "My master will reward your services greatly, granting you nearly anything you might dream of. And, of course, the Manipulator can bring about nightmarish tortures you haven't even dreamt of yet, should you refuse his generosity."

Development: Once Col'raoz has finished speaking with the PCs, she sends them on their way, allowing the PCs to continue their journey through the Kingdoms of Gretch. Proceed to Encounter #5 - Hard Questions.

6) Hard Questions (EL - or 17)

Glozir, Lieutenant of the Exilarchate (CR 16) 1x - see Appendix 1

Soldiers of the Exilarchate (CR 10) 4x - see Appendix 1

The following encounter can be inserted in a number of different places along the PCs' journey. A powerful ogre manifestor has had visions of impending doom lately and the PCs feature in them. The ogre, Glozir, is

a lieutenant in the Exilarchate of Erthne, which is the southernmost of Gretch's kingdoms. (Note that living PCs will likely not know what ogres are, as they are long extinct on Athas.) Thus, if PCs are traveling through Gretch's Kingdoms, or near the southern border of the Crunch, they would naturally pass near this territory. If the PCs are traveling farther south, the ogre's visions are concerning enough to her that she might seek them out even if it means a dangerous journey near the bugdead satrapies. One way or the other, the PCs may find themselves confronted by the ogre psion and a party of four soldiers.

In the distance, you can see a small group headed straight towards you. The group seems to be composed of several individuals following another, much larger, being.

As the figure draws close enough to speak, you can see that it is a large, humanoid-shaped creature. From its deformed and hunched-forward skull, two pale white glowing eyes stare out at you. The gaze is both uncomfortable to meet and hard to ignore. Its hulking body is decaying in places, and the creature has an awkward lumbering stride. It's hard to tell if the creature walked like this in life, or if it's a consequence of their putrefaction in undeath. Though you've become used to the terrible rotting odors of the Dead Lands at this point, the horrid smell emanating from this creature causes you to instinctively avoid breathing in through your nose so as not to smell it.

The accompanying soldiers appear strong and well-equipped, wearing insignia that likely suggest a rank in some sort of military order; their weapons are down, however. The hulking creature's face becomes even more contorted as it stares at the party. It is clear they intend to engage in conversation, not combat, yet none begin to speak.

If the PCs don't initiate a conversation, the group's leader eventually will. The leader prefers to communicate telepathically, but can speak if telepathic communications are blocked.

- Not one for pleasantries, they start simply: "Who are you?"
- If asked, the creature will give their name as Glozir, a lieutenant of the Exilarchate. If asked, Glozir indicates that she is an ogre.
- "I saw you crossing the Crunch in my visions. Why did you come from across the Crunch?"
- "Where are you headed? Why?"

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- “Are you bugs or people?”
- After this series of fairly innocuous questions, the conversation will become bizarre: “You are going to destroy the world. Why?”

It should become apparent through conversation that Glozir has had psychic visions that the party is engaged in activities that could destroy the world. If the PCs probe this, they will realize that Glozir’s conception of “the world” is the humanoid kingdoms of the Dead Lands. Glozir has had visions of the PCs unleashing enormous armies of bugdead that swarm over everything. Though Glozir is part of the Exilarchate, one of the Kingdoms of Gretch, it may become apparent that Glozir is not acting on behalf of anyone else, and is driven entirely by these disturbing visions. Claiming the support of Gretch will not accomplish anything.

If the PCs cannot or will not adequately explain their mission (and it’s likely at this point they don’t totally understand the mission themselves), Glozir becomes angry. In the best-case scenario, the PCs may be able to convince the ogre not to attack, but Glozir will clearly remain alarmed by the party’s presence. If they do not assuage Glozir’s anger, the psion will at some point abruptly attack the party. Glozir will only attack briefly, however, before fleeing with her troops.

Development: After their encounter with Glozir, the PCs are free to proceed to Part 2B - Through the Buglands.

B) Through the Buglands

No matter the route the party takes, before long the PC’s will reach a situation where the only direction the *kank antennae* point them is deep into the heart of the Buglands.

If the PCs traveled through the Kingdoms of Gretch, they likely noticed that wearing the *kank antennae* incites humanoid undead into fanatically attacking them. Within the Buglands, however, they may discover the flipside of the *kank antennae*’s powers: the *antennae* cause any unthinking bugdead to view the PCs as other bugdead and largely ignore them.

Sometime when the PCs are wearing the *kank antennae helmet* while traveling through the Buglands, read the following:

Almost too quickly to process, you hear a dim buzzing sound that becomes a whirring roar, as the sky just to the south grows dark. From over a small nearby ridge, almost too small to take note of, an enormous swarm of giant insects floods the sky. You have encountered many bugdead swarms but none even one-tenth as large as this one. The behavior of the swarm is different – while most swarms quickly and directly move to attack prey, this enormous swarm makes no movement toward you. You stand completely exposed on the open obsidian – the swarm could not possibly be unaware of your presence – and yet it makes no movement at all in your direction.

The bugdead mill in an enormous, ever-shifting cloud that passes directly over your heads, temporarily blacking out the sun, but the swarm never makes a move in your direction.

Development: Once the bugdead swarm has passed, proceed to Encounter #6 - It’s a Trap.

7) It's a Trap (EL 16)

Ant Lion, Zombie (CR 11) 4x - see Appendix 1

Wezer Storm (CR 8) 4x - see Appendix 1

As the PCs travel further through the Buglands, they come across a series of hidden ant lion traps.

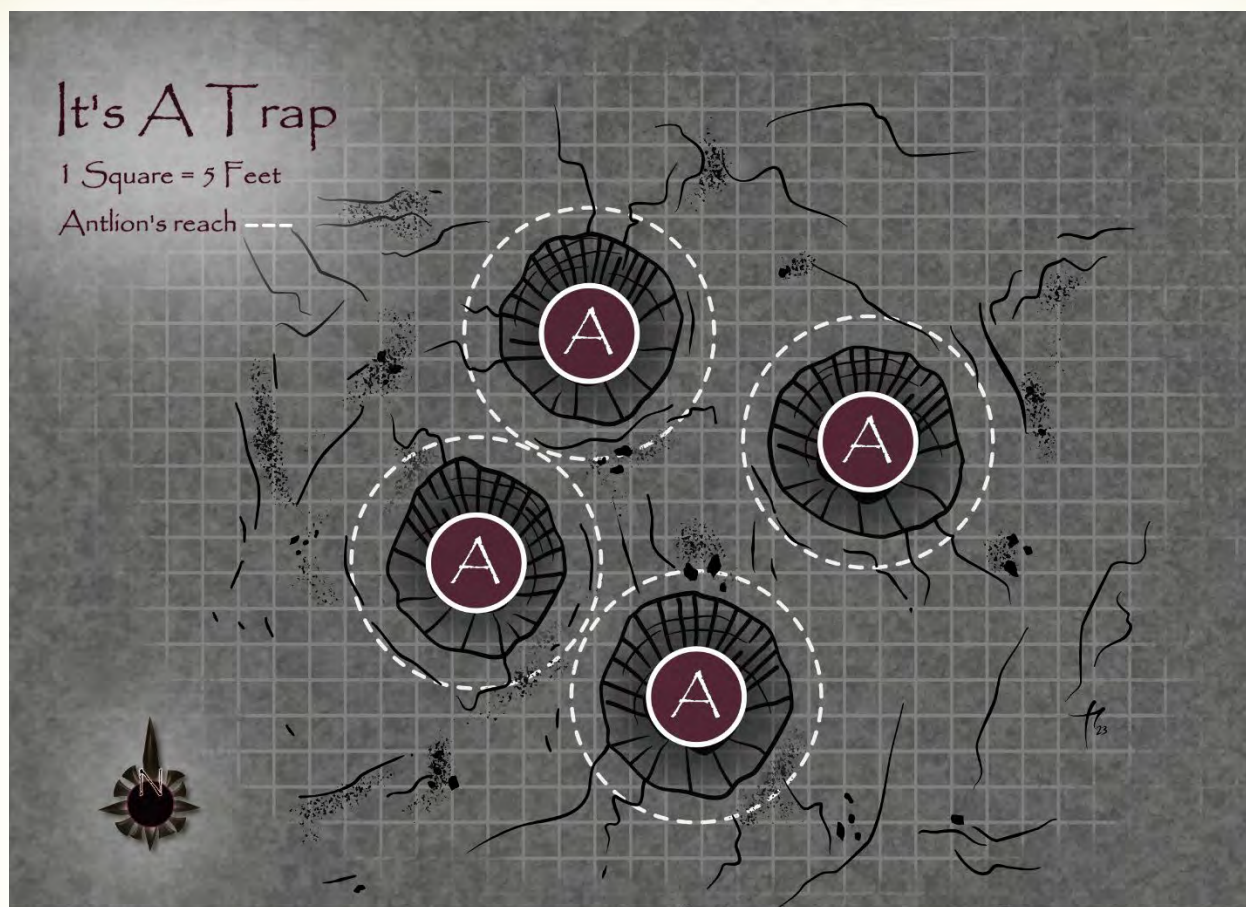
As you travel across the obsidian, you come up over a small rise in the terrain, beyond which is a gentle slope that eventually returns to a flat, featureless plain.

The ant lion pit traps are each twenty-five feet across, as the ant lions are Huge creatures and have a ten-foot reach, allowing them to attack creatures on the rim of the pit without having to move or exit the pit. Each pit trap is ten feet deep, and the four of them are clustered together to maximize the likelihood of catching prey.

Centrally located amidst the pit traps is a relatively safe space – if the PCs end up making a stand against the undead here, the ant lions will squirm up out of their pit traps by five or ten feet to reach the party.

Detecting the thin obsidian that hides the pit traps requires a passive Spot or Survival check (DC 31) or a PC actively searching the surface of the obsidian (Search check, DC 26). If the PCs proceed over the pit

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traps, it requires a Reflex save (DC 26) to avoid falling into a pit. The sloping sides of the pits are extremely smooth, but are covered with a sliding layer of razor-sharp obsidian shards which deals 2d6 points of slashing and piercing damage, but no falling damage.

When the PCs pass over the obsidian, whether they trigger the pit traps or not, read:

As you pass up over the ridge and back over the other side, the obsidian suddenly gives way and collapses. In its wake, several huge bugdead with fearsome mandibles burst forth from below!

Tactics: If the PCs are on foot, the ant lions wait until the PCs either activate the pit traps (falling down into one or more pits and into the ant lions' waiting jaws) or seem to have avoided the traps, in which case the ant lions bust up through the thin obsidian of the traps themselves to strike at the PCs.

If the PCs are flying, and are within 10 feet of the ground, the ant lions attack as above.

If the ant lions attack, the wezer swarms will also move in, instinctively drawn to the conflict and possibility of flesh to scavenge.

Development: Once the PCs have bypassed or dealt with the ant lions' traps, proceed to Encounter #7 - Up Close and Personal.

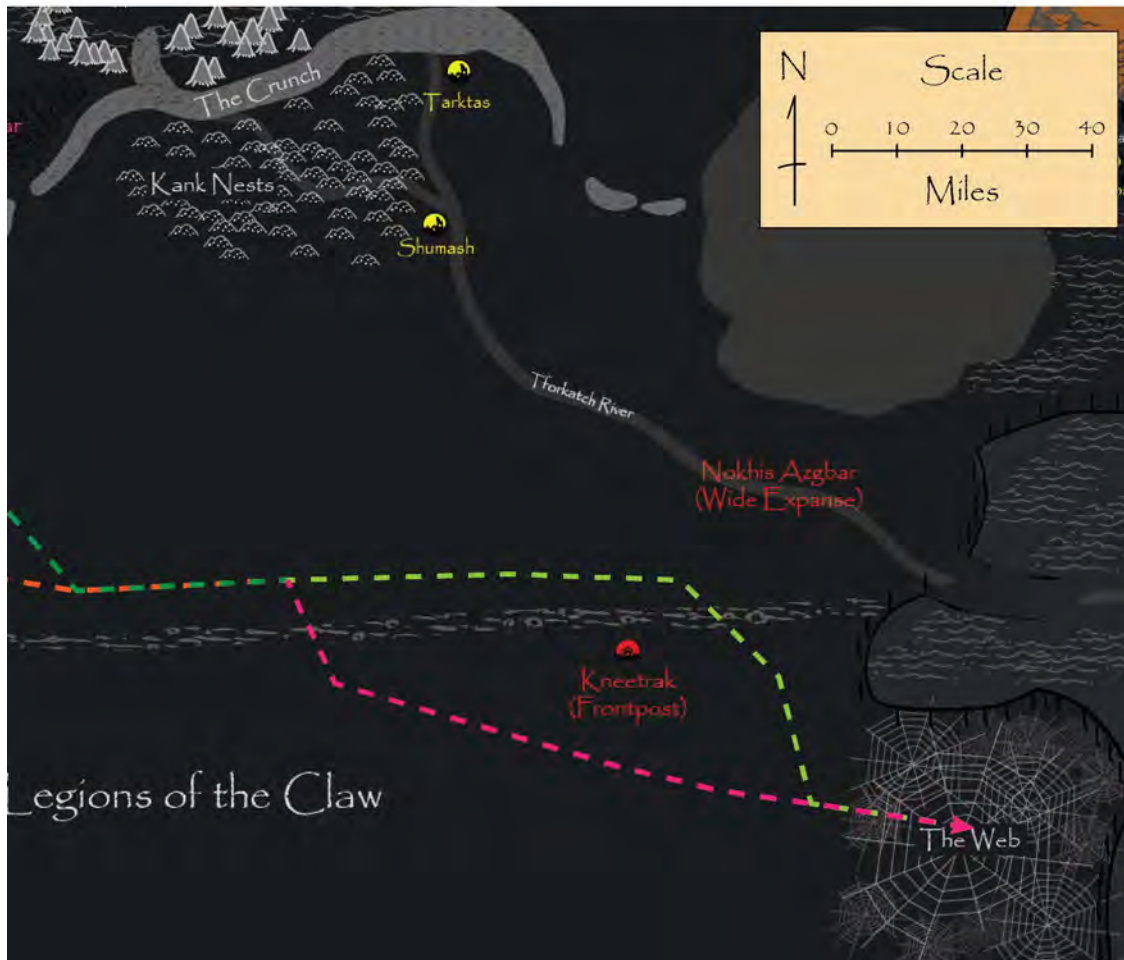
8) Up Close and Personal (EL 16)

Giant Dragonfly, Zombie (CR 10) 4x - see Appendix 1

Scarlet Warden Defiler (CR 15) 1x - see Appendix 1

As the PCs travel ever deeper into the Buglands, they are detected by a bugdead patrol. The patrol's scarlet warden leader grows suspicious of the party and approaches very closely.

SECOND HALF OF THE JOURNEY



As you have traveled ever further into the Buglands, in a generally southeast direction, you have crossed paths with swarms of bugdead with increasing frequency. Each time, however, they have bypassed or otherwise ignored your party. But now, however, you see a group of bugdead moving directly towards you from the west.

The patrol's scarlet warden has, for some reason, fixated on investigating the party. The patrol will relentlessly move to intercept the PCs and nothing short of the PCs disappearing from view (via *invisibility*, teleportation, etc.) will halt their pursuit.

Unless the PCs escape, read:

Despite all that you have done, the swarm of bugdead continue to follow you, sometimes even gaining ground. They have not taken any overtly hostile

actions yet, but it seems certain that their approach cannot bode well for your mission.

Tactics: The bugdead will follow the PCs all the way to the Web, if necessary, to investigate them. When they finally catch up to the PCs, the giant dragonflies will advance to engage the PCs in melee while the scarlet warden will attack with its spells.

Development: Once the bugdead are defeated or successfully eluded (see above), the party can move deeper into the Buglands without worrying about encountering these particular bugdead again. If, however, the PCs simply *fly* away from them or otherwise outrun the patrol, the bugdead will keep after them and might well catch up to the party later on, perhaps even on the return trip. After their encounter with the bugdead, the PCs are free to proceed to Part 2C - Beyond the Crunch.

C) Beyond the Crunch

No matter the route the party takes, before long the PCs will reach a situation where the only direction the *kank antennae* point them is deep into the heart of the Buglands.

9) An Unfortunate Encounter (EL 18 or 19)

Glozir, Lieutenant of the Exilarchate (CR 16) 1x - see Appendix 1

Soldiers of the Exilarchate (CR 10) 4x - see Appendix 1

Giant Dragonfly, Zombie (CR 10) 4x - see Appendix 1

Scarlet Warden Defiler (CR 15) 1x - see Appendix 1

Once the PCs have moved into the desolate region of obsidian southeast of the Kingdoms of Gretch, they eventually encounter both an aggressive group of humanoid undead and an aggressive group of bugdead.

Your group has traveled well beyond the borders of the humanoid Dead Lands, putting you somewhere south of the region known as the Kank Nests. A simple glance behind you shows that your location is not necessarily an indication of safety, however, as you can see a group of humanoid undead relentlessly moving towards you from the northeast.

The humanoid undead are led by the ogre Glozir from Encounter #5 - Hard Questions. If the PCs avoided the Kingdoms of Gretch and instead went through the Buglands, Glozir has followed her visions here to the PCs anyway. If the PCs attacked and defeated Glozir, one of her compatriots begins receiving visions and intercepts the PCs instead.

Not long after you catch sight of the humanoid undead following you, a group of bugdead come up over a rise in the obsidian towards you from the south. Seeing you, and possibly the humanoid undead behind you, the bugdead hurry towards you.

The bugdead are a different group than those detailed in the previous Encounter #7 - Up Close and Personal. The humanoid undead and bugdead both assume the PCs are with the enemy and attack.

Tactics: Glozir rushes the PCs as quickly as possible and engages them in melee combat. The scarlet warden will use its spells to assault the party from a distance. Both will stay focused on the PCs, but will take any opportunity to damage the other with any attacks.

The bugdead dragonflies and humanoid soldiers will engage each other, likely wiping each other out by the time the PCs have finished with their leaders. If, however, any of the PCs engage either the soldiers or the dragonflies, both groups will instead attack the PCs (leading to the higher Encounter Level listed above).

Development: If the PCs manage to evade or outrun Glozir and her soldiers, she will relentlessly continue to follow the PCs (much like the bugdead in Encounter #7 - Up Close and Personal). Whenever they do catch up with the party is when the bugdead come upon the PCs as well, and the above encounter occurs.

Once the PCs evade or defeat Glozir and her soldiers, the PCs are free to continue traveling south to the Hoarwall.

10) The Hoarwall (EL 17 or 18)

S'thag Zagath Harvester (CR 17) 1x - see Appendix 1

Kank Worker Exoskeleton Mob (CR 9) 1x - see Appendix 1

Vurgoshilm (CR 8) 4x - see Appendix 1

As the PCs travel farther south, they come upon the former location of the Hoarwall and, depending on how they traverse the area, get their first chance to encounter a living s'thag zagath.

The land has slowly but steadily been climbing as you travel ever farther south, perhaps only an inch for every few miles traveled, but you now stand before a line of steep-sided obsidian cliffs, rising several hundred feet up into the air and extending both east

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and west as far as can be seen. Perhaps these are the southern Cliffs of Ulyan?

Whatever they are, Ahnthiyarka's "gift" clearly indicates that which you seek, their "young", is south beyond the cliffs.

The slope is in fact the remains of the northern face of the Hoarwall, though only the most learned PCs will realize it (Knowledge [History] check, DC 30 or DC 40 for PCs not from the Dead Lands). The slope is climbable, but only just (DC 30 Climb check).

When the PCs surmount or fly over the cliff, read:

Reaching the top of the "cliff", whatever you expected to find, this was not it. Atop the cliff is...nothing - only a gently sloping plateau of some type. Hundreds of feet away, you can see the other side of the strange plateau and, from what you can tell, the land seems to drop away suddenly there, much like the escarpment behind you.

What could have possibly caused such a bizarre feature in the land?

From the top of the Hoarwall, the PCs may look down into the cavity below. A Spot check (DC 30) reveals the following:

Across the vast plateau, several cracks and sinkholes can be seen. Looking down through one of them, you can see that there is a vast, lightless expanse beneath your feet - far greater and darker than could be expected from such a simple hole. The darkness is near absolute, but you think you can make out moving creatures, strange green-gray shapes, and a shimmering glint of light - not like the well-known flash of light off of obsidian, but a much rarer wavering, shifting glint off a rippling liquid.

If the PCs investigate the bottom of the cavity, they discover the Hoarwall swamp. Read:

Beneath the obsidian plateau, you find an environment unlike anything you've seen in the Dead Lands. The olive-colored sky is barely visible through the small entrance hole, throwing nearly all of the abyss into deep shadow. Murky water and sucking mud - real mud, made with soil, not just finely ground obsidian dust - lie about the floor below.

Creatures move about the swampy terrain: mostly insects or smallish crustaceans, but occasionally you catch sight of some type of larger worm or serpentine form. And all about you can see plants - a veritable jungle of green, black, violet, and gray leafy things limply growing throughout the area.

Nearby, you can see one of the deadly "lashbugs" moving about, but, rather than charging furiously about, it seems to be carefully moving about the area, concentrating on doing something with the various plants and animals in the swamp.

"Lashbug" is a term that the humanoid undead of the Dead Lands use to describe scarlet wardens. This "lashbug" is actually a living s'thag zagath (scarlet wardens are actually undead s'thag zagath) and, should they survive, the PCs will be the first humanoids from the Dead Lands to encounter a living s'thag zagath and tell of it.

Tactics: Unless the PCs enter the Hoarwall cavity, the s'thag zagath harvester is not likely to notice them when they make their way over the Hoarwall. If they do enter the Hoarwall cavity, the harvester will detect their presence around after they enter. When it notices them, the harvester will attack with its psionic powers. If the PCs descend to the swampy floor, some of the swamp's hungry denizens will join in on the attack.

Development: Once beyond the Hoarwall, the PCs are safe from further attacks by the swamp's denizens. If, however, the PCs left the s'thag zagath harvester alive and aware of their presence, the harvester will contact its superiors in K'neetrak and warn them about the intrusion (see Encounter #10 - K'neetrak for more details).

11) Battle Site (EL -)

Giant Dragonfly, Zombie (CR 10) 6x - see Appendix 1

Scarlet Warden Defiler (CR 15) 1x - see Appendix 1

or

Giant Dragonfly, Zombie (CR 10) 8x - see Appendix 1

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Giant Dragonfly Swarm (CR 12) 4x - see Appendix 1

Scarlet Warden Defiler (CR 15) 2x - see Appendix 1

S'thag Zagath Harvester (CR 17) 1x - see Appendix 1

K'neetrak is a zagath farming settlement and northern garrison for the containment of the Web's inhabitants. Whether or not the PCs attempt to investigate it, K'neetrak will need to be dealt with, one way or the other.

Up ahead to the southwest, you catch sight of something odd - it's hard to tell at this distance, but it seems to be a large cluster of obsidian spires - much like those in the Shale Lands - but all closely clustered together.

Though the PCs do not know it, this is the zagath settlement of K'neetrak (meaning "frontpost" in the zagath language). If the PCs investigate more closely, read:

With a closer viewpoint, you can see that the cluster of spires is quite expansive, easily containing as many spired mounds as stand in all of the Shale Lands, but clustered tightly together into various small groupings - almost like a small village of massive kank nests.

From what you can tell, many of the tallest spires here would rival Ahnthyarka's Great Mound in size and

height. Although the spires still seem to be composed of glittering obsidian, rather than the stacked jagged shard-based construction of the mounds of the Shale Lands, these spires look smooth and almost organic, as if they were grown from the obsidian.

If the PCs make an effort to avoid K'neetrak, they will only have to deal with a standard patrol from the settlement. If they get too close to K'neetrak, previously allowed the s'thag zagath harvester in the Hoarwall Swamp to notice them and report in, or otherwise allow themselves to be detected, a much more powerful force will be sent out to deal with the party.

If the PCs manage to use *invisibility* or *screaming* to further investigate K'neetrak, they'll see that it contains only a tiny number of living zagath, but that those few control hundreds of scarlet wardens, which in turn control thousands of bugdead.

Tactics: No matter the size of the patrol that encounters the party, its tactics remain the same: the bugdead dragonflies advance quickly to bog the party down in melee while any scarlet wardens hang back to assault the PCs with their spells. If present, the zagath harvester will stay behind the scarlet wardens, supporting its bugdead allies with its psionics.

The bugdead will fight to the death, but the zagath harvester will retreat from a losing battle.

Development: Unless the PCs are suicidal enough to directly assault K'neetrak itself, the zagath will not molest them further on their way to the Web.

Part 3: The Web

Nestled against the southeastern cliffs of the Ulyanese basin, the PCs find their ultimate destination - the Web.

12) Step Into My Parlor... (EL -)

The *kank antennae helmet* ultimately leads the PCs to the Web, a web-shrouded, spider-infested region that is unknown to the humanoid sages of the Dead Lands.

Following the gentle pull of Ahnthyarka's "gift", you find yourselves before a great mass of webbing nestled into the southeastern cliffs of Ulyan. Even

from this distance, you can see numerous bodies caught in the webbing, both humanoid and insectile, twisting and in the searingly hot breeze.

Occasionally, you even catch a glimpse of what might be a flash of light off a metallic object on a body.

If the PCs investigate the bodies, they find an assortment of types - the husks of monstrous insects are by far the most common, but there are several dead humanoids and even a dead scarlet warden or two. All

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of the bodies are dead (rather than undead and animate), partially cocooned in webbing, and completely drained of fluids. Mixed amongst the nearby bodies are twenty gold pieces (the bugdead, oblivious to the coins' value, placed them on the bodies simply for their shininess, as only gold coins have failed to tarnish with the centuries), which can be retrieved with a diligent search (Search check, DC 20) and an hour's work.

Anyone interacting with the webs, whether searching the bodies or simply navigating the Web itself, risks getting ensnared by the webbing, requiring a Reflex save (DC 15) to keep from getting entangled. Any fire effect will clear away the webs within five feet of the effect (torches and other point-sources clear away only one 5-foot square per exposure). The strands and sheets of webbing within the Web otherwise function like those of a *web* spell - see the spell description for more details.

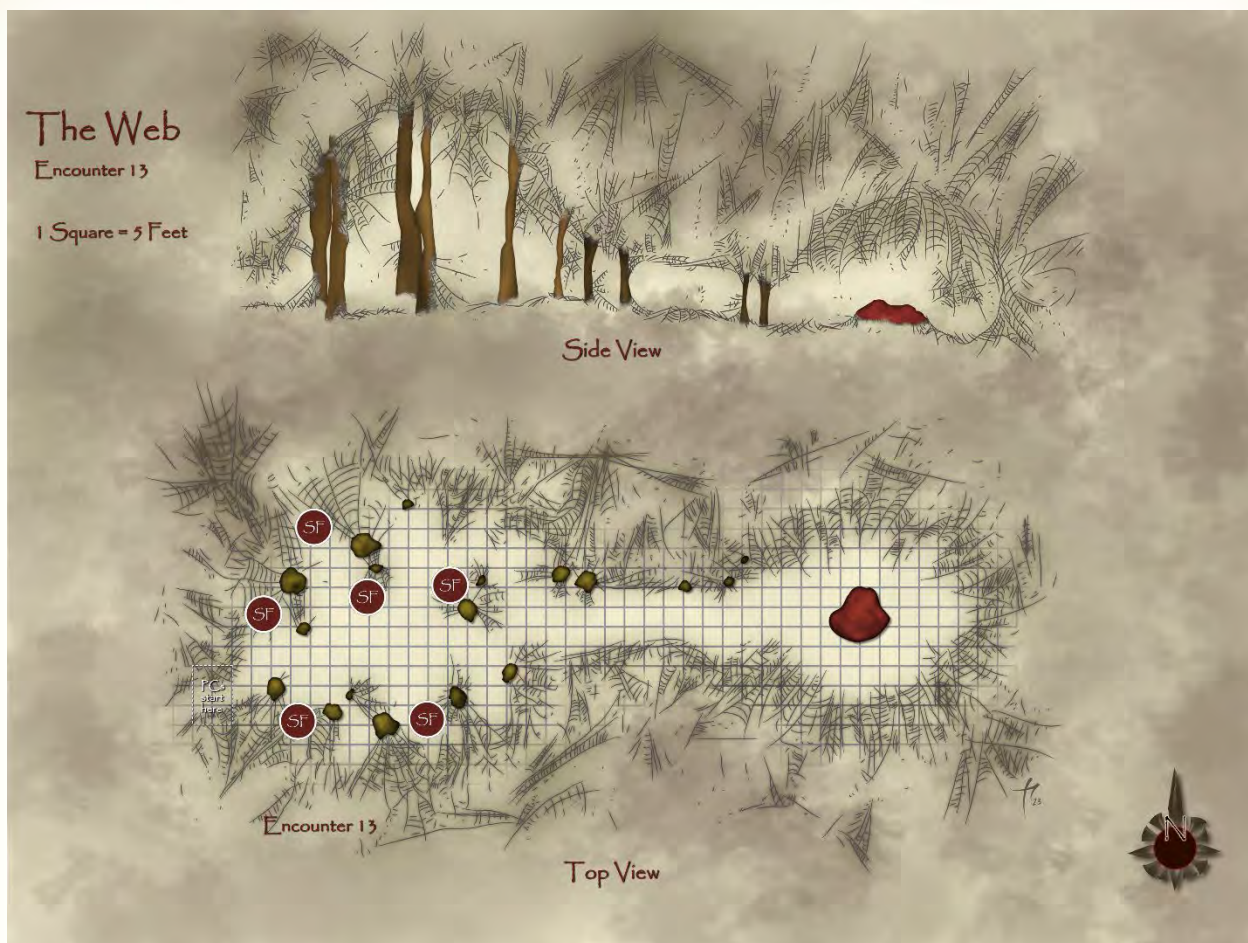
When the PCs draw closer to the Web, read:

Up close, you can see that this great mass of webbing literally crawls with arachnids - all surely undead. Small, normal-sized spiders crawl across the exterior of the webs, adding strand after strand to the construct, repairing damaged secretions and slowly increasing the size of the mass.

Here and there, spiders the size of a human hand pick their way across the webs, laying down webbing of their own and hunting their smaller brethren. Watching closely, you see hints of much bigger creatures moving within the great mass of webbing.

Development: When they're ready, the PCs can move on into the depths of the Web, cutting, burning, or simply pushing through the layers of webbing.

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13) Scarlet Fosterlings (EL 15)

Scarlet Fosterlings, Greater Cluster (CR 10) 6x - see Appendix 1

The PCs wander through the Web, stumbling through sheets of webbing and passageways within it, seeing but not being bothered by plenty of bugdead spiders. In a large clearing, swarms of freshly spawned undead zagath pour out of the webbing to attack the PCs.

Passage through the webbing is slow. Clear passageways and corridors run throughout the maze of webbing, allowing travel, but the passages are often only short, isolated sections. Such open sections are usually separated by thick sheets of webbing that require cutting or burning to move through.

Adding to the nightmarishness of this sticky labyrinth are the ever-present hordes of bugdead

spiders. They rarely threaten you but their constant presence, both on the webbing around you and on your very person, could hardly be described as "comforting".

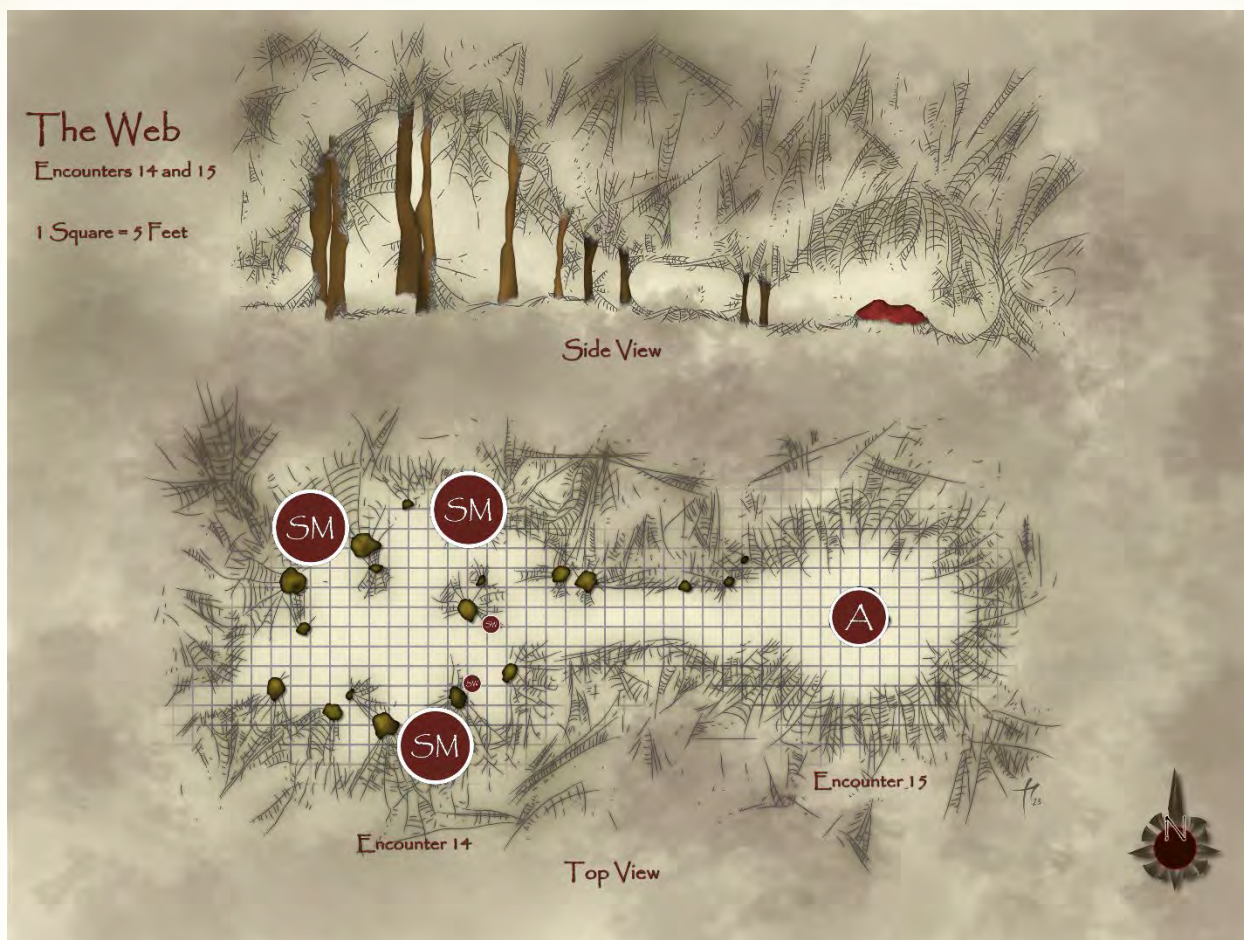
Eventually, you come to a short passage that opens up into a large chamber-like space in the webbing. The chamber is expansive, feeling more like a cathedral or cavern than a void in a mass of webbing. Another passage seems to extend from the far side of the chamber.

The chamber is roughly circular, being fifty by sixty feet across with a ceiling forty feet high. The chamber is largely wide-open with only the occasional spire of rock or thick strand of webbing obstruction.

Once the PCs are done examining the chamber or are otherwise ready to move on, read:

As you stand about the chamber, suddenly the walls seem to begin to writhe and shift, disgorging hundreds of scuttling little red creatures. As the

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waves of creatures move down from the walls and ceiling towards you, you see that they look like a horde of miniature scarlet wardens.

Tactics: Several swarms of scarlet fosterlings will move to surround the PCs (enough that the entire party is surrounded by them), crawling around and onto the PCs while biting and clawing (dealing their swarm damage). The remaining swarms will stay up on the walls or ceiling of the chamber to attack with their spells. The swarms fight to the death.

Development: After the scarlet fosterling swarms are defeated, but before the party can move on, a second wave of larger undead zagath attack the party. Proceed immediately to Encounter #13 - Scarlet Wards.

14) Scarlet Wards (EL 15)

Scarlet Ward (CR 10) 2x - see Appendix 1

Scarlet Ward Mob (CR 11) 3x - see Appendix 1

Two rounds after the scarlet fosterling swarms are defeated (giving the PCs one full round to heal, cast defensive spells, etc), a mob of larger - but still immature - scarlet wardens attack from out of the webbing.

Seemingly only moments after the last of the scuttling little red swarms has dispersed, the webbing walls of the chamber once again ripple with activity.

Though they are the size of an average humanoid, the creatures can clearly be seen to be small scarlet wardens.

Tactics: The mobs will move to encompass the PCs while the two individual scarlet wards hang back to target the PCs with their spells. As before, all of the scarlet wards fight to the death.

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Development: Once the scarlet wards are defeated, the PCs are free to move on down the passage when they are ready. Proceed to Encounter #14 - Agnakh.

15) Agnakh (EL 18)

Agnakh (CR 18) 1x - see Appendix 1

In the next open chamber within the webbing, the PCs find their ultimate destination - Agnakh and the zagath birthstone.

Once through the open passageway, you find yourselves in a second open chamber within the webs. Unlike the expansiveness of the last open chamber, this chamber - while by no means small - feels smaller and more...intimate?

Sitting in the center of the chamber is a large semicircular stone composed of a soft-looking red material. Atop the stone is a massive scarlet warden, with its many legs, other appendages, and bulges comfortably positioned in sockets and hollows in the stone's surface, as if it were made to accommodate such a creature.

The massive creature looks very much like Ahnthyarka, though there are subtle differences that even you can recognize - this then must be Ahnthyarka's broodmate.

Judging by its insistent pull, Ahnthyarka's "gift" clearly indicates that Ahnthyarka's "young" is located beneath this brood-mate.

Like the previous one, this chamber is roughly circular, being thirty by forty feet across with a ceiling forty feet high. The chamber is completely wide-open except for the stone and creature in the center of the chamber.

The creature at the center of the chamber is in fact Agnakh, an unreclaimed and a broodmate of Ahnthyarka. Though the PCs are very unlikely to know it at this time, the stone beneath Agnakh is a zagath birthstone and Ahnthyarka's "young" that the PCs are seeking. The birthstone is shaped much like a squashed sphere and is approximately ten feet wide, ten feet tall, and ten feet across.

If the PCs attempt to communicate with it (if all else fails, Agnakh can respond to the PCs' attempts at communication with its psionics), read:

Though your attempts at communication seem to so far been fruitless, at least the creature before you has not moved to attack you yet.

The massive beast seems to shudder suddenly and then begin to stir, seemingly taking more interest in you than before. Just as it seems to make eye contact with you for the first time, a multitude of extremely tiny red creatures - much like those you fought earlier, but even smaller - scuttle out from dozens of small holes in the underside of the stone the creature sits upon.

Speaking with Agnakh

Like Ahnthyarka (and all other zagath), Agnakh is genderless, but unlike Ahnthyarka, Agnakh has no concept of gender or male and female pronouns. Distrustful of humanoids and out of practice in communicating with anything other than unintelligent bugdead, Agnakh is extremely terse in conversation.

- No matter what method of communication used (including Agnakh's psionics), Agnakh's first response is the same: *"Who are you?"*
- In response to who it is: *"I am Agnakh."*
- In response to Ahnthyarka or being brood-mates: *"Yes, Ahnthyarka was one of my brood-mates."*
- If asked about the birthstone or the tiny creatures escaping from beneath it: *"It is mine. They are my young."*
- In response to the idea of losing the birthstone: *"No. It is mine. I will consume you. You will then be mine."*

Tactics: If the PCs anger Agnakh (by suggesting that Agnakh not retain the birthstone) or simply do not eventually attempt to initiate communication, Agnakh will attack. Agnakh prefers not to leave the birthstone, making melee attacks if the PCs are within reach or using their spells, psionics, and/or breath weapon if not. Only if Agnakh absolutely cannot effectively attack the PCs from atop the birthstone will they step away from it to melee with the PCs. Agnakh fights to the death to retain the birthstone.

Development: Once the PCs reach Agnakh, they may or may not decide to take possession of the birthstone. If the PCs do defeat Agnakh and take the birthstone, they still need to deliver it. Go to Concluding the Adventure, below.

Concluding the Adventure

Once the PCs obtain the birthstone from Agnakh, they must still return with it to their chosen patron (whether Ahnthyarka or Gretch). Approximately 10' x 10' x 10', composed of incredibly hard but surprisingly porous stone, and weighing 8 tons (16,000 pounds), the birthstone could prove a challenge for even a party of 17th level characters to move across the Dead Lands. Of course, even if the birthstone can be moved, it will be difficult to disguise.

If the PCs deliver the birthstone to Ahnthyarka, they will confirm that it is their "most precious young" (as the birthstone represents Ahnthyarka's nascent spawn). Within months, Ahnthyarka learns to use the birthstone and creates a horde of scarlet wardens, using them first to secure the western Dead Lands as far north as Nuubark (including the bugdead satrapies of Paaz Nak, Ghazg, and Chozag'akiz) and then to assault the lands of the Disciples, the Bone Lands, and the Kingdoms of Gretch.

Should the PCs give Gretch the birthstone, it takes him far longer to discover how to reproduce humanoid undead with it (if ever), but Gretch does soon discover a way to use the birthstone's secrets to better control scarlet wardens. Gretch soon expands his region of control south to the Hoarwall and west to the Shale Lands. The former bugdead satrapies (Zuuthruus, Zhopkos, Thagnak, and Ghazg) become further kingdoms of the newly born Empire of Gretch and their bugdead inhabitants serve Gretch in turn.

If the PCs leave the birthstone unguarded in the Web for their patron to retrieve (or perhaps both, collecting a partial reward from each), another of the unreclaimed quickly takes possession of the birthstone and Agnakh's abandoned spawn, creating a massive army of undead zagath. Once mature, these unreclaimed pour out from the Web in a wave of destruction and the s'thag zagath quickly find themselves embroiled in a second war against their undead brethren.

If the PCs retain the birthstone themselves, both Ahnthyarka and Gretch move to secure it by any means necessary, stopping at nothing to retrieve the birthstone and punish the party.

Should the PCs somehow destroy the birthstone or otherwise render it impossible to use or inaccessible to the inhabitants of the Dead Lands (via *disintegration*,

transport to another plane, etc.), Ahnthyarka and Gretch behave as though the PCs kept it for themselves, as they both find the idea of anyone destroying something so powerful inconceivable. Any pleas regarding the truthfulness of the birthstone's destruction fall on deaf ears..

Further Adventures

Depending on what choices the PCs make regarding who receives the birthstone, many subsequent adventures could follow.

If they transport it across the Dead Lands themselves, various interested parties - both bugdead and humanoid - will attempt to waylay the party and take their treasure. Even groups of undead that ostensibly serve Gretch would be happy to deliver the PCs' prize to Gretch themselves (and to take credit for its retrieval, whatever it is).

Should the birthstone be left in the Web long enough for another of the unreclaimed to take possession of it, Ahnthyarka and Gretch will (separately) insist that the PCs rectify the situation. Each patron wants the birthstone for themselves and will be concerned about the ramifications of the party's actions. The patrons will insist that the PCs delve deep into the Web once more, destroy the new undead zagath monarch, and retrieve the birthstone - personally this time!

If the PCs delivered the birthstone to Ahnthyarka, the powers among the humanoid undead might later contact the party to "clean up their mess" as it were and take the birthstone from Ahnthyarka. By now, they will have hordes of spawned scarlet wardens under their control, but Ahnthyarka might be personally weakened - drained from the birthstone.

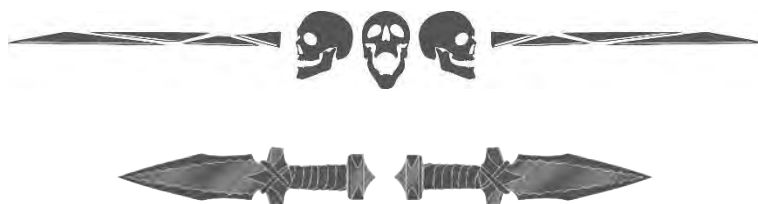
If the PCs gave Gretch the birthstone, the other signatories to the Bugdead Accords eventually contact the party to take the zagath relic back from "Emperor Gretch" by any means necessary. They claim that Gretch is "playing with fire" and that his efforts towards more-fully commanding scarlet wardens and his invasion of the former Buglands will end poorly, not just for his own kingdoms, but for all those in Dead Lands. Of course, each faction and undead leader

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would like the party to return the birthstone to them for “safe keeping”.

Whether the PCs decide to deliver the birthstone to Ahnthyarka or Gretch, the other will be deeply offended and quickly begin acting to punish the PCs. While the PCs are likely too powerful to fear the threat of assassins, soon after the delivery of the birthstone the party will find themselves unwelcome in a growing

number of locations. Soon enough they find that either their reputation as powerful but untrustworthy turncoats proceed them everywhere they go or strikes by powerful hordes of bugdead plague those with whom they had dealings soon after their departure (depending on whether the PCs delivered the birthstone to Ahnthyarka or Gretch). The party must find a way to make restitution to the offended patron and repair their reputation in the Dead Lands.



Appendix 1: Monsters & NPCs

Agnakh CR 18

Unreclaimed Scarlet Warden Wizard 4

Chaotic Evil Huge Undead (Psionic)

Init: +9; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +23, Spot +27

Aura: -

Languages: Zagath

AC: 27, touch 13, flat-footed 22**
(-2 size, +5 Dex, +10 natural, +4 armor)

hp 165 (22 HD; 22d12+22)

Spell Resistance: 30

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Cast No Shadow

Saves: Fort +6, Ref +11, Will +16

Speed: 40 ft (8 squares), Climb 20 ft.

Melee: Claw +21 (2d6+11) or Tentacle +20 (1d4+11) or Touch +20 (by spell)

Full Melee: 2x Claw +21 (2d6+11) and Bite +21 (1d6+5 plus Poison) and 3x Tentacle +20 (1d4+5)

Ranged: Ranged Touch +16 (by spell)

Space: 15 ft.; **Reach:** 10 ft. (15 ft. with tentacles)

Base Attack: +11; **Grapple:** +30

Combat Options: Breath Weapon (3/day, DC 25), Create Spawn, Enhanced Spells (+1 dmg/die), Improved Grab, Poison (DC 27)

Combat Gear: -

Psi-Like Abilities: 3/day - burst, catfall, claws of the vampire, mind probe, mindlink, psionic blast,

schism; ML = HD; The save DCs are Charisma-based.

Wizard Spells: (CL 18th, DC 15 + spell level):

7th—grasping hand*, mage’s sword*.

6th—chain lightning*, contingency* (stoneskin when attacked), disintegrate.

5th—baleful polymorph, cone of cold* x2, overland flight, persistent image.

4th—animate dead, dimension door, fire shield*, greater invisibility, shout*, stoneskin.

3rd—clairaudience/clairvoyance, halt undead*, haste, invisibility sphere, lightning bolt* x2.

2nd—command undead*, false life*, ghoul touch, mirror image, see invisibility, spectral hand;

1st—alarm, chill touch x2*, mage armor x2, ray of enfeeblement, shocking grasp*;

0—dancing lights, disrupt undead (3)*, detect magic;

Abilities: Str 32, Dex 20, Con -, Int 20, Wis 15, Cha 18

Special Qualities: Cast No Shadow, Darkvision 60 ft., Gray Toughness 1, Necromant, Spell Resistance, Undead Traits.

Feats: Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Deflect Arrows ^B, Improved Initiative, Improved Multiattack, Multiattack, Path Sinister ^B, Practiced Spellcaster, Weapon Focus (Bite, Claw).

Skills: Bluff +14, Climb +19, Concentration +29, Diplomacy +6, Hide +18, Knowledge (Arcana) +19, Listen +23, Move Silently +26, Search +12, Sense Motive +23, Spellcraft +19, Spot +27.

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Possessions: -

All-Around Vision (Ex): A scarlet warden's eyes give it 360-degree vision, granting a +4 racial bonus on Spot and Search checks and preventing the beast from becoming flanked. **

Breath Weapon (Su): The creature has a breath weapon. The creature can breathe a cone of poison gas up to three times per day, dealing 1d6 Con initial and secondary damage. A successful Fort save (DC 10 + ½ HD + Cha modifier) negates the damage.

Create Spawn (Su): A humanoid reduced to 0 Constitution by scarlet warden poison dies but continues to breathe shallowly as if alive. After 1d6 days, the corpse rises as a namech under the scarlet warden's command.

Enhanced Spells (Su): Any damage-dealing spell cast by the undead inflicts +1 damage per die. The spell's defiling radius increases by 5 ft.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a scarlet warden must hit with a claw attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity.

Path Sinister (feat): Choose two spells at every spell level. These spells must be selected from the evocation and/or necromancy schools. You gain +1 caster level when casting the chosen spells. *

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 21, initial and secondary damage 1d6 Con. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Skills: Unreclaimed have a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks and can always choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened.

Spell Resistance (Ex): Scarlet wardens have spell resistance equal to 20 + class levels.



Ant Lion, Zombie CR 11

Advanced Elite Zombie Bugdead Giant Ant Lion
NE Huge Undead

Init: +3; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft., Tremorsense 30 ft.;

Listen +1, Spot +1

Aura: -

Languages: -

AC: 23, touch 11, flat-footed 20

(-2 size, +3 Dex, +12 Nat)

hp 97 (13d12+13)

Damage Reduction: 3/metal; **Resistance:** Fire 5

Immune: Cold, Electricity, Turning, Undead Traits;

Weakness: Vulnerability to Sunlight

Saves: Fort +4, Ref +7, Will +9

Speed: 20 ft. (8 squads), Burrow 10 ft.

Melee: Bite +18 (3d6+19)

Space: 15 ft.; **Reach:** 10 ft.

Base Attack: +6; **Grapple:** +28

Combat Options: Breath Weapon (15 ft. DC 16, 10d6, 3/day), Constrict (3d6+19), Improved Grab, Sand Pit

Abilities: Str 36, Dex 17, Con —, Int —, Wis 12, Cha 1

Special Qualities: Damage Reduction 3/metal, Darkvision 60 ft, Enhanced Ability (+1 to attack, Nat AC +2), Fire Resistance, Gray Toughness 1, Immunity to Cold and Electricity, Immunity to Turning, Tremorsense 30 ft., Undead Traits, Vulnerability to Sunlight.

Feats: -

Skills: -

Breath Weapon (Ex): The creature can breathe a cone of obsidian shards (piercing damage) up to three times per day, dealing 1d6 points of damage per CR (adjusted by special abilities and weaknesses). A successful Reflex save halves the damage.

Sand Pit (Ex): A creature can make a DC 20 Spot check to notice a sand lion pit before stepping into it, and creatures with ranks in Knowledge (nature) or Survival can use one of those skills to attempt to detect the pit. The pit functions as a trap against unwary creatures.

Sand Pit Trap: CR —; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; DC 15 Reflex save avoids; 10 ft. deep (1d6, fall); multiple targets (first target in each of two adjacent 5-ft. squares); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 20; Market Price: —.

Climbing the pit's sliding sand walls requires a Climb check (DC 15). Unstable footing at the bottom of the pit forces creatures without a burrow speed to make a Balance check (DC 12) each round. Failure means the creature can't move that round, and failure by 5 or more causes the creature to fall prone.

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Tremorsense (Ex): A zombie bugdead ant lion is sensitive to vibrations in the ground and can automatically pinpoint the location of anything that is in contact with the ground within 60 feet.

Vulnerability to Sunlight (Ex): Direct sunlight deals the undead 1d6 points of damage each round.



Col'raoz CR 22

Female Half-Giant Morg Barbarian 16

CE Large Undead (Augmented Giant)

Init: +5; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft.; Listen +24, Search +11, Spot +5

Aura: Fear (60ft, DC 23)

Languages: Common, Ulyanese

AC: 27; touch 17, flat-footed 22; Dodge, Improved Uncanny Dodge, Mobility

(-1 size, +5 Dex, +6 Nat, +4 armor, +3 Def)

hp 136 (16 HD; 16d12+32); **Fast Healing** 1

Damage Reduction: 10/magic or 4/-; **Resistances:** Cold 10

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Light Sensitivity

Saves: Fort +10, Ref +7, Will +4; Indomitable Will

Speed: 50 ft.

Melee: Macahuitl +28 (3d6+18; 17-20) or Tongue +27 (1d6+12) or Touch +27 (by spell)

Full Melee: Macahuitl +28/+23/+18/+13 (3d6+18; 17-20) and Tongue +27 (1d6+12)

Space: 10 ft.; **Reach:** 10 ft.

Base Attack: +16/+11/+6/+1; **Grapple:** +32

Combat Options: Ability Damage (DC 23, 1d6 Cha dmg), Constrict, Create Spawn, Energy Drain (DC 23), Gaseous Form, Great Cleave, Improved Grab, Paralyzing Gaze (60ft., DC 23, 2d6 rounds), Power Attack, Rage (5/day, +6 Str/+3 Will/-2 AC, 8 rounds).

Combat Gear: Large Great Macahuitl +1

Spell-Like Abilities (Sp): At will - fire shield, gaseous form, levitate, mage armor, magic missile, protection from evil, ventriloquism; CL = HD. The save DCs are Charisma-based.

Abilities: Str 34, Dex 20, Con --, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 20

Special Qualities: Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60 ft., Delusional, Enhanced Ability (+2 Cha), Fast Healing, Gray Toughness, Greater Rage, Improved Uncanny Dodge, Light Sensitivity, Resistances, Skills, Trap Sense +5, Uncanny Dodge, Undead Traits.

Feats: Cleave, Dodge, Great Cleave, Improved Critical (Macahuitl), Mobility, Power Attack.

Skills: Climb +21, Concentration +5, Handle Animal +14, Intimidate +26, Jump +21, Listen +24, Move Silently +15, Search +11, Sense Motive +5, Speak Language (1, Ulyanese), Spot +5, Survival +8.

Possessions: 77,000cp or Combat Gear plus: Belt of Giant Strength +4, Boots of Springing and Striding, Cloak of Charisma +4, Gloves of Dexterity +4, (Tinted) Goggles of Minute Seeing, Potion of Blur x2, Potion of Jump, Ring of Protection +3.

Ability Damage (Su): Living creatures hit by the undead's natural attacks must succeed on a Fortitude save or take 1d6 points of Charisma damage. On each such successful attack, the undead gains 5 temporary hit points.

Delusional: Col'raoz believes herself and those around her to still be alive. She believes her spell-like and supernatural abilities to simply be "her mastery of the Will" (i.e., wild talents) or she ignores their effects completely. She bemoans being enslaved by Gretch (a well-treated slave as she might be) and longs to go home to her family near Draj. She has been undead for 1000+ years.

Improved Uncanny Dodge (Ex): At 5th level and higher, a barbarian can no longer be flanked. This defense denies a rogue the ability to sneak attack the barbarian by flanking him, unless the attacker has at least four more rogue levels than the target has barbarian levels. If a character already has uncanny dodge from a second class, the character automatically gains improved uncanny dodge instead, and the levels from the classes that grant uncanny dodge stack to determine the minimum level a rogue must be to flank the character.

Indomitable Will (Ex): While in a rage, a barbarian of 14th level or higher gains a +4 bonus on Will saves to resist enchantment spells. This bonus stacks with all other modifiers, including the morale bonus on Will saves he also receives during his rage.

Light Sensitivity (Ex): Morgs are dazzled in bright sunlight or within the radius of a daylight spell.

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Paralyzing Gaze (Su): The undead's gaze attack paralyzes creatures within 30 ft. for 2d6 rounds unless they make a Fortitude save.

Uncanny Dodge (Ex): At 2nd level, a barbarian retains his Dexterity bonus to AC (if any) even if he is caught flat-footed or struck by an invisible attacker. However, he still loses his Dexterity bonus to AC if immobilized. If a barbarian already has uncanny dodge from a different class, he automatically gains improved uncanny dodge instead.



Fallen of Nophdeh CR 10

Human Fallen Fighter 8

LE Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Human, Psionic)

Init: +6; Senses: Darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +13, Search +7, Spot +13

Aura: Despair (10 ft, DC 14 or Shaken)

Languages: Classic Dwarven, Tamwar, Ulyanese

AC: 28; touch 13, flat-footed 26

(+2 Dex, +6 armor, +3 shield, +6 Nat, +1 Def)

hp 68 (8d12+16)

Damage Reduction: 5/magic; **Spell Resistance:** 21

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Code of Honor, Vulnerability to Wood

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +5

Speed: 30 ft.

Melee: Longsword +17 (1d8+10; 19-20/x2) and Slam +14 (1d8+6; 20/x2) or Longsword +17/+12 (1d8+10; 19-20/x2) and Shield Bash +9 (1d4+3; 20/x2)

Full Melee: Javelin +10 (1d6+6; Range 20 ft; 20/x2)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +8/+3; **Grapple:** +14

Combat Options: **Blinding Touch (DC 14)**, Create Spawn.

Combat Gear: Longsword +2 (from *call weaponry*), Heavy Steel Shield +1, Javelin x6, Breastplate +1

Psi-Like Abilities: At will - *call weaponry**, *death knell*, *deathwatch*, *mindlink**; 1/day - *recall agony**; ML = HD. The save DCs are Charisma-based.

Abilities: Str 22, Dex 14, Con --, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 10

Special Qualities: Code of Honor, Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60 ft., Gray Toughness 2, Skills, Spell Resistance, Undead Traits, Vulnerability to Wood.

Feats: Dodge, Improved Initiative, Improved Shield Bash, Mobility, Power Attack ^B, Spring Attack ^B, Weapon Focus (Longsword) ^B, Weapon Specialization (Longsword) ^B.

Skills: Climb +5, Craft (weapons) +8, Craft (armor) +8, Intimidate +4, Jump +5, Listen +13, Search +7, Spot +13.

Possessions: 9,400cp or Combat Gear plus: Belt of Giant Strength +2, Ring of Protection +1, Vest of Resistance +1.

Blinding Touch (Su): The undead can make a touch attack as a standard action that doesn't provoke an attack of opportunity. The touch causes blindness in the victim for 2d4 rounds. A Fortitude save negates the effect.

Code of Honor (Ex): Fallen are bound to follow a code of honor reflecting idealized rules of war. Evil fallen attempt to break or twist codes to avoid getting killed.

Create Spawn (Su): A giant, humanoid, or monstrous humanoid slain by a fallen's death knell power rises as fallen after 1d4 rounds. A fallen can have spawn with Hit Dice totaling twice its own.

Despair (Su): Fallen radiate an aura of doom and hopelessness, causing creatures within 10 ft. to make a Will save (DC 10 + ½ fallen's HD + fallen's Cha modifier). Creatures that fail are shaken. Whether or not the save is successful, that creature cannot be affected again by the same undead's aura for 24 hours. Fallen can suppress or reactivate this ability as a standard action in order to achieve surprise in close quarters.

Vulnerability to Wood (Ex): The undead can be harmed by nonmagical weapons of wood. No matter the type of damage reduction possessed, it is overcome by these common weapons.



Giant Dragonfly, Zombie CR 10

Advanced Bugdead Zombie Giant Dragonfly
NE Large Undead

Adventures in the Dead Lands

Init +4; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0
Aura: -
Languages: -

AC: 20, touch 12, flat-footed 16
(-2 size, +4 Dex, +8 Nat)
hp 136 (21d12)
Damage Reduction: 3/metal
Immune: Cold, Electricity, Undead Traits
Saves: Fort +7, Ref +11, Will +12

Speed: 10 ft (2 squares), **Fly 60 ft. (good)**
Melee: Bite +16 (2d6+12; 20/x2)
Space: 15 ft.; **Reach:** 10 ft.
Base Attack: +10; **Grapple:** +26
Combat Options: Devour, Improved Grab, Rake (2x
melee, +16 to hit, 1d8+4)

Abilities: Str 26, Dex 18, Con -, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 1
Special Qualities: Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60
ft., Resistance to Fire, Undead Traits
Feats: Hover ^B.
Skills: -

Devour (Ex): Once a giant dragonfly has achieved a hold, it automatically deals bite damage each round it maintains the hold.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a giant dragonfly must hit with its bite attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can rake with two claws.



Giant Dragonfly Swarm CR 12

Mob of Advanced Bugdead Zombie Giant Dragonflies

NE Gargantuan undead (mob of Large Undead)
Init: +0; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0
Aura: -
Languages: -

AC: 18, touch 10, flat-footed 14
(-4 size, +4 Dex, +8 Nat)
hp 195 (30d12+30)
Damage Reduction: 3/metal; **Resistance:** Fire 5

Immune: Cold, Electricity; Mob Anatomy, Undead Traits
Saves: Fort +9, Ref +13, Will +17

Speed: 5 ft (1 squares), **Fly 50 ft. (good)**
Melee: Mob (5d6)
Space: 20 ft.; **Reach:** 0 ft.
Base Attack: +15; **Grapple:** +35
Combat Options: Improved Grab, Rake (2d8+8)

Abilities: Str 26, Dex 18, Con -, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 1
Special Qualities: Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60
ft., **Gray Toughness 1**, Mob Anatomy, Resistance to
Fire, Undead Traits
Feats: Hover ^B, Improved Bull Rush ^B, Improved
Overrun ^B.
Skills: -

Expert Grappler (Ex): A mob can maintain a grapple without penalty and still make attacks against other targets (normally, attacking other targets while grappling imposes a -20 penalty on grapple checks). A mob is never considered flat-footed while grappling.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a giant dragonfly swarm must attack a target with its mob attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can cause rake damage.

Mob Anatomy (Ex): A mob has no clear front or back and no discernible anatomy, so it is not subject to critical hits or sneak attacks. A mob cannot be flanked, tripped, grappled, or bull rushed.

Unlike standard swarms, mobs are made up of relatively small numbers of individual creatures, so spells or effects that target specific numbers of creatures can have an effect on a mob. Each specific creature that is slain, disabled, or otherwise incapacitated by spells or effects that target specific creatures bestows two negative levels on the mob. A mob that gains negative levels equal to its Hit Dice breaks up as if reduced to 0 hit points. Negative levels gained in this manner are not the result of negative energy (and thus cannot be blocked by *death ward* or removed by *restoration*), but never result in permanent level loss. A mob takes half again as much damage (+50%) from spells or effects that affect an area, such as splash weapons and evocation spells.

Although mobs are treated as one creature, it sometimes becomes necessary to determine the fate of a specific individual caught up in the mob. If a mob is

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dispersed by nonlethal attacks, there are no casualties. If the mob is dispersed by lethal attacks, assume that 30% of its number are slain and 30% are reduced to 0 hit points. To determine a specific individual's fate, simply roll d%: a result of 01–30 indicates death, 31–60 indicates the victim is reduced to 0 hit points, and a roll of 61–100 indicates the victim escapes relatively unscathed.



Glozir, Lieutenant of the Exilarchate CR 16

Male and Female Ogre Fallen Fighter 4 / Psychic Warrior 7

LE Medium Undead (Augmented Giant, Psionic)

Init: +6; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft.; Listen +13, Search +6, Spot +13

Aura: Despair (10 ft, DC 16), **Fear** (60 ft, DC 16)

Languages: Classic Dwarven, Ulyanese Giant, Ulyanese

AC: 34; touch 13, flat-footed 32

(-1 size, +2 Dex, +11 Nat, +7 armor, +3 shield, +2 Def)

hp 128 (15 HD; 15d12+30)

Damage Reduction: 5/magic

Immune: **Turning**, Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Code of Honor, Vulnerability to Stone

Saves: Fort +9, Ref +4, Will +4

Speed: 30+10 ft (base 40 ft.)

Melee: Bastard Sword +21 (2d8+14; 19-20/x2) or Bite +18 (3d6+10; 20/x2) or Touch +18 (Brand)

Full Melee: Bastard Sword +21/+16 (2d8+14; 19-20/x2) and Bite +13 (3d6+5; 20/x2)

Ranged: Javelin +10 (1d8+10; Range 30 ft.; 20/x2)

Full Ranged: Javelin +10/+5 (1d8+10; Range 30 ft.; 20/x2)

Space: 10 ft.; **Reach:** 10 ft.

Base Attack: +9/+4; **Grapple:** +24

Combat Options: **Brand** (3/day, 1d8 plus penalty), Create Spawn, Deep Impact, Great Cleave, Power Attack, Psionic Meditation (Move action), Psionic Weapon (+2d6)

Combat Gear: Large Bone Javelin x10, Large Bastard Sword +2 (called via *call weaponry*), Large Shell Breastplate +2, Large Heavy Shell Shield +1

Psionic Warrior Powers (ML 7th, PP: 15+7, DC 12 + power level):

3rd: Greater Concealing Amorphia

2nd: Dissolving Weapon, Hustle, Psionic Lion's Charge

1st: Bite of the Wolf, Chameleon, Force Screen

Psi-Like Abilities: At will—*call weaponry**, *death knell*, *deathwatch*, *mindlink**; 1/day—*recall agony**. ML = HD. The save DCs are Charisma-based. *Power can be augmented.

Abilities: Str 30, Dex 14, Con —, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 8

Special Qualities: Code of Honor, Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60 ft., **Enhanced Ability** (attack), Gray Toughness 2, Immunity to Turning, Skills, Undead traits, **Vulnerability to Stone**.

Feats: Cleave, Deep Impact, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Bastard Sword), Great Cleave, Improved Initiative ^B, Power Attack, Psionic Meditation^B, Psionic Weapon^B, Quick Draw, Speed of Thought ^B, Weapon Focus (Bastard Sword) ^B, Weapon Specialization (Bastard Sword)^B.

Skills: Climb +10, Intimidate +8, Jump +10, Knowledge (warcraft) +5, Listen +15, Search +6, Spot +15.

Possessions: 21,000cp or Combat Gear plus: Belt of Giant's Strength +2, Cloak of Resistance +1, Gloves of Dexterity +2, Potion-Orb of Expeditious Retreat (CL 1st) x2, Periapt of Wisdom +2, Potion-Orb of Inflict Moderate Wounds (CL 3rd) x2, Ring of Protection +2.

Brand (Su): Up to three times per day, the creature can trace a lasting mark on a creature's skin with its fingers by making a touch attack. This touch deals 1d8 points of damage and inflicts a -2 penalty on any interaction checks the victim makes (such as Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate, and Sense Motive); the brand leaves a disturbing impression on anyone who sees it. Both the damage and penalty are permanent. A *remove curse* or *heal* spell removes the brand and its negative effects.

Code of Honor (Ex): Fallen are bound to follow a code of honor reflecting idealized rules of war. Evil fallen attempt to break or twist codes to avoid getting killed.

Create Spawn (Su): A giant, humanoid, or monstrous humanoid slain by a fallen's death knell power rises as fallen after 1d4 rounds. A fallen can have spawn with Hit Dice totaling twice its own.

Despair (Su): Fallen radiate an aura of doom and hopelessness, causing creatures within 10 ft. to make a Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 fallen's HD + fallen's Cha modifier). Creatures that fail are shaken. Whether or not the save is successful, that creature cannot be

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affected again by the same undead's aura for 24 hours. Fallen can suppress or reactivate this ability as a standard action in order to achieve surprise in close quarters.

Fear Aura (Su): The undead is shrouded in a dreadful aura of death and evil. Creatures in a 60-foot radius that look at the undead must make a Will save. Creatures with fewer than 5 HD that fail their save become panicked. Creatures with fewer HD than the undead that fail their save become shaken. Whether or not the save is successful, that creature cannot be affected again by the same undead's aura for 24 hours.

Vulnerability to Stone (Ex): The undead can be harmed by nonmagical weapons made of stone. No matter the type of damage reduction, it is overcome by stone weapons.



Soldier Kank, Army CR 8

Exoskeleton Bugdead Domestic Worker Kank Mob
NE Gargantuan Undead (Mob of Medium undead Kanks)

Init: +0; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft., Tremorsense 60 ft.;
Listen +0, Spot +0

Languages: -

AC: 8; touch 3, flat-footed 8

(-4 size, -1 Dex, +3 natural)

hp 195 (30 HD; 30d12)

Immune: Cold, Mob Anatomy, Undead Traits;

Weaknesses: Brittle

Saves: Fort +9, Ref +8, Will +17

Speed: 5 ft. (1 square)

Melee: Mob (5d6)

Space: 20 ft.; **Reach:** 0 ft.

Base Attack: +15; **Grapple:** +28

Combat Options: Expert Grappler, Trample 2d6

Abilities: Str 12, Dex 8, Con -, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 1

Special Qualities: Brittle, Damage Reduction 3/metal,
Darkvision 60 ft., Immunity to Cold and Electricity,
Mob Anatomy, Resistance to Fire 5, Tremorsense
60 ft., Undead traits.

Feats: Improved Bull Rush^B, Improved Overrun^B

Skills: -

Brittle (Ex): Bludgeoning weapons deal an additional 2 points of damage per die to exoskeleton bugdead.

Expert Grappler (Ex): A mob can maintain a grapple without penalty and still make attacks against other targets (normally, attacking other targets while grappling imposes a -20 penalty on grapple checks). A mob is never considered flat-footed while grappling.

Mob Anatomy (Ex): A mob has no clear front or back and no discernible anatomy, so it is not subject to critical hits or sneak attacks. A mob cannot be flanked, tripped, grappled, or bull rushed.

Unlike standard swarms, mobs are made up of relatively small numbers of individual creatures, so spells or effects that target specific numbers of creatures can have an effect on a mob. Each specific creature that is slain, disabled, or otherwise incapacitated by spells or effects that target specific creatures bestows two negative levels on the mob. A mob that gains negative levels equal to its Hit Dice breaks up as if reduced to 0 hit points. Negative levels gained in this manner are not the result of negative energy (and thus cannot be blocked by *death ward* or removed by *restoration*), but never result in permanent level loss. A mob takes half again as much damage (+50%) from spells or effects that affect an area, such as splash weapons and evocation spells.

Although mobs are treated as one creature, it sometimes becomes necessary to determine the fate of a specific individual caught up in the mob. If a mob is dispersed by nonlethal attacks, there are no casualties. If the mob is dispersed by lethal attacks, assume that 30% of its number are slain and 30% are reduced to 0 hit points. To determine a specific individual's fate, simply roll d%: a result of 01-30 indicates death, 31-60 indicates the victim is reduced to 0 hit points, and a roll of 61-100 indicates the victim escapes relatively unscathed.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 11, initial and secondary damage 1d6 Str. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Trample (Ex): A mob that simply moves over a creature and doesn't end its movement with that creature in one of its occupied squares can trample the creature. A trampled creature takes damage equal to 2d6 points + 1-1/2 times the mob's Strength modifier. The victim can either make an attack of opportunity against the mob or make a Reflex save (DC 25 + the mob's Str modifier) to take half damage.



Nophdeh Sergeant CR 16

Male and Female Dwarf Dwarven Banshee Fighter 13

LE Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Dwarf)

Init: +7; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft.; Listen +10, Search +12, Spot +0

Aura: -

Languages: Classic Dwarven, Ulyanese

AC: 23; touch 13, flat-footed 20; Dodge, Mobility (+3 Dex, +5 Nat, +5 armor)

hp 110 (13 HD; 13d12+26)

Damage Reduction: 10/magic; **Resistances:** Fire 10

Immune: Turning, Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Vulnerability to Stone

Saves: Fort +8, Ref +7, Will +4

Speed: 20 ft.

Melee: Dwarven Waraxe +21 (1d10+8; 20/x3) or Slam +22 (1d6+9; 20/x2) or Dagger +22 (1d4+9; 19-20/x2)

Full Melee: Dwarven Waraxe +21/+16/+11 (1d10+8; 20/x3) and Slam +17 (1d6+9; 20/x2)

Ranged: Comp. Longbow +16 (1d8+8; 100 ft range; 20/x3)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +13/+8/+3; **Grapple:** +22

Combat Options: Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes (4/round), **Curse**, Gaze of Frenzy (DC 18), Great Cleave, Improved Grab, Improved Trip (+4), Power Attack, Spring Attack.

Combat Gear: Chitin Armor +1, Composite (+7) Longbow +1, Obsidian Dagger, Obsidian Dwarven Waraxe.

Psi-Like Abilities: 3/day—*hostile empathic transfer**, *inflict pain**, *recall agony**. ML = HD. *Power can be augmented.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will - *deeper darkness*; CL = HD.

Abilities: Str 29, Dex 16, Con --, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 14

Special Qualities: Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60 ft., Enduring Focus, Gray Toughness, **Immunity to Turning**, Resistances, Undead Traits, **Vulnerability to Stone**.

Feats: Cleave ^B, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Dodge ^B, Great Cleave ^B, Immunity to Turning, Improved Trip, Improved Initiative, Mobility ^B, Power Attack, Spring Attack, Vulnerability to

Stone, Weapon Focus (Dwarven Waraxe), Weapon Specialization Dwarven Waraxe).

Skills: Climb +25, Intimidate +18, Jump +24, Knowledge (warcraft) +18, Listen +10, Search +12.

Possessions: 35,000cp or Combat Gear plus: Belt of Giant's Strength +2, Cloak of Resistance +1, Gloves of Dexterity +2; 25cp.

Curse (Su): The undead can curse an individual when it is destroyed. As the final blow is made that kills the creature, the undead can curse its destroyer, as the *bestow curse* spell.

Dwarf Traits:

- Dwarven base land speed is 20 feet. However, dwarves can move this speed even when wearing medium or heavy armor or when carrying a medium or heavy load (unlike other creatures whose speed is reduced in such situations).
- **Stability:** A dwarf gains a +4 bonus on ability checks made to resist being bull rushed or tripped when standing on the ground (but not when climbing, flying, riding, or otherwise not standing firmly on the ground).
- a +2 racial bonus on saving throws against poison.
- **Weapons Familiarity:** To dwarves, the urgrosh is treated as a martial rather than exotic weapon.
- a +2 racial bonus on saving throws against spells and spell-like effects.
- a +1 morale bonus on all checks directly related to their focus. This includes a skill bonus, an attack bonus, a damage bonus, or a saving throw bonus, or even a bonus to manifestation or spell save DCs.

Enduring Focus (Su): Even if the banshee is destroyed, it rises again the following sunset. The only way to permanently destroy a dwarven banshee is to complete the task it could not. Killing a banshee in the Gray prevents it from returning to life.

Gaze of Frenzy (Su): Living creatures within 30 ft. that meet a dwarven banshee's gaze must make a Will save or enter an uncontrollable frenzy for 2d6 minutes. During this time, victims attack the nearest creature as though confused; if no creatures are nearby, a victim goes in search of foes. An affected creature never attacks the banshee while in a frenzy. Whether or not the save is successful, that creature cannot be affected again by the same banshee's gaze for 24 hours unless the banshee actively gazes at it.

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Once per day as a full-round action, the banshee can actively gaze at all creatures within 30 ft. Each must make a Will save or frenzy.

Vulnerability to Stone (Ex): The undead can be harmed by nonmagical weapons made of stone. No matter the type of damage reduction, it is overcome by stone weapons.



S'thag Zagath Harvester CR 17

S'thag Zagath Psion (Shaper) 6

LE Huge Magical Beast (psionic)

Init: +12; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft., Low-Light Vision; Listen +16, Spot +20

Languages: S'thag Zagath, Ulyanese

AC: 21; touch 16, flat-footed 13; All-Around Vision (-2 size, +8 Dex, +5 natural)

hp 123 (18 HD; 12d10+6d6+36)

Spell Resistance: 21

Saves: Fort +12, Ref +18, Will +10

Speed: 50 ft. (10 squares), Climb 20 ft.

Melee: Claw +19 melee (2d6+6) or Tentacle +18 (1d4+6)

Full Melee: 2x Claw +19 melee (2d6+6) and Bite +16 melee (1d6+3 plus poison) and 3x Tentacle +16 (1d4+3)

Ranged: Ranged Touch +22 (by power)

Space: 15 ft. **Reach:** 10 ft. (15 ft. with Tentacles)

Base Attack: +15; **Grapple:** +29

Combat Options: Combat Reflexes (8/round), Deflect Arrows, Greater Psionic Fist (+4d6), Poison (DC 23), Psionic Meditation (Move action), Unavoidable Strike.

Psion Powers (ML 10th, PP: 35+24, DC 18 + power level):

3rd: energy wall, greater concealing amorphia, mental barrier, psionic blast;

2nd: body equilibrium, concussion blast, sustenance, swarm of crystals;

1st: astral construct, far hand, force screen, inertial armor, offensive precognition, psionic minor creation.

Psi-Like Abilities: 3/day—burst, catfall (120 ft.*), claws of the vampire, mind probe, mindlink (up to eight

unwilling targets within 15 ft., DC 8*), psionic blast (4 rounds, DC 10*), schism. Manifester level 12th. The save DCs are Charisma-based. *Includes augmentation for the s'thag zagath's manifest level.

Abilities: Str 22, Dex 26, Con 14, Int 27, Wis 12, Cha 5

Special Qualities: All-Around Vision, Darkvision 60 ft., Immunity to Mind-Affecting Effects, Low-Light Vision, Spell Resistance.

Feats: Combat Reflexes, Deflect Arrows ^B, Greater Psionic Fist, Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Practiced Manifester, Psionic Fist, Psionic Meditation ^B, Unavoidable Strike ^B, Weapon Focus (claw).

Skills: Climb +29, Concentration +23, Diplomacy +0, Hide +15, Intimidate +11, Jump +6, Knowledge (psionics) +29, Listen +16, Psicraft +29, Search +12, Sense Motive +16, Spot +20, Use Psionic Device +17.

Possessions: 5,600cp or combat gear plus: Dorje of Correspond (2 charges), Headband of Intellect +2, Potion-Orb of Cure Light Wounds (CL 1st) x2, Potion-Orb of Fly (CL 5th) x2.

All-Around Vision (Ex): A s'thag zagath's eyes give it 360-degree vision, granting a +4 racial bonus on Spot and Search checks and preventing the beast from becoming flanked.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 21, initial damage 1d4 Dex, secondary damage paralysis for 1 minute. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Spell Resistance (Ex): S'thag zagaths have spell resistance equal to 15 + class levels.

Skills: S'thag zagaths have a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks and can always choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened.



Scarlet Fosterlings, Lesser Cluster CR 2

Neutral Evil Large Undead (Swarm)

Init: +7; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +17, Spot +17

Languages: -

AC: 17, touch 13, flat-footed 14* (+3 Dex, +4 Nat)

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hp 39 (6d12)

Spell Resistance: 20

Immune: Swarm Traits, Undead Traits; **Weakness:**

Hive Mind, Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects

Saves: Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +7

Speed: 40 ft (8 squares); Climb 20 ft.

Melee: Swarm (2d6)

Space: 10 ft.; **Reach:** 0 ft.

Base Attack: +3; **Grapple:** -

Combat Actions: Create Spawn (DC 14), Distraction (DC 13), Poison (DC 13, 1 Con dmg)

Abilities: Str 2, Dex 17, Con -, Int 9, Wis 14, Cha 13

Special Qualities: All-Around Vision, Darkvision 60 ft., Hive Mind, Merge Swarms, Spell Resistance, Swarm Traits, Undead Traits, Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects.

Feats: Alertness, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative.

Skills: Climb +4, Listen +17, Spot +17.

Environment: The Web (any)

Organization: Solitary, cluster (2–4 swarms), or infestation (7–12 swarms)

Treasure: -

Alignment: Usually neutral evil

Advancement: -

Level Adjustment: -

All-Around Vision (Ex): Scarlet fosterings' eyes give them 360-degree vision, granting a +4 racial bonus on Spot and Search checks and preventing them from becoming flanked.

Create Spawn (Su): A humanoid reduced to 0 Constitution by a scarlet fostering swarm's poison dies but continues to breathe shallowly as if alive. After 1d6 days, the corpse rises as a namech under the scarlet fostering swarm's command.

Distraction (Ex): Any living creature vulnerable to a swarm's damage that begins its turn with a swarm in its square is nauseated for 1 round; a Fortitude save (DC 10 + ½ swarm's HD + swarm's Con modifier) negates the effect. Spellcasting or concentrating on spells within the area of a swarm requires a Concentration check (DC 20 + spell level). Using skills that involve patience and concentration requires a DC 20 Concentration check.

Hive Mind (Ex): A scarlet fostering swarm has a hive mind, which would normally make it susceptible to mind-affecting spells. For purposes of such spells,

however, the swarm is a single creature of the undead type.

Merge Swarms (Ex): Two lesser scarlet fostering clusters can move into the same space and merge into a single swarm, becoming an average pack. Likewise, two average packs can merge together into a greater pack. Merging in this fashion is a fullround action.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude save (DC 10 + ½ HD + Constitution modifier), initial and secondary damage 1d2 Con.

Skills: Scarlet fostering swarms have a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks and can always choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened.

Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects (Ex): The undead, unlike most others of its type, is susceptible to mind-affecting effects, which affect the undead as though its type were the same as that of a living version of the creature (or as a humanoid, if it has no living analog).



Scarlet Fosterlings, Average Cluster CR 5

Neutral Evil Large Undead (Swarm)

Init: +7; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +23, Spot +23

Languages: -

AC: 17, touch 13, flat-footed 14*

(+3 Dex, +4 Nat)

hp 66 (12d12)

Spell Resistance: 13

Immune: Swarm Traits, Undead Traits; **Weakness:**

Hive Mind, Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects

Saves: Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +10

Speed: 40 ft (8 squares); Climb 20 ft.

Melee: Swarm (3d6) or Touch +9 (by spell)

Ranged: Ranged Touch +9 (by spell)

Space: 10 ft.; **Reach:** 0 ft.

Base Attack: +6; **Grapple:** -

Combat Actions: Create Spawn (DC 17), Distraction (DC 16), Poison (DC 16, 1d2 Con dmg)

Wizard Spells: (CL 4th (+1 vs. SR); DC 11 + spell level):

2nd—command undead, spectral hand.

1st—chill touch, magic missile, ray of enfeeblement, shocking grasp;

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0—dancing lights, disrupt undead, detect magic, mage hand;

Abilities: Str 2, Dex 17, Con -, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 13

Special Qualities: All-Around Vision, Darkvision 60 ft., Hive Mind, Innate Spell Knowledge, Merge Swarms, Necromant, Spell Resistance, Swarm Traits, Undead Traits, Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects.

Feats: Alertness, Combat Casting, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Spell Penetration.

Skills: Climb +17, Concentration +3(+4), Listen +23, Spot +23.

Environment: The Web (any Dead Lands)

Organization: Solitary, cluster (2–4 swarms), or infestation (7–12 swarms)

Treasure: -

Alignment: Usually neutral evil

Advancement: -

Level Adjustment: -

All-Around Vision (Ex): Scarlet fosterings' eyes give them 360-degree vision, granting a +4 racial bonus on Spot and Search checks and preventing them from becoming flanked.

Create Spawn (Su): A humanoid reduced to 0 Constitution by a scarlet fostering swarm's poison dies but continues to breathe shallowly as if alive. After 1d6 days, the corpse rises as a namech under the scarlet fostering swarm's command.

Distraction (Ex): Any living creature vulnerable to a swarm's damage that begins its turn with a swarm in its square is nauseated for 1 round; a Fortitude save (DC 10 + ½ swarm's HD + swarm's Con modifier) negates the effect. Spellcasting or concentrating on spells within the area of a swarm requires a Concentration check (DC 20 + spell level). Using skills that involve patience and concentration requires a DC 20 Concentration check.

Hive Mind (Ex): A scarlet fostering swarm has a hive mind, which would normally make it susceptible to mind-affecting spells. For purposes of such spells, however, the swarm is a single creature of the undead type.

Innate Spell Knowledge (Ex): Scarlet fostering swarms can prepare spells without referring to a spellbook, as the spell mastery feat.

Merge Swarms (Ex): Two lesser scarlet fostering clusters can move into the same space and merge into

a single swarm, becoming an average pack. Likewise, two average packs can merge together into a greater pack. Merging in this fashion is a fullround action.

Necromant (Ex): A scarlet fostering swarm draws energy for arcane spells from the Gray instead of from plant life. This ability negates the defiling radius and terrain modifiers on spell DCs and caster level checks.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude save (DC 10 + ½ HD + Constitution modifier), initial and secondary damage 1d2 Con.

Skills: Scarlet fostering swarms have a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks and can always choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened.

Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects (Ex): The undead, unlike most others of its type, is susceptible to mind-affecting effects, which affect the undead as though its type were the same as that of a living version of the creature (or as a humanoid, if it has no living analog).



Scarlet Fosterlings, Greater Cluster CR 10

Neutral Evil Large Undead (Swarm)

Init: +7; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +35, Spot +35

Aura: -

Languages: -

AC: 17, touch 13, flat-footed 14*

(+3 Dex, +4 Nat)

hp 132 (24d12);

Spell Resistance: 19

Immune: Swarm Traits, Undead Traits; **Weakness:**

Hive Mind, Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects

Saves: Fort +10, Ref +13, Will +18

Speed: 40 ft (8 squares); Climb 20 ft.

Melee: Swarm (5d6) or Touch +15 (by spell)

Ranged: Ranged Touch +15 (by spell)

Space: 10 ft.; **Reach:** 0 ft.

Base Attack: +12; **Grapple:** -

Combat Actions: Create Spawn (DC 24), Distraction (DC 22), Poison (DC 22, 1d3 Con dmg)

Wizard Spells: (CL 10th (+2 vs. SR); DC 12 + spell level (+2 for Evocation spells ^E)):

5th—cone of cold ^E x2.

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4th—animate dead, fire shield ^E, shout ^E.
3rd—clairaudience/clairvoyance, halt undead, haste
2nd—command undead, ghoul touch, image, see invisibility, spectral hand.
1st—chill touch, mage armor, magic missile ^E, ray of enfeeblement, shocking grasp ^E;
0—dancing lights ^E, disrupt undead, detect magic, mage hand;

Abilities: Str 2, Dex 17, Con -, Int 15, Wis 14, Cha 15

Special Qualities: All-Around Vision, Darkvision 60 ft., Hive Mind, Innate Spell Knowledge, Merge Swarms, Necromant, Spell Resistance, Swarm Traits, Undead Traits, Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects.

Feats: Alertness, Combat Casting, Greater Spell Focus (Evocation), Greater Spell Penetration ^B, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Spell Focus (Evocation), Spell Penetration.

Skills: Climb +31, Concentration +30(+4), Listen +35, Spot +35.

Environment: The Web (any Dead Lands)

Organization: Solitary, cluster (2–4 swarms), or infestation (7–12 swarms)

Treasure: -

Alignment: Usually neutral evil

Advancement: -

Level Adjustment: -

All-Around Vision (Ex): Scarlet fosterings' eyes give them 360-degree vision, granting a +4 racial bonus on Spot and Search checks and preventing them from becoming flanked.

Create Spawn (Su): A humanoid reduced to 0 Constitution by a scarlet fostering swarm's poison dies but continues to breathe shallowly as if alive. After 1d6 days, the corpse rises as a namech under the scarlet fostering swarm's command.

Distraction (Ex): Any living creature vulnerable to a swarm's damage that begins its turn with a swarm in its square is nauseated for 1 round; a Fortitude save (DC 10 + ½ swarm's HD + swarm's Con modifier) negates the effect. Spellcasting or concentrating on spells within the area of a swarm requires a Concentration check (DC 20 + spell level). Using skills that involve patience and concentration requires a DC 20 Concentration check.

Hive Mind (Ex): A scarlet fostering swarm has a hive mind, which would normally make it susceptible to

mind-affecting spells. For purposes of such spells, however, the swarm is a single creature of the undead type.

Innate Spell Knowledge (Ex): Scarlet fostering swarms can prepare spells without referring to a spellbook, as the spell mastery feat.

Merge Swarms (Ex): Two lesser scarlet fostering clusters can move into the same space and merge into a single swarm, becoming an average pack. Likewise, two average packs can merge together into a greater pack. Merging in this fashion is a fullround action.

Necromant (Ex): A scarlet fostering swarm draws energy for arcane spells from the Gray instead of from plant life. This ability negates the defiling radius and terrain modifiers on spell DCs and caster level checks.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude save (DC 10 + ½ HD + Constitution modifier), initial and secondary damage 1d2 Con.

Skills: Scarlet fostering swarms have a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks and can always choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened.

Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects (Ex): The undead, unlike most others of its type, is susceptible to mind-affecting effects, which affect the undead as though its type were the same as that of a living version of the creature (or as a humanoid, if it has no living analog).



Scarlet Warden Defiler CR 15

Scarlet Warden Wizard 3

LE Huge Undead

Init: +9; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +17, Spot +21

Languages: S'thag Zagath

AC: 27; touch 17, flat-footed 22

(-2 size, +5 Dex, +10 natural, +3 Deflection, +1 Insight)

hp 97 (15 HD; 15d12)

Spell Resistance: 23

Saves: Fort +5, Ref +10, Will +13

Speed: 40 ft. (8 squares)

Melee: Claw +17 (2d6+9) or Touch +17 (by spell)

Full Melee: 2 claws +17 (2d6+9) and bite +12 (1d6+4 plus poison)

Adventures in the Dead Lands

Ranged: Ranged Touch +12 (by spell)

Space: 15 ft. **Reach:** 10 ft.

Base Attack: +7; **Grapple:** +26

Combat Options: Create Spawn, Improved Grab, Poison (DC 23)

Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 13th (+1 vs. SR), defiler, DC 17 + spell level):

7th—control undead, project image

6th—chain lightning, disintegrate, greater dispel magic

5th—cone of cold (2), magic jar, overland flight, wall of stone

4th—animate dead, dimension door, fire shield, greater invisibility, shout, stonewall

3rd—clairaudience/clairvoyance, displacement, fireball (2), halt undead, haste, invisibility sphere

2nd—command undead (2), false life, ghoul touch, mirror image, see invisibility, spectral hand (2)

1st—alarm, chill touch (2), mage armor, magic missile (2), ray of enfeeblement, shocking grasp

0—dancing lights, disrupt undead (3), detect magic

Abilities: Str 28, Dex 20, Con —, Int 25, Wis 14, Cha 18

Special Qualities: All-Around Vision, Darkvision 60 ft., Necromant, Spell Resistance, Undead Traits

Feats: Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Deflect Arrows ^B, Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll ^B, Spell Penetration, Weapon Focus (bite, claw).

Skills: Concentration +22, Diplomacy +21, Hide +12, Listen +17, Move Silently +20, Search +26, Sense Motive +17, Spellcraft +22, Spot +21.

Possessions: 59,000cp or Combat Gear plus: Dusty Rose Prism Ioun Stone, Headband of Intellect +6, Ring of Protection +3.

All-Around Vision (Ex): A scarlet warden's eyes give it 360-degree vision, granting a +4 racial bonus on Spot and Search checks and preventing the beast from becoming flanked.

Create Spawn (Su): A humanoid reduced to 0 Constitution by scarlet warden poison dies but continues to breathe shallowly as if alive. After 1d6 days, the corpse rises as a namech under the scarlet warden's command.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a scarlet warden must hit with a claw attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a

free action without provoking an attack of opportunity.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude save (DC 10 + ½ HD + Constitution modifier), initial and secondary damage 1d6 Con.



Scarlet Ward CR 10

CE Medium Undead

Init: +8; **Senses:** All-Around Vision, Darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +17, Spot +21

Languages: -

AC: 20; touch 14, flat-footed 14*

(+4 Dex, +10-4 natural)

hp 78 (12 HD; 12d12)

Spell Resistance: 18

Saves: Fort +4, Ref +8, Will +10

Speed: 40 ft. (8 squares)

Melee: Claw +11 (1d6+1) or Tentacle +10 (1d2)

Full Melee: 2 Claws +11 (1d6+1) and Bite +5 (1d6 plus poison) and 3x Tentacle +5 (1d2)

Space: 5 ft. **Reach:** 5 ft. (10 ft. with Tentacles)

Base Attack: +6; **Grapple:** +7

Combat Options: Create Spawn, Improved Grab, Poison (DC 21, 1d4 Con dmg)

Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 10th, defiler, DC 12 + spell level):

5th—cone of cold, magic jar, overland flight

4th—animate dead, dimension door, fire shield, shout

3rd—clairaudience/clairvoyance, halt undead, haste, invisibility sphere

2nd—command undead, false life, ghoul touch (+11 melee touch), mirror image, see invisibility, spectral hand

1st—alarm, chill touch (+11 melee touch) (2), mage armor, ray of enfeeblement (+8 ranged touch), shocking grasp (+11 melee touch)

0—dancing lights, disrupt undead (+8 ranged touch) (3), detect magic

Abilities: Str 12, Dex 18, Con —, Int 15, Wis 14, Cha 16

Special Qualities: Darkvision 60 ft., Necromant, Spell Resistance, Undead Traits

Feats: Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Deflect Arrows ^B, Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (claw)

Adventures in the Dead Lands

Skills: Concentration +18, Diplomacy +5, Hide +11, Listen +17, Move Silently +19, Search +6, Sense Motive +17, Spot +21

Environment: The Web (any Dead Lands)

Organization: Solitary, cluster (2–4), or infestation (7–12)

Treasure: -

Alignment: Usually neutral evil

Advancement: -

Level Adjustment: -

All-Around Vision (Ex): A scarlet ward's eyes give it 360-degree vision, granting a +4 racial bonus on Spot and Search checks and preventing the beast from becoming flanked.

Create Spawn (Su): A humanoid reduced to 0 Constitution by scarlet ward poison dies but continues to breathe shallowly as if alive. After 1d6 days, the corpse rises as a namech under the scarlet warden's command.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a scarlet ward must hit with a claw or tentacle attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude save (DC 10 + ½ HD + Constitution modifier), initial and secondary damage 1d4 Con.



Scarlet Ward Mob CR 11

Mob of Scarlet Wards

CE Gargantuan Undead (mob of Medium scarlet wards)

Init: +0; **Senses:** All-Around Vision, Darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +15, Spot +19

Languages: -

AC: 16; touch 10, flat-footed 16*

(-4 size, +4 Dex, +6 natural)

hp 195 (30 HD; 30d12)

Spell Resistance: 20

Saves: Fort +9, Ref +13, Will +17

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee: Mob (5d6)

Space 20 ft. **Reach:** 0 ft. (5 ft. with Tentacles)

Base Attack: +15; **Grapple:** +27

Combat Options: Create Spawn, Expert Grappler, Improved Grab, Poison (DC 18, 1d4 Con dmg), Trample (2d6+1 dmg)

Abilities: Str 12, Dex 18, Con —, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10

Special Qualities: Darkvision 60 ft., Spell Resistance, Undead Traits

Feats: Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Deflect Arrows^B, Improved Initiative, Improved Bull Rush^B, Improved Overrun^B, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (claw)

Skills: Concentration +15, Diplomacy +5, Hide +11, Listen +15, Move Silently +19, Search +6, Sense Motive +15, Spot +19

Environment: The Web (any Dead Lands)

Organization: Solitary, cluster (2–4), or infestation (7–12)

Treasure: -

Alignment: Usually neutral evil

Advancement: -

Level Adjustment: -

All-Around Vision (Ex): A scarlet ward's eyes give it 360-degree vision, granting a +4 racial bonus on Spot and Search checks and preventing the beast from becoming flanked.

Create Spawn (Su): A humanoid reduced to 0 Constitution by scarlet ward poison dies but continues to breathe shallowly as if alive. After 1d6 days, the corpse rises as a namech under the scarlet warden's command.

Expert Grappler (Ex): A mob can maintain a grapple without penalty and still make attacks against other targets (normally, attacking other targets while grappling imposes a –20 penalty on grapple checks). A mob is never considered flat-footed while grappling.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a scarlet ward must hit with a claw or tentacle attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity.

Mob Anatomy (Ex): A mob has no clear front or back and no discernible anatomy, so it is not subject to critical hits or sneak attacks. A mob cannot be flanked, tripped, grappled, or bull rushed.

Unlike standard swarms, mobs are made up of relatively small numbers of individual creatures, so spells or effects that target specific numbers of creatures can have an effect on a mob. Each specific creature that is slain, disabled, or otherwise

Adventures in the Dead Lands

incapacitated by spells or effects that target specific creatures bestows two negative levels on the mob. A mob that gains negative levels equal to its Hit Dice breaks up as if reduced to 0 hit points. Negative levels gained in this manner are not the result of negative energy (and thus cannot be blocked by *death ward* or removed by *restoration*), but never result in permanent level loss. A mob takes half again as much damage (+50%) from spells or effects that affect an area, such as splash weapons and evocation spells.

Although mobs are treated as one creature, it sometimes becomes necessary to determine the fate of a specific individual caught up in the mob. If a mob is dispersed by nonlethal attacks, there are no casualties. If the mob is dispersed by lethal attacks, assume that 30% of its number are slain and 30% are reduced to 0 hit points. To determine a specific individual's fate, simply roll d%: a result of 01–30 indicates death, 31–60 indicates the victim is reduced to 0 hit points, and a roll of 61–100 indicates the victim escapes relatively unscathed.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude save (DC 10 + ½ HD + Constitution modifier), initial and secondary damage 1d4 Con.

Trample (Ex): A mob that simply moves over a creature and doesn't end its movement with that creature in one of its occupied squares can trample the creature. A trampled creature takes damage equal to 2d6 points + 1-1/2 times the mob's Strength modifier. The victim can either make an attack of opportunity against the mob or make a Reflex save (DC 25 + the mob's Str modifier) to take half damage.



Soldiers of the Exilarchate

CR 10

Male and Female Human Fallen Fighter 8

LE Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Human, Psionic)

Init: +6; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +13, Search +7, Spot +13

Aura: Despair (10 ft, DC 14)

Languages: Ulyanese, Ulyanese Giant

AC: 28; touch 13, flat-footed 26; Dodge, Mobility (+2 Dex, +6 armor, +3 shield, +6 Nat, +1 Def)

hp 68 (8d12 +16)

Damage Reduction: 5/magic

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Code of Honor, Turn Submission (as 4 HD undead)

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +5

Speed: 20 ft (base 30 ft.)

Melee: Bastard Sword +17 (1d10+9; 19-20/x2) or **Bite** +15 (1d4+6; 20/x2)

Full Melee: Bastard Sword +17/+12 (1d10+9; 19-20/x2) and **Bite** +10 (1d4+3; 20/x2)

Ranged: Javelin +11 (1d6+6; Range 20 ft; 20/x2)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +8/+3; **Grapple:** +14

Combat Options: **Brand** (3/day, 1d8 plus penalty), Create Spawn, **Guilt Gaze** (30 ft., DC 14), Power Attack, Spring Attack.

Combat Gear: Bastard Sword +1 (called via *call weaponry*), Heavy Shell Shield +1, Javelin x6, Shell Breastplate +1

Psi-Like Abilities: At will - *call weaponry**, *death knell*, *deathwatch*, *mindlink**; 1/day - recall agony*; ML = HD. The save DCs are Charisma-based.

Abilities: Str 22, Dex 14, Con --, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 10
SQ: Code of Honor, Damage Reduction 5/magic, Darkvision 60 ft., **Enhanced Ability** (attack), Gray Toughness 2, Skills, **Turn Submission** (-4), Undead Traits.

Feats: Dodge, Improved Initiative, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Bastard Sword), Mobility, Power Attack^B, Spring Attack^B, Weapon Focus (Bastard Sword)^B, Weapon Specialization (Bastard Sword)^B.

Skills: Climb +5, Intimidate +7, Jump +5, Knowledge (warcraft) +12, Listen +13, Search +7, Spot +13.

Possessions: 9,400cp or Combat Gear plus: Belt of Giant Strength +2, Vest of Resistance +1, Potion-Orb of *Blur*, Ring of Protection +1.

Brand (Su): Up to three times per day, the creature can trace a lasting mark on a creature's skin with its fingers by making a touch attack. This touch deals 1d8 points of damage and inflicts a -2 penalty on any interaction checks the victim makes (such as Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate, and Sense Motive); the brand leaves a disturbing impression on anyone who sees it. Both the damage and penalty are permanent. A *remove curse* or *heal* spell removes the brand and its negative effects.

Adventures in the Dead Lands

Code of Honor (Ex): Fallen are bound to follow a code of honor reflecting idealized rules of war. Evil fallen attempt to break or twist codes to avoid getting killed.

Create Spawn (Su): A giant, humanoid, or monstrous humanoid slain by a fallen's death knell power rises as fallen after 1d4 rounds. A fallen can have spawn with Hit Dice totaling twice its own.

Despair (Su): Fallen radiate an aura of doom and hopelessness, causing creatures within 10 ft. to make a Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 fallen's HD + fallen's Cha modifier). Creatures that fail are shaken. Whether or not the save is successful, that creature cannot be affected again by the same undead's aura for 24 hours. Fallen can suppress or reactivate this ability as a standard action in order to achieve surprise in close quarters.

Guilt Gaze (Su): The undead's gaze attack causes grief to intelligent creatures within 30 ft. Unless a victim makes a Will save, its most painful memories surface, wracking the victim with guilt over small incidents that happened years ago in its life. The guilt nauseates a creature for 1d4 rounds.

Turn Submission (Ex): Certain undead individuals have a weaker link to the Gray. The undead is turned or rebuked as if it were 4 HD lower.



Wezer Storm CR 8

Mob of Zombie Bugdead Wezers

NE Gargantuan undead (mob of Medium undead wezers)

Init: +0; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0

Aura: -

Languages: -

AC: 11, touch 7, flat-footed 10

(-4 size, +1 Dex, +4 natural)

hp 195 (30 HD; 30d12)

Damage Reduction: 3/metal; **Resistance:** Fire 5

Immune: Cold, Electricity, Mob Anatomy, Undead Traits

Saves: Fort +9, Ref +10, Will +17

Speed: 5 ft. (1 squares), Fly 50 ft (average)

Melee: Mob (5d6 plus poison)

Space: 20 ft.; **Reach:** 0 ft.

Base Attack: +15; **Grapple:** +30

Combat Options: Expert Grappler, Poison, Trample
2d6

Abilities: Str 17, Dex 12, Con -, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 1

SQ: Damage Reduction, Fire Resistance, Immunities, Mob Anatomy, Undead Traits

Feats: Improved Bull Rush^B, Improved Overrun^B

Skills: -

Expert Grappler (Ex): A mob can maintain a grapple without penalty and still make attacks against other targets (normally, attacking other targets while grappling imposes a -20 penalty on grapple checks). A mob is never considered flat-footed while grappling.

Mob Anatomy (Ex): A mob has no clear front or back and no discernible anatomy, so it is not subject to critical hits or sneak attacks. A mob cannot be flanked, tripped, grappled, or bull rushed.

Unlike standard swarms, mobs are made up of relatively small numbers of individual creatures, so spells or effects that target specific numbers of creatures can have an effect on a mob. Each specific creature that is slain, disabled, or otherwise incapacitated by spells or effects that target specific creatures bestows two negative levels on the mob. A mob that gains negative levels equal to its Hit Dice breaks up as if reduced to 0 hit points. Negative levels gained in this manner are not the result of negative energy (and thus cannot be blocked by *death ward* or removed by *restoration*), but never result in permanent level loss. A mob takes half again as much damage (+50%) from spells or effects that affect an area, such as splash weapons and evocation spells.

Although mobs are treated as one creature, it sometimes becomes necessary to determine the fate of a specific individual caught up in the mob. If a mob is dispersed by nonlethal attacks, there are no casualties. If the mob is dispersed by lethal attacks, assume that 30% of its number are slain and 30% are reduced to 0 hit points. To determine a specific individual's fate, simply roll d%: a result of 01–30 indicates death, 31–60 indicates the victim is reduced to 0 hit points, and a roll of 61–100 indicates the victim escapes relatively unscathed.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 13, initial damage unconsciousness for 1 minute, secondary damage unconsciousness for 2d4 days. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Trample (Ex): A mob that simply moves over a creature and doesn't end its movement with that

Adventures in the Dead Lands

creature in one of its occupied squares can trample the creature. A trampled creature takes damage equal to 2d6 points + 1-1/2 times the mob's Strength modifier.

The victim can either make an attack of opportunity against the mob or make a Reflex save (DC 25 + the mob's Str modifier) to take half damage.

Appendix 2: New Items

Kank Antennae Helmet

Lesser Artifact

These antennae are mounted on a bit of carapace and still wriggle and move about on their own, despite being clearly severed from whatever creature they originally belonged to.

The severed antennae of an undead kank, still attached to a bit of carapace, the *kank antennae helmet* is a unique device specially created by Ahnthyarka to track down the zagath birthstone they (zagath are genderless) were spawned from. The *helmet* grants the wearer knowledge of what direction the birthstone lies in over a nearly limitless range (at least as far as the width of the Ulyan basin) and a general sense of the distance (feet, miles, dozens of miles, etc), but does not grant knowledge of the exact distance sufficiently enough to *teleport* there. Furthermore, teleportation effects disorient the helmet, making it incapable of detecting the birthstone for four hours after it or its wearer experiences a teleportation effect.

Any unintelligent undead (bugdead or humanoid) will perceive the wearer and by extension anyone accompanying them, as bugdead and will react to them accordingly. Intelligent undead gain a single Will save to perceive the true nature of the wearer (whatever that may be). If it fails, they will likewise treat the wearer and any companions as bugdead and act accordingly. This perception effect is only limited



by the current limit of vision for the environment and functions through *screaming* and related effects.

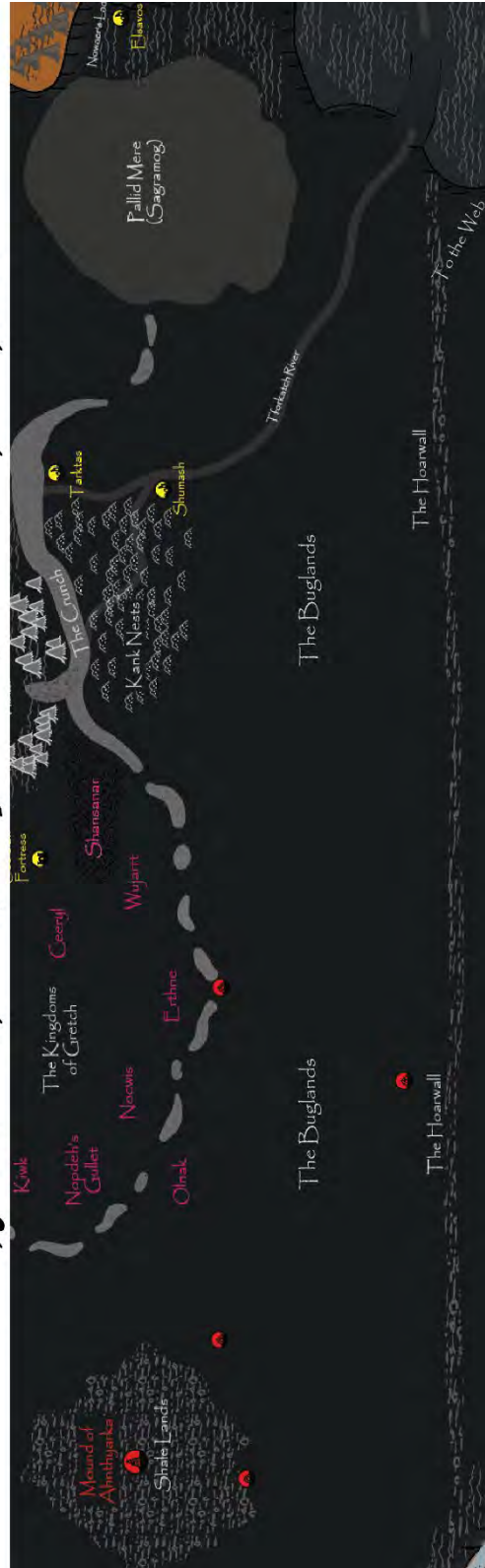
The *kank antennae helmet* seems to be impervious to harm and can only be destroyed by the touch of Ahnthyarka themselves or of their birthstone.

Strong abjuration and divination; ML 20th; Price - cp.



Appendix 3: Maps

PLAYER'S MAP - THE SOUTHERN DEAD LANDS



Adventures in the Dead Lands





Group 3 – Last Visits to the Dead Lands

The Key To It All



A Dark Sun 3.5e adventure module for four 15th-level characters

The heroes have found the lost activation phrases for *the Mirror of the Ages*. This sets them on a desperate scramble to find a way to protect themselves from the Dead Lords, forcing them to use the Mirror to search for their salvation in the ancient lands of Ulyan's past.

Credits

WRITING AND CONCEPT
Adam Cieszlak, Jack Meyer

EDITING
Zach McKean

IMAGES/GRAPHICS
Raven Daegmorgan,
Jack Meyer, Izhar Ben Yosef

Introduction

The Key to It All is a short D&D adventure for four 15th-level player characters (PCs). Consult the Scaling the Adventure sidebar for ways to modify the scenario for higher or lower levels of play.

The PCs have found the lost activation phrases to the *Mirror of the Ages*. This sets the PCs on a desperate scramble to find a way to protect themselves from the Dead Lords, forcing them to use the Mirror to search for their salvation in the ancient land of Ulyan.

Developer's notes

The concept of this adventure came about by two accidents. The week I was working with the mapmaker to make a map of Deshentu for Secrets of the Dead Lands, he showed me a Green Age version of the map he had made just for fun. In the same week, I heard someone on the Athas.org Arena forums complaining about the idea of introducing a time portal with the Mirror of Ages. This was when I had the idea of combining the two ideas together to make a "Nightmares of Future's Past" style scenario for Dark Sun. Almost nobody seemed to like the idea as they talked about how most time travel adventures struggle with controlling what the PCs can and cannot do. But I was convinced we could pull it off with some deft writing and some carefully placed mechanical constraints. -JM

Preparation

You (the DM) will need the 3rd edition revised D&D core rulebooks, including the *Player's Handbook*, the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*, as well as the *Expanded Psionics Handbook*. This adventure also uses material from *Faces of the Dead Lands*, *Secrets of the Dead Lands*, *Terrors of the Dead Lands* and the *Dark Sun 3.5 conversion* rulebook from Athas.org, but all necessary rules are already included.

Please consult Appendix 4 for additional rules for communicating with the residents of, and surviving in, the Dead Lands.

Adventure Background

A potent creation of psionics and divine magic, the *Mirror of the Ages* is a pool of water whose purpose is to allow the viewing of and the travel back to previous ages in the history of Athas. Its powers are engaged by using a combination of divine incantations and psionic powers, but which words and powers are jealously guarded secrets.

The Mirror of Ages is guarded and maintained by the Brotherhood of the Mirror, a priesthood of former Water (now Rain) priests. Many secrets of the Brotherhood, including the more powerful activation sequences for the Mirror, were lost during the Cleansing of Ulyan. Now, the undead priests of the Brotherhood still watch over the Mirror of the Ages but lack access to its greatest powers.

Although the details are not widely known, the Obsidian Tide (also known as the Boiling Ruin and Shining Tide, among other names) was the event that created the Dead Lands. A series of waves of pure, molten elemental obsidian inundated the Ulyan basin, covering everything in a layer of blackglass (as the obsidian is sometimes known). The Obsidian Tide not only killed or destroyed everything in Ulyan, it also reanimated all dead animal life within former Ulyan, thus creating the Dead Lands.

Overview

The PCs have stumbled upon a *ring of memory*. Within, they see a millennia old discussion around the *Mirror of Ages* (see Appendix 2), and the long-lost key to activate the *Mirror*. Unfortunately for them, the Dead Lords are constantly divining for the *Mirror's* activation key or those who might know of it, and this news will travel fast.

If the PCs keep the information to themselves, they will be hunted by every faction of the Dead Lands for the rest of their lives (or unives); if they for some reason share the information (perhaps in the hopes of throwing off or distracting the hunters), they start a kind of power grab, with everyone who learns of this

Adventures in the Dead Lands

captured or eliminated by various factions until only the PCs remain.

The PCs must head to Nolak Island, where the Brotherhood of the Mirror explains to them what the *Mirror of Ages* can and cannot do, and in exchange for the key they are given (at least) one use of the *Mirror* to travel back in time, to the days of Cleansed Ulyan (in the 161st King's Age, approximately 2,000 years before the liberation of Tyr).

The PCs will have a choice where to go to seek protection in the future, depending on whose protection they wish to try and obtain. Depending on their mode of travel and the order in which they choose to visit them, the PCs may have time to reach all of these locations and potential benefactors, or they may only have time to visit one.

Options include traveling to:

- The ruins of Nuubark, to speak with the murderously angry Yorg-Yanak
- The former lands of the Sageocracy, to seek out Musraaf's Chosen and attempt to bring one of the warlords onto their side
- The Kingdoms of Gretch, to attempt to secure an alliance with Gretch himself
- The Navel, in an effort to befriend either the living Navel researchers or the undead lurking below. The road to the Navel passes through two other locations that may be of interest to the PCs:

- Deshentarum, former and future home of the Vizier
- Ehessos, the future site of Kushtan, Shadowmourn's capital city
- Anywhere else entirely

Whatever happens, after five days the Obsidian Tide will strike, inundating Ulayn with molten obsidian and creating the Dead Lands, at which time the PCs will be yanked back to the present.

Adventure Hooks

The adventure begins in the Dead Lands, after the party has acquired a *ring of memory* somehow, possibly through one of the following methods:

- Presumed to be trustworthy agents, the PCs were sent to retrieve a *ring of memory* for an employer or patron, but they grew curious and viewed the memory contained within.
- During another (unrelated) adventure, the PCs discovered the *ring of memory*, thinking it just another bauble from ages past.
- Some other party (perhaps an ally, perhaps an enemy) sent the *ring of memory* to the PCs or otherwise maneuvered it into their possession. Now the PCs, rather than this 3rd party, must deal with the consequences of this discovery.

Scaling the Adventure

The Key to It All is designed for a party of four 15th-level adventurers, but it can be modified easily to present an appropriate challenge for parties of different sizes or levels.

Consider adapting the adventure for PCs of average levels 7 to 11 by adding effective positive or negative levels to the creatures in each encounter to change their effective **Challenge Rating**. A creature takes the following penalties/bonuses for each positive/negative level it has gained:

- +/-1 on all skill checks and ability checks.
- +/-1 on attack rolls and saving throws.
- +/-5 hit points.
- +/-1 effective level (whenever the creature's level is used in a die roll or calculation, reduce it by one for each negative level).
- If the creature casts spells, she gains/loses one spell slot of her highest-level spells. (If she has more than one spell at her highest level, she chooses which she gains/loses.) In addition, when she next prepares spells or regains spell slots, she gets one more/less spell slot at her highest spell level. If the creature is a manifester, she gains/loses enough power points to manifest her highest-level power once.

Adventures in the Dead Lands

The Dead Lands In the Present

The Former Land of Ulyan



Part 1: The Worst Discovery

1) The Secret (EL -)

The adventure starts when the PCs access the memory stored within the ring.

Yes, there can be no mistaking it. As the trance fades, you can still clearly recall the details of the vision: a human man, standing amongst other humans and very tall, green-skinned and gangly people with fleshy hair, chanting out prayers and manifesting powers into a large pool of clear, clean water. As the chanting came to an end, the pool of water flashed with power, and the man stepped into the pool and disappeared.

If your research is correct, the pool from the memory stored in the ring is the *Mirror of the Ages*, and you may have just learned it's missing activation key.

How the PCs proceed for now is up to them, but some guidance is likely in order. With a skill (Knowledge - Arcana, History, Psionics, or Religion) check, party members can recall or learn the following:

DC	Information known
15	The group seen in the stored memory was the Brotherhood of the Mirror, a group of (mainly human and troll) Water priests.
18	The Brotherhood of the Mirror was based on Nolak Island, located in the Sparkling Gem sea (now known as the Fouled Sea).
20	The pool of water was likely the <i>Mirror of the Ages</i> , a power device that could be used to view or even travel to the past.

Adventures in the Dead Lands

25	The various Dead Lords would give nearly anything to control and utilize such a device, as it would make them unstoppable.
30	The activation keys for <i>Mirror of Ages</i> have been lost since the Cleansing Wars and, if known, could well change the balance of power in the Dead Lands.

Development: Armed with this knowledge, the party might do any number of things, including:

- Travel straight to Nolak Island, looking to give the knowledge to the Brotherhood of the Mirror or attempt to trade it for some reward.
- Visit or contact one or more Dead Lords to give them the activation key; perhaps the PCs need a favor from a particular Dead Lord or have previously crossed one of these undead tyrants and now need to make amends.
- Nothing (for now).

Whatever the PCs decide to do, things become much more complicated for them 6 hours later (when the various Dead Lords' and major factions' divinations about the activation key for the *Mirror of Ages* begin to point to the PCs).

2) Interested Parties (EL 15)

Attack Squad Nomad (CR 13) 1x - see Appendix 1

Attack Squad Veteran (CR 10) 3x - see Appendix 1

Only hours after viewing the stored memory, attack squads will begin targeting the PCs, wherever they are and whatever they are doing.

From out of nowhere, destructive psionic powers and arrows rain down on your group.

A careful look around locates the snipers about 150 feet away - they appear to be a group of undead and not anyone you've specifically interacted with before.

Guided by divinations and clairsentient powers, Dead Lords and faction leaders have begun sending teams to secure the *Mirror's* activation key, capturing or killing the PCs as necessary.

Tactics: The attack squad veterans will stay near the nomad when combat first begins, using their bows (and psionic shot feat) to strike from range (165 feet with far shot), but will move to attack with their spears if the PCs close to within charging range (65 feet with the longspear).

Before teleporting the group to the PC's location, the nomad will manifest *force screen* (-1 PP, lasts 11 min) and *inertial armor* (-5 PP, lasts for 11 hrs). Once combat begins, they will stay behind the attack squad veterans and manifest ranged combat powers for as long as possible, using quicken power and psionic meditation to manifest two powers per round. They will, however, reserve enough power points to retreat from combat using psionic teleport when they reach less than 22 hp, abandoning the veterans if necessary.

Development: Whether the PCs defeat the attack team or simply make their escape, further attack squads will continue to be sent (by various leaders of the Dead Lands) until the party is captured or killed.

If they don't realize it themselves, the PC's friends, contacts, or allies should eventually point out that their only hope is to deliver the activation key to the Brotherhood of the Mirror.

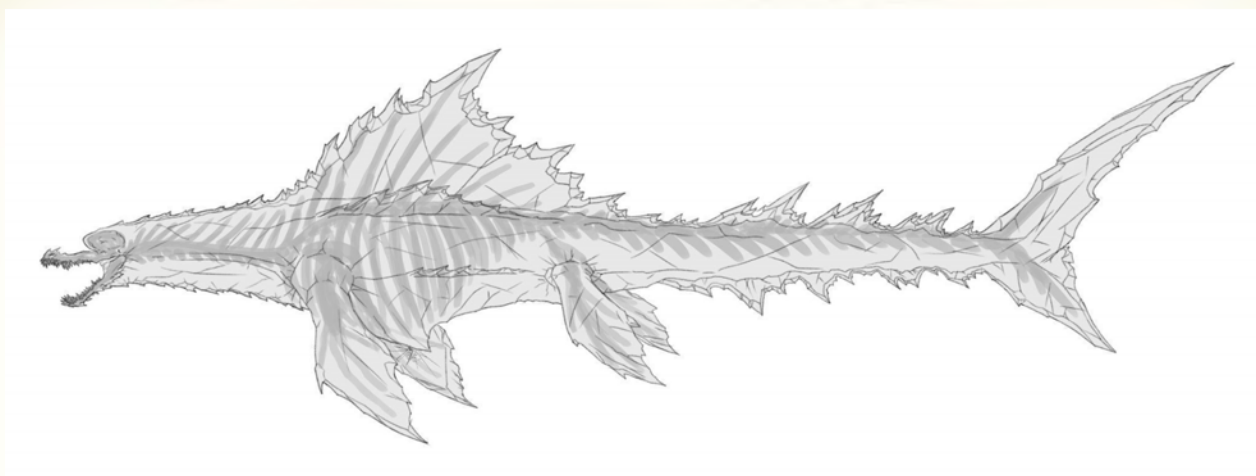
Part 2: The Brotherhood of the Mirror

3) The Fouled Sea (EL 10)

Firemouth (CR 15) 1x - See Appendix

The Brotherhood of the Mirror (and the *Mirror of Ages* itself) are located on Nolak Island and getting there will require crossing the Fouled Sea. The Obsidian Tide submerged the sea under a sheet of thin, brittle obsidian, trapping the defiled waters under the surface.

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Crossing the Fouled Sea can be treacherous for those unwilling or incapable of teleporting. In any given round, there is a 25% chance that the obsidian underneath a character is too thin to support their weight (Survival check, DC 10 to notice) and will collapse, dropping the character into the waters below (Reflex save, DC 20 to avoid).

If a character falls into the waters of the sea, a firemouth will notice and immediately attack. If the party is walking across the obsidian of the Fouled Sea, but somehow manages to complete nearly the whole trip without falling in, a Firemouth will run out of patience and smash up through the obsidian to attack the party. If a firemouth bursts up through the obsidian, read:

Without warning, a dark shape bursts up from below, shattering the blackglass nearby and sending shards of obsidian hurtling through the air!

Whether a character falls into the waters on their own, or the firemouth breaches the surface, when the PCs get a good look at the creature, read:

You see a massive, streamlined creature with fins for limbs, a long neck, and a mouth full of vicious-looking teeth. Its flesh seems to be coated or infused with obsidian, for it glints and gleams in the light in a glass-like manner.

Whether atop the obsidian or in the water, the firemouth will attempt to consume any characters it can reach, swallowing them at the first opportunity.



Development: After the party reaches Nolak Island, they are free to seek out the Brotherhood of the Mirror.

4) The Brotherhood (EL 15 or -)

Brotherhood of the Mirror Acolyte (Human) (CR 13) 2x - See Appendix

After traversing the Fouled Sea, the party will reach the location of Nolak Island. Like the sea around it, the island is buried beneath the obsidian. Contained within an air pocket, it is possible to access Nolak Island through fissures and crevasses in the obsidian above or simply by using magic or psionics.

Once the PCs descend into the subvitrine air pocket, read:

Now that you're here, Nolak Island is a strange sight indeed for those accustomed to the sights of the Dead Lands: bare earth - it's black, defiled, and dead, but it's real dirt - crunches underfoot. A massive obsidian cavern stretches overhead - stalactites of obsidian frozen in place hang down here and there, and the sterile waters of the Fouled Sea gently lap against the island's shore.

A shattered temple complex stands nearby; most of the still-standing buildings look to be fire-gutted and sport at least one tumbled wall or a caved-in roof, but that matters little here underground.

When the party begins to explore the island or draws a large amount of attention to themselves, read:

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Soon enough, a group comes out from the ruins to meet you. They have the gleaming, glossy skin typical of zhen, but it is a strange blue-green color, rather than the darker tones you're seen in the past. What little clothing they wear is light-colored robes of silk, decorated with patterns too faded to make out.

One of the motions for you to hold and speaks:

The acolyte will attempt to speak to the party in Ulyanese, switching to Ulyanese Giant if necessary and then Aquan before finally resorting to a *tongues* spell to communicate with the party.

"Why have you come to Nolak Island, outsiders? Have you come to take in the sights of our beautiful island? The pristine waters of the Sparkling Gem Sea?" he asks with a disgusted look "Perhaps you have come to worship the great sea beasts? Or have you come as conquerors?"

If the party treats the acolytes well and resolves the situation peacefully, the Brotherhood will be happy to speak to them. Should the party act in an overly disrespectful or aggressive manner, the acolytes will attack.

Tactics: Having been warned of the arrival of the PCs by their superiors (through their near constant use of the *Mirror of the Ages* to scry for threats), the acolytes will be aware of the PC's strengths and weaknesses, and will use that knowledge to their advantage in battle.

Development: Should the PCs defeat the acolytes, the senior Brotherhood members are displeased with their actions but impressed with their prowess, and will speak to them just the same.

5) The Mirror of the Ages (EL 20 or -)

Brotherhood of the Mirror Acolyte (Human) (CR 13) 12x - see above

After dealing with the acolytes, the PCs are free to travel across the island to the *Mirror of the Ages* and speak to the leaders of the Brotherhood.

Traveling across Nolak Island, you come to an open-air building set atop a small hill. Constructed with

ancient stone columns, perhaps this is the location of the *Mirror of the Ages*.

As you approach, you see that this building too is long ruined - gutted by fire and with many shattered columns, it shows perhaps the worst evidence of whatever battle once occurred here.

High ranking members of the Brotherhood will come out of the building to either greet PCs accompanied by the acolytes or to admonish the PCs for slaying the acolytes, as appropriate. Should the PCs attack these leaders of the Brotherhood, they will call forward a dozen acolytes to assault the party. The acolytes will attack until either the PCs become unconscious or attempt to negotiate. When this happens or if the party begins this encounter peacefully, read:

"You want something of us then? What need have you for the services of the Brotherhood of the Mirror? Speak quickly, for our patience runs short - we must soon return to our devotions."

Negotiations or interrogations will likely reveal that the *Mirror of the Ages* lies nearby and that the PCs have the activation key for it. Desperate to regain the activation key, the Brotherhood of the Mirror will be quick to suggest that the PCs go back in time to secure one or more allies - whether through blackmail information or favors earned.

Lacking experience in using the *Mirror* to send people back in time, the Brotherhood can only send the PCs back five days before the Boiling Ruin (their preferred name for the Obsidian Tide - the cataclysm that created the Dead Lands). They will also inform the PCs that the power of the *Mirror* will connect the PCs to the present and will pull them back to the present at a moment's notice should the need arise (such as in the event of their imminent death).

Development: While in life the priests of the Brotherhood were isolationists and pacifists, their deaths taught them many lessons. Today they use the *Mirror* to keep tabs on the Dead Lands, ever watchful for threats and invaders, and they can tell the PCs much regarding the current and ancient politics of Ulyan:

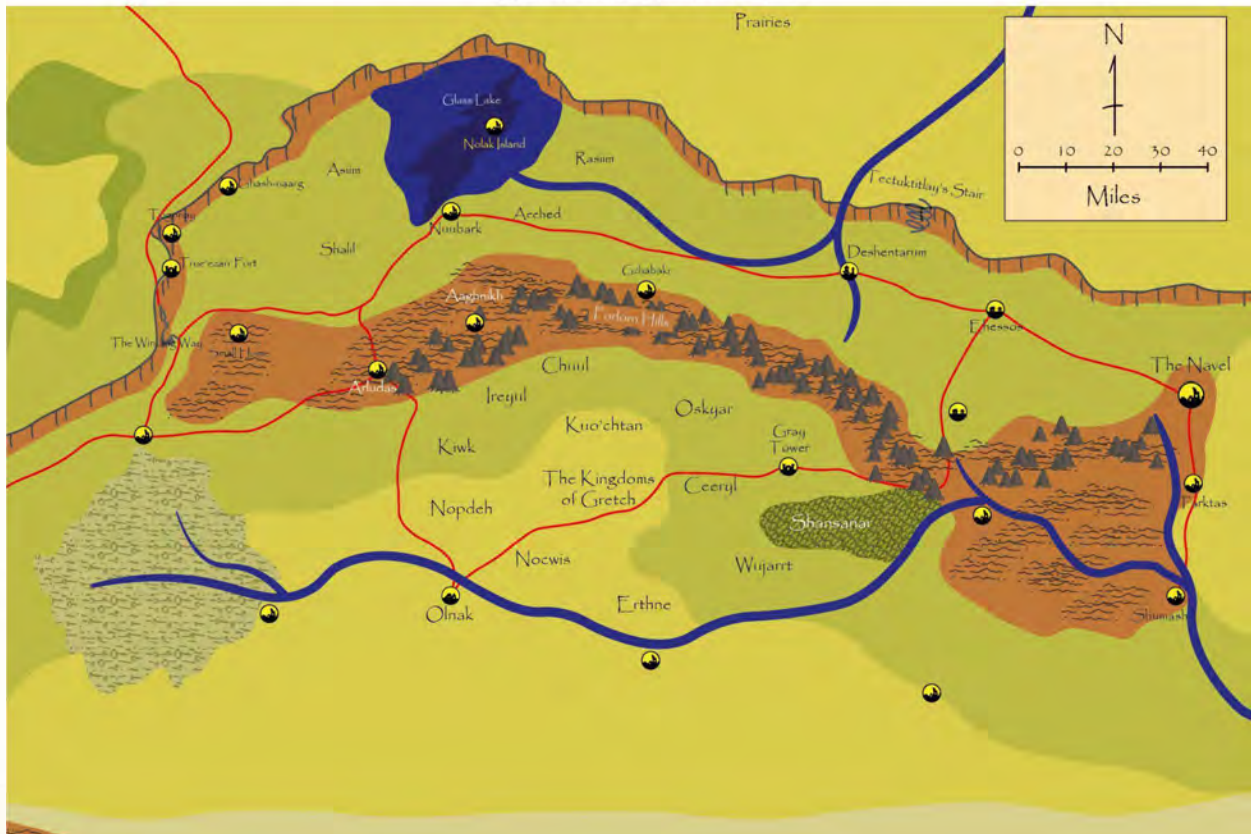
- Now that the Brotherhood has the activation key to the *Mirror*, if the PCs wish to save themselves here in the present, the best place for them to find allies is in the past.

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- Many of the Dead Lords were people of some importance in Cleansed Ulyan: the troll-king Yorg-Yanak, the warlords of Musraaf's Chosen, the necromancer Gretch, the Vizier, Harkor, Qwith, Pandruj, the Defenders, the Descendants of the Chosen.
- Yorg-Yanak, king of the trollish Sageocracy's empire could then, as now, be found in the ruins of Nuubark - located on the southern shores of the Fouled Sea (but was then known as Glass Lake). See section A) Nuubark.
- In those days, Musraaf's Chosen ruled what had been the lands of the Sageocracy - now known as the Bone Lands and the lands of the Disciples. Look for them in the lands surrounding Glass Lake. See section B) The Lands of Musraaf's Chosen.
- Gretch has ruled the same lands for ages. Once the Cleansing armies had left, Gretch's undead kings governed the lands of central Ulyan. See section C) The Kingdoms of Gretch.
- The Vizier, Harkor, and Qwith were all occupied with their ultimately destructive magical research at the Navel, which occupied the ruins of Nagarovs' and is now the site of the City of a Thousand Dead. The leaders of the Descendants of the Chosen were all researchers at the Navel. See section D) The Navel.
- Pandruj and the Defenders were also at the Navel, but they were buried underground in the ruins of Nagarovs'. It was arguably their assault on the Navel that caused the Obsidian Tide to occur. See section D) The Navel.
- Other powerful figures exist within the Dead Lands and it is possible the PCs could locate and contact those individuals in the past.
- The Brotherhood will be incapable of helping the PCs in the past, as they were "indisposed" (dead and inanimate) at that time.
- Finally, the Brotherhood will explain to the PCs that the raw magical power of the Obsidian Tide will disrupt the functioning of the *Mirror of the Ages*, snapping them back to the present as surely as if they had been killed in the past.

Ulyan In the Age of Magic

Before the Obsidian Tide



Part 3: Through the Looking Glass

Before they pass through the *Mirror of the Ages*, the Brotherhood has one last warning for them:

"The past often cannot ultimately be changed, for if it was, then what happened has already come to pass. You have five days to try."

With that, the priests allow you to step through the pool of water and into the past. As you descend into the waters, you paradoxically feel yourself stepping out of the waters as well somehow - by the time you have submerged yourself in the present, you've stepped out of the Mirror in the past.

The island around you is largely unchanged, but beyond that it is a completely different world: the stones of the temple still lie where you saw them last, but the waters of the Fouled Sea - no, of Glass Lake - lap much higher up the shore than before. Gone is the obsidian that overlaid the island - in its place is the olive-tinged sky of Athas. Hanging in that sky is not the burning crimson orb that you left behind, but a gentle yellow sun.

Unless they possess the ability to fly (naturally, psionically, or magically), the party's first challenge in the past is to cross the waters of Glass Lake (as the Fouled Sea was known in the time of Cleansed Ulyan).

6) Musraaf's Chosen Patrol (EL 15)

Musraaf's Chosen Cavalry Captain (CR 13) 1x - see Appendix 1

Musraaf's Chosen Cavalry Lieutenants (CR 8) 6x - see Appendix 1

Once they have crossed Glass Lake and reached the mainland, the PCs will have to deal with a patrol of the Musraafi - what passes for law and order in this part of Cleansed Ulyan. They confront the party in Ulyanese:

As you step away from the waters of the lake, you draw the stares of the local fisherfolk, tending to their nets, boats and day's catch on the shore.

From farther up the muddy beach, you hear cries of alarm and see the people making way quickly - a group of riders move towards you quickly.

Carrying lances, they ride on strange creatures: long of leg and face, they lack scales but instead have tufts of hair on their necks and tails.

"You're not from around here; who are you and what are you doing in the lands of Musraaf's Chosen?"

The Musraafi riders are belligerent and used to getting their way - Musraaf's Chosen have ruled these lands for a thousand years and freely terrorize the settled farmers and fisherfolk therein.

Tactics: The riders will attack from horseback given the chance, attacking with their lances whenever possible. If the PCs attempt to flee or move away, the riders will give chase, attacking with their bows until they can ride the party down.

Development: If the PCs defeat the riders, the fisherfolk become even more concerned than before, fearing the inevitable reprisal from other Musraaf's Chosen over their missing kin. If calmed down (Diplomacy check, DC 20), they can be convinced to clean up the scene of the battle, raking the blood into the sand and dumping the bodies far out into the lake. If not calmed down, they will threaten to report the PCs to the next Musraaf's Chosen that come by, but the PCs are free to do as they will, as the Obsidian Tide will have killed everyone before that can happen.

When they are finished with the rides and fisherfolk, the PCs are free to go where they will.

If the PCs are subdued by the riders, they will bring the party to their leader, Hazzi Shalil for interrogation. Proceed to encounter #9 - Clan Shalil, below.

A) Nuubark

Should the PCs choose to travel to the ruins of Nuubark, it is only 20 miles away - possibly a day's walk around Glass Lake (as the Fouled Sea is known at this time) away from where they previously

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encountered the Musraaf's Chosen if the party pushes themselves.

7) Undead Trolls (EL 15)

Nuubark Troll (CR 13) 2x - See Appendix

When the PCs arrive at Nuubark, read:

Linked to Glass Lake by canal, this must be the late, great Nuubark. Once the capital of the trollish empire of the Sageocracy, it is now a ruin of looming granite towers and benighted alleyways - the towers crumbling and the streets filled with rubble and bodies.

As the PCs enter and explore the ruins of Nuubark, they find little but trouble. The army of the Troll-Scorcher sacked and looted the city, and not all of Nuubark's dead rest quietly. Eventually, the undead trolls of Nuubark will find and attack them.

As you round a corner, you see a pair of very tall, green-skinned, and gangly creatures moving towards you. They sport terrible burns and vicious wounds, and have a look of savage glee on their fanged faces. Perhaps these were the "trolls" of Nuubark?

Tactics: The undead trolls are unobtrusive opponents, happy to tear into intruders with tooth and claw. They will attack until destroyed.

Development: These trolls are obsessed with defending Nuubark from all invaders and will not listen to reason or diplomacy. Once they are defeated, the party can move deeper into the city in search of the troll-king.

8) Yorg-Yanak (EL -)

Centrally located in the ruins of Nuubark lies the troll-king's palace.

You end up needing to travel deeply into the ruins of Nuubark to reach the shattered remains of the troll-king's palace. A burnt-out shell of a building, it still displays a few remaining soaring arches and geometric design elements - features that even now suggest a reverence for thought and reason.

Soon after you arrive, a spectral creature fades into view. A tall and regal creature with long, ropey hair woven into elaborate locks and knots, wearing a simple but fine pale green cloak, this must be the troll-king Yorg-Yanak.

Assuming the PCs can understand Ulyanene Giant, read:

"Who would dare intrude upon these revered chambers and disturb me? My kingdom lies conquered, my life taken and my people butchered - what more can you want?"

If the PCs don't seem to understand him, Yorg-Yanak will repeat himself in Ulyanese. Should the PCs still not understand him or actively anger the spectral troll, he will rage at them for a bit and then, sensing the power of the *Mirror of the Ages* about them, simply retreat back to the Gray, knowing he cannot truly harm them.

Assuming the PCs explain themselves, if they are especially well spoken (Diplomacy check, DC 25) or their party includes living humanoids/demi-humans (tareks, elves, tari, half-giants, etc), read or paraphrase:

Your words leave the troll-king taken aback. *"Truly? Tell me of this world you come from - did the hateful Champions fail at their Cleansing of Athas? Do the other races of the Rebirth still survive?"*

Honestly curious about Athas of the future and the fate of non-humans in it, the PCs' words will spark in Yorg-Yanak feelings he had not known since his death, and he will be eternally grateful to the PCs.

"Though my people are gone from the face of the world, perhaps our struggles were not all for naught; thank you for that. Come find me again in this future you speak of, and I will do what I can for you."

Development: Yorg-Yanak will give the PCs the passcode "*einhverr*", a word in the trollish dialect of Ulyanese Giant and will promise to tell his people of it, granting the PCs safe passage through Nuubark in the future.



B) The Lands of Musraaf's Chosen

The PCs might decide to seek out the clan leaders of Musraaf's Chosen. Even cursory research (DC 15 Gather Information or Knowledge - Local checks, magic, psionics, etc) will reveal that the clan lead by Hazzi Shalil is the closest and Hazzi is the least volatile of the Musraafi leaders. The lands controlled by Hazzi Shalil are 20 miles from the ruins of Nuubark. A thoughtful, educated man and a staunch traditionalist, Hazzi Shalil is the leader both most likely to listen to reason and most likely to succumb to blackmail.

9) Clan Shalil (EL 12 or -)

Musraaf's Chosen Cavalry Captain (CR 13) 1x - see Appendix 1

Musraaf's Chosen Cavalry Lieutenants (CR 8) 6x - see Appendix 1

Musraaf's Chosen are a group of interrelated clans who still live their traditional lifestyle as nomadic horsemen. However, as former auxiliaries in Myron's army during the Cleansing Wars, for two thousand years they have also ruled over the survivors of the Sageocracy - the settled human farmers of the region.

The Musraafi are a dark-haired people with strong noses and skin that is well-tanned from their time in the sun. They dress mainly in leathers, using bronze and feathers as decorative elements.

Being of interrelated clans, the Murassfi's Chosen will be extremely difficult to infiltrate or approach without some kind of effort at disguise or concealment (Bluff, Diplomacy, Disguise or Intimidate check, DC 30, or magic/psionics).

Once amongst the Murassfi of Clan Shalil, the PCs are free to locate and contact or spy on Hazzi Shalil.

You enter the Clan Shalil encampment of Murassfi's Chosen - the differences and similarities to existence in the Dead Lands are striking. Warriors still mill about, coming and going to hunt or patrol; others still sit outside their temporary shelters of hide and wicker: mending clothing, sharpening weapons, or crafting tools. But everywhere around you, the

Murassfi are alive - not just going through the motions of life, but actually alive - men and women eat and laugh, and children play.

The Murassfi's strange mounts are here as well: looking even stranger in life than in undeath, you think you've heard the word "horse" ascribed to them.

Now to find the clan leader Hazzi Shalil.

As the PCs move through the encampment, the calvary members will complicate their lives. This will happen in different ways depending on the PCs previous actions: if the PCs failed to adequately disguise or conceal themselves (especially non-humans in the group), the calvary members will stop and interrogate the party. If the PCs are invisible or otherwise relatively undetectable, the calvary members will stop and briefly suspect something is amiss, requiring the party to stop and hold for a moment to maintain their concealment, lest an alarm be raised.

Should the PCs not have adequately prepared themselves to infiltrate the Murassfi's Chosen (in the DM's opinion, per the guidelines above), the calvary members will discover their presence and initiate combat. If the PCs have adequately prepared, the calvary members exist simply to give the party a good scare and make them feel good about their preparations.

10) Hazzi Shalil (EL 28 or -)

Knor'morhen (CR 28) 1x - See Appendix

Hazzi Shalil spends most of his day holding court in his tent. An audience can be gained with him if the PCs are very persuasive (Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate check, DC 30) but doing so runs the risk of the PCs being exposed (see Clan Shalil, above). Hazzi will initially attempt to converse with the party in Ulyanese, before trying Ulyanese Giant. If the PCs still cannot make themselves understood, he will send them away.

The interior of clan leader Hazzi Shalil's tent is spacious and well-lit: window-flaps and brass oil lamps are spread throughout to keep the tent bright and airy, rugs of exotic design cover the floor, and brocaded pillows and furs denmark places to sit.

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"What would you ask of Hazzi Shali?" the old man says.

Hazzi will refuse to believe such fanciful tales as time travel and world-destroying cataclysms. He will also not become allies with or trade favors with the party, as they have nothing he wants. Eventually, Hazzi will send the party on their way, as he has other business to attend to.

With a bit of reconnaissance, the PCs can learn that Hazzi spends two days out of every week meditating in the wilds by himself. Should they surreptitiously follow him, the party will discover that Hazzi has in fact left the encampment without his bodyguards, riding to the north by horse.

If uninterrupted, Hazzi will verify he is not being followed (Listen & Spot checks, DC 25) and then ride to a cave at the base of the Cliffs of Uylan. If the PCs follow him inside, read:

The cave is deep and dark, but comfortably dry. From far ahead, you can see pure white light from around a corner - Hazzi has likely used psionics to provide light for himself.

Rounding the corner, you see Hazzi seated on the floor, legs crossed and eyes closed. Stomping around him, speaking in a gravelly tongue and making exasperated noises between grumbling comments is a very tall, green-gray-skinned, gangly person with fleshy hair.

The creature's gasp shakes the warlord from his meditations.

If the PCs understand Ulyanese Giant, read:

"You were followed!?!" the massive creature roars: *"Quickly we must eliminate them."*

Tactics: Hazzi will call for peace, attempting to calm both the creature and the PCs, but if the party insists on joining battle, Knor'morhen will happily tear into them.

Development: Should the PCs hold for a moment and listen to reason, Hazzi will explain that the creature is Knor'morhen - a troll and his tutor in the Way. He will go on to explain that even though the trolls are the people that Murassf's Chosen slaughtered during the Cleansing to come to rule these lands and Knor'morhen is an undead creature, he has agreed to

allow her to hide here (at the edge of Murassfi lands) in exchange for tutoring.

If the PCs are amenable, Hazzi is willing to trade the secret of Knor'morhen's existence and his association with her for a future favor.

C) The Kingdoms of Gretch

If the PCs choose to travel to see Gretch, the trip will be much shorter than might otherwise be expected. In the days before the Boiling Ruin, a series of high hills stood where the Forbidden Mountains are located in the present.

It's about 90 miles from Nolak Island to the Gray Tower of Gretch and, counting the time it takes to traverse the Forlorn Hills, it should take an average party four days to get there on foot.

11) Undead Patrol (EL 15)

Gukek (CR 13) 1x

Undead Warriors of Gretch (CR 9) 4x

Once the Cleansing Wars had begun, Gretch no longer needed to hide his power and the hills of central Ulyan made an excellent bulwark for his northern border. Accordingly, they are heavily patrolled by his undead troops and once such patrol will intercept the PCs as they travel the hills.

Though they are by no means the Forbidden Mountains, these hills that will one day be the Mountains' foundations are high and rugged, taking much effort to traverse.

As you pick your way over the bare stone and gullies, you catch sight of an armed group moving in your direction. They don't look especially noteworthy, but they make their way over the rough terrain with impressive stamina.

When the armed group grows closer, you can see that they all sport numerous vicious (mortal even) wounds, sickly gray flesh and glowing white eyes.

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Both groups will catch sight of each other at approximately 600 ft, but the undead will not engage in combat until they are 100 ft away (due to the unevenness of the terrain). The patrol will initially assume that the PCs are bandits, as armed groups with peaceful intent are rare in Cleansed Ulyan, but their leader might be convinced to parley (Bluff, Diplomacy or Intimidate check, DC 25). If the PCs can't manage to successfully communicate with the undead (see Gukek's languages below), they will be happy to attempt to slaughter the party.

Tactics: Unless the PCs initiate combat from range, the undead patrol members will close to melee range with the party. Should the PCs strike first with ranged attacks, Gukek will provide ranged support to his troops with his bow while they close the distance to the PCs. Once they engage the PCs, he will move into melee range as well.

Development: Whether they defeat or somehow avoid the undead patrol, the PCs should realize that undead troops likely mean they're headed in the right direction to meet with Gretch. If they speak peacefully with the undead, Gukek and his troops will personally escort the PCs to meet with Gretch.

12) Gretch (EL -)

Gretch's forces will not bother the PCs as they approach the Gray Tower. If they defeated his warriors, Gretch will be intrigued by the PCs and will have already left word that he wished to see them.

As you leave the hills behind and pass onto the plains of central Ulyan, Gretch's tower comes into view - not yet rebuilt of obsidian blocks, this is still the Gray Tower of old and it is abuzz with activity.

Undead creatures of all races and species, once mortal enemies in life but now all slaves of Gretch in undeath, mill about the Tower making preparations for...something. Supplies are being laid in: mostly spell components and weapons by the looks of it, enough to outfit a great host of troops.

You know that the great cataclysm of the Boiling Ruin will strike in less than a week but, Gretch could not know of the disaster yet, could he?

If the PCs were accompanied by Gretch's warriors, they take their leave of the party at the Tower's front

entrance. When the PCs present themselves at the Gray Tower, read:

It seems you were expected, as when you approached the Tower's front entrance, you were shown directly to a waiting room, with no surprise or flurry of activity in evidence at all.

After a short wait, you are shown to an audience chamber. Soon enough, a figure enters through the doorway before you and seats itself in a throne made of bone. Garbed in voluminous robes and masked, you can discern nothing about the individual but a somehow palpable sense of power and malice.

"Your presence intrigues me. What news do you bring Gretch?"

The masked figure will have used magic ahead of time to communicate with the party as necessary and will neither confirm nor deny if it is, in fact, Gretch. When the PCs explain their situation (that they need Gretch's protection in the future), read:

It begins as a slow chuckle and builds to a dry, rasping laugh and ranks among the most disturbing sounds you've ever heard.

"How amusing - you desperately need Gretch's aid and have next to nothing to trade for it? And you 'traveled through TIME' to come and plead Gretch's MERCY?!? How precious."

Development: Entertained for a brief moment and sensing an excellent opportunity, the masked figure will agree to the PCs' request - agreeing to protect them in the future (assuming they make it to the Obsidian Tower to claim Gretch's protection), in trade for a 'small favor' to be named and performed later.

D) The Navel (and Points Between)

Traveling to the Navel is a long, but not particularly harrowing trip. The land between the former Sageocracy and the Navel is well patrolled and safe (for those subservient to the Navel). Along the road linking northwestern Ulyan (Glass Lake, Nuubark, and the lands of Musraaf's Chosen) and the Navel in the northeast, lie the city of Dshentaram and the small town of Ehessos.

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13) Navel Patrol (EL 15)

Kondok (CR 14) 1x

Navel Warriors (CR 6) 7x

In the lands east of Glass Lake, along the great trade road that once linked Nagarvos' and the Winding Way, the PCs likely encounter a patrol of soldiers from the Navel. The terrain is generally flat, with only scattered, gently rolling hills, so the patrol will see the PCs unless they are using *scrying* and *invisibility* effects to monitor the road ahead and avoid other travelers.

If the PCs teleport to a location near the Navel or one of the settlements detailed below, instead alter this encounter to occur at the teleport destination.

Traveling east towards the Navel, your path quickly converges with an ancient and relatively well up-kept road. Along the road, you see an amount of greenery that would likely shock your peers in the present - despite the occasional burial mound or patch of blackened, defiled ground, the land is vibrant and alive compared to your time. Tufts of grass are all around, waving in the cool breeze and patches of bushes and the occasional lone tree can be seen here and there.

After a few hours of travel, another group can be seen traveling along the road opposite you. They likely caught sight of your group just as you saw them, judging from the way they begin to hurry towards you, pointing and shouting.

The two groups catch sight of each other at 300 ft. The Navel patrol is mounted on crodlu, but lacking calvary training, will dismount to engage the PCs.

The patrol is led by Kondok, a frustrated fighter/wizard who learned defiling in the hopes of transferring to the Navel's research division and, hopefully, into a position of true power. The Navel, however, had little use for a researcher with only moderate intelligence, little skill, and no focus. So Kondok remains second in command of the Navel's guard contingent (serving directly under Tarled, the Navel's captain of the watch, who in turn directly reports to Cheltagthwo herself) and therefore has broad discretion in how he motivates (i.e., abuses and terrorizes) Ulyan's civilian population.

With armed travelers being incredibly rare in Cleansed Ulyan, Kondok happily assumes the PCs are bandits and moves to vent his rage on them.

Tactics: Kondok will use his spells to attack the party from range and then cast spells to buff himself and his warriors before moving to melee.

The Navel Warriors will engage the PCs with ranged attacks but will switch to melee as necessary.

Development: With Kondok and his warriors out of commission, the PCs will have free reign of the roads until another patrol is sent out (which is not scheduled to happen until after the Obsidian Tide has struck).

14) Deshentarum (EL -)

A teeming undead metropolis in the Dead Lands, Deshentarum is a small, decadent city in the last days of Cleansed Ulyan (though still the largest city in Ulyan) with an exclusively human population.

Before the Cleansing Wars, Deshentarum was ruled by the Council of Ten, an oligarchy of the city's ten most powerful noble families. Competition amongst families was fierce, especially among those families within reach of ascending to or falling from the last few seats on the council.

Today, the noble families still compete against each other, but the Council of Ten has been disbanded - in its place rules a military governor appointed by the Navel. Though still wielding power and influence in the city, the nobles have long since fallen into self-indulgence and pleasure-seeking after submitting to centuries of "foreign" rule.

Deshentarum's current governor, Rorved Hantadza, has ruled for 17 years and remains firmly committed to keeping the supplies of foodstuff and arcane paraphernalia flowing to the Navel (lest he end up like his predecessor - a greasy soot mark on the floor of his palace), at least when he is not busy sampling the dream vapors and other delights of the city's pleasure houses.

Development: PCs seeking allies in Cleansed Deshentarum will come up empty. Still theoretically an advisor to the ruling council, the Vizier has been at the Navel for centuries, seeing to the needs of the Researchers for arcane supplies and he will remain there until the Obsidian Tide strikes. The nobles of Deshentarum are a fractious, sybaritic bunch and, even

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if they could be shamed into being blackmailed over their activities, each of them would likely just deny all knowledge of the PCs when reanimated as Deshentu's Negotiators corps. History does not record Rorved Hantadza's fate after the Boiling Ruin, but as he was more of a good soldier and obsequious servant than inspiring leader, it is likely that he ended up a nameless undead servant somewhere.

Though Deshentarum holds nothing to advance the PCs' goals of obtaining a patron for their return to the future/present, they are free to explore the city or while away as much time as they wish by partaking of the city's many vices. To that end, a map and location key for Deshentarum during the Age of Magic appears in Appendix 3.

15) Ehessos (EL -)

A small town and site of a garrison from the Navel, Ehessos serves as both a layover point between the Navel and the city of Deshentarum and logistical center. The region around Deshentarum and Ehessos serves as the breadbasket of Cleansed Ulyan and Ehessos is the collection and distribution hub for northeast Ulyan.

Ehessos is overseen by Xaksiis Goldgleam, an expert warrior whose mandate is to keep the farms in the area around the town: pacified, pure, and productive. Xaksiis is otherwise free to rule his petty fiefdom as he sees fit. A brutal and domineering tyrant, Xaksiis does truly feel a duty to his charges, but simply sees an iron fist as the best method to maintain discipline and security.

As long as they don't make trouble while in town, the PCs can freely explore Ehessos, though there isn't much to see. As a garrison town and agricultural center, Ehessos has little to offer in way of entertainment or culture - troops on leave prefer to sample the decadence of nearby Deshentarum and the local farmers prefer to conduct their business and go, lest they attract the attention of Xaksiis' soldiers.

Development: PCs seeking allies in Cleansed Ehessos will have little luck. Harkor makes periodic visits to preach the doctrine of Fire and recruit acolytes from the local Fire temple, but is currently at the Navel. Likewise, Qwith is also at the Navel, and will not come to Ehessos until after the Obsidian Tide. Xaksiis Goldgleam will remain in control of Ehessos after the Obsidian Tide, but will be driven out by Qwith and her

forces, and will be presumed destroyed during the first bugdead invasion.

16) Navel Personnel (EL -)

Built atop the ruins of Nagarvos', the Navel more resembles a university campus than a true city. It is nonetheless a fully functioning settlement with dormitories for researchers and civilians, barracks for the guards, and research facilities for planar experimentation.

You've reached the Navel. Standing atop a hill alongside the Tforkatch River, the facility is composed of dozens of buildings - blocky dormitories, expansive pavilions, and great amphitheaters, all with soaring columns and decorated by bas-reliefs.

People move around the complex constantly - soldiers, support personnel, wizards, psions, and clerics.

If the PCs have come to the Navel in the hopes of gaining the aid of the various personnel, they could not have come at a worse time - Qwith was recently dismissed as lead researcher by Rajaat but he designated no replacement. The current situation at the Navel is fractious - many of the department heads have begun making (often contradictory) unilateral decisions and tensions are high.

It will require an extremely persuasive argument (Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate check, DC 30) to even get one of the researchers to even stop what they're doing and listen to the PCs, and it will be even harder to convince them of the truth of the party's words.

Only two conversation topics will ultimately ensure the researchers' undivided attention: "There is something wrong with the Gate" or "the Navel is about to be attacked".

Those personnel at the Navel who will be persons of power and influence in the Dead Lands to come can be found in the following locations going about their business:

- Kulrath, the Vizier, can be found in his office at the Navel. Within, he manages the bureaucracy that keeps the researchers supplied with writing materials, spell components, scrolls and other arcane paraphernalia. Centuries of frustration vying with devotion in his psyche have eroded his mind, but he remains an effective manager.

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- Harkor can be found in the Navel's small Fire chapel, ministering to the occasional spiritual needs of the researchers and waiting for his perfunctory funerary rites to be needed.
- Only recently dismissed by Rajaat as lead researcher, Qwith has sequestered herself in her personal compound for weeks now. Sulking over her master's slight, it will take much effort to shake Qwith from her brooding.
- Those researchers who will eventually become leaders of the Descendants of the Chosen are all hard at work attempting to outperform their peers and assume leadership of the Navel. Negchar, Ac'nac'wo, Sinker Kasgat, Abak-Enawi and the others can be found in their departments' research labs, already falling prey to the factionalism that will come to define their unives.
- Volldrager currently lies in the Navel's dungeon, locked away there after Qwith crushed his peaceful little rebellion. He would be overjoyed to be released but will not manage to escape Ulan before the Obsidian Tide.

Development: If any of the personnel at the Navel can be convinced of the truth of the PCs story, they will immediately sound an alert, attempting to secure the Gate and increase the security at the Navel. This will have a paradoxical effect, triggering the undead in the ruins below to begin their attacks immediately out of panic, and consequently causing the Obsidian Tide slightly earlier than expected. Proceed to encounter #19 - The Battle of the Gate, below.

17) Pandruj (EL -)

Deep beneath the Navel, in a labyrinth composed of the remaining cellars and sub-basements of ruined Nagarvos', dwell Pandruj and the undead Tetrarchs.

Anyone wishing to contact Pandruj and the Tetrarchs will need to gain access to the Navel compound and then find some way to access the buried ruins of Nagarvos'. Effects such as *disintegrate*, *passwall*, *teleport* or *etherealness* will likely be necessary to reach the ruins, though *scrying* and *telepathy* effects might also be used to make contact without physically traveling to the underground warren.

The Tetrarchs are currently still firmly under Pandruj's control and if met or contacted, will simply pass along word to Pandruj. Though difficult to reach, Pandruj will be easy to convince that a catastrophe will occur that involves the research being performed at the

Navel. Already planning an imminent assault on the complex of defilers, the undead preserver will simply move up his timetable. It will, however, be impossible to convince Pandruj that his attack will *trigger* the accident, as he is obviously moving to prevent such an event from happening.

Development: If contacted by the PCs, Pandruj will accelerate his plans and attack within the hour. Proceed to The Battle of the Gate, below.

18) The Defenders (EL -)

Also buried deep beneath the Navel, G'dranav and the Defenders would make powerful allies back in the present. They are, however, even harder to reach than Pandruj and the Tetrarchs.

During the Siege of Nagarvos', G'dranav ripped open a chasm with his psionics, hurtling himself, his foes, and the fallen Defenders deep beneath the Arkolak hill. The rift on the surface closed up soon enough, but underground the cleft in the earth stayed open around the newly risen meorty and his dead students. By the time the PCs have arrived at the Navel, G'dranav has finished reanimating the Defenders as meorties and plans an assault on Rajaat's lackeys.

If approached or contacted (in the same way as with Pandruj above), G'dranav will be horrified at the thought of further death and destruction at the hands of Rajaat's forces and will insist on immediately attacking, despite any warnings the PCs might make to the contrary.

Development: As with Pandruj, once contacted by the PCs, G'dranav will accelerate his plans and attack within the hour. Proceed to The Battle of the Gate, below.

19) The Battle of the Gate (EL 15)

Navel Scholar (CR 15) 1x

Once one of the important personages at or beneath the Navel has received and believes the PCs warnings, the Battle of the Gate will begin soon after.

Stepping out into the gentle yellow sunlight of the past, a brutal battle scene greets you. Armored

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undead - some much larger than a man, others much shorter - rush about, slaughtering personnel of the Navel with abandon, howling curses and epitaphs like "child butcher", "murderer" and "racist scum". Several other undead stand nearby, hurling spells and manifesting powers into the fray. In ones and twos, the researchers step out of buildings and begin magical and psionic assaults of their own, turning the entire battle into a confusing whirlwind of hurtled death and flashing blades.

The armored undead (the Guardians), the Navel personnel, and other undead (Pandruj and the Tetrachs) are engaged in a three-way battle. In the confusion, one of the Navel Scholars will attack the PCs.

Tactics: The scholar will create astral constructs to attack the party. Once they have manifested a sufficient number of astral constructs, they will make use of their psionics to otherwise control the combat environment: blocking or distracting ranged attackers while forcing their opponents close, so as to inflict maximum damage with their hand-to-hand attacks.

Development: Once the PCs defeat the Scholar or once they are nearly defeated, proceed to encounter #20 - The Gate Fails, below.

20) The Gate Fails (EL -)

Eventually, the inevitable happens - the gate is used to summon a massive obsidian quasi-elemental, it fails, and molten obsidian pours forth, triggering the Obsidian Tide.

As the battle rages on, one of the nearby research buildings explodes outwards and a torrent of black

liquid stone pours forth - the Obsidian Tide has begun!

The melee immediately turns into a mad scramble to escape the molten obsidian, but to no avail - the tide of blackglass is moving too quickly and wave after surging wave pour forth from the ruined building.

Just before the Obsidian Tide overtakes you, you swear you see a gargantuan humanoid figure moving through the waves of obsidian as if completely unaffected. It seems to glance in your direction and you can clearly feel its gaze upon you before you are yanked back to your time.

The party has just encountered (and been seen by) the obsidian quasi-elemental that will eventually become "The Great One" and this may have repercussions later (see the Concluding the Adventure section, below).

E) Anywhere Else

The PCs are free to search for allies elsewhere in Cleansed Ulyan or even attempt to escape the Obsidian Tide altogether. While a DM is encouraged to play out such scenarios, such efforts are beyond the scope of this adventure and will ultimately fail.

When the PCs have run out of time, if they are still in Ulyan, read:

Your efforts may have been futile, as none of those you have met have the standing to protect you in the future. As you vainly try to continue your efforts, you feel a rumbling in the earth. Glancing to the horizon, a scarlet and black ribbon can be seen; at first it looks like a bizarre reverse sunset, but it suddenly becomes clear - this is the Obsidian Tide, and your time has run out.

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Part 4: Back to the Future

Whether their mission was successful or not, whether they died or not, and whether they stayed in Ulyan or not, at the moment that the Obsidian Tide comes into contact with the *Mirror of the Ages*, the PCs are yanked back to the present.

Supposedly prepared for it or not, returning to the future comes as quite a shock. You are suddenly thrust up from the *Mirror of the Ages*, dripping wet and standing at the edge of its waters.

“Welcome back” says a member of the Brotherhood, “What did you see? Where did you go? Did you accomplish

what you set out to do? Did you find an ally to protect you from the Dead lords?”

Development: With the agreed upon transaction complete (the trade of a trip through the *Mirror of the Ages* for its activation key), the Brotherhood of the Mirror will request the PCs leave them alone with the object of their worship. If the PCs have been well-behaved guests, they will ask kindly, but they will drive the PCs from Nolak Island using violence if necessary.

Concluding the Adventure

If the PCs were successful in the past, making contact with a future leader of the Dead Lands, their ally will (surprisingly) follow through on their promise, contacting the other leaders and factions to explain that the PCs are (currently) under their protection. They will also explain that the activation key for the *Mirror of the Ages* has now been given to the Brotherhood of the Mirror and that the PCs are now of little value in that regard.

To make use of such an ally, however, the PCs will first have to reach their ally, facing assault squads (see encounter #2 - Interested Parties, above) with the same frequency as before their trip to the past until they arrive at the ally's location.

If the PCs made contact with multiple parties in the past, then they not only have their pick of safe havens but have the rare opportunity to ask a favor of one or more of the leaders of the Dead Lands. Such a boon should be used with caution, however, for the Dead Lords are often fickle and rarely fair.

If the PCs traveled to the Navel and were present to witness the failure of the gate, they have accidentally accomplished a rare and unexpected thing - they have drawn the attention of The Great One. Sometime after they return to the present, when the party is in dire straits (perhaps even while on the run from assault squads, having failed to procure an ally in the past) a Manifestation of the Great One will appear to defend the party before enigmatically fading away again.

Should the PCs have failed to make an ally out of one of the future leaders of the Dead Lands, perhaps because they attempted to find a place to live out their lives in the Athas of the past, all is not necessarily lost. After several weeks of being constantly hounded by assault squads and bounty hunters, the attacks will suddenly cease: the Dead Lords will have realized (again through divinations and precognitive powers) that the activation key of the *Mirror of the Ages* has been delivered to the Brotherhood and, as the PCs are now useless to them, they will direct their efforts elsewhere.

Further Adventures

Depending on where they went and what they did, the PCs might experience many subsequent adventures.

Once brought to their attention, the leaders of the Dead Lands will likely call upon the PCs again, whether to eliminate an irritation or retrieve a wanted item, and such requests are rarely safe to decline.

If the PCs came to the attention of, and were subsequently rescued by, the Great One, its association with them could ultimately end up being more problematic than helpful. As word spreads of the event, it will likely spark another round of interest in the PCs and whatever specialized knowledge or particular attribute they might possess.

It might be that (at the DM's option) the PCs chanced upon some detail or event in the past that will become

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vitally important or extremely secret in the present: a scrap of paper containing the ailing Kulrath's favorite passcode or the name of Qwith's childhood pet might grant the party access to unimaginable places and opportunities. Once they discover the significance of their knowledge, it will be up to the PCs whether they use it to their own advantage or attempt to trade the knowledge for another favor.

With the full abilities of the *Mirror of the Ages* once again available to them, the Brotherhood of the Mirror could become a major player in the politics of the Dead Lands. At the very least, the Brotherhood might have more missions for PCs to perform in the past, leading to any number of strange adventures.





Appendix 1: Monsters & NPCs

Attack Squad Nomad CR 13

Male or Female Human Zhen Psion (Nomad) 11
LE Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Human, Psionic)

Init: +2 **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft.; Listen +8, Search +20, Spot +14

Aura: -

Languages: Ignan, Tamwar, Ulyanese, Ulyanese Giant

AC: 23; touch 13, flat-footed 21**
(+2 Dex, +10 Nat, +1 Def)

hp 98 (11 HD; 11d12+11+16); Fast Healing: 3

Damage Reduction: 10/magic

Immune: Turning, Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Vulnerability to Iron, Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects

Saves: Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +11

Speed: 40 ft.; Obsidian Climb

Melee: Spear +8 (1d6+3/ x2) or Slam +8 (1d8+3) or Touch +8 (by spell)

Ranged: Ranged Touch +7 (by spell)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +5; **Grapple:** +8

Combat Options: Psionic Meditation (Move action)

Combat Gear: Spear, Leather Armor

Psi-Like Abilities (ML = HD. The save DCs are Charisma-based): At will—aura sight*, body adjustment*, body equilibrium, catfall*, control light, elfsight**, false sensory input*, psionic charm*, psionic daze*, psionic suggestion*, ubiquitous vision** *Power can be augmented.

Psion Powers (ML 11th, PP: 139-6, DC 16 + power level):

6th: Breath of the Black Dragon

5th: Baleful Teleport, Psionic Teleport, Psionic True Seeing, Tower of Iron Will

4th: Detect Remote Viewing, Dismissal Psionic, Psionic Fly, Trace Teleport

3rd: Astral Caravan, Dispel Psionics, Energy Bolt, Eradicate Invisibility

2nd: Cloud Mind, Dimension Swap, Psionic Levitation, Thought Shield

1st: Astral Traveler, Conceal Thoughts, Detect Teleportation, Force Screen, Inertial Armor, Mind Thrust, Sense Link

Abilities: Str 16, Dex 14, Con --, Int 23, Wis 14, Cha 15
SQ: **Damage Reduction**, Darkvision 60 ft., Fast Healing, Gray Toughness 1, **Immunity to Turning**, Obsidian Climb, Rebuke Undead (CL 15th, 5/day), Skills, Undead Traits, **Vulnerability to Iron**, Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects.

Feats: Expanded Knowledge (Force Shield, Inertial Armor) x2, Greater Power Penetration, Power Penetration, Psionic Body ^B, Psionic Meditation ^B, Quicken Power ^B, Speed of Thought.

Skills: Climb +10, Concentration +16, Jump +10, Knowledge (arcana) +20, Knowledge (psionics) +20, Knowledge (religion) +20, Knowledge (the planes) +20, Listen +8, Psicraft +20, Search +18, Sense Motive +8, Spot +14, Survival +2.

Possessions: 21,000cp or Combat Gear plus: Cloak of Resistance +1, Headband of Intelligence +4, Ring of Protection +1.



Attack Squad Veteran CR 10

Male human Thinking Zombie Fighter 9

Chaotic Evil Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Human, Psionic)

Init: +7; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft; Listen +10, Spot +10

Aura: -

Languages: Goblin, Ulyanese

AC: 22; touch 14, flat-footed 18
(+4 Dex, +4 Nat, +4 armor)

hp 79 (9d12+9+12)

Resistances: Cold and Electricity 10

Immune: Turning, Undead Traits; **Weakness:** **Phobia** (water), Vulnerability to Blessed Elements

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +8, Will +4

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Speed: 30 ft (6 squares)

Melee: Longspear +16 (1d8+7; 20/x3) or Claw +15 (1d4+6; 20/x2) or Bite +15 (1d6+6; 20/x2)

Full Melee: Longspear +16/+11 (1d8+7; 20/x3) and Bite +10 (1d6+3; 20/x2) or 2x Claw +15 (1d4+6; 20/x2) and Bite +10 (1d6+3; 20/x2)

Ranged: Comp. Longbow +15 (1d8+7; Range 110 ft.; 20/x3)

Full Ranged: Comp. Longbow +15/+10 (1d8+7; Range 110 ft.; 20/x3)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft. (10ft w/ Longspear)

Base Attack: +9/+4; **Grapple:** +15

Combat Options: Combat Reflexes (5/round), Disease (DC 13), Far Shot, Psionic Fist/Shot/Weapon (+2d6), Psionic Meditation (Move action), Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Ride-By Attack, Spirited Charge, Trample

Combat Gear: Composite (+6 Str) Longbow +1, Longspear +1, Obsidian Arrows x50, Studded Leather +1

Abilities: Str 22, Dex 18, Con --, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 9

SQ: Darkvision 60 ft., **Enhanced Ability (feat)**, Gray Toughness 1, Immunity to Turning, **Phobia (water)**, Resistance to Cold and Electricity, Vulnerability to Blessed Elements

Feats: Combat Reflexes ^B, Far Shot ^B, Improved Initiative ^B, Psionic Body, Psionic Fist, Psionic Meditation, Psionic Shot, Psionic Weapon, Point Blank Shot ^B, Weapon Focus (Longbow) ^B, Wild Talent ^B.

Skills: Climb +12, Handle Animal +11, Jump +12, Listen +4, Ride +16, Search +5, Sense Motive +4, Spot +10.

Possessions: 12,000 cp or Combat Gear plus: Cloak of Resistance +1, Gloves of Dexterity +2, Potion-Orb of Displacement (CL 5th), Potion-Orb of *Shield of Faith* (CL 1st, +2 Def)



Brotherhood of the Mirror Acolyte (Human) CR 13

Male or Female Human Zhen Cleric (Rain) 10

NE Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Human, Psionic)

Init: +1; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft., Low-Light Vision; Listen +14, Search +14, Spot +20

Aura: -

Languages: Aquan, Ulyanese, Ulyanese Giant

AC: 26; touch 11, flat-footed 25**

(+1 Dex, +10 Nat, +5 armor)

hp 85 (10 HD; 10d12+20); **Fast Healing:** 6

Damage Reduction: 5/magic

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Bound to Area (Nolak Island), Stench (rotting fish), Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects

Saves: Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +14

Speed: 30 ft.; Obsidian Climb

Melee: Slam +12 (1d8+5) or Touch +12 (by spell)

Ranged: Ranged Touch +8 (by spell)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +7/+2; **Grapple:** +10

Combat Options: Paralysis (DC 13)

Combat Gear: Handwraps (+2 from *greater magic weapon*), MW Light Chitin Shield (not equipped yet), MW Studded Leather Armor (+2 from *magic vestment*)

Psi-Like Abilities: At will—aura sight*, body adjustment*, body equilibrium, catfall*, control light, elfsight**, false sensory input*, psionic charm*, psionic daze*, psionic suggestion*, ubiquitous vision**. ML = HD. The save DCs are Charisma-based. *Power can be augmented.

Cleric Spells (CL 10th (+4 vs. SR), DC 16 + spell level):

5th: **Elemental strike**, Commune, ~~Extended—Greater Magic Weapon~~, Scrying, Water Trap (d)

4th: Divine power, Divination, ~~Extended—Magic Vestment~~, Pact of water (d), Summon Monster IV, Tongues

3rd: Bestow curse, Control tides (d), Dispel magic, Magic Vestment, Prayer, Searing Light

2nd: darkness, death knell, desecrate, Extended Divine Favor, Fog Cloud (d), Resist Elements, **Return to the Earth**, Silence

1st: Bless, Cause fear (d), Command, **Curse Element**, Deathwatch, Endure Elements, Hide from undead, Shield of Faith

0th: **Create Element**, **Detect Element**, Detect Magic, Guidance, Resistance, Read Magic

Abilities: Str 16, Dex 13, Con --, Int 14, Wis 23, Cha 16

SQ: Bound to Area (Nolak Island), Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60 ft, Domains, **Enhanced Ability (saves)**, **Fast Healing**, Gray Toughness 2, Obsidian Climb, Rebuke Undead (CL 10th, 6/day), Skills,

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Stench (rotting fish), Undead Traits, Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects.

Feats: Craft Wand, Craft Wondrous Item, Extend Spell, Greater Spell Penetration, Spell Penetration.

Skills: Concentration +16, Diplomacy +3, Heal +21, Knowledge (arcana) +2, Knowledge (religion) +15, Knowledge (the planes) +15, Listen +14, Search +10, Sense Motive +14, Spellcraft +15, Spot +20.

Possessions: 16,000cp or Combat Gear plus: Periapt of Wisdom +4.

Cleric Domains:

- Drowning Despair: Class Skill - Swim; Granted Power - Rebuke/Command water creatures.
- Living Waters: Class Skill - Swim; Granted Power - *Stabilize* all dying creatures in 60 ft radius once per day.

Paralysis (Su): Those hit by the undead's natural attacks must succeed on a Fortitude save or be paralyzed for 2d4 rounds.



Musraaf's Chosen Cavalry Captain CR 13

Female Human Fighter 13

NE Medium Humanoid (Human)

Init: +8; **Senses:** Listen -1, Search +1, Spot -1

Languages: Ulyanese

AC: 20; touch 15, flat-footed 16

(+4 Dex, +5 armor, +1 Def)

hp 110 (13d10+39)

Speed: Fort +11, Ref +8, Will +2

Speed: 30 ft.

Melee: Lance +21 (1d8+10; 20/x3) or Dagger +19 (1d4+5; 19-20/x2)

Full Melee: Lance +21/+16/+11 (1d8+10; 20/x3) or Dagger +19 (1d4+5; 19-20/x2)

Ranged: Comp. Shortbow +20 (1d6+1; Range 70 ft.; 20/x3)

Full Ranged: Comp. Shortbow +20/+15/+10 (1d6+1; Range 70 ft.; 20/x3)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +13/+8/+3; **Grapple:** +18

Combat Options: -

Combat Gear: Bone Lance +1, Studded Leather Armor +2, Composite Shortbow +1, MW Bone Dagger, Ulyanese War Chariot (see Chapter 10)

Abilities: Str 20, Dex 18, Con 16, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 12
SQ: -

Feats: Greater Weapon Focus (Lance), Greater Weapon Focus (Shortbow), Improved Initiative, Mounted Archery ^B, Mounted Combat ^B, Ride-By Attack ^B, Skill Focus (Ride), Spirited Charge ^B, Trample ^B, Weapon Focus (Lance) ^B, Weapon Focus (Shortbow), Weapon Specialization (Lance) ^B, Weapon Specialization (Shortbow) ^B.

Skills: Climb +13, Handle Animal +17, Intimidate +17, Jump +13, Listen -1, Ride +20, Search +1, Spot -1.

Possessions: 35,000cp or Combat Gear plus: Amulet of Health +2, Belt of Strength +4, Gloves of Dexterity +2, Ring of Protection +1; 100cp.



Firemouth (Undead Sea Monster) CR 10

NE Gargantuan Undead (Augmented Animal)

Init: +1; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft., Low-Light Vision; Listen +20, Spot +15

Aura: -

Languages: -

AC: 29; touch 11, flat-footed 28**; Dodge, Mobility (-4 size, +1 Dex, +22 Nat)

hp 75 (10 HD; 10d12+10); **Fast Healing:** 3

Damage Reduction: 5/magic; **Turn Resistance:** (+2; as 12 HD undead)

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Bound to Area (Fouled Sea), Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects

Saves: Fort +9, Ref +8, Will +5

Speed: 20 ft., Swim 20 ft.; Obsidian Climb

Melee: Bite +18 (3d8+22)

Space: 15 ft.; **Reach:** 15 ft.

Base Attack: +7; **Grapple:** +34

Combat Options: Cleave, Improved Grab, Swallow Whole (2d6 +12 bludgeoning, AC 16, hp 10)

Psi-Like Abilities: At will—aura sight*, body adjustment*, body equilibrium, catfall*, control light, elfsight**, false sensory input*, psionic

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charm*, psionic daze*, psionic suggestion*, ubiquitous vision**. ML = HD. The save DCs are Charisma-based. *Power can be augmented.

Abilities: Str 40, Dex 13, Con --, Int 3, Wis 15, Cha 11
SQ: Bound to Area (Fouled Sea), Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60 ft, Enhanced Ability (feat), Enhanced Senses**, Fast Healing, Gray Toughness 1, Obsidian Climb, Skills, Turn Resistance, Undead Traits, Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects.
Feats: Cleave ^B, Dodge, Great Fortitude, Mobility, Power Attack
Skills: Listen +20, Search +8, Sense Motive +8, Spot +15, Swim +23.

Environment: Warm Aquatic

Organization: Solitary

Treasure: None

Alignment: Usually neutral evil

Advancement: 11-20 HD (Gargantuan); 21-30 HD (Colossal)

Level Adjustment: -

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, the firemouth must hit a Huge or smaller opponent with its bite attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can try to swallow the foe the following round.

Swallow Whole (Ex): A firemouth can try to swallow a grabbed opponent of up to one size smaller by making a successful grapple check. Once inside, the opponent takes 2d6+10 points of bludgeoning damage plus 1d8+4 points of acid damage per round from the firemouth's digestive juices. A swallowed creature can cut its way out using a light slashing or piercing weapon by dealing 10 points of damage to the firemouth's digestive tract (AC 16). Once the creature exits, muscular action closes the hole; another swallowed opponent must cut its own way out.

Zhen: Zhen that were not originally a Giant, Humanoid or Monstrous Humanoid are possible but have some differences from humanoid zhen:

- Turn Resistance +2: Non-humanoid zhen are harder to Turn/Rebuke than one might expect. This replaces the Rebuke Undead ability.



Gukek CR 13

Male Human Fallen Fighter 10

LE Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Psionic)

Init: +7; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft.; Listen +7, Search +6, Spot +7

Aura: Despair (10ft, DC 23)

Languages: Classic Dwarven, Ulyanese, Orcish

AC: 25; touch 13, flat-footed 22

(+3 Dex, +6 Nat, +4 armor, +2 shield)

hp 85 (10 HD; 10d12+20)

Damage Reduction: 5/magic

Immune: Undead Traits

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +6

Speed: 30 ft.

Melee: Cahulak +20 (1d6+10; 19-20/x3)

Full Melee: Cahulak +18/+13 (1d6+10; 19-20/x3) and Cahulak +17 (1d6+5; 19-20/x3)

Ranged: Composite Longbow +13 (1d8+1; Range 110 ft; 20/x3)

Full Ranged: Composite Longbow +14/+9 (1d8+1; Range 110 ft; 20/x3)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +10/+5; **Grapple:** +16

Combat Options: Combat Expertise, Create Spawn, Curse, Disease (DC 23), Improved Disarm, Improved Trip

Combat Gear: MW Bone Cahulak, Cahulak +2 (called via *call weaponry*), Composite Longbow +1, Studded Leather +1

Psi-Like Abilities: At will—*call weaponry**, *death knell*, *deathwatch*, *mindlink**; 1/day—*recall agony**. ML = HD. The save DCs are Charisma-based. *Power can be augmented.

Abilities: Str 22, Dex 16, Con --, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 16

SQ: Code of Honor, Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60 ft., Enhanced Ability (feat), Gray Toughness, Skills, Undead traits.

Feats: Combat Expertise ^B, Greater Weapon Focus (Cahulak) ^B, Improved Critical (Cahulak) ^B, Improved Disarm ^B, Improved Initiative, Improved Trip ^B, Iron Will ^B, Skill Focus (Knowledge - Warcraft), Two-Weapon Defense, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (Cahulak) ^B, Weapon Specialization (Cahulak) ^B.

Skills: Climb +15, Intimidate +16, Jump +15, Knowledge (warcraft) +15, Listen +7, Search +6, Sense Motive +7, Spot +7.

Adventures in the Dead Lands

Possessions: 16,000cp or Combat Gear plus: Belt of Giant's Strength +2, Cloak of Charisma +2, Gloves of Dexterity +2, Potion-Orb of *Enlarge Person* (CL 1st).



Kondok CR 14

Male Human Fighter 9 / Wizard 5

LE Medium Humanoid (Human)

Init: +5; **Senses:** Listen +0, Search +3, Spot +0

Aura: -

Languages: Ulyanese

AC: 17; touch 13, flat-footed 16

(+1 Dex, +4 armor, +2 Def)

hp 90 (14 HD; 9d10+5d4+28)

Saves: Fort +9, Ref +6, Will +7

Speed: 30 ft.

Melee: Longsword +18 (1d8+7; 17-20) or Touch +16 (by spell)

Full Melee: Longsword +18/+13/+8 (1d8+7; 17-20)

Ranged: Ranged Touch +12 (by spell)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +11/+6/+1; **Grapple:** +16

Combat Options: Cleave, Combat Expertise, Power Attack

Combat Gear: Bronze Longsword

Wizard Spells (CL 5th, DC 13 + spell level):

3rd: displacement, haste.

2nd: acid arrow, ~~extended mage armor~~, mirror image.

1st: expeditious retreat, magic missile x2, shield, shocking grasp.

0th: detect magic, disrupt undead, mage hand, message.

Abilities: Str 20, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 17, Wis 10, Cha 14

SQ: -

Feats: Cleave, Combat Casting, Combat Expertise ^B, Extend Spell ^B, Greater Weapon Focus (Longsword) ^B, Improved Initiative ^B, Improved Critical (Longsword), Iron Will, Power Attack, Quick Draw, Scribe Scroll ^B, Weapon Focus (Longsword) ^B, Weapon Specialization (Longsword) ^B.

Skills: Bluff +2, Climb +17, Concentration +18(+4), Intimidate +14, Jump +17, Knowledge (arcana) +9, Knowledge (psionics) +3, Knowledge (warcraft) +15, Spellcraft +6.

Possessions: 45,000cp or Combat Gear plus: Belt of Giant's Strength +4, Gloves of Dexterity +4, Headband of Intellect +2, Ring of Protection +2, Vest of Resistance +1.



Knor'morhen CR 28

Female Troll Kaisharga Psion (Seer) 14 / Expert 5

CN Large Undead (Augmented Giant, Psionic)

Init: +15; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft., Low-Light Vision, Scent; Listen +43, Search +19, Spot +43

Aura: Fear (60 ft, DC 22)

Languages: Classic Dwarven, Orcish, Ulyanese, Ulyanese Giant

AC: 37; touch 19, flat-footed 30

(-1 size, +7 Dex, +10 Nat, +8 armor, +3 Def)

hp 212 (25 HD; 25d12+50); **Fast Healing** 3

Damage Reduction: 15/magic; **Spell Resistance:** 30

Immune: Cold, Electricity, Undead Traits

Saves: Fort +14, Ref +18, Will +21; Evasion

Speed: 40 ft.

Melee: Claw +26 (1d6+10) or Bite +26 (1d6+10) or Touch +26 (1d10 Cold or by power and Paralyzing Touch)

Ranged: Ranged Touch +23 (by power)

Space: 10 ft.; **Reach:** 10 ft.

Base Attack: +14/+9/+4; **Grapple:** +28

Combat Options: Create Spawn, Greater Psionic Fist (4d6), **Insanity (DC 22)**, Paralyzing Touch, Psionic Meditation (Move action), Rend (2d6+15).

Combat Gear: -

Psi-Like Abilities (Psi): At will—aversion, conceal thoughts, control air, control object, detect psionics, dimension slide, mass missive, mindlink, psionic dimension door, psionic dimensional anchor, psionic levitate, psionic teleport, telekinetic force; 3/day—control body, dispel psionics, matter manipulation, psionic dominate, psionic mind blank, psychic crush; ML 25th; The save DCs are Charisma-based.

Psion Powers (ML 14th, PP: 170+63, DC 19 + power level):

7th: energy conversion, psionic moment of prescience, ultrablast.

Adventures in the Dead Lands

- 6th: greater precognition, psionic contingency, temporal acceleration.
5th: clairtangent hand, second chance, power resistance, psionic true seeing.
4th: aura sight, remote viewing, trace teleport.
3rd: body adjustment, dispel psionics, escape detection, telekinetic force, telekinetic thrust.
2nd: clairvoyant sense, cloud mind, concussion blast, psionic tongues.
1st: defensive precognition, destiny dissonance, missive, psionic daze, precognition.

Spell-Like Abilities: At Will - *Hold Undead*; CL = HD; The save DC is Charisma-based.

Abilities: Str 30, Dex 24, Con --, Int 28, Wis 16, Cha 10
SQ: Code of Honor, Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60 ft., **Fast Healing**, Fear Aura, Gray Toughness 2, Immunity to Cold & Electricity, Low-Light Vision, Master's Voice, *Nondetection* (DC 30), Scent, Skills, Spell Resistance, Undead Traits.

Feats: Alertness, Combat Manifestation, Craft Dorje, Greater Psionic Fist, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Maximize Power, Psionic Fist^B, Psionic Meditation^B, Quicken Power^B, Superior Initiative (Epic).

Skills: Climb +12, Concentration +28(+4), Diplomacy +5, Gather Information +26, Hide +3, Jump +10, Knowledge (psionics) +37, Listen +43, Psicraft +37, Search +19, Sense Motive +15, Spot +43.

Possessions: 265,000cp or Combat Gear plus: Bracers of Armor +8, Dorje of Body Adjustment (ML 5th, 33 charges), Headband of Intellect +6, Ring of Evasion, Ring of Invisibility, Skin of the Hero, Third Eye Gather, Tome of Clear Thought +2 (already read), Torc of Power Preservation; 75cp

Insanity (Su): The undead's natural attacks afflict its victim with temporary insanity. If the creature fails a Will save, it is confused for 2d10 minutes. The victim has no sense of right or wrong and behaves unpredictably.

Paralyzing Touch (Su): Any living creature a kaisharga hits with its touch attack must succeed on a Fortitude save or be paralyzed for 2d4 minutes. Remove paralysis or any spell that can remove a curse can free the victim (see the *bestow curse* spell description). The effect cannot be dispelled. Anyone paralyzed by a kaisharga seems dead, though a DC 20 Spot check or a DC 15 Heal check reveals that the victim is still alive.

Rend (Ex): If a troll hits with both claw attacks, it latches onto the opponent's body and tears the flesh.

This attack automatically deals damage as a Claw attack 2 steps larger (1d6 → 1d8 → 2d6) plus 1.5x the troll's Str bonus.



Musraaf's Chosen Cavalry Lieutenants CR 8

Male Human Fighter 8

NE Medium Humanoid (Human)

Init: +6; **Senses:** Listen +0, Search +2, Spot +0

Aura: -

Languages: Ulyanese

AC: 16; touch 12, flat-footed 14
(+2 Dex, +4 armor)

hp 52 (8d10+8)

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +4

Speed: 30 ft.

Melee: Lance +13 (1d8+7; 20/x3) or Dagger +12 (1d4+3; 19-20/x2)

Full Melee: Lance +13/+8 (1d8+7; 20/x3) or Dagger +12 (1d4+3; 19-20/x2)

Ranged: Comp. Shortbow +12 (1d6+4; Range 70 ft.; 20/x3)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +8/+3; **Grapple:** +11

Combat Options: -

Combat Gear: MW Bone Dagger, Bone Lance +1, Studded Leather Armor +1, Composite (+3) Shortbow +1

Abilities: Str 16, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 8
SQ: -

Feats: Improved Initiative, Mounted Archery^B, Mounted Combat^B, Ride-By Attack^B, Spirited Charge, Weapon Focus (Lance)^B, Weapon Focus (Shortbow)^B, Weapon Specialization (Lance), Weapon Specialization (Shortbow).

Skills: Climb +8, Craft (weaponsmithing) +8, Craft (armorer) +8, Handle Animal +9, Intimidate +9, Jump +8, Ride +13.

Possessions: 9,400cp or Combat Gear plus: Cloak of Resistance +1, Ring of Protection +1.



Adventures in the Dead Lands

Navel Scholar CR 15

Female Human Psion (Shaper) 15

LE Medium Humanoid (Human, Psionic)

Init: +1; **Senses:** Listen +5, Search +10, Spot +5

Aura: -

Languages: Ulyanese, Classic Halfling

AC: 14; touch 14, flat-footed 13

(+1 Dex, +3 Def)

hp 55 (15 HD; 15d4+18)

Saves: Fort +8, Ref +8, Will +13

Speed: 30+10 ft.

Melee: Slam +11 (1d8+4) or Touch +11 (by power)

Full Melee: 2x Slam +11/+6 (1d8+4)

Ranged: Light Crossbow +13/+8 (1d8+2; 19-20/x2)

Full Ranged: Light Crossbow +13 (1d8+2; 19-20/x2) or Ranged Touch +9 (by power)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +7/+2; **Grapple:** +11

Combat Options: Greater Psionic Fist (+4d6), Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Psionic Meditation (Move action), Unavoidable Strike

Combat Gear: Crossbow Bolts x20, Light Crossbow +2

Psion Powers (ML 15th, PP: 195+45, DC 16 + power level):

8th: Astral Seed, Bend Reality

7th: Divert Teleport, Energy Wave, Mass Ectoplasmic Cocoon, Psionic Phase Door

6th: Crystallize, Psionic Disintegrate, Psionic Greater Fabricate, Temporal Acceleration

5th: Hail of Crystals, Psionic Major Creation, Psionic Plane Shift, Psionic True Seeing

4th: Psionic Dimension Door, Psionic Fabricate, Quintessence, Wall of Ectoplasm

3rd: Greater Concealing Amorphia, Dispel Psionics, Dismiss Ectoplasm, Ectoplasmic Cocoon

2nd: Psionic Identify, Psionic Lock, Psionic Repair Damage, Thought Shield

1st: Astral Construct, Astral Traveler, Energy Ray, Far Hand, Inertial Armor

Abilities: Str 18, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 22, Wis 12, Cha 8

SQ: -

Feats: Boost Construct ^B, Chain Power, Empower Power, Greater Psionic Fist ^B, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Psionic Body ^B, Psionic Fist ^B, Psionic Meditation, Speed of Thought, Unavoidable Strike.

Skills: Autohypnosis +19, Bluff +5, Concentration +18, Craft (stonemasonry) +24, Knowledge (arcana) +14, Knowledge (psionics) +24, Knowledge (the planes)

+10, Listen +5, Psicraft +24, Search +10, Sense Motive +7, Spot +5, Use Psionic Device +19.

Possessions: 59,000cp or Combat Gear plus: Cloak of Resistance +3, Headband of Intellect +4, Potion-Orb of Inflict Critical Wounds x2, Ring of Protection +3.



Navel Warrior CR 6

Male or Female Human Fighter 6

NE Medium Humanoid (Human)

Init: +6; **Senses:** Listen +2, Search +0, Spot +2

Aura: -

Languages: Ulyanese

AC: 17, touch 12, flat-footed 17; Dodge, Mobility

(+2 Dex, +4 armor, +3 shield)

hp 39 (6d10+6)

Saves: Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +4

Speed: 30 ft.

Melee: Shortspear +10 (1d6+4; 20/x2) or Dagger +9 (1d4+3; 19-20/x2)

Full Melee: Shortspear +10/+5 (1d6+4; 20/x2) or Dagger +9 (1d4+3; 19-20/x2)

Ranged: Shortspear +8 (1d6+3; Range 20 ft.; 20/x2) or Longbow +8 (1d8; Range 100 ft.; 20/x3)

Full Ranged: Shortspear +8 (1d6+3; Range 20 ft.; 20/x2) or Longbow +8 (1d8; Range 100 ft.; 20/x3)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +6/+1; **Grapple:** +9

Combat Options: Combat Reflexes, Cleave, Power Attack, Spring Attack

Combat Gear: Bone Shortspear +1, Bone Shortspear x4, Studded Leather Armor +1, Leather Heavy Shield +1, Longbow, Bone Arrows x20

Abilities: Str 16, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 8

SQ: -

Feats: Combat Reflexes, Cleave, Dodge ^B, Improved Initiative, Mobility ^B, Power Attack, Quick Draw ^B, Spring Attack ^B.

Skills: Climb +9, Craft (weaponsmithing) +6, Jump +9, Listen +2, Search +0, Spot +2.

Possessions: 5600cp or Combat gear plus: Cloak of Resistance +1.



Adventures in the Dead Lands

Nuubark Troll CR 13

Male or Female Troll Thinking Zombie Psi-Warrior 6

CE Large Undead (Augmented Giant, Psionic)

Init: +2; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft., Low-Light Vision, Scent; Listen +16, Search +4, Spot +16

Aura: -

Languages: Ulyanese, Ulyanese Giant

AC: 23; touch 11, flat-footed 21; Dodge, Mobility

(-1 size, +2 Dex, +9 Nat, +3 armor)

hp 90 (12 HD; 12d12+12)

Resistance: Cold 10, Electricity 10

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Vulnerability to Blessed Elements, **Vulnerability to Sunlight**

Saves: Fort +11, Ref +7, Will +10

Speed: 30 ft.

Melee: Claw +18 (1d8+11) or Bite +18 (1d8+11) or Touch +18 (by spell)

Full Melee: 2x Claw +18 (1d8+11) and Bite +13 (1d8+5)

Ranged: Ranged Touch +9 (by spell)

Space: 10 ft.; **Reach:** 10 ft.

Base Attack: +8/+3; **Grapple:** +23

Combat Options: **Ability Damage (DC 16, 1d6 Con dmg)**, Combat Reflexes (3/round), Disease (DC 16), Great Cleave, Power Attack, Psionic Meditation (Move action), Rend (3d6+16), Spring Attack.

Combat Gear: Studded Leather Armor

Psi-Warrior Powers (ML 6th, PP: 20, DC 15 + power level):

2nd: animal affinity, hustle, psionic lion's charge

1st: bite of the wolf, offensive precognition, thicken skin

Abilities: Str 32, Dex 14, Con --, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 10

SQ: Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60 ft., **Enhanced Ability (feat)**, Gray Toughness 1, Resistances, Scent, Skills, Undead Traits, Vulnerability to Blessed Elements, **Vulnerability to Sunlight**.

Feats: Cleave, Combat Reflexes^B, Dodge, Great Cleave, Mobility, Power Attack, Psionic Fist^B, Psionic Meditation^B.

Skills: Climb +11, Concentration +15, Jump +11, Knowledge (The Planes) +8, Listen +16, Search +4, Sense Motive +7, Spot +16.

Possessions: 5,600cp or Combat Gear plus: Belt of Giant's Strength +2, Psionic Tattoo of *Concealing Amorpha* x2, Vest of Resistance +1.

Rend (Ex): If a troll hits with both claw attacks, it latches onto the opponent's body and tears the flesh.

This attack automatically deals damage as a Claw attack 2 steps larger (1d8 → 2d6 → 3d6) plus 1.5x the Trolls's Str bonus.



Undead Warriors of Gretch CR 9

Male or Female Human Fallen Fighter 8

LE Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Psionic)

Init: +6; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft.; Listen +8, Search +7, Spot +13

Aura: Despair (10 ft range, DC 14 or Shaken)

Languages: Classic Dwarven, Ulyanese, Ulyanese Giant

AC: 23; touch 13, flat-footed 21; Dodge, Mobility

(+2 Dex, +6 Nat, +4 armor, +1 Def)

hp 68 (8 HD; 8d12+16)

Damage Reduction: 5/magic

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Code of Honor

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +5

Speed: 30 ft.

Melee: Greatclub +16 (1d10+9; 20/x2)

Full Melee: Greatclub +16/+11 (1d10+9; 20/x2)

Ranged: Javelin +10 (1d6+6; 30ft range; 20/x2)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +8/+3; **Grapple:** +16

Combat Options: **Blinding Touch (DC 14)**, **Curse**, Create Spawn, **Disease (DC 14)**, Great Cleave, **Paralysis (DC 14)**, Power Attack, Psionic Weapon (+2d6), Spring Attack

Combat Gear: Greatclub +1, Javelin x10, Studded Leather +1

Psi-Like Abilities: At will—call *weaponry**, *death knell*, *deathwatch*, *mindlink**; 1/day—recall *agony**. ML = HD. The save DCs are Charisma-based. *Power can be augmented.

Abilities: Str 22, Dex 14, Con --, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 10

SQ: Code of Honor, Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60 ft., Gray Toughness, Undead Traits.

Feats: Cleave^B, Dodge, Great Cleave, Improved Initiative^B, Mobility, Power Attack^B, Psionic Weapon, Spring Attack, Weapon Focus (Greatclub)^B, Weapon Specialization (Greatclub)^B.

Adventures in the Dead Lands

Skills: Climb +17, Intimidate +11, Jump +17, Listen +8, Knowledge (warcraft) +5, Search +7, Sense Motive +8, Spot +13.

Possessions: 9,400cp or Combat Gear plus: Cloak of Resistance +1, Crawling Tattoo of Energy Ray (ML 1st) x2, Gauntlets of Ogre Strength +2, Ring of Protection +1, Psionic Tattoo of Biofeedback (ML 3rd).

Blinding Touch (Su): The undead can make a touch attack as a standard action that doesn't provoke an attack of opportunity. The touch causes blindness in the victim for 2d4 rounds. A Fortitude save negates the effect.

Curse (Su): The undead can curse an individual when it is destroyed. As the final blow is made that kills the creature, the undead can curse its destroyer, as the *bestow curse* spell.

Disease (Su): The undead's natural attacks infect their victims with a disease. A creature dealt damage by the undead must make a Fortitude save or contract either filth fever (50%) or red ache (50%).

Paralysis (Su): Those hit by the undead's natural attacks must succeed on a Fortitude save or be paralyzed for 2d4 rounds.

Appendix 2: New Items

Mirror of the Ages

Major artifact

(from *Faces of the Dead Lands*, pg 446)

Not so much an artifact as a place of power, the *Mirror of the Ages* is a pool of water, 20' diameter and 3' deep, ringed by an octagonal line of gray-white coping stones. It has survived every defiler, vandal, and calamity visited upon the lands formerly known as Ulyan, and will likely outlast every living being on Athas. It is the sacred protectorate of the Brotherhood of the Mirror, and only they know how to use it.

The members of the Brotherhood do not know much about the origin of the *Mirror of the Ages*, or at least they are not willing to reveal such a secret. Built using an ancient combination of divine magic and psionics, it seems to draw upon both when the Brotherhood uses it.

The pool is known to have several powers:

- The first is visions of the past. Those who know the correct incantations can touch the water and gaze into the pool to be granted a powerful version of the past. This vision performs similarly to the spell *divination*, except that the *Mirror* only responds to questions concerning the past, and answers the user's questions with scenes of past events.
- The second power is the ability to travel into the past. If properly activated and set to a particular time in history, users need simply walk into the pool and submerge themselves to be transported

to the desired time. From this point, users will be connected to the pool by an effect similar to an astral tether (see the *astral projection* spell), and will have up to five days in which they can do what they wish in that time in the past. The effects of these actions upon the present (if any), or indeed if the traveler are truly in the past and not just some perfect facsimile thereof, is up to the DM.

- The third power is the ability to travel into the future. This functions similarly to the ability to travel into the past, but requires even more powerful and secretive rituals to activate it.

The *Mirror of the Ages* does have some limitations, however. It will not, under any circumstances, reveal information about itself or its history; any attempts to discover such information will reveal related but different and seemingly unhelpful information and scenes. Also, the *Mirror* can carry beings and equipment only so far back in time as the first appearance of psionics in the early Green Age – it cannot reach the Blue Age as psionics did not exist then.

Unfortunately, when the high priest of Nolak island disappeared, he took the knowledge of how to activate the *Mirror's* time travel powers with him. Whatever the command word or triggering item required, none of the current members of the Brotherhood seem to know it. Ancient records do indicate, however, that the high priest had an assistant, though their remains disappeared with the Shining Tide. The Brotherhood has spent king's ages desperately searching for this apprentice, hoping they also knew how to activate the *Mirror*...

Ring of Memory

(from *Faces of the Dead Lands*, pg 447)

A *ring of memory* is an ornate gold signet ring of ancient design which often features three onyx gemstones, two mounted on the sides and carved into the shape of skulls, and a third flat, oval-shaped stone on the top.

Light seems to reflect strangely across its surface, giving hints of images trapped within.

A *ring of memory* records and stores a memory that is up to one hour long. Once per day, the wearer can enter a trance-like state and experience the memory as if they were an incorporeal outside observer. They will not be able to physically interact with, converse with or alter the memory. If the observer strays too far from the sensory range of the original host, the details of the memory will fade quickly, as the clarity of the environment is dependent on what the original host was actually focusing on.

During this trance, the wearer is totally unaware of their real-world surroundings. However, suffering any damage will instantly break the trance.

The memory enclosed in the ring will remain there indefinitely. Although it can be replaced at will by another memory from the wearer, the former memory will be permanently erased. The memory stored must have either occurred within the past seven days at the



time of the recording, or the wearer can opt to record what they are currently experiencing.

As the memory is being stored within the *ring of memory*, the wearer can choose to erase this memory from their mind, making it impossible to recover, whether with psionics or magic.

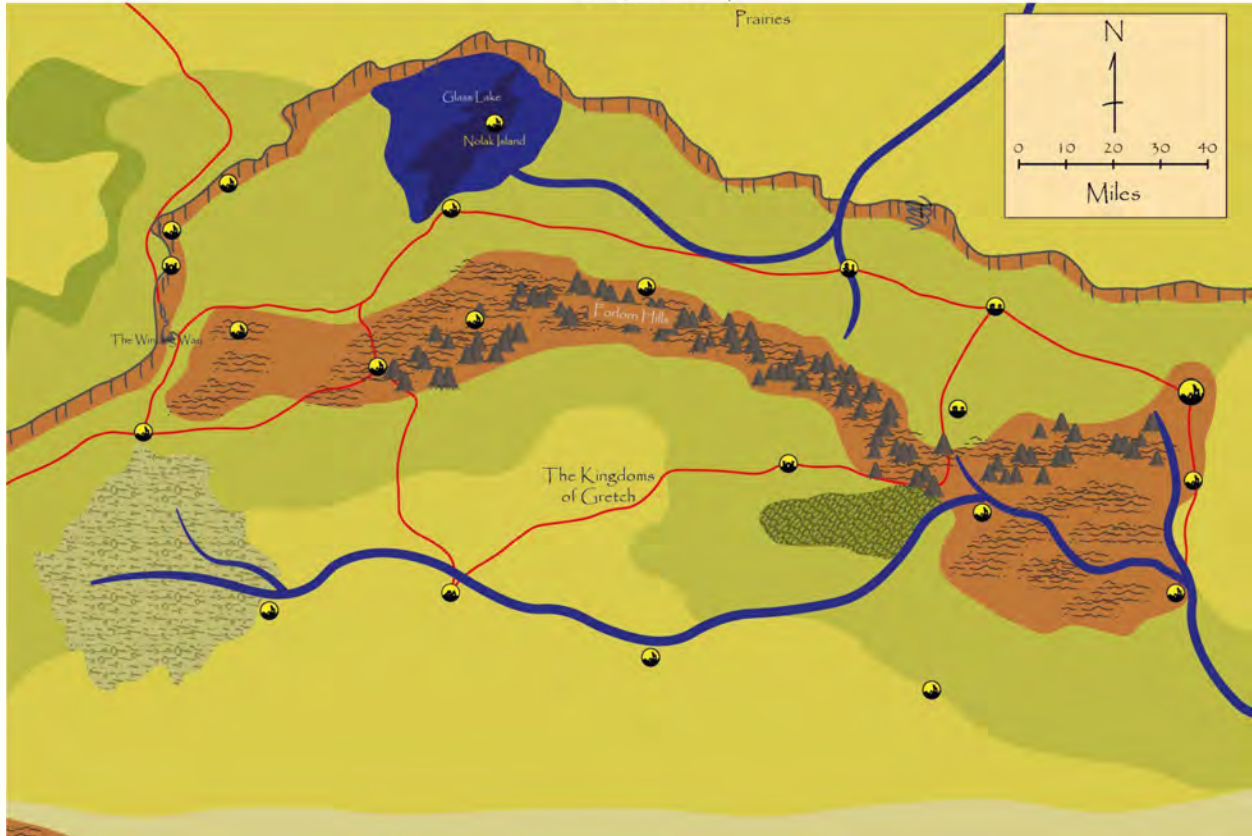
Moderate telepathy; ML 9th; Craft Universal Item, *mindprobe*; Price 9,000 cp.



Appendix 3: Maps

Ulyan In the Age of Magic

Players' Map



Deshentarium in the Age of Magic



Deshentarium in the Age of Magic - Area Descriptions

1. Ten-Towers Dome - Lawgiver's Palace or Council Hall
2. Amphitheater
3. Statue of Ancient Ulyanese Taynsh Chieftain
4. Chariot Stadium
5. Nuubark Gate
6. Bazaar
7. Arcane Lyceum (defiler school, basically satellite campus of the Navel, rebuilt post Obsidian Tide as the Necrologium)
8. The Defiler's Piss (Tavern)
9. Golden Horse Well (has a golden sygra/horse statue with fountain)
10. The Black-Gold Masquerade (theater/"diplomat" school)
11. The Elsavan Merchant (casino, just racist enough to keep its name after the Cleansing)
12. House of Dreams (brothel/theater)
13. Glass Lake Brewery (formerly Sparkling Gem, used to process booze out of the Sageocracy)

Adventures in the Dead Lands

14. Workhouse
15. Black Velvet, Gold Brocade ("clothing store", i.e. high class brothel, possible origin of undead Deshentarum fashion)
16. Temple of Elemental Water
17. Temple of Paraelemental Ice (Rain) (added late Age of Magic, during time of the Navel)
18. Temple of Elemental Air
19. Temple of Elemental Fire (repurposed then rebuilt by the Vizier as his Great Temple, he never liked Harkor or the Fire Cult)
20. Temple of Paraelemental Ash (Sun) (added late Age of Magic, during time of the Navel)
21. Temple of Elemental Earth
22. Temple of Paraelemental Magma (added late Age of Magic, during time of the Navel)
23. Remaan Great Pantheon Temple (wrecked in Cleansing, never rebuilt)
24. Temple of Paraelemental Ooze (Silt) (added late Age of Magic, during time of the Navel)
25. Deshent Gate
26. Deshent Bridge
27. Inner Eye Lodge (Tanysh wilder-focus psionic school, shared origins with the Musraafi Inner Eye Warriors)
28. Ehessos Gate
29. Warehouses
30. City-Side Docks
31. Ferry-Side Docks
32. The Gazing Navel (bar)



The One Has Risen



A Dark Sun 3.5e adventure module for four 18th-level characters

The unthinkable has finally happened: during a raid of a new corpse mine, Disciples forces encountered a newly released krag of unimaginable power. Dubbed 'The Chosen One', his presence has incited the Disciples into declaring another crusade to cleanse the face of their god - and they have set their sights on the City of a Thousand Dead.

Credits

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Introduction

The One Has Risen is a medium-length D&D adventure for four 18th-level player characters (PCs). Consult the Scaling the Adventure sidebar for ways to modify the scenario for higher or lower levels of play.

Forces of the Disciples, during a raid on a new corpse mine, have encountered a newly released magma krag of unimaginable power. Dubbed the 'Chosen One', the presence of this creature has incited the Disciples into declaring another crusade to cleanse the face of their obsidian god - and they have their sights set on the City of a Thousand Dead.

The PCs must either convince the Disciples to call off their destructive crusade or form a coalition of factions to repel the Disciples. Many options for possible alliance will present themselves, but each will carry a price...

Developer's notes

This probably proved the most difficult adventure to write of this entire book. The concept was not the problem—the political structures of the Dead Thrones and the Disciples are crying out for an intrigue adventure. The problem is how to make such an adventure that would actually be interesting for PCs. It took several tries to get the pacing and mechanics right, but again Adam is very good at what he does. -JM

Preparation

You (the DM) will need the 3rd edition revised D&D core rulebooks, including the *Player's Handbook*, the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*, as well as the *Expanded Psionics Handbook*. This adventure also uses material from *Faces of the Dead Lands*, *Secrets of the Dead Lands*, *Terrors of the Dead Lands* and the *Dark Sun 3.5 conversion* rulebook from Athas.org, but all necessary rules are already included.

Consult Appendix 4 for additional rules for communicating with the residents of, and surviving in, the Dead Lands.

Adventure Background

The furthest northwestern reaches of the Dead Lands are home to a unified group of undead who call themselves the Disciples. The Disciples are committed to the idea that the Obsidian Plain is not merely a home, but a living entity and, in fact, their god. Like any true believers, they are convinced of the rightness of their doctrine. While some Disciples are more doctrinaire than others, many will rigorously argue that there is only one true belief, that they hold it, and that they are destined to rule, protect, and keep the obsidian.

Having welcomed the Chosen One into the fold as a direct messenger from their Sleeping God himself and indoctrinated it into their faith, the Disciples are now being rallied by the Chosen One to launch another crusade against the City of a Thousand Dead. With the call to "Purge the blasphemers from the face of our god!", many undead have flocked to their banner.

The Chosen One is in fact a Deshenten agent. Conditioned to become a demagogue amongst the Disciples and sent to be found within a new corpse mine on the western Deshenten border, the Chosen One has been instructed to send a large crusade against the City of a Thousand Dead. If the crusade fails, the Disciples will be greatly weakened; if it succeeds, then the factions of the City of a Thousand Dead will be weakened. Either way, a rival power is weakened and Deshentu (and therefore the Vizier) wins.

Rebuilt atop the ruins of not just Nagavos', the metropolitan jewel of Ulyan, but also those of the Navel, Rajaat's planar research center that spawned the Obsidian Tide, the City of a Thousand Dead is a massive city of walls and bastions, moats and turrets, all fashioned of obsidian blocks carved right from the land beneath it. The City's weakness lies not in its fortifications, but in the factious nature of its inhabitants - the City is host to at least five powerful factions and numerous minor ones, all vying for control of the city and its inhabitants.

Overview

Recruited by Beryessaa (who the PCs may or may not already know from the adventure *The Emissary*), the PCs must stop the Chosen One's crusade against the City of a Thousand Dead but they may go about it in several different ways.

- The PCs could destroy the Chosen One either through outright assassination, or by convincing the Disciples leadership that their 'Chosen One' is not the messianic-figure they seem to be.
- They could convince one or more neighboring groups to invade the Disciples' lands, halting the crusade in favor of a war to defend their territory. Or the PCs could ally other forces against the Disciples, harrying enroute and possibly forcing them to halt the crusade.
- The PCs might 'simply' ally the forces of the City of a Thousand Dead and bolster their defenses to prepare for the crusade.

Ultimately, the crusade will likely require many different methods be used in concert to stop the Disciples' crusade before it ends in tragedy.

Skill Challenges

Throughout the adventure, the PCs will be meeting with various leaders and groups, and attempting them to take action against the Disciples' latest crusade. When they do so, the PCs may use a variety of tactics to make their case, with the process taking the form of a Skill Challenge.

Each Skill Challenge will last three (3) turns and require the PCs to achieve seven (7) successful checks in total to be completed successfully. While each Skill Challenge will follow the guidelines below, each will also feature special rules specific to the leader or group in question, which will be included in the Encounter in question.

Should the PCs fail a Skill Challenge (not achieve seven successes in three turns), they may reattempt the Skill Challenge, but all checks then suffer a -5 penalty (as it is difficult to have the same conversation with the same person a second time and achieve a different result).

DMs are encouraged to remind players that, as always, PCs are free to attempt an *Aid Another* action (DC 10) to grant an ally (another PC in this case) a +2 bonus on a check of the same type. As usual, a DM should consider granting a +2 bonus on any check for

extremely good play (excellent roleplay, a well formulated argument, cunning combat tactics, etc.).

Primary Checks: Primary Checks grant one (1) success in a Skill Challenge for each use and possible uses of them include:

- **Attack (vs AC 35)** - The PC attacks the target (but declining to deal damage), showing the PC's combat readiness.
- **Bluff (DC 35)** - The PC says suspected but unproven or outright fabricated statements.
- **Diplomacy (DC 35)** - The PC attempts to convince the target using flattery and kind words.
- **Intimidate (DC 35)** - The PC attempts to impress or threaten the target using their powerful and fearsome manner.
- **Knowledge (arcana) / Knowledge (psionics) (DC 35)** - The PC attempts to explain how using some spell, power, or other effect will be especially effective against the Disciples' crusade.
- **Knowledge (architecture and engineering) (DC 35)** - The PC attempts to explain how using some type of, changes to, or weakness in fortifications will be especially effective against the Disciples' crusade.
- **Knowledge (geography) (DC 35)** - The PC attempts to explain how using some particularity of the terrain will be especially effective against the Disciples' crusade.
- **Knowledge (history) (DC 35)** - The PC attempts to explain how past actions will affect the efforts against the Disciples' crusade (likely either pointing out the history of previous Disciples' crusades or past interactions between the target and the Disciples).
- **Knowledge (religion) (DC 35)** - The PC attempts to explain how the Disciples stated crusade goals line up with the standard tenants of the Disciples faith to convince the target.
- **Knowledge (the planes) (DC 35)** - The PC attempts to explain/clarify who or what the Disciples might actually worship (obsidian quasi-elementals) and the possible consequences of such aggressive promotion of the Disciples goals.
- **Knowledge (warcraft) (DC 35)** - The PC attempts to explain battle tactics that will be especially effective against the Disciples' crusade.

Secondary Checks: Secondary Checks do not grant successes in a Skill Challenge; instead, they grant a +5 bonus to the PC's next check for each use. Secondary Checks are easier to successfully perform than Primary Checks and possible uses of them include:

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- Autohypnosis (DC 28) - The PC memorizes the exact words and tone of the target, using the target's own words against them in the next check.
- Concentration (DC 28) - The PC calms and centers themselves, mentally preparing and perfectly timing their next check for maximum effect.
- Disguise (DC 28) - The PC attempts (before the skill challenge begins) take on the appearance of someone the target will respond favorably to.
- Forgery (DC 28) - The PCs fabricates (before the skill challenge begins) written documents (or psionic message stones, if they have access to the Knowledge - Psionic or Psicraft skills, or the Craft Universal Item feat) that substantiate some of their claims.
- Gather Information (DC 28) - The PC collects extra information (before the skill challenge begins) and uses it to inform their next check.
- Hide / Move Silently (DC 28) - The PC attempts to remain unnoticed (either before the skill challenge begins or by slipping out of sight) and getting the drop on the target, leaving them too surprised to properly respond to the PC's next check.
- Knowledge - Local (DC 28) - The PC attempts to use local feelings towards the Disciples to convince the target.
- Listen / Spot (DC 28) - The PC picks up on subtle clues and 'tells' that grant some small amount of help in making their next check.
- Perform (DC 28) - The PC attempts to entertain the target with a performance, using that appreciation to help make their next check.
- Sense Motive (DC 35) - The PC attempts to discern the target's true intentions or feelings, using that knowledge to help with their next check.
- Sleight of Hand (DC 28) - The PC attempts to either steal an important item from the target or hide a weapon, and then revealing said item to leave the target too surprised to properly respond to the PC's next check.
- Use Magic Device / Psionic Device (DC 28) - The PC attempts to activate one of the target's items or another PC's item, suggesting the PCs have unexpected capabilities.
- If the PCs were previously tasked with stopping Dregoth's emissary to the Dead Lands (see the adventure *The Emissary*), then they will be well known to Beryessaa and she will request they come personally.
- The PCs may be known in the Dead Lands as intrepid (or troublesome) mercenaries; if so, then Beryessaa will contact them based on referrals from her friends and allies.
- If PCs have never been to the Dead Lands the adventure could serve as an excellent introduction to the region, with Beryessaa simply contacting the PCs based solely on their reputation as powerful adventurers in the Tablelands.

Why a Skill Challenge?

Introduced in the 4th Edition of *Dungeons and Dragons*, Skill Challenges are a concise and well-organized way to handle diverse and potentially complicated encounters. Designed to accommodate and streamline non-combat encounters, Skill Challenges are an excellent way to prevent a single "face" character from being the only PC who can or does interact with NPCs in a social encounter (they're also a great way to prevent overuse of 'read aloud' text boxes).

The addition of Skill Challenges (to any edition of *Dungeons & Dragons*) promotes the engagement of all players during a non-combat encounter, rather than those playing socially orientated characters, and prevents bottlenecks in an adventure's plot, should a particular character or character archetype be missing (no Bard during a social encounter, no Ranger while traversing the desert wastes, etc.).

Skill Challenges are meant to enhance gameplay, not replace thoughtful choices on the part of the players or the DM's judgment. Using a psionic attack power on a city-state's guard captain or a command undead spell on the obstinate undead guardian of a tomb may still be a brilliant or foolhardy choice during a Skill Challenge, and still requires the DM's adjudication, as it always has.

Adventure Hooks

Beginning as it does with a message sent to the party, the adventure can begin while the PCs are nearly anywhere, but it is most likely for Beryessaa to have heard of them if they are or were previously active in the Dead Lands:

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Scaling the Adventure

The One Has Risen is designed for a party of four 18th-level adventurers, but it can be modified easily to present an appropriate challenge for parties of different sizes or levels.

Consider adapting the adventure for PCs of average levels 16 to 20 by adding effective positive or negative levels to the creatures in each encounter to change their effective **Challenge Rating**. A creature takes the following penalties/bonuses for each positive/negative level it has gained:

- +/-1 on all skill checks and ability checks.
- +/-1 on attack rolls and saving throws.
- +/-5 hit points.
- +/-1 effective level (whenever the creature's level is used in a die roll or calculation, reduce it by one for each negative level).
- If the creature casts spells, she gains/loses one spell slot of her highest-level spells. (If she has more than one spell at her highest level, she chooses which she gains/loses.) In addition, when she next prepares spells or regains spell slots, she gets one more/less spell slot at her highest spell level. If the creature is a manifester, she gains/loses enough power points to manifest her highest-level power once.

Part 1: A Call for Aid

The PCs receive a request for aid from Itinerant Beryessaa, a Disciples missionary who might be an old friend or a surprising ally to the PCs. Either way, the mission Beryessaa has for them will send the PCs on a whirlwind tour of the Dead Lands as they attempt to halt what could be an apocalyptic event.

1) The Missive (EL -)

Wherever they currently are, the PCs receive a surprising message. While described below to have been delivered in person by undead messenger, the missive could instead be delivered by spell, psionic power, or written note, depending on the particulars of the campaign and the PCs involved.

As you browse the wares of a merchant, while enjoying some much-deserved downtime between bouts of harrowing combat and desperate survival, you notice a small boy standing wordlessly near you. At first glance, he looks to be a common street urchin, but as you look more closely, the boy's pallor, cloudy eyes, and ill-concealed stab wound clearly indicate his status as an undead. He neither moves nor speaks while you look at him, standing eerily still until you approach him.

When you come near enough that there can be no mistake that you have noticed him, the boy's mouth opens widely and a low, clear, rasping female voice comes out *"Friends, I, Itinerant Beryessaa, have urgent news for you and would speak with you! Please meet me at Fort Owestra, on the southwestern border of Erthne, in two days' time, the fate of all of Athas is at stake!"*

With the final word, the undead boy's mouth clicks shut, he nods once to you, and he begins to walk away.

If the PCs attempt to stop the undead messenger, the boy complies, but seems entirely unintelligent. Magical or psionic research will reveal that he does not remember his past (living or undead), neither holds nor knows any clues as to who gave him the message to deliver and that he recently came from the Dead Lands.

Similar research will also indicate that Fort Owestra and Erthne are locations in the Dead Lands, the region of obsidian plains located far to the south of the Tablelands.

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Development: When the PCs make their way to the Dead Lands, proceed to Encounter #2 - A Meeting with Beryessaa.

2) A Meeting with Beryessaa (EL -)

The PCs meet or have a reunion with Itinerant Beryessaa (pictured below) at Fort Owestra, and learn of a threat to not just all of the Dead Lands, but to all life on Athas.

Fort Owestra is located on the southwestern border of Gretch's kingdom of Erthne, near the border with the kingdom of Nocwis.

Arriving in Fort Owestra in the Dead Lands, the settlement's small size makes it relatively easy to ask around and quickly locate Beryessaa - you are directed to a small square where an undead woman with a shaved head and gleaming purple-black flesh stands preaching to a small crowd of undead in her ancient and tattered, but finely made, black robes:

"Though the Sleeping God may have graced each of us with his blessings in different ways, we are all his Perfected ones and he loves us all! Soon he will awaken and sweep all his children into his warm embrace forever more!"

"Cease this pointless warring and embrace the peace of the Disciples; carve not at the face of the Sleeping God, but instead exist in harmony with His will!"

With that, the crowd of undead listeners disperses, some discussing the merits of the Disciples faith, some muttering about their obvious madness.

If this is the first meeting with Beryessaa for some or all of the PCs, read:

"Hello, I am Itinerant Beryessaa of the Disciples. Thank you for coming to meet me."

Whether this is a first meeting or a reunion with Beryessaa, read:

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"It is good that you have come. Events are quickly proceeding out of control and I fear for all of Athas if something is not done."

Beryessaa leads you off to the side, seemingly seeking a bit more privacy.

"I have heard that a krag of incredible power has recently been discovered during a raid by fellow Disciples - the blasphemers who carved at the face of the Sleeping God and stole his Perfected children called it a 'corpse mine'. This krag - a Perfected being of raw elemental Obsidian power - was immediately hailed as 'the Chosen One' by fanatics within our faith. These fanatics - known as the Sovereign Rising - believe that, rather than awaiting the coming of the Sleeping God in His own time, we must discover the source of the Obsidian Tide and find a way to repeat it, covering all the world in another, unending tide of Obsidian - what we call the Emergence."

"This 'Chosen One' has declared another crusade against the City of a Thousand Dead, bent on cleansing its blasphemy from the Black God's face. Even now, thousands of faithful Disciples prepare to march on that decadent city. I fear that, should the crusade go poorly for the Disciples, it will shatter our faith and numbers, just as our faithful will shatter upon the walls of that foul city."

"Should the crusade be successful, the Sovereign Rising will bring the Perfected of The City of a Thousand Dead - lost though they may be - only fire and death, rather than the peace and loving embrace of the Sleeping God. Worse yet, the fanatics of the Sovereign Rising believe they will find something to further the Emergence within The City of a Thousand Dead. Should they actually find what they are looking for in the City, the fanatics will surely attempt to wrap all the blessed Imperfects of Athas in His scalding obsidian embrace, subverting the will of the Sleeping God by doing so long before His plan dictates."

"You must stop this 'Chosen One' and his foolish crusade, if not for the Disciples, then for all the Dead Lands and, perhaps, all of Athas."

What Beryessaa knows

Should the PCs ask Beryessaa follow-up questions, she can tell them the following:

- Beryessaa herself is an Itinerant - a missionary - of the Disciples faith, tasked with reaching out to the various nations and fiefdoms of the Dead Lands and proselytizing to those denizens of the Dead Lands that have not yet embraced the faith of the Sleeping God.

- The Disciples have scattered faithful throughout the lands of blackglass (the Dead Lands), but most of them have long-since gathered in the northwestern corner of the Dead Lands to form their own nation - one dedicated to following the teachings of their faith.
- Krag are undead who were killed by and infused with raw (para)elemental power. Nearly all the krag in the Dead Lands are 'obsidian krag' infused with the might of the Sleeping God.
 - PCs well versed in the lore of the undead or the Elemental Planes (who make a DC 25 Knowledge (religion or the planes) check) know that krag are former clerics slain and reanimated by an element they hated. They also know that the Disciples are a variant of Paraelemental Magma clerics and 'obsidian krag' are likely just a regional variant of magma krag, though the Disciples are unlikely to admit it.
- The Sleeping God is how the Disciples refer to the being that called the Obsidian Tide down on Ulyan and created the Dead Lands. They believe its spirit infuses the obsidian of the Dead Lands and was responsible for reanimating all the Perfected beings here.
 - PCs well versed in the Dead Lands (who make a DC 25 Knowledge (local - The Dead Lands) or Knowledge (the planes) check) might realize that such beliefs are eerily similar to rumors about the so-called Great One that are spoken of within the Dead Lands.
- The Disciples refer to undead creatures as the Perfected, as they have been reborn in the Sleeping God's image. They refer to the living as Imperfects, as they still await the Sleeping God's touch. The Imperfects are, however, seen as doubly blessed by their god as only they can still procreate and further populate the world - increasing the ultimate number of Perfected when the Sleeping God returns.
- The Sovereign Rising is a splinter sect within the Disciples - sometimes greatly favored, sometimes barely tolerated, depending on changes to Disciples leadership. They believe that the Sleeping God's return must be triggered and are militantly fanatical about hastening that return by any means necessary.
- The Obsidian Tide has many names but refers to the explosion of pure paraelemental obsidian that created the Dead Lands, filling it with obsidian

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and creating all the undead that populate the Dead Lands.

- The City of a Thousand Dead is a great metropolis of undead in the eastern Dead Lands. Built of great blocks of obsidian and protected by high walls, it is populated by a diverse array of undead types and warring factions.
- The Disciples once led a crusade against The City of a Thousand Dead, but it was massively disastrous. Even mentioning it can enrage a Disciple (not the ever-patient Beryessaa, of course).
- The Chosen One is not just an obsidian krag, but has been especially blessed with the power of elemental obsidian and is quite wise in the ways of the Sleeping God, from whom it draws additional power.
 - Learned PCs might discern (with a DC 25 Knowledge (the planes or religion) check) that Beryessaa seems to be indicating that the Chosen One likely has the abilities of a magma krag, a half-magma paraelemental, and a cleric of Magma.
- The crusade will surely begin marching on The City of a Thousand Dead any day now, if they haven't already. It should take them about 8 days to arrive at The City.

Development: Though Beryessaa insists *something* must be done about the Chosen One's crusade, she is unsure of how to proceed, but she does have some initial ideas:

- If the Chosen One could be removed from the picture, either through political maneuvering or actual physical violence, cooler heads amongst the Disciples might prevail and stop the crusade before it ever reaches the City. (If the PCs investigate this option, go to Part 2: Assassination Plot, below).
- If the crusade cannot be stopped before it has begun, perhaps it could still be turned back. With the lands of the Disciples depopulated by the crusade, it would be easy enough for a neighboring power to threaten an invasion of Disciples' lands. If such a thing could be coordinated, then the crusade might falter as the faithful return to defend our lands. (If the PCs pursue this option, go to Part 3: Halting the Crusade, below).
- Our most troubling option, and perhaps our fallback option, is the successful defense of the

City of a Thousand Dead itself. Such an action would require an alliance of many of the City's factions, which is nearly unheard of outside of a bugdead invasion. (If the PCs follow-up this option, go to Part 4: The City of a Thousand Dead, below).

Any or all of these ideas might be worth trying, but Beryessaa leaves what they do up to the PCs.

3) Assassins (EL 18)

Disciples Nomad (CR 15) 1x - see Appendix 1

Disciples Warrior (CR 13) 4x - see Appendix 1

Throughout the adventure, each time the strength of the Disciples' crusade is adversely affected, the Sovereign Rising use divination spells and clairsentient powers to identify and locate the troublemakers (the PCs) and send an assassination squad to dissuade or eliminate them. Each time the Crusade Strength score (see Part 4B: Consequences for more details) drops to or below a multiple of four (20, 16, 12, 8, or 4; for example, if the Crusade Strength score were to drop from 21 to 19, or if it were to drop from 10 to 8, but not if the Crusade Strength score were to drop from 27 to 25, or from 24 to 21), a Disciples assassination squad is sent to attack the PCs.

Attacks by such assassination squads (perhaps carrying clues) may also be used at the DM's discretion to break up the main course of the adventure, should more action-orientated PCs or players need a change of pace. To keep the attacks feeling fresh and interesting, the assassins should strike at various locations and when the PCs least expect it. Maps of some example locations are included below.

With a cry of "For the Chosen One!" and a blast of lightning, a group of armed undead soldiers rush your current location.

Tactics: The Disciples assassins will attempt to get the drop on the party, teleporting to their position and attacking immediately. The warriors will rush towards the PCs and move to melee range, pausing only to avoid the nomad's area attacks.

The nomad will hang back, using area attack powers on the party when possible and otherwise supporting the warriors. While the nomad is willing to die to defeat the PCs if necessary, they've been informed that

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the warriors are disposable and are under orders to *teleport* away rather than being defeated or captured.

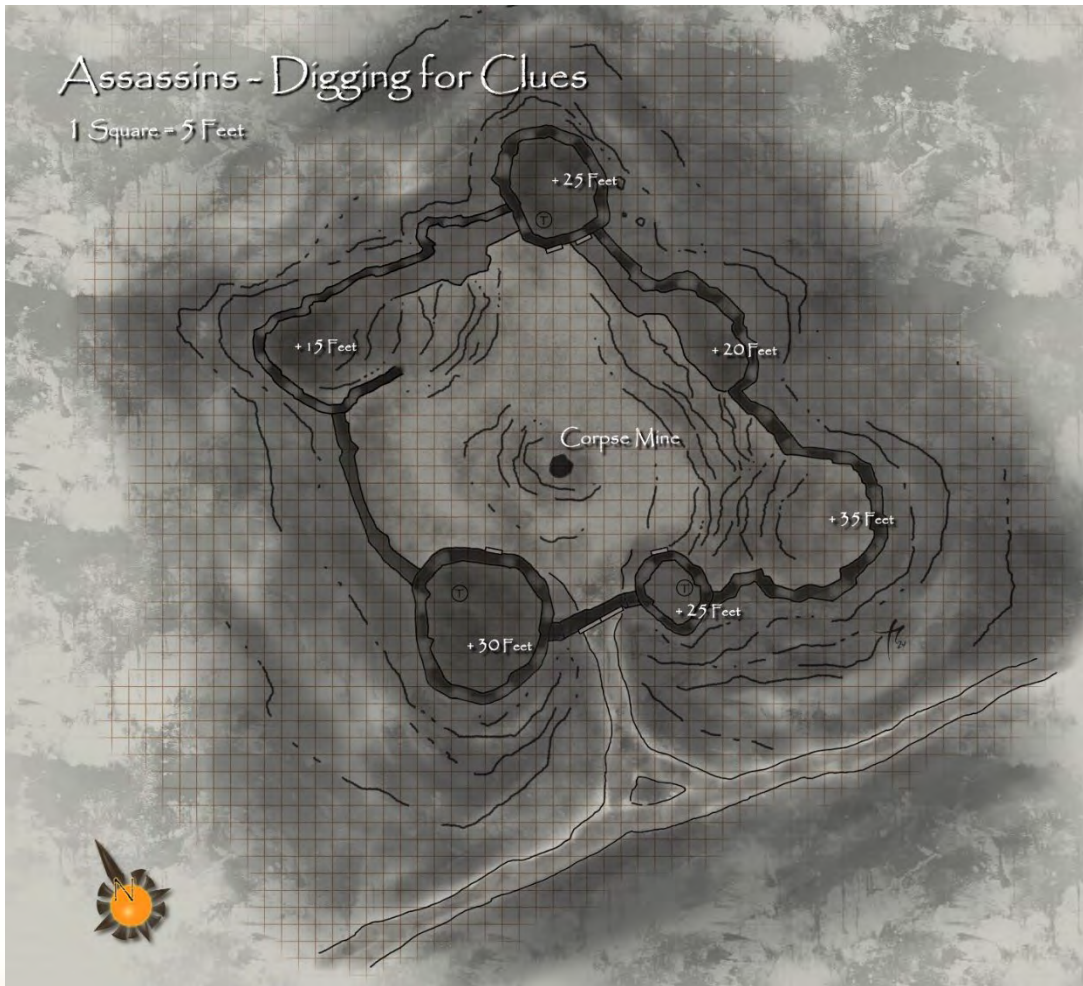
Development: Once the assassins are defeated, the PCs are free to continue with what they were doing. Further groups of assassins, however, will continue to

be sent to eliminate the party as the adventure continues.

The only way to prevent further assassination parties from being sent would be full countermeasures against divinations and clairsentience powers.



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Part 2: Assassination Plot

In an attempt to halt the Disciples' crusade, the PCs might try to remove the Chosen One from the Disciples' leadership, one way or the other.

A) Character Assassination

It may be possible to remove the Chosen One's influence by learning more about them and then showing the Chosen One to be a false prophet and discrediting them. This could cause an internal power struggle within the Disciples and cripple the crusade before it starts.

4) Who is the Chosen One, Anyway? (EL -)

If the PCs are to have any hope of discrediting the Chosen One, they will need information both about the Chosen One and where they came from. If the PCs inquire with the Disciples, the PCs can gain the following information after four (4) hours of asking around:

- *"The Chosen One? They've been sent from the Black God himself to usher in the Emergence!"*
- *"I heard the Chosen One was immediately welcomed with open arms after they clawed their way up out of the obsidian on their own."*
- *"Oh, I am twice-blessed by the Black God - I was there when our warriors paraded them back through my parish. What? Oh, they came from the east."*
- *"Hmm? Well, we found the Chosen One at a new wound on the face of our god. We chased those blasphemers away from their sacrilege and healed Their wounds - as They heal ours. It was a blessed day." (The Disciples chased off the miners and guards, collapsed the entrance to the corpse mine, and used their spells to melt the obsidian back to a smooth appearance.)*
- *"Yes, the Chosen One was found at a new corpse mine, located near the border between the Bone Lands and Deshentu."*

Development: With the above information, the PCs can head east to the Deshenten border to investigate the corpse mine where the Chosen One was found. If

they do so, proceed to Encounter #4 - Digging for Clues.

5) Digging for Clues (EL 19 or -)

Coldthorn - Champion of Deshentu (CR 17) 1x - see Appendix 1

Biftor - Deshenten Giant Skeleton Leader (CR 17) 1x - see Appendix 1

Deshenten Giant Skeleton Bombardier (CR 6) 6x - see Appendix 1

Deshenten Warrior Skeleton (CR 1/3) 40x - see Appendix 1

The PCs arrive at a new Deshenten corpse mine, located near the border of the Bone Lands, where they discover evidence that could discredit the Chosen One.

As you travel east, you see no visual indications that you are approaching the border between the Bone Lands (home to the so-called Musraaf's Chosen) and the nation of Deshentu. In fact, even when you arrive, you see nothing but a hastily constructed fort - built of rough blocks of obsidian - and a well-trod path running east from the fort across the blackglass.

When you get closer to the fort, one of the defenders calls out to you *"Leave now and we shall not slay you!"*

From where you stand, you can see some of the defenders are much taller than their fellows - likely undead giants.

Keen-eyed PCs (Spot check, DC 25) will note that many of the defenders on the battlements are doing quite a bit of mummering, shifting around, and clutching their weapons in a way that suggests (Sense Motive check, DC 15) that they are nervous.

The defender who called out is Coldthorn, a Champion of Deshentu and leader of the fort's defenders. If the PCs continue to approach the fort, the defenders will attack. However, as the fort is not yet complete, lies outside the protection of Deshentu's Killing Grounds, and the defenders have had some recent setbacks (such

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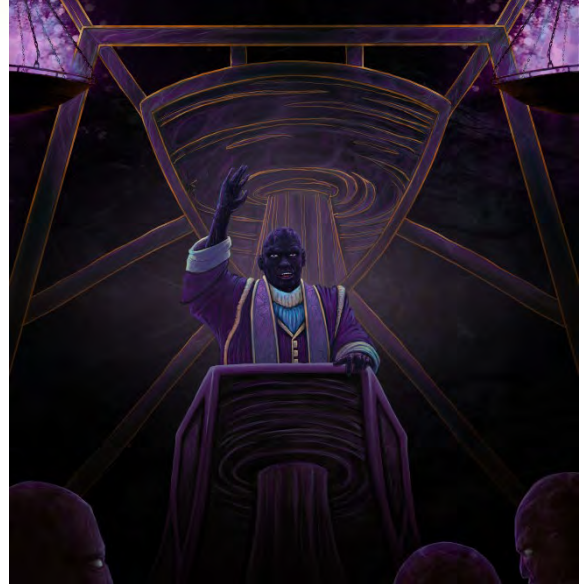
as the attack by the Disciples, for instance), Coldthorn will happily parley with the PCs if they reply to his hail with anything short of an attack, as he hopes to avoid conflict at least until he can assess the party's strength.

With some persuasion (Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate, DC 30), Coldthorn can be convinced to allow the PCs limited access to the fort and its inhabitants, but not the mine itself. Speaking to the fort's defenders and the miners takes four (4) hours, but the PCs can hear the following:

- *"Who's the Chosen One? Oh, some Disciples holy man - I wouldn't know anything about that. Some Disciples zealots did attack the fort a few weeks ago, though."*
- *"The Disciples? They hit us just as we were beginning the fort - the mine was only barely a shaft in the blackglass at that point. We were still carving blocks of obsidian out of the mineshaft to assemble the walls when they came howling out of the west, screaming about how we were carving at some god's face and all that."*
- *"Ugh, that Disciples attack put us two weeks behind schedule. Their warriors cut down most of our miners and defenders, and then their fool priests used spells to melt the blackglass - it flowed back down into the mineshaft and filled it back in. You'd never even have known we were ever here, blast it! We hadn't even pulled a single new corpse out of the obsidian yet."*
- *"The Disciples' Chosen One is a magma krag? Oh, you know I did see someone dripping with obsidian jump down into the mineshaft earlier that day. I thought it was the dangest thing, and I meant to report it, but I guess I forgot all about it after the attack happened; they had to reanimate me, you know..."*

Tactics: If the PCs end up attacking the fort, Coldthorn, Biftor, and the giant skeleton bombardiers defend the fort with their unives. Biftor and his bombardiers will stay behind the fort walls, lobbing boulders (really unfinished blocks meant for the fort walls) at the PCs. Coldthorn will engage the PCs in melee combat, but will wait to do so until either the PCs breach the fort walls (confronting them once inside the fort) or after all the giants have been eliminated (confronting the PCs outside the fort in this case).

If Coldthorn, Biftor, and the giant skeleton bombardiers are defeated, the rest of the fort's staff surrender to the PCs (as they are clearly outmatched) and answer any of the party's questions as if the PCs had parleyed.



Development: After learning the above information, the PCs should now know that the Deshentens had not yet recovered any corpses from the mine when the Disciples attacked and that the Chosen One climbed **into** the mine shaft before the Disciples arrived. This indicates the Chosen One was not recovered from beneath the obsidian at the Deshenten corpse mine as the Disciples believe, but instead that the Chosen One came from elsewhere in Deshentu. Despite this, the Chosen One has allowed the Disciples to believe they were from the corpse mine.

At this point, if the PCs choose to confront the Chosen One directly, proceed to Encounter #5 - Confronting the Chosen One. If the PCs instead choose to take their information to the Disciples' leaders, proceed to Encounter #6 - Persuading the Gleaming Tribunal.

6) Confronting the Chosen One (EL -)

If the PCs choose to confront the Chosen One (whether or not they have the information obtained from the Deshenten corpse mine), the Chosen One can be found preaching to the Disciples masses. If they think to ask her, Beryessaa can put the PCs in touch with a marabout she knows and trusts named Domenico who can help them locate the Chosen One. Additionally, due to the fervor and excitement over the Chosen One among the Disciples, simply asking around amongst the Disciples can easily lead the PCs to the Chosen One, as the Chosen One is quite the celebrity amongst the Disciples.

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Following the directions you received, you find a small gathering of Disciples huddled beneath a rather large, well-worn tent. The black tent seems to be made more of rips and holes than fabric, but the faithful undead huddle around and under the tent anyway. They seem to all be listening with rapt attention to the creature dipping with molten obsidian that stands in their midst.

"The Emergence is nearly upon us; now is the time to wipe clean the blasphemies of the unbelievers! It is the Black God's will that we end the sacrilege of the City of a Thousand Dead and restore the purity of our god's face!"

The PCs have found the Chosen One, proselytizing to a small crowd. If anyone stops to examine the crowd more closely (Spot check, DC 25), they see several zhen standing in the crowd, clearly more attentive to their surroundings than to the Chosen One - likely (Sense Motive check, DC 15) bodyguards. It takes four (4) hours for the Chosen One to stop proselytizing and acknowledge the PCs.

Speaking with the Chosen One

If the PCs speak with, debate with, or otherwise verbally confront the Chosen One, they respond with semi-random platitudes and doctrinal quotes:

- *"Such is the Black God's will - who are we to question His will?"*
- *"The Black God is neither to be mocked or defiled. I hope, for your sake, you do not intend to do either."*
- *"The Sleeping God's word is law. Joyous are those who follow his teachings."*
- *"Unbelievers must be shown the error of their ways. Their ignorance sullies the Black God's face."*
- *"Blessed are those who have been 'perfected' by the Sleeping God's touch. Doubly blessed are those perfected who believe."*

If the PCs confront the Chosen One with the information from the Deshenten mine (that the Deshentens had not yet recovered any corpses from the mine when the Disciples attacked and that the Chosen One crawled **into** the mine shaft before the Disciples arrived), the Chosen One is so surprised that they slip up:

- *"None of those miners know what they're talking about - the Vizir treats them so poorly that they're barely even sentient. Even if I **had** climbed down into that mine pit, it wouldn't make me a Deshenten sleeper agent!"*

Development: If the PCs choose to take the Chosen One and/or their information to the Disciples' leaders, proceed to Encounter #6 - Persuading the Gleaming Tribunal. If the PCs choose to attack the Chosen One or otherwise allow the confrontation to end in violence, proceed to Part 2B - Actual Assassination.

7) Persuading the Gleaming Tribunal (EL 31 or -)

Zhen Gleaming Tribunal Member (CR 27) 4x - see Appendix 1

At some point, the PCs may attempt to prevail upon the Disciples' leaders to halt the crusade. Sending word up the Disciples' ranks will take too much time, but a diplomatic overture from one of the other powers of the Dead Lands (such as Ahnthiyarka, one of the Dead Thrones, a faction from the City of a Thousand Dead, etc.) will get the PCs a quick response. Alternatively, Beryessaa's marabout contact, Domenico, can also get the PCs an audience with the leaders of the Disciples if the PCs think to ask. It takes four (4) hours for the Gleaming Tribunal's response to arrive.

After waiting for what seems like forever for a reply from the Disciples' leadership, as the crimson sun reaches its zenith, a zhen with gleaming, well-polished flesh approaches you.

"The Gleaming Tribunal has assented to granting you a brief audience. I am to take you to them; take my hands."

The PCs' audience with the Gleaming Tribunal (the leaders of the Disciples' faith) is contingent on the PCs allowing the nomad to *teleport* them. The location of the Gleaming Tribunal's meeting place (called the Gleaming Grotto) is a closely guarded secret and the location is warded against detection.

If the party refuses to go with the nomad, she simply shrugs, replies with *"As you wish."*, and walks away. The nomad waits nearby for 2 minutes before teleporting away to some other location (not the Gleaming Grotto).

If the PCs agree to go with the Disciples nomad, read:

Joining hands with the Disciples messenger, the world melts away for a moment before you find yourselves someplace else. At first, all you can see is

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darkness, but as your eyes adjust, you can make out a large, cavernous space.

Looking around, you can see that one wall of the large chamber rises at a diagonal angle from the floor, while the rest of the walls and ceiling appear to gently curve around in an almost bubble-like way. All of the walls and ceiling seem to be made of unworked obsidian and feature strange tendril-like projections. These projections glow with veins of crimson and purple light, making them look like perpetually dripping molten obsidian.

After a moment, you hear the shuffle of feet from the center of the chamber. Several zhen in black Disciples robes approach you. *“Greetings, children of the Black God. You wished to speak with us about His most holy servant, the Chosen One?”*

The chamber the PCs find themselves in is the Gleaming Grotto, the meeting place of the Gleaming Tribunal - the leaders of the Disciples’ faith. The obsidian that forms the diagonal wall is in fact a tumbled sheet of the first obsidian to encounter the Glass Sea when the Obsidian Tide struck. Similar to what happened in the Sagramog, this initial obsidian was cooled by the waters, forming giant slabs that were hurled aside with the next wave of obsidian. This

diagonal wall still abuts the Fouled Sea, allowing the Gleaming Tribunal to look out into the Fouled Sea and think upon their past, present, and future at once. The chamber and the strange projections are exactly what they look like - the grotto is a bubble of air that formed up against the tumbled slab of obsidian and projections were drips of molten obsidian that cooled in place, forming frozen drop-like stalactites. The glowing veins of light are a peculiar effect of the ceiling’s structure and sunlight shining through the obsidian from the surface above.

Skill Challenge Notes:

- Any - any checks that mention the information uncovered regarding the Chosen One’s origins (that the Deshentens had not yet recovered any corpses from the mine when the Disciples attacked or that the Chosen One was seen climbing **into** the mine shaft before the Disciples arrived) gain a +5 bonus for each piece of information, as they shake the Gleaming Tribunal’s faith in the Chosen One.
- Any - any checks that mention the slip-up by the Chosen One (mentioning the idea that they might be a Deshenten agent) gain a +10 bonus, as this is a deeply disturbing idea for the Gleaming Tribunal (Note that the PCs simply mentioning



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this possibility is not enough to gain the bonus. The bonus is only granted if the PCs mention that the Chosen One **personally** mentioned this possibility.)

- Attack - as the leaders of a generally peaceable faith, members of the Gleaming Tribunal do not appreciate such shows of force. Any attacks automatically fail.
- Knowledge (religion) - spending much of their spare time lost in esoteric discussions and dissections of doctrine, the Gleaming Tribunal members are especially appreciative of those who prove knowledgeable regarding the Disciples' doctrine. If a PC successfully makes a DC 40 (rather than the usual DC 35) Knowledge (religion) check, the Disciples leaders are extremely impressed, counting as two (2) successful checks.

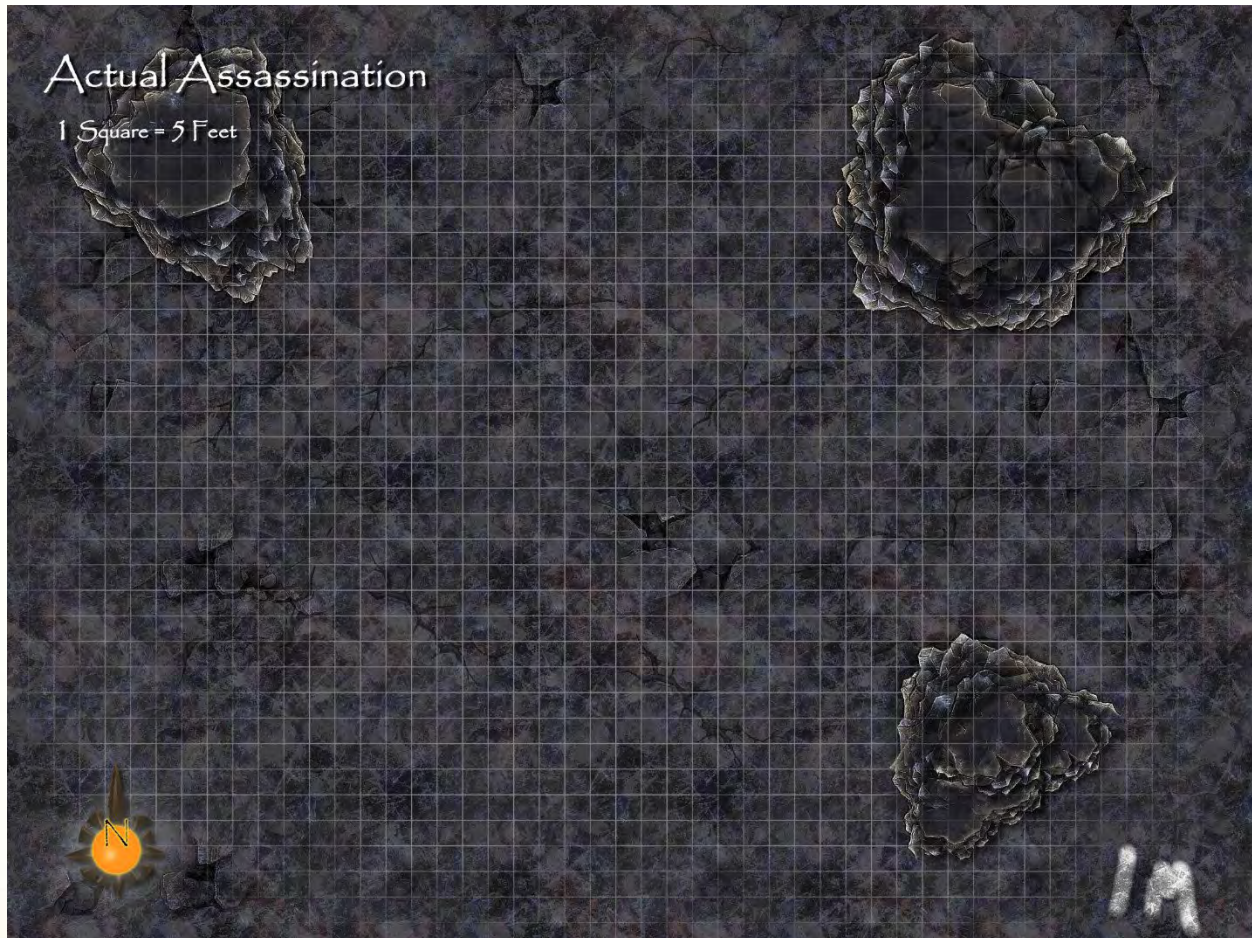
Development: If the PCs are successful with their Skill Challenge, the Gleaming Tribunal members admit that the Chosen One may not be who or what they thought. In light of this, while they cannot simply call a stop to

the crusade, the Gleaming Tribunal members do agree to stop actively supporting the crusade and move to curb the rhetoric of their more radical faithful. Refer to Part 4B: Consequences to determine how this affects the Disciples' crusade.

B) Actual Assassination

The Chosen One currently spends all of its time in the company of an honor guard, traveling between the Gleaming Grotto (where the Disciples' leaders - the Gleaming Tribunal - meet) and various Disciples parishes, preaching to the faithful about the glories of the Slumbering God that await them after the Emanation and decrying the horrors and evils of the City of a Thousand Dead.

The easiest and most logical place to attack the Chosen One would be in one of the many uninhabited expanses of obsidian that exist between the mobile Disciples



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parishes, but that might not be where the PCs initially encounter the Chosen One. Due to the fervor and excitement over the Chosen One among the Disciples, tracking down the Chosen One is as simple as asking - anyone within the Disciples' lands knows where they are headed next.

If the PCs choose to attack the Chosen One, the Chosen One can be found preaching to the Disciples masses. If they think to ask her, Beryessaa can put the PCs in touch with a marabout she knows and trusts, named Domenico, who can help them locate the Chosen One and can help them escape afterwards if needed.

8) The Chosen One (EL 19)

The Chosen One (CR 18) 1x

Disciples Honor Guard (CR 13) 4x

At the insistence of the Gleaming Tribunal, the Chosen One never travels anywhere without an honor guard of Disciples warriors. If the PCs immediately attack the Chosen One after speaking with them (see Encounter #5 - Confronting the Chosen One), then the battle might begin in the midst of a parish of Disciples. If the PCs attack the Chosen One on the open obsidian, read:

Walking across the featureless and smooth obsidian here is a nearly fleshless skeletal creature dripping

with molten obsidian and four well-armed and tough-looking zhen: the Chosen One and their bodyguards. If you truly intend to strike the Chosen One down, this would be the place to do it - no one else is around and there is nowhere for them to run.

Tactics: Once combat begins, the Chosen One will attempt to stay out of melee and use their ranged spell-like and psi-like abilities on their attackers, only resorting to melee combat if their spells and power seem ineffective.

The honor guards will close to melee range with any attackers, happy to give their unives to defend the Chosen One.

Development: If the PCs successfully assassinate the Chosen One, it significantly weakens the Disciples' crusade. Also, if the PCs search the Chosen One's body, they find a psionically empowered stone (a *psionic sending stone* - see Appendix #2) that divinations or clairsentient powers can reveal to be linked to a mated stone in Deshentu.

If the PCs attempt to eliminate the Chosen One, but fail to do so successfully, news of the attempted assassination spreads quickly and only serves to draw more of the Disciples to the crusade. Refer to Part 4B: Consequences to determine how these actions affect the Disciples' crusade.

Part 3: Halting the Crusade

In an attempt to turn back the Disciples' crusade, the PCs might try to convince a neighboring power to invade the Disciples' lands, hopefully causing the crusade to fall back to defend their territory.

A) The Bone Lands

Constantly warring tribes of brutal warriors that dwell in the lands to the east of the Disciples, Musraaf's Chosen of the Bone Lands are a natural choice of groups to invade the Disciples.

9) Musraafi Commander (EL 18 or -)

Musraaf's Chosen Cavalry Commander (CR 18) 1x - see Appendix 1

No matter the clan (or clans) contacted, the Musraafi warlords are all "too busy" to speak with the PCs, so the party ends up dealing with a commander of the clan. Each of the commanders is mechanically similar but each differs slightly in personality, style of dress, etc depending on clan. It takes four (4) hours to manage to speak with a Musraafi commander.

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- Aisha of clan Rasiim, representing Khasti Rasiim, a fierce and proud warrior
- Zahid of clan Asiim, representing Bael Asiim, a hedonistic but cunning warrior
- Sher of clan Achhed, representing Tatia Achhed, a canny negotiator
- Hasib of clan Achhed, representing Inbed Achhed, a fiery warrior, prone to fits of rage
- Gohar of clan Shalil, representing Hazzi Shalil, a thoughtful psychic warrior and brilliant tactician

The Musraafi commander will, each in their own way, ask or tell the PCs the following:

- *"Who are you, what do you want?"*
- *"The warlord is busy, too busy for you, you can speak with me."*
- *"Invade the Disciples' lands, how would we do that? We are mighty, but they are so many and have powerful priests."*
- *"A crusade, how do you know of this? You don't look like a Disciple."*
- *"What do we care for the City of a Thousand Dead? What's in it for us?"*

Skill Challenge Notes:

The Musraafi respect confidence and displays of strength, and they are impatient with anything they see as weakness. Though they are eager for victories in battle, even the most war-mongering of Musraaf's Chosen recognize that the Disciples are far more numerous and their great numbers of spellcasters and manifesters could prove troublesome. Similarly, the Musraafi have no love for The City of a Thousand Dead.

- Any - all checks gain a +2 bonus, as the Musraafi are eager for an excuse to invade their neighbors.
- Attack - as members of a group now concerned almost exclusively with warfare the Musraafi commanders respond well to being challenged to ritual combat. If a PC successfully makes an attack against AC 40 (rather than the usual AC 35), the Musraafi commander is extremely impressed, counting as two (2) successful checks.
- Knowledge (any but warcraft) - more doers than thinkers, do not appreciate such explanations unless they involve battle tactics. All Knowledge checks but Knowledge (warcraft) automatically fail against all Musraafi commanders, except the one representing Hazzi Shalil; the Hazzi Shalil's representative finds Knowledge (psionics) and Knowledge (warcraft) checks acceptable.

- If the PCs fail their Skill Challenge, the Musraafi commander becomes offended and immediately attacks the party. If the commander is defeated, the PCs are free to seek out another Musraafi commander and try again. Subsequent commanders will have heard of the PCs' battle with their comrade and, impressed with their prowess, will be eager to meet with them (the second Skill Challenge does not suffer the standard -5 penalty to all checks).

Development: If the PCs have arrived at the lands of the Musraaf's Chosen before the crusade has reached the City of a Thousand Dead and if they are successful with their Skill Challenge(s), one or more factions of the Musraaf's Chosen immediately invade the lands of the Disciples. Refer to Part 4B: Consequences to determine how this affects the Disciples' crusade.

B) The Shale Lands

Powerful and inexplicable, Ahnthyarka often leads campaigns of brutality and destruction against the humanoid undead nations. Ruling far to the south of the lands of the Disciples, Ahnthyarka might be willing to invade the Disciples.

10) Shale Lands Patrol (EL 18 or -)

Onesight Glasschipper (CR 15) 1x - see Appendix 1

Advanced Chitin Golem (CR 13) 2x - see Appendix 1

Scarlet Warden (CR 12) 2x - see Appendix 1

Wezer Storm (CR 8) 4x - see Appendix 1

Onesight is an undead pterran of the Obsidian Claws and one of Ahnthyarka's precious humanoid namechs. Leading patrol of bugdead, Onesight can lead the party back to Ahnthyarka for a conversation if captured or convinced to listen to reason (Diplomacy check, DC 35) before the patrol attacks.

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Traveling through the Shale Lands, you see a group of bugdead moving towards you.

When the PCs start close the distance (or *scry/remove view* the bugdead), read:

The group of undead insectoids moving towards you seems to be made up of two distinct groups. The first is a mixed group moving on foot, including deep-red creatures with whip-like antennae suttling along on multiple legs, several monstrous creatures vaguely shaped like men with a single savage-looking pincer, and what appears to be an undead reptilian humanoid. The second group is a vast cloud of man-sized insects, flying in a swarm just above the land-bound group. They all seem to be headed in your direction.

Tactics: The patrol will attack as soon as they are close enough. Onesight orders the chitin golems to close to melee range with the PCs and attacks with his bow, only switching to his claws if attacked in melee. The scarlet wardens will provide spellcasting support with their spells while the wezer mobs move to swarm the PCs.

Development: If convinced to parley, Onesight can take the party to speak with Ahnthyarka. If not, the PCs are free to seek out Ahnthyarka for an audience after the patrol is defeated.

11) An Audience with Ahnthyarka (EL 27 or -)

Ahnthyarka (CR 27) 1x - see Appendix 1

No bugdead will confront the party as they travel to the Great Mound. Content to not waste any further bugdead on them and simply speak with the PCs themselves, Ahnthyarka has ordered its legions to allow the PCs to pass. No matter the travel method used, it takes twelve (12) hours to travel to and gain an audience with Ahnthyarka.

As you travel closer to the center of the Shale Lands, you can see the Great Mound in the distance. Easily far more massive than the other mounds, it rises from the obsidian plain like a massive castle. The base of the mound is composed of six spokes radiating out from a central shaft, above which it extends up into

the green-tinted sky like a bizarre obsidian sculpture. It twists and curves seemingly at random, defying both gravity and logic. The base is 300 yards wide from end to end and the highest towers jut more than 500 yards into the air.

When the PCs enter the mound, read:

As you proceed into one of the Great Mound's entrances, you see one of the scarlet-colored creatures standing just inside the opening, as if waiting for you. Rather than attack, it simply turns and slowly moves deeper into the mound, pausing briefly to see if you follow.

Assuming the PCs follow the scarlet warden:

The bugdead creature leads you deeper into the obsidian mound to a massive chamber. There you are brought before an oversized scarlet bugdead with a palpable air of majesty. Enormous and crab-like, this must be Ahnthyarka.

Skill Challenge Notes:

Ahnthyarka does not need an excuse to attack the humanoid undead. The PCs will simply need to convince Ahnthyarka that attacking in this particular place at this particular time will be easy or do the most immediate damage.

- Any - any checks that mention the possible supremacy of humanoid undead in the Dead Lands, the eventual elimination of all bugdead, or



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a repetition of the Obsidian Tide gain a +5 bonus, as they play on Ahnthyarka's worst fears.

- Any - If the PCs avoided destroying the Onesight the namech, Ahnthyarka is appreciative (good help is so hard to find) and much easier to convince, granting a +2 bonus on all checks.
- Bluff - Ahnthyarka is quite knowledgeable and has little time for fools or liars. Any Bluff checks made against Ahnthyarka automatically fail.

Development: If the PCs have arrived at the Shale Lands before the crusade has reached the City of a Thousand Dead and the PCs succeed at the Skill Challenge, Ahnthyarka begins to mobilize their forces immediately and leads a charge deep into Disciples territory soon after. Refer to Part 4B: Consequences to determine how this affects the Disciples' crusade.

C) The Dead Thrones

Located between the lands of the Disciples and the City of a Thousand Dead, and possessed of large standing armies, the undead kingdoms of Deshentu, Shadowmourn and Harkor might make excellent allies in the effort to slow or even stop the Disciples' crusade against the City.

12) Dead Nationalist (EL -)

No matter the nation contacted, the Dead Lords are all "too busy" to speak with the PCs, so the party ends up dealing with a lieutenant. Each of the lieutenants is mechanically similar but each differs slightly in personality, style of dress, etc depending on nation. It takes four (4) hours to be granted an appointment with a lieutenant of the Dead Lords.

- Hirlish, representing Deshentu, a passionate and blunt human field commander
- Jarzir Zirnyami, representing Shadowmourn, a resourceful and manipulative necromancer
- Sendit, representing Harkorl, a blindly obedient and judgmental devotee

Each of the lieutenants will, in their own way, ask or tell the PCs the following:

- *"Who are you, what do you want?"*
- *"My Lord is busy, too busy for you, you can speak with me."*
- *"A crusade, how do you know of this? You don't look like a Disciple."*
- *"Stop the Disciples from passing by our lands, why would we do that? Our nation is mighty and our troops unmatched, but if they mean to pass us by, why oppose them?"*
- *"What do we care about the City of a Thousand Dead? What's in it for us?"*

Skill Challenge Notes:

The PCs need to clearly indicate a connection between the Disciples' crusade and a threat to the interests of the Dead Thrones if they hope to successfully persuade them.

- Any - any checks that mention the sovereignty of the nations of the Dead Lords gain a +2 bonus, as they play to the nationalistic pride of the lieutenant.
- Any - any checks that mention that the PCs have or intend to speak to other nations of the Dead Lords take a -2 penalty, as the nations have no interest in working together.
- Attack, Hide/Move Silently, Sleight of Hand, Use Magic/Psionic Device - used to a "civilized" culture, the lieutenant finds these attempts to be extremely uncouth. These checks made against a lieutenant automatically fail.

Development: If the PCs have arrived at the nations of the Dead Lords before the crusade has passed by and if they are successful with their Skill Challenge(s), one or more of the nations harries the Disciples as the crusade passes. Refer to Part 4B: Consequences to determine how this affects the Disciples' crusade.

Part 4: The City of a Thousand Dead

Central to the history and culture of the Dead Lands, the City of a Thousand Dead is the target of the Disciples' crusade.

A) Defending the City

Dwelling in the City of a Thousand Dead and heavily militarized due to the numerous bugdead assaults made against the City, the factions of the City of a Thousand Dead will need to take measures to defend their city if they are to weather or even stop the Disciples' crusade against the City.

13) Faction Flunkie (EL 18 or -)

Faction Flunkie (CR 18) 1x - see Appendix 1

No matter the faction contacted, the leaders are all too busy to deal with the PCs, so the party ends up dealing with a mid-level lieutenant of the faction. It takes eight (8) hours to meet with a faction lieutenant. Each of the lieutenants is effectively identical (for the purposes of this encounter) but each differs slightly in personality, style of dress, etc depending on faction. Example lieutenants include:

- Sielu, representing Rajaan's Fugitives, a proud and uppity elf
- Seor-Zireu, representing the Descendants of the Chosen, a frustrated former scholar
- Laslynn Glubrank, representing the Defenders, a painfully critical dwarf
- Sergeant Chorna, representing the Champions' Daughters, a morose and brutal taskmaster
- Gladan Rog, representing the Hungry Ghosts, a shifty and conniving diviner
- Denrac Zedurka, representing Volldrager, a canny former merchant

Each faction lieutenant will, in their own way, ask or tell the PCs the following:

- *"Who are you, what do you want?"*
- *"Our leadership is busy, too busy for you; you can speak with me."*
- *"A crusade, how do you know of this? You don't look like a Disciple."*

- *"Ally with the other factions of the City of a Thousand Dead? Ha! Only an invasion of the bugdead can bring the factions together for mutual defense..."*

Skill Challenge Notes:

While in theory it should be easy to convince the factions of the City of a Thousand Dead to defend the City once the PCs prove that the Disciples' crusade is coming, getting the feuding factions of the City to work together will be anything but.

- Any - all checks take a -2 penalty, as the factions of the City of a Thousand Dead are deeply divided, only working together under the threat of a bugdead attack.
- Attack - as former scholars, the faction flunkies, while capable combatants, do not appreciate being physically attacked. Any attacks automatically fail.
- Knowledge (any) - as former scholars, faction flunkies are happy to accept such explanations, granting all Knowledge checks a +2 bonus.

Development: If the PCs have arrived at the City of a Thousand Dead before the crusade has reached it and if they are successful with their Skill Challenge(s), one or more of the City's factions will mobilize to its defense. Refer to Part 4B: Consequences to determine how this affects the Disciples' crusade.

B) Consequences

The actions the PCs undertook and the success of those actions determine the scale of the Disciples' crusade against the City of a Thousand Dead and may have halted it completely. This is determined by comparing the Sovereign Rising Strength and Crusade Defense scores, as below.

Note: do not indicate to the players or PCs the value of either the Crusade Strength or Crusade Defense scores at any time. Rather, allow them to discover the successfulness of their efforts when the crusade reaches the gates of the City of a Thousand Dead.

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Crusade Strength Score

The Crusade Strength score is a representation of how effective the Chosen One and his supporters (largely among the Sovereign Rising) have been in their efforts to rally the Disciples to their crusade. The Crusade Strength score begins at 24 and is affected by the following:

- For every day that passes while the Chosen One is still rallying the Disciples, add +1 to the Crusade Strength score. (to a maximum of +8)
- If the PCs successfully discredited the Chosen One (see Part 2A: Character Assassination) amongst the Disciples, subtract -8 from the Crusade Strength score.
- If the PCs successfully assassinated the Chosen One (see Part 2B: Actual Assassination), subtract -6 from the Crusade Strength score.
- If the PCs' assassination attempt on the Chosen One is unsuccessful (see Part 2B: Actual Assassination), add +4 to the Crusade Strength score.
- For each clan of Musraaf's Chosen that the PCs convince to invade the lands of the Disciples (see Part 3A: The Bone Lands), subtract -2 from the Crusade Strength score (maximum of -10).
- If the PCs successfully convinced Ahnthiyarka to invade the lands of the Disciples (see Part 3B: The Shale Lands), subtract -6 from the Crusade Strength score.
- For each of the below undead nations the PCs successfully convinced to harry the Disciples as they pass through its territory (see Part 3C: The Dead Thones), subtract -2 from the Crusade Strength score. (to a maximum of -6)
 - Deshentu
 - Shadowmourn
 - Harkor

The Crusade Strength score can never drop below 0 (meaning only a handful of fanatics make the journey). Any reduction which would make the Sovereign Rising Strength score negative instead reduces it to 0.

Each time the Crusade Strength score drops to or below a multiple of four (20, 16, 12, 8, or 4; for example, if the Crusade Strength score were to drop from 21 to 19, or if it were to drop from 10 to 8, but not if the Crusade Strength score were to drop from 27 to 25, or from 24 to 21), a Disciples assassination squad is sent to attack the PCs (see Encounter #2 - Assassins for more details).

The number is a measure of how many Disciples eventually march on the City of a Thousand Dead in the crusade (the size of their 'army'). Multiply the Crusade Strength score by 50 to determine how many Disciples ultimately arrive as part of the crusade (i.e., a Crusade Strength score of 20 indicates 1000 Disciples, while a Crusade Strength score of 8 indicates 400 Disciples).

Crusade Defense Score

The Crusade Defense score measures the preparedness of the City of a Thousand Dead to turn away the Disciples' assault. If the Defense score is greater than the Sovereign Rising Strength score, then the odds are in the City's favor; if it is less, then it is all but guaranteed that the City will be breached.

The Crusade Defense score begins at 0 and can be increased by convincing factions to help defend the City (remember, the PCs will only have 8 days to achieve as many of these as they can).

For each of the following groups or leaders that the PCs successfully convinced to prepare for the Disciples' crusade (see Part 4A: Defending the City), add the appropriate value to the Crusade Defense score.

- Rajaan's Fugitives; +4
- Defenders; +4
- Champion's Daughters; +4
- Hungry Ghosts; +4
- Volldrager; +2
- The Undying Guardians; +2
- Guinswai the Forbidding; +2
- Each Descendants of the Chosen faction (maximum of +10); +2

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Difference (CD - CS)	Crusade Result	Consequences
-6 or lower	Total Failure	The Disciples' crusade proceeds as expected, and they reach the City of a Thousand Dead largely unopposed, with the PCs' efforts having had little discernible effect on it. They breach the walls and do massive amounts of damage, only to be stopped by drastic interventions.
-5 to -1	Failure	The Disciples' crusade is weaker than expected. The PCs' efforts have had a noticeable effect on it, but the crusade still reaches the City of a Thousand Dead, manages to breach the walls, and does significant damage before it is stopped.
0 to +5	Partial Success	The Disciples' crusade has been significantly weakened by the PCs' efforts. The crusade fails to breach the walls of the City of a Thousand Dead and is successfully defeated.
+6 or greater (or if the CS score is 0)	Complete Success	The Disciples' crusade is completely dismantled. A small number of fanatical Disciples reach the City of a Thousand Dead, but they are quickly turned away.

Comparing the Values

Subtract the Crusade Strength (CS) score from the Crusade Defense (CD) score, and consult the chart on above. Based on the listed result, read the matching section below.

Total Failure

The Disciples' crusade crashes against the walls of the City of a Thousand Dead as a complete surprise. The Disciples breach the city walls and casualties on both sides are extremely high. The PCs are expected to help defend the City (see The Crusade, below) and are seen as pariahs throughout the Dead Lands if they do not.

While the Disciples are ultimately turned away, relationships are shattered throughout the Dead Lands. The Disciples are seen as dangerous zealots and turned away or attacked whenever they venture from their lands. Relations between the City of a Thousand Dead and the other powers of the Dead Lands sour as blame and recriminations fly.

Within the City of a Thousand Dead, many buildings are reduced to rubble, and tensions quickly rise - the defense against the crusade went poorly enough that use of the Sunflash (a devastating weapon normally only used to defend the City from the bugdead) was briefly considered and while the idea was ultimately rejected, many are deeply disturbed that their fellows

could even consider setting such an 'ultimate weapon' against fellow humanoid undead. Within and without, the factions quickly fall to infighting, leaving the City dangerously unprotected should another invasion occur.

Failure

The Disciples' crusade breaches the walls of the City of a Thousand Dead but its arrival was expected and while there are many casualties on both sides, the losses could have been much worse. The PCs are expected to help defend the City (see The Crusade, below) and are seen as pariahs throughout the Dead Lands if they do not.

While the Disciples are ultimately turned away, relationships are strained nearly to the breaking point throughout the Dead Lands. The Disciples are seen as dangerous zealots and turned away when they visit other lands. Relations between the City of a Thousand Dead and the other powers of the Dead Lands are tense as conversations about 'what could have been done differently' turn quickly into bitter arguments.

Within the City of a Thousand Dead, the inhabitants are restless - there was much damage done and the defense against the crusade could have gone much better, leaving many factions reeling. Alliances shift and tensions rise as members of the factions jockey against each other amidst a massive recruitment and reanimation drive.

Partial Success

The Disciples' crusade surges against the walls of the City of a Thousand Dead but it is small and expected - structural damage is minimal and casualties on both sides are low. The PCs' assistance in defending the City (see *The Crusade*, below) is appreciated but not demanded, as the PCs are seen as already having done much to aid the City of a Thousand Dead.

While the Disciples are generally unwilling to speak of the crusade, they are still relatively welcome throughout the Dead Lands, with the crusade being seen as the work of zealots and firebrands and not supported by the Disciples at large. Relations between the City of a Thousand Dead and the other powers of the Dead Lands remain unchanged.

Within the City of a Thousand Dead, relationships remain as they were - another day survived, another invasion halted. Among those in the know, the PCs are hailed as heroes and are highly sought after by various factions as allies.

Complete Success

The Disciples' crusade barely even reaches the walls of the City of a Thousand Dead and casualties on both sides are almost non-existent. The PCs are hailed as heroes and their help in defending the City (see *The Crusade*, below) is seen as more honorary than necessary.

The Disciples' leadership decries the attack and the Disciples actually grow more welcome throughout the Dead Lands as the actions of their more dangerous and zealous members are publicly denounced. Relations between the City of a Thousand Dead and the other powers of the Dead Lands grow stronger as mutual defense pacts beyond the Bugdead Accords are considered.

Within the City of a Thousand Dead, tensions slowly subside - the defense against the crusade went extremely well and the phrase "cooperation for our mutual defense" falls from undead lips for quite a while. The factions of the City still jockey amongst themselves, but do so more through the use of words and influence than of blades and spells, at least for a time.

C) The Crusade

On the expected day of the crusade's arrival, the PCs should not yet know the results of their efforts to halt or defend against the Disciples' crusade. Eventually, however, the crusade arrives and PCs discover just how effective their efforts have been - one way or another.

As indicated above (see Part 4B - Consequences), the PCs are expected to man the walls of the City of a Thousand Dead (presumably along the outermost wall at the western gate) when the Disciples' crusade arrives, though their expected role will vary, depending on the successfulness of the PCs' efforts.

14) The Crusade (EL 18 or 20)

Disciples Priest (CR 15) 1x - see Appendix 1

Disciples Warrior (CR 13) 4x - see Appendix 1

or

Disciples Priest (CR 15) 2x - see Appendix 1

Disciples Warrior (CR 13) 8x - see Appendix 1

As the Disciples' crusade reaches the City of a Thousand Dead, the PCs are expected to help in the defense of the City.

You guard the walls of the City of a Thousand Dead, awaiting news of the arrival of the Disciples' crusade - only then will you know if your efforts to hinder the crusade were successful.

All around you, undead soldiers, mages, and priests stand ready to defend the walls with you. Assembled from the fractious factions and lone undead of this strangely cosmopolitan city, you can only hope that these forces will be enough to turn back the crusade.

Do not tell the PCs how many defenders they have amassed at this time. Instead, allow the PCs (and their players) to mull over how well their efforts might have gone and what they might have done differently. This should be a tense and stressful time for the PCs and the DM is encouraged to draw out the moment as long as

Adventures in the Dead Lands

is reasonable, describing the unease of the PCs' fellow defenders and the oppressive worry of the unknown.

When the Disciples' crusade finally comes into view, read:

As the Disciples' forces come into view, you know in an instant that the sight will stay with you for the rest of your days.

Now is the time to describe the size of both the Disciples' army and the defending forces to the PCs. Both can be found in see Part 4B - Consequences.

Regardless of the size of the attacking Disciples' army, the PCs will be expected to fight in defense of the City of a Thousand Dead: if the PCs' efforts were successful (either a Complete Success or Partially Successful), the PCs personally face the EL 18 fight listed above; if the PCs' efforts were unsuccessful (either a Failure or Complete Failure), the PCs personally face the EL 20 forces listed above.

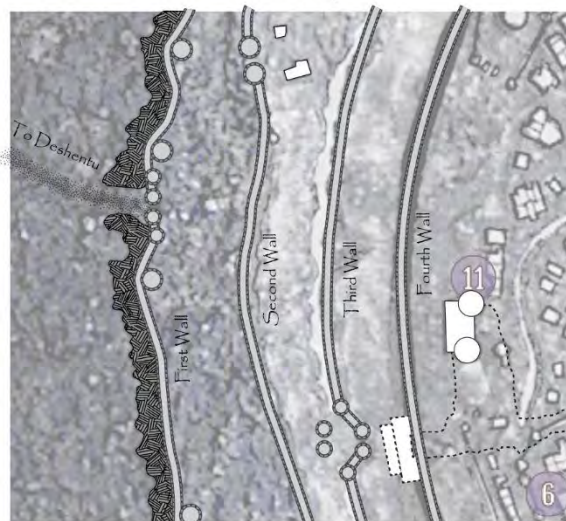
Tactics: Each of the Disciples warriors will activate their potions of spider climb and scale the walls to confront the PCs, fighting to the death.

The Disciples priest(s) will begin combat with the spells *greater magic weapon* and *magic vestment* already active and will climb part of the way up the City wall and then hang back, casting two spells each round (one spell quickened and one not), preferring to cast both a ranged attack spell (like *elemental strike*) and a self-buffing spell (such as *divine power*) each round. Once all the Disciples warriors have fallen, or 5 rounds have passed, the Disciples priest(s) will close to melee distance with the PCs.

Development: Once combat with the Disciples is over, proceed to Concluding the Adventure.

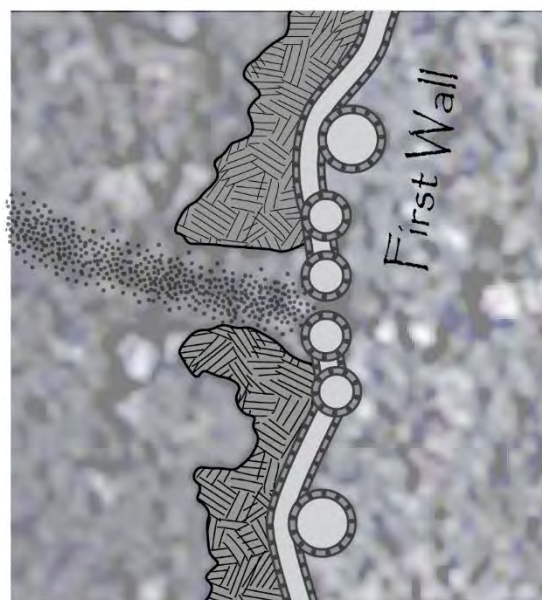
City 1000 Dead - Defenders' Gate

Area Map



Scale 250'

First Wall Tactical Map

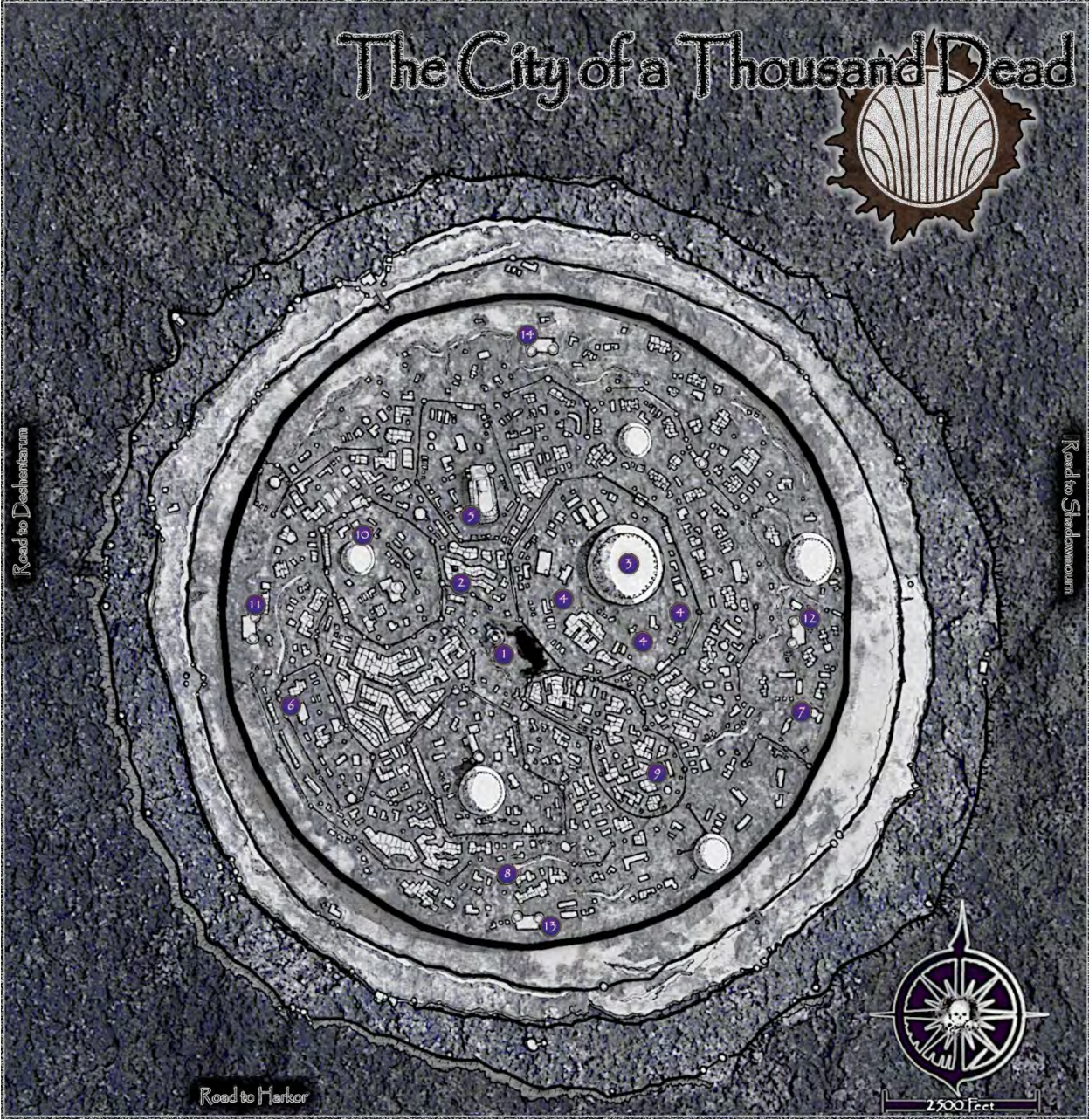


Scale 10'

20

The City of a Thousand Dead Side View





Concluding the Adventure

Once the Disciples' crusade has been turned back, the adventure is over. Depending on their level of success, the PCs might be seen as heroes with the vision to foresee and head off a disaster, or as deluded fools whose warnings fell on deaf ears. Regardless, once the fighting is over, new relationships - whether for good or for ill - will have formed, and canny PCs might move to take advantage of new opportunities.

Further Adventures

If the PCs were successful in defeating the crusade, the Disciples faithful might well regard them as heroes, as much carnage was prevented and their forces were prevented from participating in a disastrous and senseless attack led by dangerous zealots. In such a case, however, the Sovereign Rising will not be appreciative of the PCs' interference in their 'great crusade' and will mark them as enemies to be eliminated. This will be doubly true if the PCs killed or discredited the Chosen One: the loss of their messiah

will make it that much harder for the Sovereign Rising to bring about the Emergence and the return of their Black God, and they will place the blame for that squarely upon the PCs.

Now that the PCs have come to their attention, the factions of the City of a Thousand Dead will seek to use the PCs to their own ends, using them as allies and enforcers if the party was successful in their efforts, or as pawns and scapegoats if they failed against the Disciples' crusade.

If the PCs failed to halt or help mount a proper defense against the Disciples' crusade, the residents of the City of a Thousand Dead will paradoxically blame the PCs, claiming that the party did not raise a warning soon enough or did not do enough to communicate the danger. As "failures" and "would-be heroes", the PCs' reputations in the City of a Thousand Dead will be severely damaged, and depending on their efforts to slow the crusade before it reached the City, this poor reputation of the PCs might spread beyond the City of a Thousand Dead to other nations of the Dead Lands.





Appendix 1: Monsters & NPCs

Anthyarka, Queen of the Great Mound CR 27

Unreclaimed Scarlet Warden Necromant 10

Neutral Evil Huge Undead (Psionic)

Init: +13; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +31, Spot +35

Aura: -

Languages: Classic Dwarven, Classic Elven, Terran, Ulyanese, Zagath

AC: 35, touch 17, flat-footed 31**

(-2 size, +5 Dex, +10 natural, +8 armor, Def +4)

hp 210 (28 HD; 18d12+18)

Spell Resistance: 36

Immune: Turning, Undead Traits; **Weakness:**

Vulnerability to Sunlight

Saves: Fort +14, Ref +19, Will +25

Speed: 40 ft (8 squares), Climb 20 ft.

Melee: Claw +22 (2d6+9) or Tentacle +21 (1d4+9) or Touch +21 (by spell)

Full Melee: 2x Claw +22 (2d6+9) and Bite +20 (1d6+4 plus Poison) and 3x Tentacle +19 (1d4+4)

Ranged: Ranged Touch +19 (by spell)

Space: 15 ft.; **Reach:** 10 ft. (15 ft. with tentacles)

Base Attack: +14; **Grapple:** +31

Combat Options: Ability Drain (DC 29), Create Spawn, Enhanced Spells (+1 dmg/die), Improved Grab, Poison (DC 29)

Combat Gear: Metamagic Rod of *Extend* (3/day, 1st - 6th level)

Psi-Like Abilities: 3/day - burst, catfall, claws of the vampire, mind probe, mindlink, psionic blast, schism; ML = HD; The save DCs are Charisma-based.

Spell-Like Abilities (Sp): 1/day - animate dead, command undead (DC 16); CL 20th.

Wizard Spells (CL 20th, DC 20 + spell level):

10th— *quicken*ed chain lightning, *quicken*ed true seeing;

9th - mage's disjunction, magma tunnel, prismatic sphere, *quicken*ed cone of cold, time stop



- 8th - create greater undead, ghostform, maze, prismatic wall, *quicken*ed greater invisibility,
- 7th - greater arcane sight, greater teleport, mage's sword, reverse gravity, unliving identity,
- 6th - antimagic field, forceful hand, chain lightning, disintegrate, true seeing, undeath to death;
- 5th - cone of cold, magic jar, overland flight, persistent image, teleport, transmute rock to mud.
- 4th - animate dead, dimension door, fire shield, greater invisibility, scrying, shout;
- 3rd - clairaudience/clairvoyance, dispel magic, halt undead, haste, invisibility sphere, lightning bolt;
- 2nd - command undead, false life, ghoul touch, mirror image, see invisibility, spectral hand, web;
- 1st - alarm, chill touch x2, mage armor, ray of enfeeblement, shield, shocking grasp;
- 0 - dancing lights, disrupt undead (3), detect magic;

Abilities: Str 28, Dex 20, Con -, Int 31, Wis 16, Cha 20
SQ: All-Around Vision, Darkvision 60 ft., Dead Lord, Enhanced Ability (Int), Gravespeaker, Gray Casting, Gray Toughness 1, Immunity to Turning, Spell Resistance, Undead Traits, Vulnerability to Sunlight.

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Feats: Alertness, Automatic Quicken Spell, Combat Reflexes, Deflect Arrows ^B, Improved Initiative, Improved Spell Capacity (10th), Multiattack, Quicken Spell, Superior Initiative, Weapon Focus (Bite, Claw).

Skills: Bluff +36, Climb +17, Concentration +36, Diplomacy +24, Hide +22, Listen +31, Knowledge (Arcana) +41, Knowledge (Psionics) +26, Knowledge (Warcraft) +25, Move Silently +26, Psicraft +11, Search +17, Sense Motive +24, Spellcraft +41, Spot +35.

Possessions: 170,000cp or Combat Gear plus: Bracers of Armor +8, Headband of intellect +6, Ring of Protection +4 Vest of Resistance +5.

Ability Drain (Su): Living creatures hit by the undead's natural attacks must succeed on a Fortitude save or take 1d6 points of ability drain. On each such successful attack, the undead gains 5 temporary hit points.

All-Around Vision (Ex): A scarlet warden's eyes give it 360-degree vision, granting a +4 racial bonus on Spot and Search checks and preventing the beast from becoming flanked.**

Create Spawn (Su): A humanoid reduced to 0 Constitution by scarlet warden poison dies but continues to breathe shallowly as if alive. After 1d6 days, the corpse rises as a namech under the scarlet warden's command.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a scarlet warden must hit with a claw attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 21, initial and secondary damage 1d6 Con. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Skills: Unreclaimed have a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks and can always choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened.

Spell Resistance (Ex): Scarlet wardens have spell resistance equal to 20 + class levels.

Vulnerability to Sunlight (Ex): Direct sunlight deals the undead 1d6 points of damage each round. The bright light of the dark sun reminds the creature of its former life; the creature cannot stand the brightness of the sun when compared to its eternal existence of pain and hunger.



Champion of Deshentu CR 17

Male or Female Human Fallen Psychic Warrior 14
Lawful Evil Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Human, Psionic)

Init: +2; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +10, Spot +18

Aura: Despair (10 ft, DC 19), **Fear (60 ft, DC 19)**

Languages: (Classic Elven or Classic Dwarven), Ulyanese, Ulyanese Giant

AC: 26, touch 14, flat-footed 22; Dodge, Mobility

(+4 Dex, +6 armor, +6 Nat)

hp 133 (14 HD; 14d12+42)

DR: 5/magic

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Code of Honor,

Craving, Stench

Saves: Fort +11, Ref +10, Will +10

Speed: 30 ft (6 squares)

Melee: Lance +20 (2d4+12; 20/x3) or Falchion +19 (2d4+12; 18-20/x2) or Touch +16 (by Brand or power)

Full Melee: Lance +20/+15 (2d4+12; 20/x3) or Falchion +19/+14 (2d4+12; 18-20/x2)

Ranged: Javelin +14 (1d6+6; Range 30 ft.; 20/x2)

Full Ranged: Javelin +14/+8 (1d6+6; Range 30 ft.; 20/x2)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +10/+5; **Grapple:** +16

Combat Actions: **Brand (3/day)**, Combat Reflexes (3/round), Create Spawn, Deep Impact, **Disease (DC 19)**, Ghost Attack, **Guilt Gaze (30 ft, DC 19)**, Mounted Combat, Psionic Meditation (Move action), Greater Psionic Weapon (+4d6), Ride-By Attack, Spirited Charge

Combat Gear: Chitin Armor +2, Falchion +3 (from *call weaponry*), Lance +3 (from *call weaponry*), Javelin x6, Zombie Crodlu.

Psi-Like Abilities: At will—call weaponry*, death knell, deathwatch, mindlink*; 1/day—recall agony*. As the power or spell. ML = HD. The save DCs are Charisma-based. *Power can be augmented.

Psychic Warrior Powers: (ML 14th, PP 59+28)

5th: Oak Body, Psychofeedback

4th: Psionic Dimension Door, Energy Adaptation, Weapon of Energy

3rd: Hostile Empathic transfer, Mental Barrier, Vampiric Blade

2nd: Dimensional Swap, Hustle, Prowess

Adventures in the Dead Lands

1st: Defensive Precognition, Force Screen, Offensive Precognition

Abilities: Str 22, Dex 18, Con -, Int 15, Wis 18, Cha 15

SQ: Code of Honor, **Craving**, Damage Reduction, **Gray Toughness 3**, Skills, **Stench**.

Feats: Combat Reflexes, Deep Impact ^B, Dodge, Ghost Attack ^B, Mobility, Mounted Combat, Psionic Meditation ^B, Psionic Weapon ^B, Greater Psionic Weapon ^B, Ride-by Attack, Spirited Charge, Weapon Focus (Lance) ^B.

Skills: Autohypnosis +14, Climb +5, Concentration +20, Jump +8, Knowledge (psionics) +16, Listen +10, Ride +20, Search +16, Sense Motive +10, Spot +18.

Possessions: 45,000 cp or combat gear plus: Belt of Strength +4, Cloak of Resistance +2, Gloves of Dexterity +4, Necklace of Fireballs (type 3: 7d6 x1, 5d6 x2, 3d6 x4), Potion-Orb of Inflict light Wounds (CL 1st), x4.

Brand (Su): Up to three times per day, the creature can trace a lasting mark on a creature's skin with its fingers by making a touch attack. This touch deals 1d8 points of damage and inflicts a -2 penalty on any interaction checks the victim makes (such as Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate, and Sense Motive); the brand leaves a disturbing impression on anyone who sees it. Both the damage and penalty are permanent. A remove curse or heal spell removes the brand and its negative effects.

Code of Honor (Ex): Fallen are bound to follow a code of honor reflecting idealized rules of war. Evil fallen attempt to break or twist codes to avoid getting killed.

Create Spawn (Su): A giant, humanoid, or monstrous humanoid slain by a fallen's death knell power rises as fallen after 1d4 rounds. A fallen can have spawn with Hit Dice totaling twice its own.

Disease (Su): The undead's natural attacks infect their victims with a disease. A creature dealt damage by the undead must make a Fortitude save or contract either filth fever (50%) or red ache (50%).

Despair (Su): Fallen radiate an aura of doom and hopelessness, causing creatures within 10 ft. to make a Will save (DC 10 + ½ fallen's HD + fallen's Cha modifier). Creatures that fail are shaken. Whether or not the save is successful, that creature cannot be affected again by the same undead's aura for 24 hours. Fallen can suppress or reactivate this ability as a standard action in order to achieve surprise in close quarters.

Fear Aura (Su): The undead is shrouded in a dreadful aura of death and evil. Creatures in a 60-foot radius that look at the undead must make a Will save. Creatures with fewer than 5 HD that fail their save become panicked. Creatures with fewer HD than the undead that fail their save become shaken. Whether or not the save is successful, that creature cannot be affected again by the same undead's aura for 24 hours.

Guilt Gaze (Su): The undead's gaze attack causes grief to intelligent creatures within 30 ft. Unless a victim makes a Will save, its most painful memories surface, wracking the victim with guilt over small incidents that happened years ago in its life. The guilt nauseates a creature for 1d4 rounds.

Stench (Ex): The creature's flesh is rotten and putrefying, emitting a foul stench easily identifiable as undead.



Chitin Golem, Advanced CR 13

Advanced Chitin Golem

TN Huge Construct

Init: -2; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft., Low-Light Vision; Listen +1, Search +0, Spot +1

Aura: -

Languages: -

AC: 19, touch 6, flat-footed 19
(-2 size, -2 Dex, +13 Nat)

hp 188 (27d10+40)

Damage Reduction: 3/adamantine;

Immune: Construct Traits, Magic

Saves: Fort +9, Ref +7, Will +10

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee: Claw +29 (3d10+16 plus Poison; 20/x2)

Space: 15 ft.; **Reach:** 15 ft.

Base Attack: +20; **Grapple:** +39

Combat Options: Poison (DC 23, 1d6 Str dmg)

Abilities: Str 32, Dex 7, Con -, Int -, Wis 12, Cha 1

SQ: Construct Traits, Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60 ft., Immunity to Magic, Low-Light Vision.

Feats: -

Skills: -

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Construct Traits: A construct possesses the following traits (unless otherwise noted in a creature's entry).

- Immunity to all mind-affecting effects (charms, compulsions, phantasms, patterns, and morale effects).
- Immunity to poison, sleep effects, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, and necromancy effects.
- Cannot heal damage on their own, but often can be repaired by exposing them to a certain kind of effect (see the creature's description for details) or through the use of the Craft Construct feat. A construct with the fast healing special quality still benefits from that quality.
- Not subject to critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability damage, ability drain, fatigue, exhaustion, or energy drain.
- Immunity to any effect that requires a Fortitude save (unless the effect also works on objects, or is harmless).
- Not at risk of death from massive damage. Immediately destroyed when reduced to 0 hit points or less.
- Constructs do not eat, sleep, or breathe.

Immunity to Magic (Ex): A chitin golem is immune to any spell or spell-like ability that allows spell resistance. In addition, certain spells and effects function differently against the creature, as noted below.

- The delay poison spell deals 1d4 points of damage and slows the golem (as the slow spell) for 2d6 rounds.
- Casting giant vermin heals the golem's wounds and breaks any slow effect on it.
- Repel vermin affects the golem as though it were of the vermin type.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude save negates (DC 10 + ½ HD + Con modifier), initial and secondary damage 1d4 Str.



Deshenten Giant Skeleton Leaders CR 17

Desert Giant Fallen Fighter 4

NE Huge Undead (Augmented Giant, Psionic)

Init: +7; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft., Low-Light Vision; Listen +13, Search +6, Spot +13

Languages: Ulyanese Giant

Aura: Despair (10ft, Will DC 19)

AC: 39; touch 17, flat-footed 32

(-2 size, +4 armor, +7 Dex, +18 Nat, +2 Def)

hp 171 (18d12+54); **Fast Healing:** 3

Damage Reduction: 5/magic; **Power Resistance:** 19;

Immune: Spell Turning (1d4+6 lvls), Undead Traits;

Weakness: Code of Honor, Craving

Saves: Fort +16, Ref +15, Will +10

Speed: 40 ft.

Melee: Spear +32 (3d6+25; 20/x3) or Slam +27 (1d8+15)

Full Melee: Spear +32/+27/+22 (3d6+25; 20/x3) or 2x Slam +27 (1d8+15)

Ranged: Rock +20 (2d8+17; Range 140 ft; 20/x2)

Full Ranged: Rock +18/+18/+13/+8 (2d8+17; Range 140 ft; 20/x2)

Space: 15 ft.; **Reach:** 15 ft.

Base Attack: +14/+9/+4; **Grapple:** +37

Combat Options: Combat Reflexes (8/round), Create Spawn, Great Cleave, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Rapid Shot, Rock Throwing, Taint Weapon (DC 19).

Combat Gear: Huge Spear +4 (from call weaponry), Huge Padded Armor +3, Rocks x20

Psi-Like Abilities: At will—call weaponry*, death knell, deathwatch, mindlink*; 1/day—recall agony*. ML = HD. The save DCs are Charisma-based. *Power can be augmented.

Abilities: Str 41, Dex 24, Con -, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 11

SQ: Code of Honor, Craving, Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60 ft., Fast Healing, Gray Toughness 3, Low-Light Vision, Skills, Spell Turning, Undead traits.

Feats: Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Great Cleave, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Rapid Shot, Quick Draw, Weapon Focus (Rock)^B, Weapon Focus (Spear), Weapon Specialization (Rock)^B.

Skills: Climb +18, Jump +18, Listen +13, Search +6, Spot +13, Survival +7

Possessions: 59,000cp or combat gear plus: Belt of Strength +4, Cloak of Resistance +3, Gloves of Dexterity +4, Potion-Orb of Displacement (CL 3rd), Psionic Tattoo of Force Screen (ML 1st) x2, Ring of Protection +2.

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Code of Honor (Ex): Fallen are bound to follow a code of honor reflecting idealized rules of war. Evil fallen attempt to break or twist codes to avoid getting killed.

Create Spawn (Su): A giant, humanoid, or monstrous humanoid slain by a fallen's death knell power rises as fallen after 1d4 rounds. A fallen can have spawn with Hit Dice totaling twice its own.

Despair (Su): Fallen radiate an aura of doom and hopelessness, causing creatures within 10 ft. to make a Will save (DC 10 + ½ fallen's HD + fallen's Cha modifier). Creatures that fail are shaken. Whether or not the save is successful, that creature cannot be affected again by the same undead's aura for 24 hours. Fallen can suppress or reactivate this ability as a standard action in order to achieve surprise in close quarters.

Spell Turning (Su): The undead is protected from 1d4+6 spell levels per day, as the *spell turning* spell. The undead can suppress this ability as a free action.

Taint Weapon (Su): The undead can taint magic and psionic weapons by touching them. It makes a touch attack against the weapon. The touch does not provoke an attack of opportunity. If the undead hits, the weapon or its wielder must make a Will save. Failure means the weapon permanently loses one point of its enhancement bonus. A weapon drained to a +0 enhancement bonus loses all other magic and psionic properties.



Deshenten Giant Skeleton Bombardiers CR 6

Desert Giant Skeletons

Neutral Evil Huge Undead

Initiative: +7; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft., Listen +0, and Spot +0

Aura: -

Languages: (understand Uylanese Giant)

AC: 14; touch 11, flat-footed 11 (+3 Dex, +3 natural, -2 size)

hp 112 (14 HD; 14d12+14); **Fast Healing:** 3

Damage Reduction: 5/Bludgeoning.

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects

Saves: Fort +4, Ref +7, Will +9

Speed: 40 ft. (8 squares)

Melee: Claw +13 (1d8+8) or Slam +13 (1d8+8)

Full Melee: 2x Claw +13 (1d8+8) or 2x Slam +13 (1d8+8)

Ranged: Rocks +8 (2d8+8; 140 ft range; 20/x2)

Full Ranged: Rocks +8 (2d8+8; 140 ft range; 20/x2)

Space: 15 ft.; **Reach:** 15 ft.

Base Attack: +7/+2; **Grapple:** +21

Combat Actions: Rock Throwing

Combat Gear: Boulder x6

Abilities: Str 27, Dex 17, Con -, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 1

SQ: Fast Healing, Gray Toughness 1, Immunity to Cold, Undead Traits, Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects.

Feats: Improved Initiative

Skills: none

Possessions: -

Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects (Ex): The undead, unlike most others of its type, is susceptible to mind-affecting effects, which affect the undead as though its type were the same as that of a living version of the creature (or as a humanoid, if it has no living analog).



Deshenten Warrior Skeleton CR 1/3

Human Warrior Skeleton

Neutral Evil Medium Undead

Initiative: +5; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, and Spot +0

Aura: -

Languages: (understand Uylanese)

AC: 15; touch 11, flat-footed 14 (+1 Dex, +2 natural, +2 shield)

hp 6 (1 HD; 1d12)

Damage Reduction: 5/Bludgeoning

Immune: Cold, Undead Traits

Saves: Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +2

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee: Club +1 (1d6+1) or Claw +1 (1d4+1)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +0; **Grapple:** +1

Combat Gear: Chitin Shield, Obsidian Club

Abilities: Str 13, Dex 13, Con -, Int 1, Wis 10, Cha 1

Adventures in the Dead Lands

SQ: Immunity to Cold, Undead traits.

Feats: Improved Initiative

Skills: -

Possessions: -



Disciples Nomad CR 15

Male or Female Human Zhen Psion (Nomad) 13

LE Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Human, Psionic)

Init: +3 **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft.; Listen +8, Search +19, Spot +14

Aura: -

Languages: Ignan, Tamwar, Ulyanese, Ulyanese Giant

AC: 25; touch 15, flat-footed 22**

(+3 Dex, +10 Nat, +2 Def)

hp 115 (13 HD; 13d12+13+18); **Fast Healing:** 3

Damage Reduction: 10/magic

Immune: Turning, Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Vulnerability to Iron, Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects

Saves: Fort +6, Ref +9, Will +13

Speed: 30 ft.; Obsidian Climb

Melee: Spear +9/+4 (1d6+3/ x2) or Slam +9 (1d8+3) or Touch +9 (by spell)

Ranged: Ranged Touch +9 (by spell)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +6/+1; **Grapple:** +9

Combat Options: Blinding Touch (DC 17), Psionic Focus (2x), Psionic Meditation (Move action)

Combat Gear: Spear, Leather Armor

Psi-Like Abilities (ML=HD. The save DCs are Charisma-based)

At will—aura sight*, body adjustment*, body equilibrium, catfall*, control light, elfsight**, false sensory input*, psionic charm*, psionic daze*, psionic suggestion*, ubiquitous vision**; *Power can be augmented.

Spell-Like Abilities: 1/day - animate dead, create greater undead, create undead; CL = HD.

Psion Powers (ML 13th, PP: 147+45, DC 16 + power level):

7th: Energy Wave

6th: Mass Cloud Mind, Psionic Disintegrate, Temporal Acceleration

5th: Baleful Teleport, Psionic Teleport, Psionic True Seeing, Tower of Iron Will

4th: Detect Remote Viewing, Psionic Dismissal, Psionic Fly, Trace Teleport

3rd: Astral Caravan, Dispel Psionics, Energy Bolt, Eradicate Invisibility

2nd: Cloud Mind, Dimension Swap, Psionic Levitation, Thought Shield

1st: Astral Traveler, Conceal Thoughts, Detect Teleportation, Force Shield, Inertial Armor, Mind Thrust, Sense Link

Abilities: Str 16, Dex 16, Con --, Int 24, Wis 14, Cha 15

SQ: Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60 ft., Fast Healing, Gray Toughness 1, Immunity to Turning, Obsidian Climb, Rebuke Undead (CL 13th, 5/day), Skills, Undead Traits, Vulnerability to Iron, Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects.

Feats: Expanded Knowledge (Force Shield, Inertial Armor) x2, Power Penetration, Psicrystal Affinity, Psicrystal Containment, Psionic Body ^B, Psionic Meditation ^B, Quicken Power ^B, Speed of Thought.

Skills: Climb +14, Concentration +18, Jump +14, Knowledge (arcana) +23, Knowledge (psionics) +23, Knowledge (religion) +23, Knowledge (the planes) +23, Listen +8, Psicraft +23, Search +19, Sense Motive +8, Spot +14, Survival +2.

Possessions: 59,000cp or Combat Gear plus: Bead of Force, Cloak of Resistance +2, Gloves of Dexterity +2, Handy Haversack, Headband of Intelligence +4, Ring of Protection +2.

Blinding Touch (Su): The undead can make a touch attack as a standard action that doesn't provoke an attack of opportunity. The touch causes blindness in the victim for 2d4 rounds. A Fortitude save negates the effect.

Despair (Su): At the mere sight of the undead, the viewer must succeed on Will save or be paralyzed with fear for 1d4 rounds. Whether or not the save is successful, that creature cannot be affected again by the same undead's despair ability for 24 hours.

Vulnerability to Iron (Ex): The undead can be harmed by nonmagical weapons made of iron. No matter the type of damage reduction, it is overcome by these common weapons.

Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects (Ex): The undead, unlike most others of its type, is susceptible to mind-affecting effects, which affect the undead as

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though its type were the same as that of a living version of the creature (or as a humanoid, if it has no living analog).



Disciples Priest CR 15

Male or Female Human Zhen Cleric (Magma) 13

LE Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Human, Psionic)

Init: +1; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft.; Listen +15, Search +14, Spot +21

Aura: -

Languages: Ignan, Tamwar, Ulyanese

AC: 24; touch 14, flat-footed 22**

(+2 Dex, +10 Nat, +2 Def)

hp 97 (13 HD; 13d12+13); **Fast Healing:** 3

Damage Reduction: 5/magic

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Craving (blood), Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects

Saves: Fort +10, Ref +8, Will +18

Speed: 30 ft.; Obsidian Climb

Full Melee: Mace +12/+7 (1d8+3/ x2) or Slam +12 (1d8+3) or Touch +12 (by spell)

Melee: Mace +12 (1d8+3/ x2) or Slam +12 (1d8+3) or Touch +12 (by spell)

Ranged: Ranged Touch +11 (by spell)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +9/+4; **Grapple:** +12

Combat Options: -

Combat Gear: Obsidian Heavy Mace, Leather Armor

Psi-Like Abilities (ML=HD. The save DCs are Charisma-based)

At will—aura sight*, body adjustment*, body equilibrium, catfall*, control light, elfsight**, false sensory input*, psionic charm*, psionic daze*, psionic suggestion*, ubiquitous vision**; *Power can be augmented.

Cleric Spells (CL 13th, DC 17 + power level):

7th: Earthquake (d), Mass Inflict Serious Wounds, Quickened Invisibility Purge

6th: Blade Barrier, Flesh to Stone (d), Harm, Quickened Silence

5th: Elemental Strike, Quickened Divine Favor, Righteous Might, Unliving Identity (d), Wall of Stone

4th: Cure Critical Wounds, Dismissal, Divine Power, Freedom of Movement, Greater Magic Weapon, Vampiric Touch (d)

3rd: Dispel Magic, Invisibility Purge, Magic Vestment, Searing Light x2, Spike Stones (d), Wind Wall

2nd: Resist Energy x4, Silence x2, Speak with Dead (d), Spiritual Weapon

1st: Divine Favor, Entropic Shield, Inflict Light Wounds x3, Magic Stone (d), Protection from Evil, Shield of Faith

Abilities: Str 16, Dex 15, Con —, Int 14, Wis 24, Cha 16

SQ: Change Shape, Craving (blood), Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60 ft., Enhanced Senses, Fast Healing, Gray Toughness 1, Immunity to Turning, Nondetection, Obsidian Climb, Rebuke Undead (CL 13th, 18/day), Skills, Undead Traits, Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects.

Feats: Divine Metamagic (Quickened Spell), Extra Turning x3, Quickened Spell, Skill Focus (Concentration).

Skills: Climb +3, Concentration +22, Diplomacy +19, Jump +3, Knowledge (religion) +18, Knowledge (the planes) +18, Listen +15, Search +14, Sense Motive +8, Spellcraft +18, Spot +21.

Possessions: 59,000cp or Combat Gear plus: Bead of Force, Cloak of Resistance +2, Gloves of Dexterity +2, Handy Haversack, Periapt of Wisdom +4, Ring of Protection +2.

Change Shape (Su): Only corporeal undead can have this ability. The undead can mimic the voice and appearance of any humanoid creature of the same size. In humanoid form, the undead loses its natural attacks. It can remain in its humanoid form until it chooses to assume a new one. A change in form cannot be dispelled, but the undead reverts to its natural form when killed. The undead gains a +10 circumstance bonus on Disguise checks while in another form. A true seeing spell or ability reveals its natural form.

Cleric Domains:

- **Dead Heart** - Class Skill: Intimidate; Weapon: Impaler; Granted Power: When dealing with undead, You get a +4 bonus on interaction checks (such as Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate, and Sense Motive). You also gain a +4 bonus on turn or rebuke attempts against undead.
- **Mountain's Fury** - Class Skill: Climb; Weapon: Heartpick; Granted Power: You do not suffer

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armor check penalties and encumbrance penalties to Climb checks. You may use a turn attempt to rebuke, commands, or bolster earth creatures as an evil cleric would rebuke undead.

Divine Metamagic (Feat): When you take this feat, choose a metamagic feat. This feat applies only to that metamagic feat. As a free action, you can take the energy from turning or rebuking undead and use it to apply a metamagic feat to spells that you know. You must spend one turn or rebuke attempt, plus an additional attempt for each level increase in the metamagic feat you're using.

Nondetection (Su): The undead is difficult to detect using divination spells, as though it were protected by the *nondetection* spell. The DC to detect the undead equals 10 + HD.



Disciples Honor Guard CR 13

Male or Female Human Thinking Zombie Fighter 12
LE Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Human, Psionic)

Init: +7; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft.; Listen +7, Search +5, Spot +7

Aura: -

Languages: Ignan, Ulyanese

AC: 26; touch 14, flat-footed 22
(+4 Dex, +5 armor, +3 Shield, +4 Nat)

hp 97 (13 HD; 13d12+13)

Resistances: Cold 10, Electricity 10

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** *Cast no Shadow*, Vulnerability to Blessed Elements

Saves: Fort +10, Ref +10, Will +9

Speed: 40 ft.

Melee: Shortspear +21 (1d6+11; 20/x2) or Claw +17 (1d4+6) or Bite +17 (1d6+6)

Full Melee: Shortspear +21/+16/+12 (1d6+11; 20/x2) or 2x Claw +17 (1d4+6) and Bite +12 (1d6+3)

Ranged: Shortspear +20 (1d6+12; Range 20 ft.; 20/x2)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +12/+7/+2; **Grapple:** +18

Combat Options: *Brand (3/day)*, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes (4/round), Disease (DC 17), Great Cleave, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack

Combat Gear: Returning Shortspear +1, Studded Leather +2, Heavy Chitin Shield +1

Abilities: Str 22, Dex 18, Con --, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 14

SQ: *Cast no Shadow*, Darkvision 60 ft., *Enhanced Ability (+10 base land speed)*, *Enhanced Senses*, Gray Toughness 1, Resistances, Skills, Vulnerability to Blessed Elements.

Feats: Cleave, Combat Expertise^B, Combat Reflexes^B, Great Cleave, Greater Weapon Focus (Spear)^B, Greater Weapon Specialization (Spear)^B, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (Spear)^B, Weapon Specialization (Spear)^B.

Skills: Climb +13, Craft (armor) +16, Craft (weapons) +16, Handle Animal +1, Intimidate +16, Jump +14, Listen +7, Ride +2, Search +5, Sense Motive +5, Spot +7.

Possessions: 27,000cp or Combat Gear plus: Belt of Strength +2, Cloak of Resistance +2, Gloves of Dexterity +2, Potion-Orb of *Resist Energy* (Fire 10), Potion-Orb of *Spider Climb*.

Brand (Su): Up to three times per day, the creature can trace a lasting mark on a creature's skin with its fingers by making a touch attack. This touch deals 1d8 points of damage and inflicts a -2 penalty on any interaction checks the victim makes (such as Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate, and Sense Motive); the brand leaves a disturbing impression on anyone who sees it. Both the damage and penalty are permanent. A remove curse or heal spell removes the brand and its negative effects.

Vulnerability to Blessed Elements (Ex): A thinking zombie takes half again as much (+50%) damage as normal from blessed elements.



Faction Flunkie CR 18

Male or Female Human Zhen Psion (Nomad) 15
NE Medium Undead (Augmented Psionic Humanoid, Human)

Init: +2; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft.; Listen +19, Search +22, Spot +25

Aura: -

Languages: Ulyanese, Classic Halfling

AC: 24; touch 14, flat-footed 22**
(+2 Dex, +10 Nat, +2 Def)

hp 112 (15 HD; 15d12+15); **Fast Healing** 1

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Damage Reduction: 10/magic

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Stench (burnt flesh), **Vulnerability to Cold**, Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +9, Will +13

Speed: 30+10 ft.; Obsidian Climb

Melee: Slam +11 (1d8+3) or Touch +11 (by spell)

Ranged: Ranged Touch +8 (by spell)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +7/+2; **Grapple:** +11

Combat Options: Blinding Touch (DC 19), Enhanced Powers (+1 dmg/die), Psionic Meditation (Move action),

Combat Gear: -

Psi-Like Abilities: (ML 15th; DC Charisma-based)

At will—aura sight*, body adjustment*, body equilibrium, catfall*, control light, elfsight**, false sensory input*, psionic charm*, psionic daze*, psionic suggestion*, ubiquitous vision**. *Power can be augmented.

Psionic Powers (ML 15th, Power Points 195+60, DC 18 + power level):

8th — Bend Reality

7th — Energy Wave, Evade Burst, Personal Mind Blank

6th — Dimensional Screen, Psionic Disintegrate, Temporal Acceleration

5th — Baleful Teleport, Psionic Teleport, Teleport Trigger, Psionic True Seeing

4th — Correspond, Detonate, Magnetize, Psionic Fly

3rd — Astral Caravan, Psionic Blink, Danger Sense, Energy Bolt

2nd — Dimension Swap, Ego Whip, Psionic Levitate, Thought Shield

1st — Burst, Far Hand, Inertial Armor, Know Direction and Location, Missive

Abilities: Str 16, Dex 14, Con --, Int 26, Wis 15, Cha 14

SQ: Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60 ft., **Enhanced Ability** (+1 profane bonus on attack rolls), **Enhanced Powers**, Enhanced Senses, Fast Healing, Gray Toughness, Obsidian Climb, Rebuke Undead (3/day), Skills, **Stench (burnt flesh)**, **Transmit Curse (Crystal Mask of Knowledge; Destroy the defilers of the Navel)**, Undead Traits, Vulnerability to Cold, Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects.

Feats: Burrowing Power, Empower Power, Enlarge Power, Greater Power Penetration, Greater Psionic Endowment ^B, Power Penetration, Psionic

Endowment ^B, Psionic Meditation, Quicken Power ^B, Speed of Thought ^B, Split Psionic Ray.

Skills: Climb +21, Concentration +20, Jump +21, Knowledge (Psionics) +31, Listen +19, Psicraft +26, Search +22, Sense Motive +8, Spot +25.

Possessions: 59,000cp or Combat Gear plus: Cloak of Resistance +2, Crystal Mask of Knowledge (Psionics), Dorje of Energy Bolt (ML 5th, 16 charges), Headband of Intelligence +6, Ring of Protection +2.

Blinding Touch (Su): The undead can make a touch attack as a standard action that doesn't provoke an attack of opportunity. The touch causes blindness in the victim for 2d4 rounds. A Fortitude save negates the effect.

Transmit Curse (Su): The undead carries particular objects of some value (magical or monetary) that carry on its curse after death. A creature taking these objects after the undead's death must make a Will save every 24 hours they remain in its possession. Once the creature fails a save, it becomes compelled to carry out the task previously belonging to the undead. The compulsion is so strong that over a period of 2d10 days the victim abandons his current pursuits to fulfill the undead's task. A remove curse spell breaks the curse any time after the creature picks up the objects.



Musraaf's Chosen Cavalry Commander CR 18

Male Human Fael Fighter 15

NE Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Human)

Init: +8; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft.; Listen +5, Search +6, Spot +14

Aura: -

Languages: Goblin, Ulyanese, Ulyanese Giant

AC: 28; touch 16, flat-footed 24

(+4 Dex, +4+1 Nat, +7 armor, +2 Def)

hp 127 (15d12+30)

Damage Reduction: 5/magic

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Delusional (still alive), Vulnerability to Acid

Saves: Fort +9, Ref +9, Will +6

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Speed: 30 ft.

Melee: Lance +24 (1d8+14; 20/x3) or Slam +21 (1d6+6) or Bite +21 (2d6+6; 18-20/x3)

Full Melee: Lance +24/+19/+14 (1d8+14; 20/x3) or 2x Slam +21 (1d6+6) and Bite +16 (2d6+3; 18-20/x3)

Ranged: Comp. Shortbow +22 (1d6+7; Range 70 ft.; 20/x3)

Full Ranged: Comp. Shortbow +22/+17/+12 (1d6+7; Range 70 ft.; 20/x3)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +15/+10/+5; **Grapple:** +21

Combat Options: Ability Damage (1d6 Wis, DC 19), Taint Weapon (DC 19)

Combat Gear: Bone Heavy Mace +1, Bone Lance +1, Chitin Armor +3, Composite (+6) Shortbow +1, Ulyanese War Chariot.

Abilities: Str 22, Dex 18, Con --, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 14

SQ: Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60 ft., Delusional (still alive), Gray Toughness 2, Maw, Skills, Vulnerability to Acid.

Feats: Greater Weapon Focus (Lance), Greater Weapon Focus (Shortbow), Greater Weapon Specialization (Lance), Greater Weapon Specialization (Shortbow), Improved Initiative, Mounted Archery^B, Mounted Combat^B, Ride-By Attack^B, Skill Focus (Ride), Spirited Charge^B, Trample^B, Weapon Focus (Lance)^B, Weapon Focus (Shortbow), Weapon Specialization (Lance)^B, Weapon Specialization (Shortbow)^B.

Skills: Climb +14, Craft +2, Handle Animal +20, Intimidate +20, Jump +14, Listen +5, Ride +24, Search +6, Spot +14.

Possessions: 59,000cp or Combat Gear plus: Amulet of Natural Armor +1, Belt of Strength +4, Gloves of Dexterity +4, Psionic Tattoo of Vigor (ML 16th - 80 hp), Ring of Protection +2.

Ability Damage (Su): Living creatures hit by the undead's natural attacks must succeed on a Fortitude save or take 1d6 points of ability damage. On each such successful attack, the undead gains 5 temporary hit points.

Taint Weapon (Su): The undead can taint magic and psionic weapons by touching them. It makes a touch attack against the weapon. The touch does not provoke an attack of opportunity. If the undead hits, the weapon or its wielder must make a Will save. Failure means the weapon permanently loses one point of its enhancement bonus. A weapon drained to a +0 enhancement bonus loses all other magic and psionic properties.

Onesight Glasschipper CR 15

Female Pterran Namech Ranger 13

Neutral Evil Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Human, Reptilian)

Init: +9; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +23, Spot +25

Aura: Revulsion (30 ft, DC 18)

Languages: Common, Pterran, Ulyanese

AC: 24, touch 15, flat-footed 19

(+5 Dex, +4 Nat, +5 armor)

hp 97 (13d12+13);

Damage Reduction: 5/magic

Immune: Piercing, Spells (*Cure Moderate Wounds*, *Protection from Good*), Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Revulsion, Turn Submission (-4; as 9 HD)

Saves: Fort +10, Ref +15, Will +9; Evasion

Speed: 30 ft (6 squares)

Melee: Claw +17 (2d6+4; 20/x2) or Bite +17 (1d4+4; 20/x2)

Full Melee: 2x Claw +17 (2d6+4; 20/x2) and Bite +12 (1d4+4; 20/x2)

Ranged: Composite Longbow +21 (1d8+6; Range 110 ft.; 20/x3) or Composite Longbow +15 (Manyshot: 1d8+6 x3; Range 30 ft.; 20/x3)

Full Ranged: Composite Longbow +21/+16/+11 (1d8+6; Range 110 ft.; 20/x3) or Composite Longbow +19/+19/+14/+9 (Rapid Shot: 1d8+6; Range 110 ft.; 20/x3)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +13/+8/+3; **Grapple:** +17

Combat Options: Favored Enemy (Undead +6), Favored Terrain (Obsidian Waste +2, Sandy Waste +2), Improved Precise Shot, Manyshot, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot.

Combat Gear: Chitin Armor +1, Composite (+4) Longbow +2.

Psi-Like Abilities (Sp): *Missive*; CL = 6 HD.

Ranger Spells (CL 6th, DC 13 + spell level):

3rd: greater magic fang x2

2nd: barkskin, protection from energy

1st: alarm, longstrider

Abilities: Str 19, Dex 20, Con -, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 14

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SQ: Animal Companion (-), Camouflage, Combat Style Mastery (Ranged), Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60 ft., Evasion, **Gray Toughness 1**, **Immunity to Piercing**, **Nondetection (DC 23)**, Revulsion, Skills, **Spell Immunity (Cure Moderate Wounds, Protection from Good)**, Swift Tracker, Turn Submission (-4), Undead Traits, Wild Empathy (+15), Woodland Stride.

Feats: Endurance ^B, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (Claw), Improved Precise Shot ^B, Manyshot ^B, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot ^B, Track ^B, Weapon Focus (Longbow).

Skills: Climb +11, Concentration +18, Hide +21, Jump +11, Listen +23, Move Silently +27, Sense Motive +9, Speak Language (1), Spot +25, Survival +19.

Possessions: 35,000cp or Combat Gear plus: Belt of Strength +2, Cloak of Resistance +2, Gloves of Dexterity +4, Pearl of Power (1st), Potion-Orb of Hide From Undead.

Camouflage (Ex): A ranger of 13th level or higher can use the Hide skill in any sort of natural terrain, even if the terrain doesn't grant cover or concealment.

Evasion (Ex): At 9th level, a ranger can avoid even magical and unusual attacks with great agility. If he makes a successful Reflex saving throw against an attack that normally deals half damage on a successful save, he instead takes no damage. Evasion can be used only if the ranger is wearing light armor or no armor. A helpless ranger does not gain the benefit of evasion.

Favored Enemy (Ex): At 1st level, a ranger may select a type of creature from among those given on Table: Ranger Favored Enemies. The ranger gains a +2 bonus on Bluff, Listen, Sense Motive, Spot, and Survival checks when using these skills against creatures of this type. Likewise, he gets a +2 bonus on weapon damage rolls against such creatures.

Favored Terrain (Ex): At any time when you could normally select a favored enemy, you may instead choose to select a favored terrain. You receive a +2 bonus to Hide, Knowledge (nature), Move Silently, Spot and Survival checks made within your favored terrain.

Pterrann Traits (Ex):

- -2 penalty to Listen checks. Pterrann have only slits for ears, and their hearing sense is diminished.
- Natural Weaponry: 2 claws (1d3), 1 bite (1d4). A
- pterrann's bite is treated as a secondary attack. For more

- on natural attacks, see MM section on natural weapons.
- Wild Telepathy. All pterrann are gifted from the day they hatch with the ability to use the *missive* talent at will, but only with their fellow reptiles.
- Weapon Familiarity: Thanaks are treated as martial rather than exotic weapons by pterrann. These weapons are more common among pterrann than among other races.

Revulsion (Su): A powerful aura of revulsion surrounds a namech. Any creature within 30 ft. that fails a Fortitude save (DC of 10 + 1/2 namech's HD + namech's Cha modifier) becomes nauseated for 1d6 rounds. Whether or not the save is successful, that creature cannot be affected again by the same namech's aura for 24 hours.

Swift Tracker (Ex): Beginning at 8th level, a ranger can move at his normal speed while following tracks without taking the normal -5 penalty. He takes only a -10 penalty (instead of the normal -20) when moving at up to twice normal speed while tracking.

Woodland Stride (Ex): Starting at 7th level, a ranger may move through any sort of undergrowth (such as natural thorns, briars, overgrown areas, and similar terrain) at his normal speed and without taking damage or suffering any other impairment.

However, thorns, briars, and overgrown areas that are enchanted or magically manipulated to impede motion still affect him.



Scarlet Warden CR 12

LE Huge Undead

Init: +8; **Senses:** All-Around Vision, Darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +17, Spot +21

Aura: -

Languages: -

AC: 22; touch 12, flat-footed 18 (-2 size, +4 Dex, +10 Nat)

hp 78 (12 HD; 12d12)

Spell Resistance: 20

Saves: Fort +4, Ref +8, Will +10

Speed: 40 ft. (8 squares)

Melee: Claw +12 (2d6+7)

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Full Melee: 2 claws +12 (2d6+7) and bite +7 (1d6+3 plus poison)

Space: 15 ft. **Reach:** 10 ft.

Base Attack: +6; **Grapple:** +21

Combat Options: Create Spawn, Improved Grab, Poison, Spells

Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 10th, necromancer, defiler, DC 12 + spell level):

5th—cone of cold, magic jar, overland flight

4th—animate dead, dimension door, fire shield, shout

3rd—clairaudience/clairvoyance, halt undead, haste, invisibility sphere

2nd—command undead, false life, ghoul touch (+11 melee touch), mirror image, see invisibility, spectral hand

1st—*alarm*, *chill touch* (+11 melee touch) (2), *mage armor*, *ray of enfeeblement* (+8 ranged touch), *shocking grasp* (+11 melee touch)

0—dancing lights, disrupt undead (+8 ranged touch) (3), detect magic

Abilities: Str 24, Dex 18, Con —, Int 15, Wis 14, Cha 16

SQ: Darkvision 60 ft., Spell Resistance, Undead Traits

Feats: Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Deflect Arrows^B, Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (bite, claw)

Skills: Concentration +18, Diplomacy +5, Hide +11, Listen +17, Move Silently +19, Search +6, Sense Motive +17, Spot +21

All-Around Vision (Ex): A scarlet warden's eyes give it 360-degree vision, granting a +4 racial bonus on Spot and Search checks and preventing the beast from becoming flanked.

Create Spawn (Su): A humanoid reduced to 0 Constitution by scarlet warden poison dies but continues to breathe shallowly as if alive. After 1d6 days, the corpse rises as a namech under the scarlet warden's command.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a scarlet warden must hit with a claw attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 21, initial and secondary damage 1d6 Con. The save DC is Constitution-based.



The Chosen One CR 18

Male or Female Half-Paraelemental (Magma) / Magma Krag Cleric 4

NE Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Earth, Fire, Psionic)

Init: +11; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft.; Listen +41, Search +31, Spot +35

Aura: -

Languages: Aquan, Ignan, Terran, Ulyanese

AC: 21; touch 13, flat-footed 20*

(+3 Dex, +8 Nat)

hp 240 (37 HD; 37d12); **Fast Healing** 3

Damage Reduction: 5/magic; **Turn Resistance:** +2 (vs. Water, as 13 HD)

Immune: Fire, Rebuke Undead, Undead Traits;

Weakness: Phobia (incorporeal creatures), Turn Submission +2 (vs. Magma, as 9 HD), Vulnerability to Cold, **Vulnerability to Stone.**

Saves: Fort +15, Ref +18, Will +28

Speed: 30 ft.

Melee: Claw +22 (1d6+3)

Full Melee: 2x Claw +22 (1d6+3) and Bite +17 (2d6+1)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +18; **Grapple:** +21

Combat Options: **Ability Damage** (DC 35, 1d6 Wisdom dmg), **Blinding Touch** (DC 35), Combat Reflexes (3/round), Create Spawn, **Curse** (DC 35), Elemental Blast (60 ft line, DC 35, 8d6 Fire dmg), Elemental Infusion (DC 35), Greater Psionic Fist (+4d6), Power Attack, Psionic Meditation (Move action), Unavoidable Strike.

Combat Gear: -

Cleric Spells (CL 4+4th, DC 17 + spell level):

2nd: desecrate, enthrall, heat metal (d), silence, spiritual weapon.

1st: command, curse element, hide from undead x2, magical stone (d), shield of faith;

0th: detect magic, guidance, read magic, resistance, virtue;

Psi-Like Abilities: At will - anchored navigation, clairvoyant sense, conceal thoughts, control light, inflict pain, mindlink, precognition, telekinetic thrust; 3/day - quickened telekinetic thrust; 1/day - ultrablast. ML 41st. The save DCs are Charisma-based. *Includes augmentation for the krag's manifester level.

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Spell-Like Abilities: 1/day - burning hands, earthquake, elemental swarm, firestorm, flaming sphere, magma tunnel, pyrotechnics, stinking cloud, wall of fire; CL 37th.

Abilities: Str 17, Dex 16, Con —, Int 18, Wis 24, Cha 24
SQ: **Damage Reduction**, Darkvision 60 ft., Elemental Bond, **Fast Healing**, **Phobia (incorporeal creatures)**, Rebuke Undead (CL 4th, 10/day), Turn Resistance, Ubiquitous Vision, Undead Traits, **Vulnerability to Stone**.

Feats: Alertness, Combat Manifestation ^B, Combat Reflexes, Dire Charge, Epic Prowess, Greater Psionic Fist, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Practiced Spellcaster, Psionic Fist, Psionic Meditation, Quicken Psi-Like Ability (*telekinetic thrust*), Superior Initiative, Unavoidable Strike.

Skills: Climb +18, Concentration +40(+4), Hide +26, Intimidate +40, Knowledge (Psionics) +14, Knowledge (Religion) +28, Knowledge (The Planes) +28, Listen +42, Move Silently +26, Psicraft +20, Search +31*, Sense Motive +40, Spellcraft +12, Spot +36*.

Possessions: none (-1 CR).

Ability Damage (Su): Living creatures hit by the undead's natural attacks must succeed on a Fortitude save or take 1d6 points of ability damage. On each such successful attack, the undead gains 5 temporary hit points.

Blinding Touch (Su): The undead can make a touch attack as a standard action that doesn't provoke an attack of opportunity. The touch causes blindness in the victim for 2d4 rounds. A Fortitude save negates the effect.

Curse (Su): The undead can curse an individual when it is destroyed. As the final blow is made that kills the creature, the undead can curse its destroyer, as the *bestow curse* spell.

Divine Metamagic (Feat): When you take this feat, choose a metamagic feat. This feat applies only to that metamagic feat. As a free action, you can take the energy from turning or rebuking undead and use it to apply a metamagic feat to spells that you know. You must spend one turn or rebuke attempt, plus an additional attempt for each level increase in the metamagic feat you're using.

Cleric Domains:

- **Dead Heart** - Class Skill: Intimidate; Weapon: Impaler; Granted Power: When dealing with undead, You get a +4 bonus on interaction checks

(such as Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate, and Sense Motive). You also gain a +4 bonus on turn or rebuke attempts against undead.

- **Mountain's Fury** - Class Skill: Climb; Weapon: Heartpick; Granted Power: You do not suffer armor check penalties and encumbrance penalties to Climb checks. You may use a turn attempt to rebuke, commands, or bolster earth creatures as an evil cleric would rebuke undead.

Elemental Blast (Su): A krag can manipulate elemental energy twice per day as a standard action. The attack varies by krag type as noted below. Each attack allows the specified type of saving throw for half damage (DC 10 + ½ HD + Cha modifier) unless otherwise noted. The magma krag creates a stream of flowing obsidian. Anyone caught in this inferno suffers 8d6 points of fire damage in the first round, 6d6 in the next round, then 4d6 and, finally, 2d6. (Fort)

Elemental Infusion (Su): The victim of a krag's bite must make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + ½ HD + Cha modifier) or become cursed with a painful and fast-spreading elemental transformation. The creature suffers 1d6 points of damage per round until it dies or is cured. The type of damage varies by krag: acid damage for earth and silt; cold damage for water; electricity damage for air and rain; and fire damage for fire, magma, and sun. A remove curse or heal spell stops the infusion.

Turn Resistance (Ex): A krag has +2 turn resistance versus a cleric of the same element the krag worshiped in life. A cleric of the element the krag died to, however, has a +2 bonus on his turning or rebuking check against the krag. An evil cleric cannot rebuke or command a krag.

Ubiquitous Vision (Ps): *A krag's continuous ubiquitous vision power causes it to retain its Dexterity bonus when flat-footed. The krag also has a +4 enhancement bonus on Spot and Search checks.

Vulnerability to Stone (Ex): The undead can be harmed by nonmagical weapons made of stone. No matter the type of damage reduction, it is overcome by these common weapons.



Wezer Storm (Mob of zombie bugdead Wezers) CR 8

NE Gargantuan undead (mob of Medium undead wezers)

Init: +0; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0

Languages: -

AC: 11, touch 7, flat-footed 10

(-4 size, +1 Dex, +4 natural)

hp 195 (30 HD; 30d12)

Damage Reduction: 3/metal; **Resistance:** Fire 5

Immune: Cold, Electricity, Mob Anatomy, Undead Traits

Saves: Fort +9, Ref +10, Will +17

Speed: 5 ft. (1 squares), Fly 50 ft (average)

Melee: Mob (5d6 plus poison)

Space: 20 ft.; **Reach:** 0 ft.

Base Attack: +15; **Grapple:** +30

Combat Options: Expert Grappler, Poison, Trample (2d6)

Abilities: Str 17, Dex 12, Con -, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 1

SQ: Damage Reduction, Immunities, Mob Anatomy, Resistance to Fire, Undead Traits.

Feats: Improved Bull Rush ^B, Improved Overrun ^B

Skills: -

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 13, initial damage unconsciousness for 1 minute, secondary damage unconsciousness for 2d4 days. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Expert Grappler (Ex): A mob can maintain a grapple without penalty and still make attacks against other targets (normally, attacking other targets while grappling imposes a -20 penalty on grapple checks). A mob is never considered flat-footed while grappling.

Trample (Ex): A mob that simply moves over a creature and doesn't end its movement with that creature in one of its occupied squares can trample the creature. A trampled creature takes damage equal to 2d6 points + 1-1/2 times the mob's Strength modifier. The victim can either make an attack of opportunity against the mob or make a Reflex save (DC 25 + the mob's Str modifier) to take half damage.

Mob Anatomy (Ex): A mob has no clear front or back and no discernible anatomy, so it is not subject to critical hits or sneak attacks. A mob cannot be flanked, tripped, grappled, or bull rushed.

Unlike standard swarms, mobs are made up of relatively small numbers of individual creatures, so spells or effects that target specific numbers of creatures can have an effect on a mob. Each specific creature that is slain, disabled, or otherwise incapacitated by spells or effects that target specific creatures bestows two negative levels on the mob. A mob that gains negative levels equal to its Hit Dice breaks up as if reduced to 0 hit points. Negative levels gained in this manner are not the result of negative energy (and thus cannot be blocked by *death ward* or removed by *restoration*), but never result in permanent level loss. A mob takes half again as much damage (+50%) from spells or effects that affect an area, such as splash weapons and evocation spells.

Although mobs are treated as one creature, it sometimes becomes necessary to determine the fate of a specific individual caught up in the mob. If a mob is dispersed by nonlethal attacks, there are no casualties. If the mob is dispersed by lethal attacks, assume that 30% of its number are slain and 30% are reduced to 0 hit points. To determine a specific individual's fate, simply roll d%: a result of 01–30 indicates death, 31–60 indicates the victim is reduced to 0 hit points, and a roll of 61–100 indicates the victim escapes relatively unscathed.



Zhen Gleaming Tribunal Member CR 27

Male or Female Zhen Cleric (Magma) 16 / Psion (Seer) 5 / Psychic Theurge 4

LE Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Human, Psionic)

Init: +5; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft., Low-Light Vision; Listen +15, Search +18, Spot +21

Aura: -

Languages: Aquan, Ignan, Ulyanese, Ulyanese Giant

AC: 29; touch 11, flat-footed 28**

(+1 Dex, +10 Nat, +3 armor, +5 shield)

hp 187 (25 HD; 25d12+25); **Fast Healing** 6

Damage Reduction: 10/magic

Immune: Spells (*cure moderate wounds, enthrall, sanctuary*), Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects, **Vulnerability to Iron**

Saves: Fort +13, Ref +9, Will +25

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Speed: 40 ft.; Obsidian Climb

Melee: Slam +21 (1d8+4) or Touch +21 (Brand or by spell)

Full Melee: 2x Slam +21 (1d8+4)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +17/+12/+7; **Grapple:** +21

Combat Options: Brand (3/day), Psionic Meditation (Move action)

Combat Gear: Animated Obsidian Heavy Shield +3, Staff of Obsidian Storms (see new magic items in Chapter 10), MW Studded Leather Armor

Psi-Like Abilities (Psi): At will—aura sight*, body adjustment*, body equilibrium, catfall*, control light, elfsight**, false sensory input*, psionic charm*, psionic daze*, psionic suggestion*, ubiquitous vision**; ML = 20th. The save DCs are Charisma-based. *Includes augmentation for the krag's manifest level.

Psion Powers (ML 9th, PP: 72+27, DC 16 + power level):

5th: Baleful Teleport, Psionic Teleport

4th: Detect Remote Viewing, Psionic Dismissal, Psionic Fly, Trace Teleport

3rd: Astral Caravan, Dispel Psionics, Energy Bolt, Eradicate Invisibility

2nd: Cloud Mind, Dimension Swap, Psionic Levitation, Thought Shield

1st: Astral Traveler, Conceal Thoughts, Detect Teleportation, Mind Thrust, Sense Link

Spell-Like Abilities: 1/day - animate dead, create greater undead, create undead; CL = HD.

Cleric Spells (CL 21st, DC 19 + spell level):

10th: *enlarged* mass heal

9th: fissure (d), greater elemental chariot, heartseeker, implosion, mass harm, soul bind

8th: antimagic field, discern location, elemental storm, gray rift (d), *maximized* elemental strike, Create Greater Undead

7th: earthquake (d), elemental chariot, *enlarged* blade barrier, greater scrying, *quicken*ed dimensional anchor, sands of time

6th: braxatskin, flesh to stone (d), forbiddance, harm, ingathering the shards, word of recall;

5th: cleansing flame, elemental strike, commune, greater command, mass inflict moderate wounds, *quicken*ed shield of faith, unhallow, unliving identity (d);

4th: birthfurnace, elemental armor, elemental weapon, *enlarged* searing light x2, *heightened* hide from undead, inflict critical wounds, tongues, vampiric touch (d);

3rd: animate dead, bestow curse, deeper darkness, dispel magic, searing light, speak with dead, spike stones (d), wind wall;

2nd: desecrate, enthrall, heat metal (d), inflict moderate wounds, resist elements, Return to the Earth, silence, spiritual weapon.

1st: command x2, curse element, endure elements x2, heat lash, hide from undead, magical stone (d), shield of faith;

0th: detect magic, guidance, inflict minor wounds, read magic, resistance, virtue;

Abilities: Str 18, Dex 12, Con —, Int 22, Wis 28, Cha 22

SQ: Cleric Domains (Dead Heart, Mountain's Fury), Create Undead, **Damage Reduction**, Darkvision 60 ft., **Fast Healing**, Gray Toughness 1, Low-Light Vision, Obsidian Climb, Rebuke Undead (CL 25th, 12/day), Skills, **Spell Immunity**, Undead Traits, Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects, **Vulnerability to Iron**.

Feats: Enlarge Spell, Extra Turning, Greater Power Penetration, Heighten Spell, Improved Spell Capacity (10th), Inquisitor, Maximize Spell, Power Penetration, Psionic Meditation, Quicken Spell, Speed of Thought.

Skills: Climb +4, Concentration +34, Intimidate +30, Knowledge (Psionics) +30, Knowledge (Religion) +34, Knowledge (The Planes) +22, Listen +15, Psicraft +30, Search +18, Sense Motive +15(+10), Spellcraft +30, Spot +21.

Possessions: 350,000cp or Combat Gear plus: Cloak of Charisma +6, Crystal Mask of Psionic Craft, Headband of Intelligence +6, Pearl of Power (6th), Periapt of Wisdom +6, Strand of Prayer Beads (Greater: Healing, Karma, Summons, Wind Walking), Vest of Resistance +5.

Brand (Su): Up to three times per day, the creature can trace a lasting mark on a creature's skin with its fingers by making a touch attack. This touch deals 1d8 points of damage and inflicts a -2 penalty on any interaction checks the victim makes (such as Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate, and Sense Motive); the brand leaves a disturbing impression on anyone who sees it. Both the damage and penalty are permanent. A remove curse or heal spell removes the brand and its negative effects.

Clerical Domains:

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- **Dead Heart** - Class Skill: Intimidate; Weapon: Impaler; Granted Power: When dealing with undead, You get a +4 bonus on interaction checks (such as Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate, and Sense Motive). You also gain a +4 bonus on turn or rebuke attempts against undead.
- **Mountain's Fury** - Class Skill: Climb; Weapon: Heartpick; Granted Power: You do not suffer armor check penalties and encumbrance penalties to Climb checks. You may use a turn attempt to rebuke, commands, or bolster earth creatures as an evil cleric rebukes undead.

Vulnerability to Iron (Ex): The undead can be harmed by nonmagical weapons made of iron. No matter the type of damage reduction, it is overcome by these common weapons.

Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects (Ex): The undead, unlike most others of its type, is susceptible to mind-affecting effects, which affect the undead as though its type were the same as that of a living version of the creature (or as a humanoid, if it has no living analog).



Appendix 2: New Items

Sending Stones, Psionic

These fist-sized chunks of unworked stone are mirror images of one another.

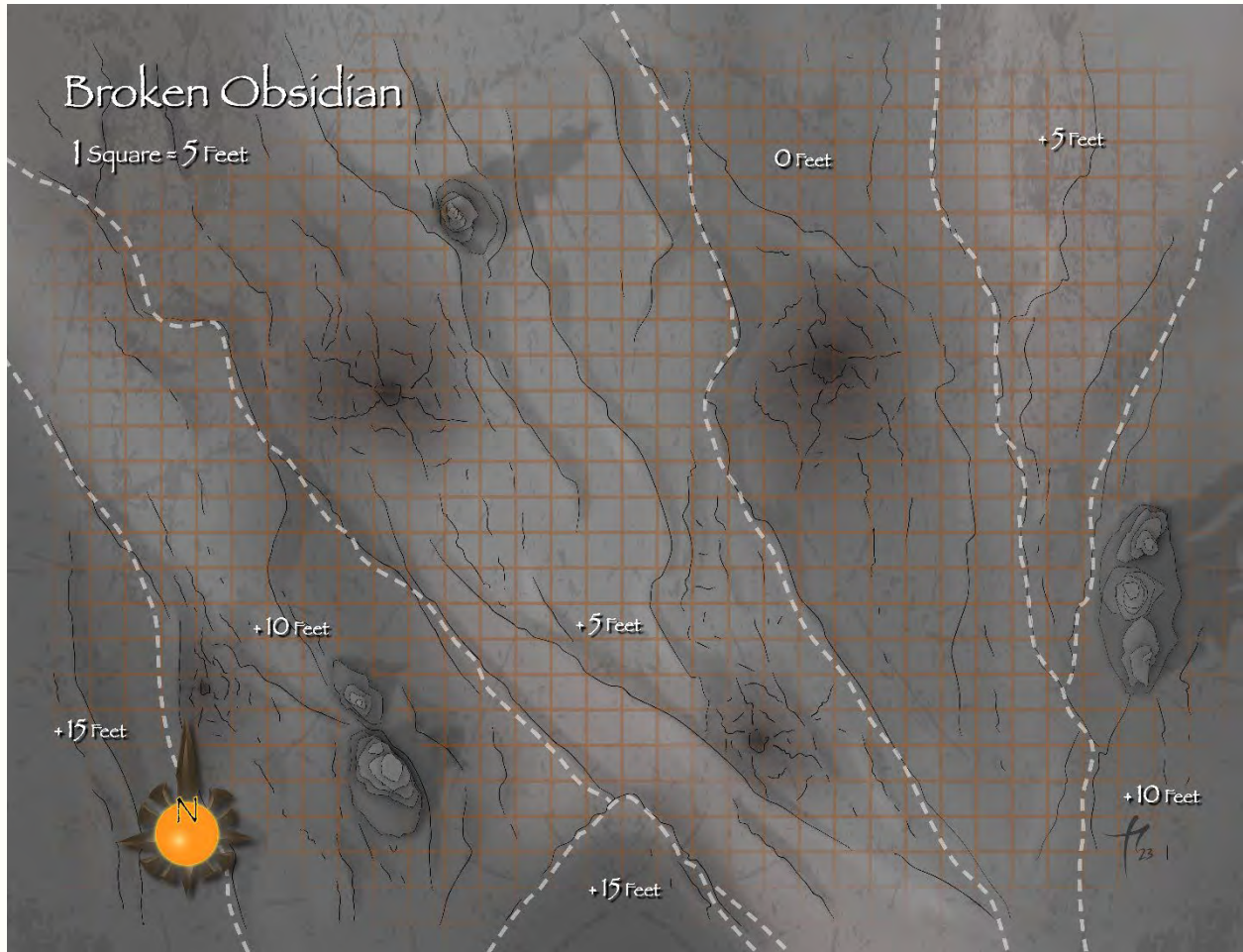
These unremarkable-looking stones come in pairs. Once per day, the bearer of each stone can send a message (as the *correspond* power) to the bearer of the

other stone. If a stone's mate is not in a creature's possession, no message is sent and you know the communication has failed. If either stone of the pair is destroyed, the other becomes useless.

Strong telepathy; CL 7th; Craft Universal Item, *correspond*; Price 1,400 gp.



Appendix 3: Maps





**Group 4 – Tales of the
Unbound**

Adventures in the Dead Lands

Unbound and Unleashed

Tales of the Unbound, part 1



A Dark Sun 3.5e adventure module for four 3rd-level characters

A new type of undead has appeared in the Dead Lands and the Necrologium of Deshentarum has plans to test their capabilities...

Credits

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Introduction

Unbound and Unleashed is a short D&D adventure for four 3rd-level player characters (PCs). The adventure assumes all characters are undead “Unbound” characters, created using the template listed in Appendix 2.

Alternatively, the adventure could be run for four Unbound PCs of 10th level. Consult the “DM’s Option - The Agents of Gretch” sidebar for more information on this variation.

While any combination of races and classes can be used for this adventure, for the sake of maximum setting immersion, it is suggested that the choice of races be limited to those that would have been in Ulyan during the Green Age (human, elf, half elf, mul, or dwarf and perhaps even orcs or goblins), but any combination of classes and races could theoretically work with the adventure as written.

Developer’s notes

As we were getting started making the NPCs for Faces of the Dead Lands, Adam Cieszlak had the idea to make a concept for workable Dark Sun undead PCs. I thought it was a fun idea, so I helped out, adding some back story and a name for them. From there, the idea for campaign to introduce and use them followed, inspired by John Le Carré’s spy novels.

The purpose of this series was always to help such low-level undead survive and gain levels in the impossibly high-level Dead Lands. But in order to make entertaining adventures for a party that would always be outmatched by almost every single creature around them, we had to get VERY creative with non-combat scenarios. Perhaps that’s why we went so strongly in the direction of stealth adventures.

During development, Adam pointed out that there will be players or characters who would not at all be interested in stealth or interaction elements, and it might be good to provide an alternative way of playing these. This was how the “Agents of Gretch” alternative play mode for these adventures came about.

I think this may be one of the only campaigns I’ve ever seen which was designed so it could be played in two vastly different styles – stealth or murderhobo. -JM

It is suggested that the party be more focused on stealth, psionics, and/or magic than combat. The setup of this adventure will put ‘hack-and-slash’ parties at a disadvantage. It is also important that at least one of the PCs be able to read and write.

Preparation

You (the DM) will need the 3rd edition revised D&D core rulebooks, including the *Player’s Handbook*, the *Dungeon Master’s Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*, as well as the *Expanded Psionics Handbook*. This adventure also uses material from *Faces of the Dead Lands*, *Secrets of the Dead Lands*, *Terrors of the Dead Lands* and the *Dark Sun 3.5 conversion* rulebook from Athas.org, but all necessary rules are already included.

Experience Points and Non-Combat

Since so much of this adventure revolves around the PCs deftly avoiding violent confrontations, it makes sense to apply the optional rule that avoiding conflicts with an enemy should count for the same amount of experience as defeating them in combat.

Since such a system can be abused, this rule should have restrictions:

- 1.) There has to be the threat of combat in the first place with the enemy in question.
- 2.) It should only apply once per enemy.

Adventure Background

Emboldened by the success of his “Negotiators”, The Vizier has decided to experiment with a new type of infiltration agent. At his behest, the High Wizard Rhokhan has assembled a group of the rarest sort of undead - a brand new batch of Unbound. Since these Unbound are a rare and unknown commodity, it is believed they will be capable of actions no other undead would be able to achieve.

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Rhokhan has been tasked with mentoring these new undead and helping them acclimate to unlife in the Dead Lands. To test their capabilities and creativity, their first task will be to steal a rare item from Kushtan's Museum - the skull of a pyreen.

Overview

Rhokhan manages the PCs by acting as their mentor and teacher, treating them as she might her students. The first mission: she needs the skull of a long dead green age creature for a new project - something called a pyreen. The only such item ever found was in the mines of Shadowmourn. Rhokhan knows Qwith keeps it in her warehouse of parts under her Menagerie. The PCs must steal it and bring it back to the Necrologium. If they do so, they will be rewarded.

The PCs travel to Shadowmourn during an annual racing gala.

Once in Shadowmourn, the PCs will need to figure out how to blend into the city and get where they need to go. They must learn the routines of the building's guards before attempting to break into the archives beneath the Menagerie.

Instructed to avoid notice or making a scene, the level of mayhem caused will be up to the PCs, but that choice could have consequences.

Once they have the skull, the PCs will need to get it and themselves back to Deshentarum.

Preludes

Because this is an adventure for new characters, adventure hooks are unnecessary.

In this adventure, all of the player characters (PCs) will be undead, with the Unbound template (see Appendix 2) applied to them before the adventure starts.

Making character backstories for a new land populated by the undead can prove a challenge for players and DMs alike. To make this process easier, this optional section has been provided to assist in generating session zero backstories which will mesh well with an Unbound campaign.

While these backstories are not a required part of the adventure, they can help provide fuller immersion in the setting of the Dead Lands.

Background Option 1 - PCs Originate in the Time of Magic

Assuming the PCs lived in Ulyan before the Obsidian Tide, the DM and player can work together to develop a short backstory based around the character's life during the late Time of Magic. In practice, this will mean designing the PC as if they were from a more "standard" fantasy setting (albeit with less metal and magic).

The following suggestions can be added to characters' backstories to better integrate the characters into the Dead Lands history:

- **Defilers or Preservers:** most likely studied magic in Nagarvos (now the City 1000 Dead), either under a renegade Pristine Tower student named Pandruj, or as a servant of the Navel (note the caster will need Greycasting as one of their Undead Special Abilities).
- **Psions or Clerics:** were possibly students at the Psionic Temple in Nagarvos, or hailing from the Sparkling Gem Sea coast during the days of the Sageocracy.
- **Barbarians:** may have originated among the Musraafi clans, or former Cholite plainsmen to the east.
- **Elves:** could come from the swamps of Elsavos moving west to seek their fortune in Nagarvos. Or they could have been found in an ancient burial site in northern Deshentu.
- **Dwarves:** could come from either the Colony of Toganay, an ancient burial site in western Deshentu, or from Nagarvos itself.

Other Classes - for classes or races not listed above, they might come from:

- The cosmopolitan hub of Nagarvos.
- The farming and shepherding villages of southern Ulyan, within sight of the Hoarwall.
- Nomadic tribes of the Numaridean Kingdom (what is now presently western Deshentu).

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Background Option 2 - PCs are More Recently Dead

This origin is better suited for races and class combinations that would not have been seen in Green Age Ulyan, such as thri-kreen, half-giants, halflings, etc.

For this background, the DMs and players could create a backstory involving their traveling into the Dead Lands and being killed at the hands of one enemy or another. Ideally for the sake of this adventure, the PCs should have died somewhere in or near Deshentu.

Alternatively, the PC might have died outside the Dead Lands and their body was later transported to Deshentu somehow, leaving a mystery to be explored later.

Choosing Gear

Since PCs are starting at Level 3, they have 2700cp to spend on gear. The DM should assist the PCs in choosing appropriate items for the characters.

DM's Option - Agents of Gretch

Unbound and Unleashed is designed for an introductory party of four 3rd level characters, but with some additional setup, the adventure could be repurposed to run a party of four 10th level characters.

In this scenario, Gretch, through his double-agent Anzatias, secretly tasks the Necrologium's new recruits (the PCs) with causing as much havoc as possible at Shadowmourn's Gala. With this alternate styling, the goal would be to achieve as high an Incident score (see Getting Out below) as possible with as little suspicion as possible, and ultimate success and rewards would be based upon that.

In this case, to calculate the PCs final reward, subtract the final Incident score from 12 and use that instead, while using the same Suspicion score calculation as before.

Part 1: A Fresh Start

A) The Tests

The first thing the PCs are aware of is that they are lying in open caskets made of black stone, under a glowing green crystalline diagram on the wall. Beneath the diagram they see a tall, thin, statuesque, middle-aged human woman with iridescent black skin and shiny wavy hair. She is dressed in floor-length white robes and stands with her hands outstretched while she chants in an arcane language.

The PCs hear a voice to their left:

"Madam, it is a success! they are awake!"

The lady ends her trance and lowers her hands.



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"Excellent. Welcome to unlife. I'm certain you are disorientated. The numbness and strange feelings in your body will pass with time.

"I am the High Wizard Rhokhan, and this is the Necrologium."

"The world looks very different to you now no doubt. This world of obsidian on which we stand is not the world you knew as a living being."

Rhokhan then approaches each PC and asks: "Tell me, what is the last thing you remember?"

While the PCs talk, the scribe following her around is taking notes: "I know you have questions, which I will be happy to get to in due time. But first, you are no doubt curious to know what your new bodies are capable of, yes? As it happens, we're curious as well. I have some tests we can use for this purpose. Come with me."

1) The First Test - The Box (EL -)

Rhokhan and her servants lead the PCs to a long room lined with stained glass windows along the walls, multiple arches crossing the ceiling, and a floor which seems to be covered with black sand. Under each arch sits a frieze depicting the training of a great army of various kinds of undead. The windows themselves are a diamond shape, with the panels arranged in the style of a cracked diamond emblem symbol.

"As you all are now keenly aware, you are no longer living. With your undeath comes new capabilities. Sometimes these are blessings in a fashion, sometimes they are curses. But all have their uses.

"If you are to be helpful to our cause, both you and I must know your capabilities. Hence this series of tests. Are you ready?"

Rhokhan leads the characters in front of what seems to be a 10' x 10' x 10' stone block. Upon first inspection, there doesn't seem to be any entrances to it.

"You have 30 seconds (5 rounds) to determine what is inside this chamber."

PCs are allowed to use their skills, magic spells or psionic powers, or any other means to discover what is inside. With a high enough Search check (DC 18), they will find a trap door hidden in the sandy floor 10 feet away from the stone box, which could be opened with

either sufficient Strength or an Open Locks check (DC 18). This leads to a 20-foot-long underground tunnel which opens up into another unlocked trap door in the bottom of the box.

If they are able to get inside the box, the PCs discover a non-magical gold bracelet on a small pedestal within. They must then communicate or otherwise bring back their findings to Rhokhan before the time limit ends.

If the PCs succeed, Rhokhan will smile and instruct her scribe to make a note. If they refuse to do the task or if they fail, Rhokhan will frown and instruct her scribe to make a note.

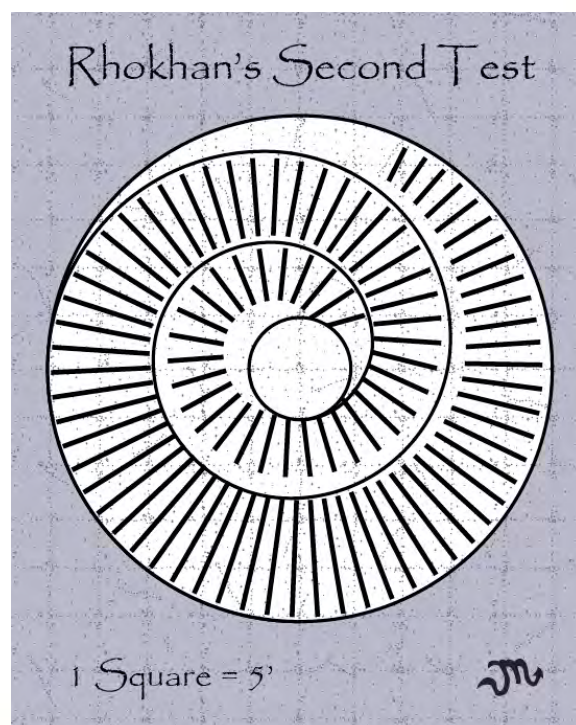
Either way, they will move on to the next test.

2) The Second Test - The Spiral (EL 3)

Unarmed Skeletons (CR ½) – See Appendix

The PCs are led by one of Rhokhan's assistants further down the room to tables full of their preferred weapons and some leather armor (if they are capable of wearing it). The Armorer helps them get equipped.

Once they are geared up, the PCs are instructed to stand outside of a 50' diameter circle nearby. In the



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middle of the circle stands a long bone spear with a piece of leather hanging from the end as a flag.

Once they are all in position, the circle rises 30 feet up, becoming a series of stairs spiraling up to a circular platform at the top. All stairs are 10' wide, with no outer banister.

"You have 1 minute (10 rounds) to collect the spear."

If the PCs were to walk up the stairs at normal movement speed, they would reach the top in 5 rounds.

However, this won't be that simple – the moment all PCs have stepped onto the spiraling stairs, 1d4 unarmed mindless skeletons will appear each round to fight them (up to a maximum of 20), seemingly rising out of the sandy steps themselves around whoever is at the *lowest* point on the spiral tower. The skeletons will pursue the PCs once they appear at their normal movement rate, and will fight until either the skeletons are destroyed, or the PCs are incapacitated. The skeletons will not go away or stop attacking if the PCs step off the tower. The only way to make the skeletons disappear would be either claiming the spear or running out of time.



The spear is stuck into the top of the tower, but it can be removed with a Strength check (DC 18), which can be repeated as necessary.

PCs can collect the spear in any fashion that suits them. It is possible for one or more of the PCs to ascend the steps quickly, but they will need to hurry or their companions may be overwhelmed. The party could also stay together and fight their way up the steps as a group, but it would be a literal uphill battle.

If they succeed in time, Rhokhan smiles and instructs her scribe to make a note. If they refuse to do the task or if they fail, Rhokhan will frown and instruct her scribe to make a note.

Either way, any PCs who have been injured or incapacitated will be revived after the encounter, and once they have recovered Rhokhan and the party will move on to the next test.

3) The Third Test - The Balcony (EL -)

Rhokhan leads them outside of the building into the street. For the first time, the PCs see the city of Deshentarum.

Stepping out from the archway, the dazzling crimson sun reflects off the faces of the black obsidian tiles. The world around you looks to have been fabricated out of various shades of this black glass substance, giving an otherworldly feel to what otherwise looks to be a very old city.

The cobbled avenue stretches out before you, with gracefully carved multi-story townhouses and shops looming over the street. If they had been fabricated out of wood and stone, they would have looked different only in their coloration. Small blackstone sculptures of unknown plants and creatures dot the central dividing island in the street.

You then notice an odd being across the street pulling a handcart. It is a muscular zombie with rotting flesh falling away to reveal the muscles underneath, wearing tattered and faded clothes similar to those of the other merchants. Looking around, every being in sight behaves as if unaware that they've become undead, and are continuing to go about their business as if the city had never changed.

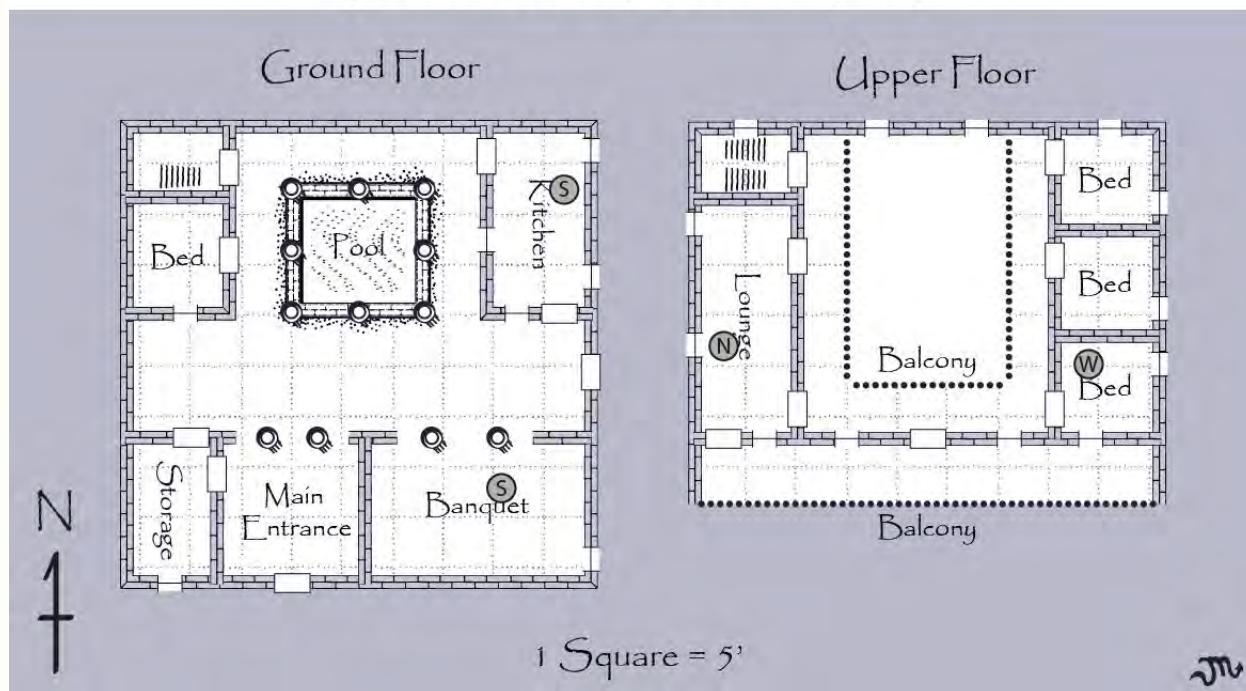
Rhokhan leads them through a courtyard and down a street, to a noble's townhouse. She then turns to the PCs and says:

"You all have 1 minute (10 rounds) to get at least one of you onto the top floor balcony of that noble's house. But there are three restrictions: first, you cannot harm the noble or anyone in the house. Second, you cannot alert the guards or cause anyone in the house to alert them. Third, whatever you do, you cannot be seen from outside the house until you reach the balcony."

When running this encounter, the DM should keep track of where the noble, his wife, and the two namech servants are located on any given turn. Normal movement speed for unaugmented PCs on this map would be 6 squares in one round.

The noble (N) starts in the lounge, the noble's wife (W) is in the southernmost bedroom on the upper floor, one namech servant (S1) is in the kitchen, and the other namech (S2) is in the banquet hall. (See Appendix 3 for an empty version of the map without NPC starting locations)

Rhokhan's Third Test (Deshenten Noble's Villa)



From the moment the PCs enter the house, roll D6 for each resident:

Die roll	Result
1-4	Stay where they are
5-6	Move idly towards another room (1d6 squares for noble or his wife, 6 squares for servants)

For skill checks, consider all four residents to have the following skills: Listen +9, Search +7, Spot +9. Unless they have been alerted to the PCs presence, they will not be expecting anyone in the house.

The PCs can go about getting to the balcony in whatever way suits them. If they can fly or climb walls, then they merely have to worry about doing so unseen. The walls are made of obsidian bricks (Climb DC 20). If they go in through the house, they will either need to use stealth (making several Hide and/or Move Silently checks, DC 18) or persuasion.

If the PCs interact with the servants or noble's wife, they will need to make at least one Bluff, Diplomacy or Intimidation check (DC 20) to either convince them the PCs are supposed to be there or convince them to keep quiet about it; checks to persuade the noble himself are harder (DC 24). The DM should encourage the PCs to roleplay out the conversation and give the PCs a bonus on their skill check (up to +4) depending on the quality of their ruse.

If the PCs fail a persuasion check, a namech servant will run and leave the house to fetch guards, who will arrive 1d4+1 rounds later. If the PCs make it to the balcony in the same round they are spotted by the nobles or the guards, Rhokhan will explain the situation to the nobles and guards, absolving the PCs of wrongdoing.

If the PCs succeed in time, Rhokhan smiles and instructs her scribe to make a note. If they refuse to do the task or if they fail, Rhokhan will frown and instruct her scribe to make a note.

Either way, they will move onto the next test.

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4) The Final Test (EL 3)

Mindless Zombie Shoppers (CR ½) – See Appendix

The Running Zombie (CR 3) – See Appendix

Once the PCs return to Rhokhan, they find her smiling. “Now, onto our last test. You will need these.” She first hands the PCs a leather map of the city (see the map in Appendix 3), with a brown square indicating where they currently are. She is then about to hand them a purse when a thinking zombie suddenly rushes by and snatches it from her hands.

Rhokhan turns to you in alarm: “*Stop that thief!*”

The PCs must now outrun and outsmart this thief. The following map indicates the path it is taking through Dshentarium’s templar quarter and marketplace. Since he is moving at full speed (double moves each round, 40 ft movement rate), the thief will have an 80 ft head start on the party. The thinking zombie’s destination seems to be the eastern gate. How the PCs intercept him is up to them - they are free to use spells and psionics as they choose, and there is no restriction on killing the target, although collateral damage might not look good to their master.

The city is not a quiet one— there are undead residents everywhere. What’s worse, depending on how much the runner or the PCs disturb the mindless zombie locals from their “daily routines”, they may find themselves attacked by those locals, potentially slowing them down even more.

The following are movement penalties for moving through various levels of crowd density. Trying to go faster than indicated in these crowds will require a Dexterity check (DC 18) to avoid crashing into one or more mindless zombies and starting a fight:

Mindless zombies will only pursue for one round before attempting to revert back to their daily routines.



Astute PCs may guess from the map that the thief is headed out of the city, and that there is more than one way to get there. If the PCs are able to get to a main thoroughfare, they could enjoy unimpeded movement.

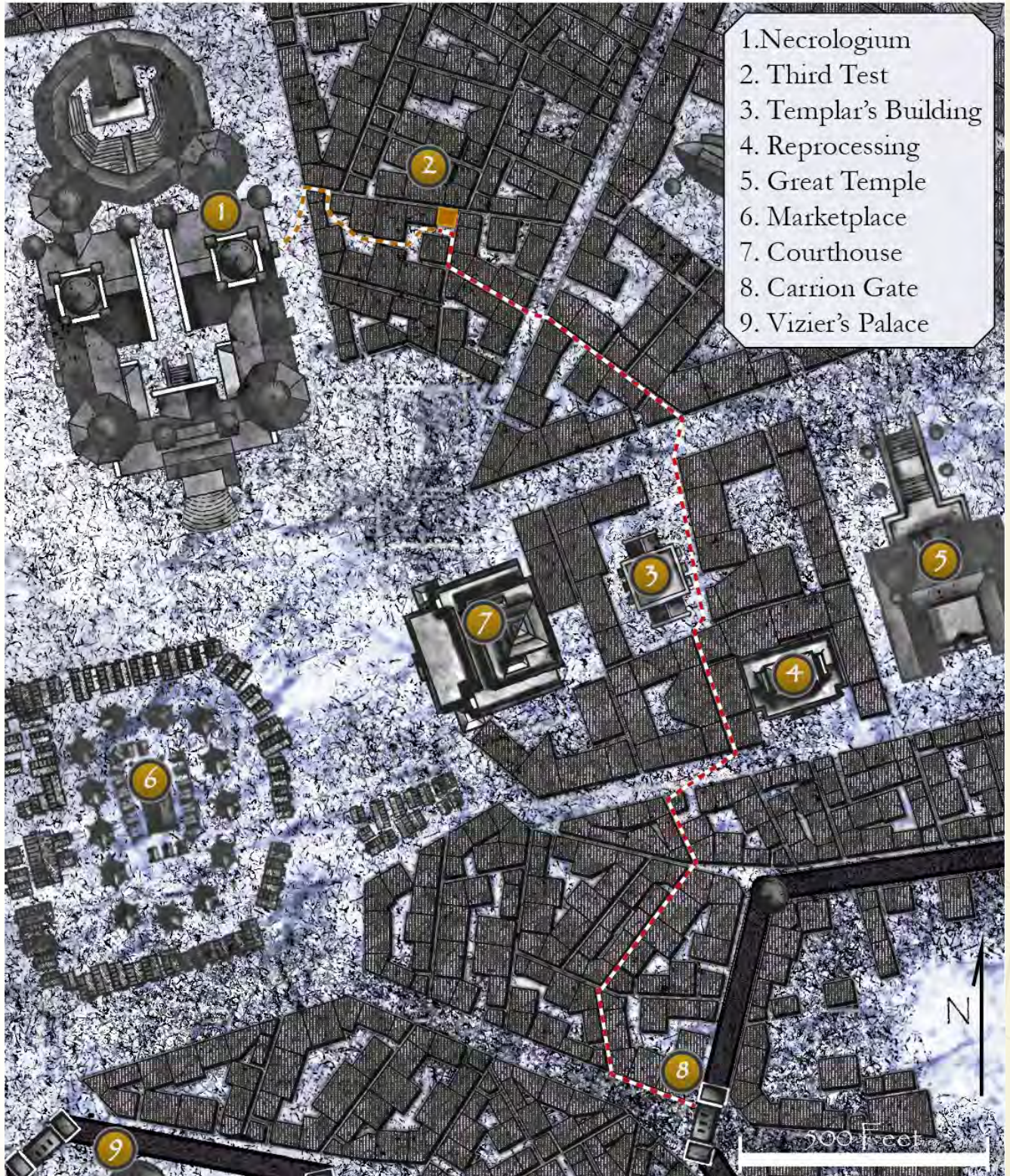
Crowd Density	Map Areas	Safe move penalty	Failed Dex check
Thin (open areas)	Open area between 6 and 7	normal speed	-
Light (wide avenues, edges of marketplace)	4 - Reprocessing 5 - Great Temple	-10 feet	1d6 mindless zombies will attack
Medium (wide avenue when busy, narrow street when not busy)	Small alleys approaching 8 7 - Courthouse	-20 feet	1d12 mindless zombies will attack
Heavy (narrow street outside of important building or shop)	3 - Templar’s Building 6 - Marketplace 8 - Carrion Gate	-30 feet	1d6+6 mindless zombies will attack

It’s ultimately up to the DM how much they want to slow the PCs or the runner down. But moving at full speed, the PCs should reach the Carrion Gate within 36 rounds (including being slowed down by crowds). The thief will only use surface roads and alleys, and will not run into or through buildings. If he is not being visibly pursued when he reaches the Templar’s Building (Area 3), the thief will slow down to his normal speed (40 ft per round). If he slows down like this, he will reach the gate in 56 rounds.

If they succeed, Rhokhan smiles and instructs her scribe to make a note. If they refuse to do the task or if they fail, Rhokhan will frown and instruct her scribe to make a note.

Development: If the PCs have passed at least two of the tests, Rhokhan will smile broadly and say:

Deshentarium City Centre and Tests



Adventures in the Dead Lands

"Excellent. You will do nicely for our purposes.

You have been created to be different from other undead. Everything in the lands of the Dead Thrones is based on hierarchies and control. Weaker and lesser creatures are subject to the powers and whims of greater beings. Everyone is someone else's slave.

"Everyone, that is, except you.

"We are taking a chance on you because we need something all the armies in Ulyan seem to lack – creativity. You have the rarest commodity in the land right now: free will. You can go places few entities would even think of going. You can find unexpected solutions when problems are presented. This makes you very dangerous indeed.

"There is significant power in each of you, but you are 'young'. It will take time, experience, and training to

develop your abilities. Fortunately, you stand within the greatest bastion of dedicated academic knowledge left in the world, and I am its headmistress. Nowhere else will you have a better opportunity to learn the secrets of undeath.

"So, I am going to give you a choice that no other newly animated undead has ever been given: work for us, aid us in our cause, and as you advance through the ranks of the Deshenten army you will be rewarded in many ways: wealth, knowledge, and power both eldritch and political."

"Will you help us?"

If the PCs have failed 3 or more tests, or refuse to go along with the mission, go straight to the Failure section.

Part 2: The Mission

If the PCs accept, read the following...

"Splendid. Now for a task uniquely suited to your abilities...

"There is an item in Qwith's Menagerie which I need you to acquire. It is the skull of an ancient creature known as a pyreen. I am certain even after all these centuries, it still contains many powerful secrets.

"As it happens, fate has provided us with an ideal opportunity to liberate the item. This year Shadowmourn is hosting the Dead Thrones Racing Gala, an annual exhibition of power projection and posturing between the cavalry forces of the various Dead Throne armies. True to form, the duchess Qwith has built a menagerie showing off the finest specimens of her collections all in one place, and plans to open them up for public exhibition during the event.

"Since treachery and plots are as much of a mainstay of this event as chariot racing, she will of course be expecting you. Or rather, she will be expecting thieves or saboteurs from at least one of the Dead Thrones.

"Now this is where your minds and wits will be needed. The gala will start two days from now, and only lasts four days. The day after it ends, her menagerie will close and the contents of the

exhibition will be placed back into the archives. This is the time window you will have in which to plan and execute your heist."

"You have access to my armory for equipment to assist you. Bear in mind that directly engaging Shadowmourn's security forces would not only be suicidal for you at best, but would alert them to your presence, potentially end our ceasefire, and could lead to an indefinite shutdown of the museum, ruining our chances of ever getting the skull."

At this point, Rhohkhan will take questions. She will give each PC time to ask two brief questions and will answer them to the best of her ability. After this, she will say she has pressing Necrologium matters to attend to, and she will refer the PCs to her archivist Anzatias (whom she summons to the room) to answer any remaining questions.

When they are finished, they will be escorted to the armory next door to this building.

A) Gearing Up

The PCs will have a day to prepare. They should now have access to all the equipment they initially picked out for their characters and will have the opportunity

Adventures in the Dead Lands

to make whatever preparations they need (within reason).

The following items have been made available for the PCs use for this task only. Each PC can pick *only one set* of items from the list below:

- 4 potion-orbs of *Alter Self*
- 4 potion-orbs of *Invisibility*
- 4 Single-Use spell-storing throwing knives containing *Hold Undead*, each affecting a target with *Hold Undead* (CL 5th, DC 13) with a successful attack.
- 4 single-use smoke bombs (single use of the spell *Obscuring Mist* cast at 1st level, 20 ft in diameter, lasting for 1 minute).
- 4 Psionic tattoos of *Telekinetic Force*

In addition, the PCs as a group will receive one *Bird Feather Token* given to a PC who can read and write (which the armorer will explain is for “sending a message back to us as needed”).

Asking for more than one of the sets of items will draw a dubious look from the armorer, who will vocally question their “supposed creativity”.

If they ask for other items beyond these special items and their equipment, they will be reminded that such things take time to source, and they are leaving for Shadowmourn within the hour.

B) Getting Into Kushtan

It is 30 miles from Deshentu and Kushtan and the trip takes approximately one full day. The first half of the journey will be through Deshentu’s Killing Grounds. If the players stay on the road they should be safe from the traps, but they will be readily visible to traffic moving in either direction. While this is not a problem yet, if they are escaping from Kushtan later it may

prove to be. Review “The Killing Grounds of Deshentu” section of *Secrets of the Dead Lands* if the PCs ever stray off road.

The first strategic choice the PCs will have to make is how they enter the city. No matter what method they choose, the PCs will be given a passcode that can be used to identify them as Deshenten agents, should they require assistance from the Deshenten delegation.

As part of the Deshenten delegation: One way to enter Kushtan is to pretend to be part of the Deshenten delegation. This would provide the party with solid cover identities and get them access to most of the places they may need to visit for the duration of the Gala, including:

- The Menagerie tour on Day 1
- Access to all areas of the Circus
- Limited access into the city for the Courier House or the Stables for supplies. The PCs will still need to let the guards know where they are going, but lying to them will be relatively easy (Bluff DC10).

However, if something should go wrong with their mission, there will be consequences for both the PCs and the Deshenten delegation, as well as for Deshentu itself. See the Consequences list under Suspicion Score in Part 3.

On their own: The other option for PCs who are skilled at persuasion or disguise is to assume or fabricate

Incident and Suspicion Scores

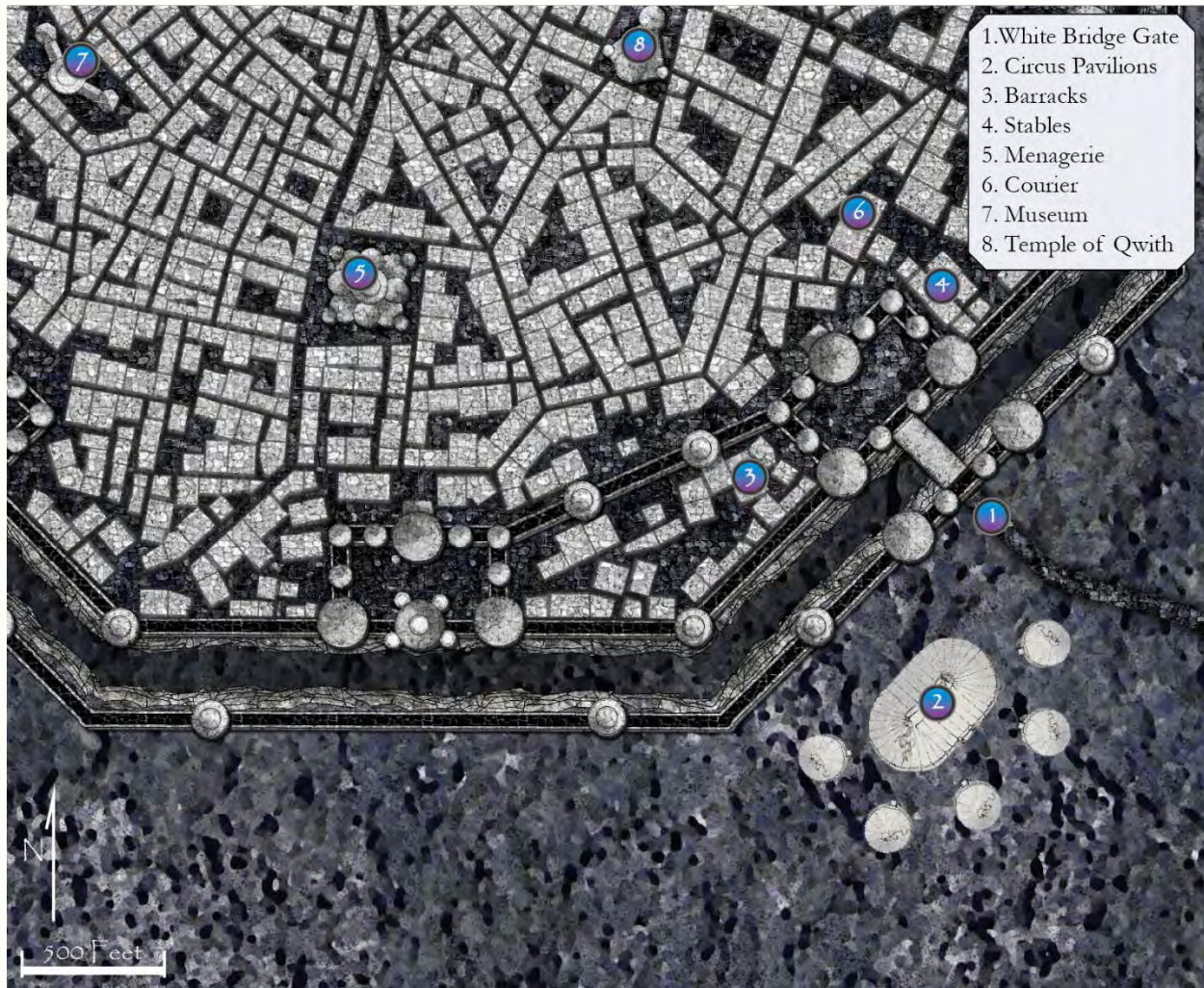
From this point on, the DM should secretly keep track of two scores: Incident and Suspicion. Each possible action will have the potential to increase these two scores. The higher these two numbers become, the more serious the consequences will be for the PCs and their mission.

General increases to consider:

- For each killed guard discovered by security: Incident +1 (unless hidden, guards will be discovered 1 day after they are killed)
- If the PCs are seen attacking a guard: Suspicion +1
- For each guard who has recovered from being held or otherwise incapacitated: Incident +0, Suspicion +1
- If the PCs are witnessed by Shadowmourn guards/leadership:
 - In a restricted area: Incident +1, Suspicion +2
 - Attacking Shadowmourn citizens/soldiers: Incident +3, Suspicion +5
 - Holding the Skull: Incident +10, Suspicion +6

Each time the Incident or Suspicion scores increase, the Incident and Suspicion tables (in the Getting Out section) should be consulted for the consequences of the PCs actions. The final Incident and Suspicion scores will affect the ultimate successfulness of the PCs mission.

Kushtan City and Circus Pavilions



another identity to deceive the gate guards. Bold characters might even use the Hide skill to slip unnoticed into another nation's delegation. This will require a skill check (Bluff, Diplomacy, Disguise, Intimidate, Hide, etc - DC 20; modified by +/-2 for the quality of the plan and roleplaying), with the price of failure being turned away from the city. If the PCs fail two such attempts in a row, then the guards will suspect the PCs of being up to no good, and they will be detained for questioning. (See "Should the PCs get Captured" section below in Part 2).

Even if they do succeed this way, they will have to talk or sneak their way into every area into which they want access (DC 18 skill check for low security, DC 20 for medium security, and DC 22 for high security). But in exchange for this hard work they will have a much freer hand in going where they want to go in the city

and fewer consequences if their mission is unsuccessful.

C) Shadowmourn's Gala

As part of the annual gala, the other Dead Thrones send a parade of charioteers to Shadowmourn for their circus, to engage in a "friendly" race with their forces. Begun several years after the Bugdead Accords, the Dead Thrones have grown to appreciate the annual chance to prove their superiority against one another in a relatively non-costly way. Each nation does of course plot and cheat on one another, but little ever comes of it, as they expect such predictable dirty tricks and easily prevent them. Shadowmourn is the host this

Adventures in the Dead Lands

year due to their charioteer winning the last year's grand race.

The schedule for the events for all locations runs as follows:

Day 1 (Opening and Tour)

- The Deshenten delegation arrives along with other delegations. Everything is already set up (one day ago).
- Opening ceremony.
- The Menagerie of the Duchess is open to all, with a guided tour being given to delegates who wish to attend (part of Qwith's power projection strategy). The Menagerie will be considered a restricted area by security after Day 1.

Day 2 (Menagerie at Circus)

- To start the Gala, the Grand Circus is held in the main Pavilion featuring the creatures from the Menagerie. All creatures except the Rampager will be brought from their cages in the Menagerie to the Circus for their performance and be returned to the Menagerie at the end of that evening. The museum will be nearly deserted except for a minimal crew of guards until the evening.
- Security will be on alert near the pavilion in case the Menagerie creatures break free.

Day 3 (Show Races)

- A day of show races between the lesser racers from each nation in a double-elimination tournament. The delegations will be occupied all day.

Day 4 (Final Day)

- The Grand Race is held between all five nations. The best racers have been saved for this day, to all race in one battle royale.
- Evening of the Bards in the pavilion, featuring entertainment of various types from dozens of bards. This will finish with a pyrotechnics display near the city entrance. Most of the security near the city entrance will be distracted by the bards all evening.
- This evening will be the PCs last chance to get into the Archives.

Day 5 and After

- Event is closed down and the delegations return to their nations.
- The Menagerie will be closed, with the front doors sealed with *Arcane Lock*.

The DM and players should be keeping track of time spent doing reconnaissance. Remind them they will need to consider how to get in, get the item, and get out of the city and back to Deshentu (35 miles away and on open road, unless they want to risk the Killing Grounds and getting killed by their own army's traps) without being caught.

D) The City of Kushtan

The following is a layout of the city. Each area is detailed further below, along with possible uses for each area, or viable opportunities for sabotage.

During the event day, there are many locations the PCs can investigate. Note that these places will have guards and some areas are in restricted areas (visitors cannot go there without special circumstances as detailed in the calendar or the entries). But if the PCs are careful and resourceful, they should be able to sneak into any of the following areas:

E) The Menagerie of the Duchess

Read the following for the PCs first impression of the building:

From your conversations with the acolytes at the Necrologium, you were aware that Qwith very much cares about appearances and power projection. This building before you is the epitome of her vanity being repurposed into a demonstration of her power.

The entire building seems to be a series of turreted obsidian towers combined into a single building, with an array of windows along the top towers just under the multiple pointed conical roofs. On the ground floor there are no windows, only three pairs of very large double doors on the front-most facing tower.

Adventures in the Dead Lands

The Menagerie is divided into two areas: the animal cages and the exhibit areas.

Area Descriptions

Note that if the PCs arrive on Day 2, only the zombie rampager (Area 9) and four guards (Areas 1, 11, and 12) will be in the entire building.

1. **Entrance:** There are three massive double doors at the entrance to this menagerie, which are opened only during atour or during the exhibition itself. Within the entry foyer is a 10' statue of Qwith herself, presented as a goddess, with her arms outstretched as if to present to the wonders she has discovered herein to visitors.

At the front gate there will always be two guards.

Menagerie Guards (EL 5): Thinking Zombie Shadowmourn Security (CR 3) 2x – See Appendix 1

2. **Skylight:** this central area features a section of ceiling significantly higher than the rest of the building, with open windows arrayed around the circular upper walls of the turret. Suspended from the ceiling by strong woven cords is the inanimate skeleton of a firemouth sea monster.

It is possible to scale the exterior walls and roof and descend into the building through these open skylights. While the walls are made of obsidian glass, the terrace and roof edge ornamentations make it a bit easier to climb (Climb DC 22). If they do so, the PCs would have to come up with a way of descending into the middle of the caged areas without being seen or heard by security.

3. **Undead Xemokeeper Cage:** In the middle of this cage lies a brackish puddle. The bars of the cage themselves are covered up to chest level in shell mail, as the 6 xemokeepers flop about dangerously within the cage.
4. **Zombie Kes'trekel Cage:** This cage is taller than the rest, featuring several long, thin, craggy, obsidian tree-like structures upon which the kes'trekels perch, fight with each other, and make their horrible sounds.
5. **Zombie Jhakars:** This smaller cage features a few piles of gravel upon which the bloated dog-like forms of the jhakars pace around, occasionally digging into the dirt or squabbling with each other.

6. **Bugdead Zombie Monstrous Spider Cage:** The cage is almost entirely filled with webs, but still visible within are the shadowy forms of monstrously large spiders. A sign on the front of the cage reads: "The bugdead, the sworn enemies of the Dead Thrones"
7. **Zombie Silk Wurm Cage:** Several spires seem anchored to the floor of this huge cage, as a decaying silk wurm weaves its way amongst them.
8. **Bugdead Zombie Cilops Cage:** under several large stacked plates of obsidian can be heard the scuttling and see the occasional body movements of what seem to be at least two of these monstrous centipede-like bugdead.

On any given turn, there is a 50% chance the guard assigned to this corner of the building is here or in the Armory (area 12). If the PCs arrive on Day 2, this guard will still be here doing the same rounds.

Menagerie Guard (EL 3): Thinking Zombie Shadowmourn Security (CR 3) 1x – See Appendix 1

9. **Zombie Rampager Cage:** This terrifyingly huge beast seems to fill up almost the entirety of its cage. As you get close, you can see it strain at the bands of magical force restraining each of its limbs. Surprisingly, it seems to be staying strangely quiet. It eyes you with animal hunger as you approach.

The restraints on its limbs can only be broken with *Dispel Magic* or similar effects (such as the wand in the Armory).

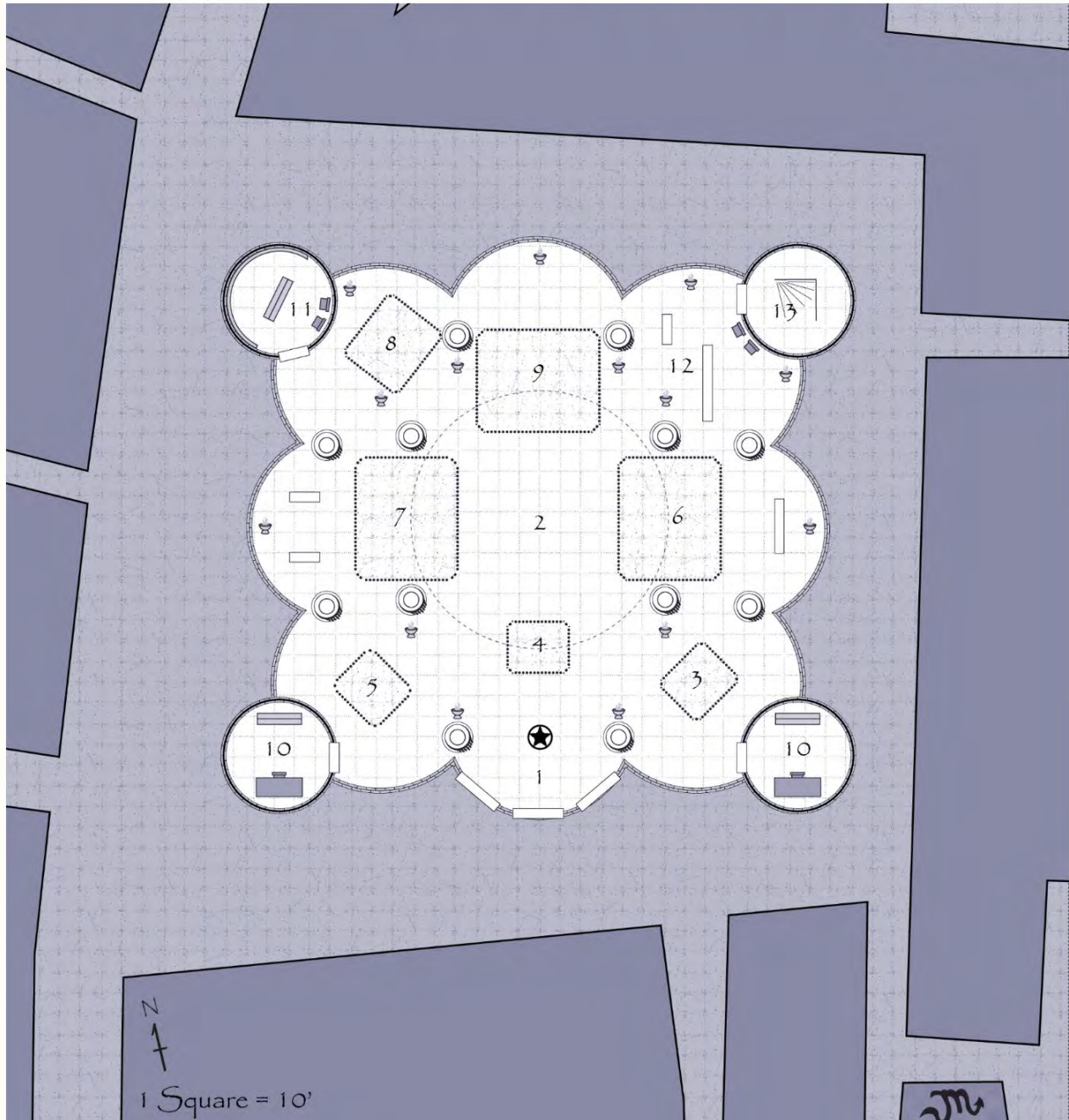
10. **Guard Rooms:** These rooms feature windows facing both internally and externally, serving both as offices and personal armories for the security supervisors for this building (Fallen Patrol Members).

On any given turn, there is a 50% chance the guard assigned to this corner of the building is either in their office or sitting just outside.

If the PCs are here on Day 2 in the evening however, there will be no guards in either room.

Menagerie Guard (EL 3): Thinking Zombie Shadowmourn Security (CR 3) 1x – See Appendix 1

The Menagerie of the Duchess



11. **Armory:** This room contains equipment designed for containing and managing the Menagerie creatures. Unfortunately, all of the magical equipment normally stored here that could be of any help is currently being used for the Gala. Currently, all that can be found here are non-magical polearms, man-catchers, and nets.

However, this is also the room where the keys to the cages are kept, along with a *Wand of Dispel Magic* (10 charges; just powerful enough to destroy the restraints on the Rampager's cage, or the *Arcane Lock* on the front doors). The wand is wrapped in a piece of leather containing the words "Invoke the name of thy goddess" (a hint for the wand's activation words: "In the name of Qwith").

Adventures in the Dead Lands

On any given turn, there is a 50% the guard will be here in this corner. Otherwise, he will be near the Cilops Cage (area 8). If the PCs arrive on Day 2, this guard will still be here doing the same rounds.

Menagerie Guard (EL 3): Thinking Zombie Shadowmourn Security (CR 3) 1x – See Appendix 1

12. **Exhibition Space:** Most of the open areas surrounding the cages feature several tables and plinths of various shapes. Each holds some sort of biological curiosity, such as:
- o A scarlet warden's whip tail, claw, and eyestalk, bearing the mark of Ahnthyarka's mound.
 - o A selection of skulls of the various non-human races of Ulyan (pixie, gnome, goblin, kobold, dwarf, elf, orc, lizardfolk, troll, ogre, giant), grouped into sections.
 - o Glass jars containing biological samples from the Dead Lands, such as an inert piece of the Lurking Blood and the husk and partial root system of a vurgoshilm.
 - o Jars showing what lies beneath the obsidian: black silt, desert sand from the Endless Dunes, a sample of the Fouled Sea water, and some earth from the Shadowmourn's Mines.

Normally, this area always has 2 guards. On Day 2, however, there will only be 1.

Menagerie Guard (EL 3): Thinking Zombie Shadowmourn Security (CR 3) 1x – See Appendix 1

13. **Stairs down to Archive:** This door is never locked, but the guards in Area 12 are always nearby and watching this door. Beyond lies the wide spiral stairs leading down to the Research Archive level.

Drawing the Guard's Attention

It is a free action for a guard to sound an alarm (a screeching howl) which will result in all of the guards inside the building rushing to where the alarm was sounded. Depending on their distance from where the

alarm was sounded, they will reach the location in 1-4 rounds. (In practice, this means the DM can stagger the reinforcements, giving the players time to act before being overwhelmed.)

Once the alarm has been sounded, the front door guards outside will be waiting, and will attack the first person or thing that comes out the doors.

Releasing the Creatures

Perhaps one of the most obvious distractions would be to release one or more of the creatures from the cages. Most creatures could be released by either picking or destroying the locks (DC 20), or finding the appropriate keys in the Armory (Search DC 20).

In addition, the Rampager is being held by magical restraints, which will need to be dispelled.

Releasing any of the creatures would have the following effects:

- o Undead Xemokeepers (Incident +2, Suspicion +0)
- o Bugdead (Zombie or Exoskeleton) Monstrous Spiders (Small, Medium-sized, or Large) (Incident +2, Suspicion +0)
- o Zombie Jhakars (Incident +4, Suspicion +1)
- o Exoskeleton Bugdead Cilops (Incident +4, Suspicion +1)
- o Zombie Kes'trekels (Incident +2, Suspicion +0)
- o Zombie Silk Wurm (Incident +6, Suspicion +2)



Adventures in the Dead Lands

- o Zombie Rampager (Incident +10, Suspicion +4 due to the amount of safeguards which must be broken to release it)

Menagerie Research Archive

The Research Archive can be reached through the doors in the north east corner of the Menagerie and down the stairs.

The archive is one cavernously large, roughly rectangular room (250 ft long by 100 ft wide) which extends to the west from the stairs and occupies roughly the same footprint as the floor above, only with straight walls and more regularly spaced pillars.

Within the archives are row after row of shelves and containers of various sizes, all containing either body parts of Ulyanese dead creatures, or completely preserved bodies.

This is where the Pyreen Skull is located, in an appropriately labeled box located near the center of the archives. Near the Skull's storage location are several tables with preservation and cleaning tools lying around. Amongst the tools can be found three bottles of *Unguent of Timelessness*, and a *Wand of Hold Undead* (12 charges) near a box containing a dead goblin. The wand itself has engraved on the surface some words which can be deciphered with *Read Magic*: "The sworn enemy of the Dead Thrones", a clue to the wand's command word (Bugdead). If the PCs need more of a hint, they might find it on the sign for the bugdead spiders display (see above).

Given the disorganized state of this room, one or more of the PCs could hide in this room for as long as they like (DC 15 + 3 for each additional PC hiding). The party would, however, need a way of breaking the *Arcane Lock* on the front door if they tried to leave on Day 5 or later...

F) The Circus

After seeing so many buildings made of dark obsidian, the soft leather tent before you stands out quite strongly. This cleared area of obsidian ground features a large leather pavilion surrounded by five smaller tents and enclosures. Caravans flying the flags of foreign delegations are parked around the circus itself, with a modest fence and occasional patrolling guard surrounding the entire assembly.

The entire area within this perimeter is filled with activity, as city citizens find their way to their seats while the various delegations prepare for the next event.

The circus is located 1 mile outside of the city gates. The main pavilion tent itself is 500 feet long, and has two guards placed at each of its two entrances and one guard stationed along the outer perimeter every 150 feet. The smaller delegation pavilions (100 feet long each) have one Shadowmourn guard of their own and whatever guards the respective delegations have provided for their own tents.

In attendance, in addition to Shadowmourn's own tent there is the delegation for Deshentu, the Musraafi (representing Bael Asim), Chol (representing Swift Death), and Nocwis. Each delegation has brought three chariot teams with them, each consisting of two riders and two zombie crodlu. The delegations also have between 7-14 (1d8+6) additional support staff with them, including guards, assistants, repair men, etc.

The Deshenten Delegation

By using their passcode (see Getting Into Kushtan, above) the PCs should have no trouble convincing the Deshenten delegates of their allegiance. The Deshenten Delegation are receptive to the idea of assisting the party (Bluff, Diplomacy or Intimidation check, DC 12). They will not, however, do anything which might run the risk of causing a diplomatic incident, including failing to show up for their athletic or exhibition events.

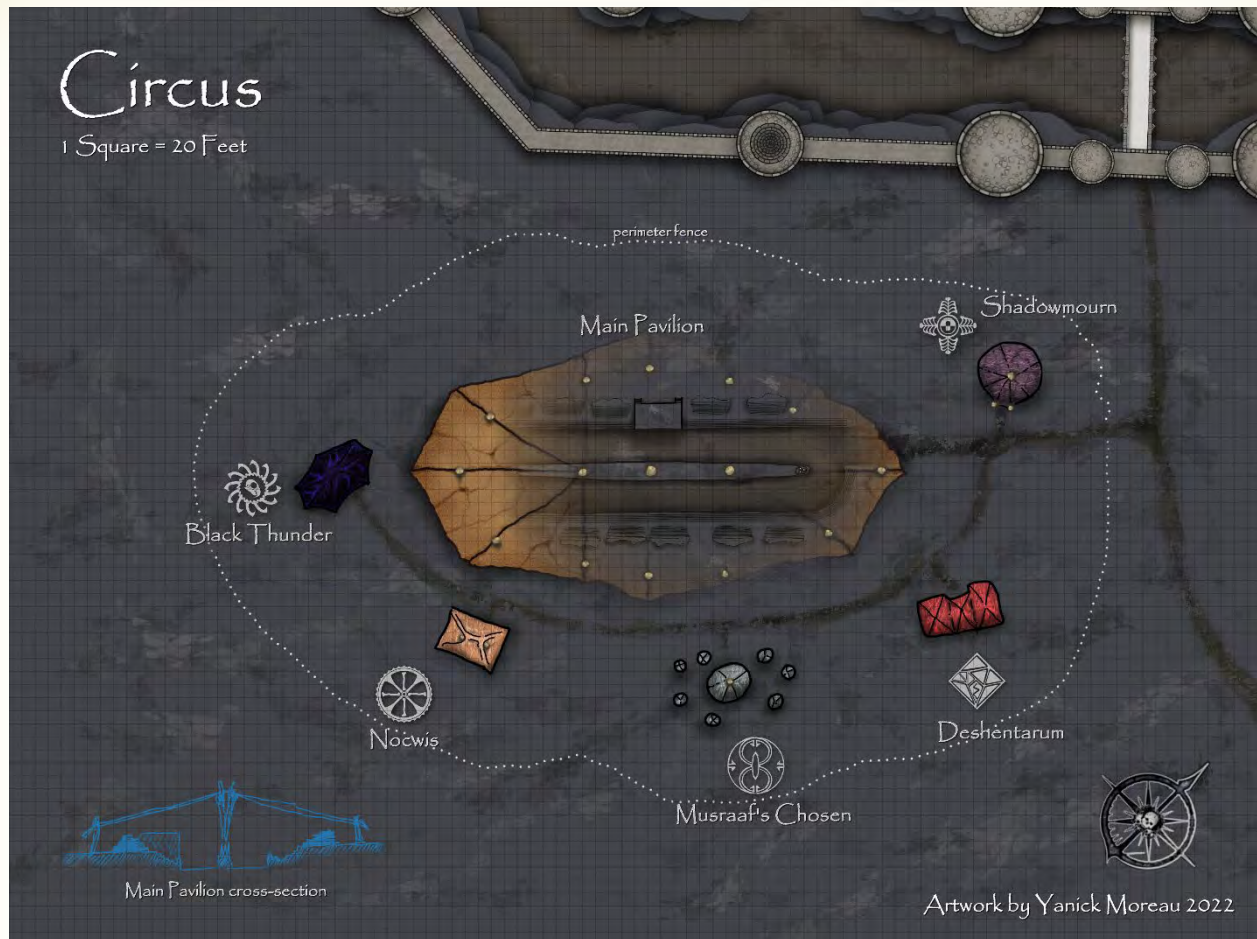
Preventing the Deshenten delegation from showing up for their events will add +2 Incident and +5 Suspicion per missed event. (Not showing up for the only reason you've come to Shadowmourn doesn't look good...)

Working with the Other Delegations

It is possible the PCs could convince the chariot teams from the other delegations to assist them in some capacity (Bluff, Diplomacy or Intimidation check, DC 22, modified by the PCs proposal), but the PCs will need to fabricate a good reason to do so. A negotiation could be brokered, but this would involve bribing the charioteers somehow.

It is possible to attempt to steal a zombie crodlu from a chariot team, but doing so will add +10 Suspicion, +10

Adventures in the Dead Lands



Incident, and likely make an enemy of the other faction.

Preventing a non-Deshenten delegation from showing up for their events will also add +2 Incident and +5 Suspicion per missed event.

Other Areas of Note

Museum of Shadowmourn (EL 5)

Thinking Zombie Shadowmourn Security (CR 3)
2x – See Appendix 1

If the PCs are feeling brave and have time on their hands, they might try to raid the Museum of Shadowmourn for useful display items. There are two guards at the entrance, and two more on patrol within that must be evaded or dealt with.

There are many rooms with potentially useful items, including (but not limited to):

- An array of potion orbs. The most immediately visible are 4 Potions of Flying, 1 Oil of Daylight, 2 Potions of Blur, and 3 Potions of Cause Light Wounds
- One Cloak of the Bat
- One Robe of Bones
- 2 Stones of Alarm
- *One Wand of Pyrotechnics (6 charges)* (+4 to Incident if used when there are not fireworks happening)

Note the items in this list above are museum pieces and could not be taken without a large effect on the incident score. While using the stolen items won't necessarily cause any suspicion, being seen by Shadowmourn security while in possession of or using a stolen artifact will add +12 to Suspicion.

Adventures in the Dead Lands

The Barracks (EL 5)

Thinking Zombie Shadowmourn Security (CR 3)
2x – See Appendix 1

There are several barracks located throughout the city. The one closest to the main gate is a fortification unto itself. Within, there are several buildings containing armor, weapons, and all different types of equipment used by Shadowmourn's army and security forces. It is possible audacious PCs could infiltrate into this fortified area and steal disguises to allow them to pose as guards. Doing so would require getting past several different guard postings – one set of two guards at the entrance to the fortified area, not being noticed by the lone guards wandering the area at all times, and getting past the two guards each in front of the armory or personnel quarters. Each of these would require a DC 20 check of the appropriate type (Bluff, Diplomacy, Disguise, Hide/Move Silently, or Intimidate, etc.).

If the PCs can get past all of these obstacles, they would be able to disguise themselves as guards, granting them a +10 bonus to Disguise checks (effectively negating the chance of them being caught by casual observation) and a +4 to all relevant skill (Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate) checks when trying to bypass security for the rest of the mission - for as long as their disguise holds. Getting caught, of course, would result in their being pursued by the security forces and possibly captured.

Courier House (EL 6)

Thinking Zombie Shadowmourn Security (CR 3)
1x – See Appendix 1

Lesser Namech Servants (CR 3) 2x – See Appendix 1

The Courier House was the creation of a treaty between the various Dead Thrones, intended as a means for securely delivering messages between the various nations, running regular dispatches and small

deliveries to different territories. Inspections are performed on both sides of the delivery to ensure nothing destructive or stolen is transferred, but it's not impossible to subvert the safeguards.

If the players make the connection, they could send the Skull via courier, provided they were able to secure a container which would disguise it, could somehow send a message to the Deshenten side to know what to expect, and could somehow persuade the dispatchers on the Shadowmourn side (one very bored guard and two Namech Servants: Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate, DC 18). This runs the risk of the skull being literally handed over to Shadowmourn security, so a ruse would need to be created to allay the dispatchers' suspicions.

Cavalry Stables (EL 3)

Thinking Zombie Shadowmourn Security (CR 3)
1x – See Appendix 1

Here the PCs can find crodlu to ride out of town in an emergency, assuming they can deal with the guards, the stable doors, and the city gates. As it is far from all normal tourist areas and not considered a priority target, there are currently only two guards on site, one at each end of the long building.

Main Gates (EL 8)

Thinking Zombie Shadowmourn Security (CR 3)
24x – See Appendix 1

There is only one gate in and out of the city of Kushtan, and there are no known hidden entrances into the city. The gates are open for the entirety of the Gala but are very well guarded (at least 24 guards at any one given time). In the event of a lockdown (caused by an Incident or Suspicion score over 11), the gates will require three rounds to fully close. To get them back open would require three DC 45-50 collective Strength checks to operate the pulley mechanism, and at least 10 rounds.

Part 3: Executing the Heist

The DMs should ask the players to declare when they're ready to execute their plan. The players can spend as long as they like within the time they have preparing for the heist, but regularly remind them as to what time of day and which day it is.

In order for the PCs to successfully achieve the heist, they must have come up with solutions to dealing with all of the following while arousing minimum suspicion and creating minimal incidents:

- Getting into the city of Kushtan or moving from the circus to the Menagerie (if they arrived with the Deshenten delegation)
- Getting into the Menagerie (if they attempt to enter outside of its normal opening hours)
- Dealing with the guards at the various locations without sounding an alarm
- Covering their tracks when leaving the Menagerie (such as hiding bodies, not leaving signs of destruction or struggle)
- Escaping the city with the Skull (or otherwise getting the skull out of the city).
- Traveling the 35 miles back to Deshentu without getting caught.

Potential problems that could occur in all of the areas (and the changes to the Incident or Suspicion scores) are listed throughout this adventure.

DMs should try to give the players a chance to be clever here but respond to unreasonable strategies with predictable results.

Getting Out

There are several ways in which the PCs could return back to Deshentu after acquiring the skull, depending on how much suspicion they aroused or how much of an incident they caused.

There is only one known gate out of the city, so leaving will likely have to be through that route. Depending on the Incident or Suspicion scores, the PCs might need some kind of ruse to fool the guards into letting them out. Some plausible examples (and their chances of success) might include:

- **For Incident and Suspicion scores of 7 or below:** There have been no alarms and no change to the state of alertness for the guards. The PCs can likely

leave Kushtan by the same means they used to enter or impersonate one

- of the other groups visiting the city (appropriate skill check DC 14).
- **For Incident and Suspicion scores of 11 or below:** Minor alarms have been raised and the guards are on the lookout for troublemakers, resulting in more difficulty deceiving the guards or sneaking out of Kushtan (appropriate skill check DC 18).
- **For Incident and Suspicion scores of 12 or higher:** The guards are on high alert, resulting in extreme difficulty deceiving the guards or sneaking out of Kushtan (DC 22).

Invisibility can be used to circumvent the difficulties, so long as the PCs could get far enough away from Shadowmourn's security before it wears off. Flight could also be used to exit the city, but it would require a significant distraction (+2 Incident) to avoid being spotted and if the party were seen flying over the walls, it would raise Suspicion significantly (+4).

If the PCs Get Captured

In the event the PCs are overwhelmed by one of the encounters in the city and are incapacitated and captured, they will be taken to holding cells within the nearest barracks to await further questioning before security decides what to do with them. Note that this does not necessarily mean the mission is over. Rather, being captured means the PCs will find themselves in holding cells within the barracks, with their gear removed and stored in a holding room. The PCs will have lost 1 day and having been caught will add +2 to Suspicion (in addition to whatever events happened that lead up to their capture).

Since the guards are busy with the Gala, they will wait until after the Gala has ended before they begin to question the PCs. In the meantime, the party can attempt to escape the holding cells by finding a way to bypass the doors and the guards in front of each cell, and then escaping the barracks without being recaptured.

If the PCs are still in their holding cells after the end of the Gala, go to the appropriate Endings section in Part 3 below ("If the PCs are Still Imprisoned After the Gala Ends").

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If the PCs choose to wait until after the Gala has ended before leaving, both Incident and Suspicion will decrease by 1 each per day of waiting for the purposes of the security at the gate when leaving. The original Incident and Suspicion scores will still be used for calculating the PCs' rewards when they return to Deshentu. The gradually diminishing interest of Shadowmourn's security over time will be compensated for by the increasing impatience of Rhokhan...

If all else fails, the PCs can just try to run for it, and hope they can outrun the security forces. Stealing a zombie crodlu from the stables will help by increasing their movement speed, as they will likely be pursued by Shadowmourn security riding crodlus themselves. Making a run through the gates like this will add +2 Suspicion.

Concluding the Adventure

Outcome

Regardless of how they left the city, once the PCs reach Deshentu the DM should compare their final Incident and Suspicion scores against the tables below, and use the corresponding ending for the PCs' mission. If the

PCs do not bring back the skull, use the Failure ending regardless of their Incident or Suspicion scores.

NOTE: If using the **DM's Option – Agents of Gretch** setup for this adventure, subtract the Incident Score from 12 to determine their ultimate success. Suspicion will still be calculated normally.

Incident Score	Result	Consequences	Outcome
0-3	No incident	It is questionable if anyone even noticed anything strange happening.	The mission was a Flawless Success.
4-7	Minor Incident	There were some strange disruptions noted but these are brushed off as petty actions of the various nations rather than any concerted effort to undermine Shadowmourn. All nearby guards will be sent to deal with the incidents in question, reducing the guard activity in that section of the city and the Barracks by half for the rest of the day.	The mission was a Success.
8-11	Major Incident	The disruptions were large or frequent enough to make the Shadowmourn military believe someone is or was trying to subvert the city's security. This will bring about a lockdown, will end the gala early, and will at the very least result in the questioning of the foreign delegates. All non-essential guards from across the city will be sent to deal with the incidents in question, effectively freeing the entire city and surrounding area of guard activity for the day.	If the PCs do manage to escape with the skull, Rhokhan will not be pleased, but the mission will still be considered a Partial Success.
12-19	Disaster	The disruption is taken as a direct attack on the city. Kushtan is locked down. All delegates and foreign visitors will be arrested, interrogated, and possibly executed (or repurposed). All future galas will be canceled, and any buildings involved in the attack will be closed down indefinitely.	If the PCs do manage to escape, the mission is considered a Failure even if they bring back the skull.

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20+	Spectacular Failure	The PCs have successfully managed to draw the attention of all of Shadowmourn's security forces to themselves. The entire gala comes to an immediate halt. Security calls in the military to contain and capture the PCs (refer to <i>Faces of the Dead Lands</i> for soldier strengths).	The PCs will almost certainly not escape at this point.
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Suspicion Score	Result	Consequences	Outcome
0-3	No suspicion	There are no discernible links between any incidents and the PCs or Deshentu.	The mission was a Flawless Success.
4-7	Minor suspicion	While a few questionable acts have garnered the notice of Shadowmourn security, there is not enough evidence to link these actions to the PCs.	The mission was a Success.
8-11	Major suspicion	Actions have taken place which can be linked to the PCs, but Shadowmourn security only wants them apprehended for questioning. They have not yet decided if this was part of a greater concerted effort against Shadowmourn.	If the PCs do manage to escape with the skull, Rhokhan will not be pleased, but the mission will still be considered a Partial Success.
12+	Caught red-handed	Enough subversive activity has been linked to the PCs to make Shadowmourn's army believe they are actively working to undermine Shadowmourn. The PCs will be immediately marked for arrest, and an active manhunt will begin, if they already haven't been cornered and captured. All Shadowmourn military and security forces will attack the PCs on sight, preferably to capture. If the PCs entered the city with the Deshenten delegation, then the entire delegation will be arrested and questioned. From there, diplomatic relations between the two nations will break down, and war may begin again.	If the PCs do manage to escape, the mission is considered a Failure even if they bring back the skull.
20+	Spectacular Failure (does not apply to the Agents of Gretch DM's Option)	The PCs have successfully managed to draw the attention of all of Shadowmourn's security forces to themselves. The entire gala comes to an immediate halt. Security calls in the military to contain and capture the PCs (refer to <i>Faces of the Dead Lands</i> for soldier strengths).	The PCs will almost certainly not escape at this point.

If the PCs are Still Imprisoned After the Gala Ends

Shadowmourn's security forces will keep the PCs in their holding cells for 3-8 (1d6+2) days before they are interrogated and, once all the information has been taken from them, they will be taken to Shadowmorn's

reprocessing center and brainwashed (effectively destroying the PCs). The PCs can try to escape of course, but since the Gala is over, they will have the guards' full attention. This will make leaving both their holding cells and the city much harder, and would likely constitute a separate adventure in and of itself.

Should the PCs return to Deshentu after escaping confinement in Shadowmourn, the PCs' mission is an automatic Failure (see below).

Endings

To determine how successful the PCs' mission was, and what Rhokhan's response will be, take the *worst* of the two results from the Incident and Suspicion score boxes in the tables above and find the appropriate ending below:

If using the DM's Option - Agents of Gretch

If the PCs are agents of Gretch, secretly in place to disrupt Shadowmourn's Gala, Rhokhan will respond normally to their actions (see Failure, below). Rather than the PCs needing to make a skill check convince Rhokhan to spare them, however, her assistant Anzaias (Gretch's double-agent within the Necrologium) will convince her mistress to spare the PCs (treat this as the PCs having succeeded at their check). Once Rhokhan has said her piece and left, Anzaias will reward the party as appropriate (per their adjusted Incident score).

Flawless Success (both scores 3 or under)

Rhokhan will be very impressed with the PCs resourcefulness, saying they performed far more ably than she could have imagined. She will take the skull for the Necrologium's study and the PCs will now be accepted into the ranks of the Deshenten ambassadors. In addition to being granted a base of operations in the Necrologium, the PCs will have access to the full spellcasting services of both the Temple of the Vizier and the Necrologium itself. Each PC can also request the issuing or construction of custom equipment (normal or magical/psionic) up to a value of 5,000cp. Such items will likely require at least several days to procure as per the standard item creation rules in the DMG. Feel free to assume a week for most things, including delays and shortages. The items will likely arrive just before Rhokhan's next mission begins...

In addition, increase the XP awards for their work in the adventure by 10%.

Success (either score 4-7)

Rhokhan will be pleased the PCs have lived up to her expectations. She will take the skull for the

Necrologium's study, and the PCs will now be accepted into the ranks of the Deshenten ambassadors. In addition to being granted a base of operations in the Necrologium, the PCs will have access to the full spellcasting services of both the Temple of the Vizier and the Necrologium itself. Each PC can also request the issuing or construction of custom equipment (normal or magical/psionic) up to a value of 3,000cp. Such items will likely require at least several days to procure as per the standard item creation rules in the DMG. Feel free to assume a week for most things, including delays and shortages.

The items will likely arrive just before Rhokhan's next mission begins...

Partial Success (either score 8-11)

Rhokhan will be very unhappy with the party's clumsy handling of the mission, but will still accept the skull. She will take the skull for the Necrologium's study, and the PCs will now be accepted into the ranks of the Deshenten ambassadors. She will agree to continue training the PCs at their new base of operations in the Necrologium, emphasizing subterfuge and non-violent infiltration tactics. Each PC can request the issuing of mundane equipment up to a value of 1,500cp.

After a bit more training and a few trials, Rhokhan will give the PCs another chance...

Failure (either score 12-19)

If the PCs return to Deshentu, they will be met at the gate by Deshentu's Templars and escorted directly to see Rhokhan, who will give them a very angry dressing down. If the skull was brought with them, it will be destroyed and Deshentu will disavow any knowledge of the item.

The PCs will then have one and only one chance to convince Rhokhan to spare them from "reprocessing" (with a Bluff/Diplomacy/Intimidate check, DC 25).

If they succeed, Rhokhan will disappear for several hours, only for one of her servants to return later to tell the PCs Rhokhan has managed to convince the Vizier not to dispose of them. They must, however, work doubly hard on their next mission to avoid such a fate.

If the PCs fail their check, Rhokhan will tell her servants to haul the PCs away to be repurposed at the

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Reanimation center (attached to the Vizier's Temple, east of the Necrologium). Once there, they will have a few hours to escape the building and the city before being destroyed and their bodies recycled for parts.

If the PCs somehow survive and escape reprocessing, the party will find themselves on the run in Deshentu's Killing Grounds without any idea of which direction to go. The players should be reminded they're now friendless and grossly outmatched in a land they don't know; if they do not wish to die, they had better make a decision as to which friends they want to make for their protection and survival.

If they head east, they will travel towards Shadowmourn where could approach Qwith and plead for protection. She may grant asylum with successful persuasion (Bluff, Diplomacy or Intimidate check, DC 18). She will then take over as their mentor and another adventure can be run. (The DM could even run this adventure in reverse, where Qwith orders them to rob the Necrologium...)

If they head south, the PCs will find the Forbidden Mountains waiting for them, and certain death. As they head into the foothills, give the PCs two warning encounters before the wraiths attack and likely kill them.

If they head north, they run into the Cliffs of Uylan and will have to choose to go east or west anyway.

If the players go west, they encounter a random clan of the Musraaf's Chosen. Once the Musraafi realize the PCs are no real threat, the clan would happily take them in and make use of them, involving the PCs in their tribal politics.

Spectacular Failure (either score 20+ and not running the Agents of Gretch option)

Shadowmourn sees the PCs' incursion as a sufficiently large and immediate threat to warrant deploying the full might of the Shadowmourn army inside the city to capture them. The PCs will be immediately facing army patrols with ELs of 12 or greater (See Faces of the Dead Lands for additional NPC stats). The city and the gates will be put on lockdown and the battlements garrisoned. The Circus will be surrounded by the Shadowmorn military and every visiting delegation and every single visitor in the city will be checked with magic and/or psionics. They will have descriptions of the PCs and will be actively looking for them. It is

extremely likely the PCs will be captured and will not make it back to Deshentu. The DM should continue throwing increasingly hard military encounters until the PCs surrender or are subdued.

However, two days after the PCs are captured and after they've been through continuous interrogation, Qwith herself visits them where they are imprisoned, dismissing the guards from inflicting further interrogation and abuse on the PCs. She then looks them over and says:

"Who would have thought such lesser creatures would have been capable of inflicting so much chaos?"

She paces for a few moments, and then chuckles to herself.

"Poor Rhokhan. She wanted to create subtle and resourceful infiltrators and she ended up creating you. Oh yes, with you in custody, it was a simple matter for divinations to reveal your identities and patron. I wouldn't be bothering to try to recover you either if I were her, it would be too embarrassing to publicly admit you were her creations..."

"Her efforts weren't a total waste though—clearly you have a talent for mischief."

She then looks you straight in the eyes and says:

"I'll make you an offer: serve me, and I shall find good uses for your capacity for destruction. Refuse, and I shall find good uses for your body parts to repair my soldiers..."

At this point, even the most unruly PCs will likely realize they have no choice but to accept Qwith's terms. From here, further adventures in the Dead Lands can continue, only the PCs will now have Qwith as their patron.

Experience Point Awards

Experience Point (XP) rewards for certain actions are listed below. The final XP total is the amount the party receives and should be divided between the PCs equally.

As stated in the Introduction, XP in this adventure is awarded for both defeating an enemy or avoiding an encounter with them (as long as there was a reasonable

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threat of combat with said enemy) and only once per enemy.

XP Rewards

- If the PCs completed all of Rhokhan's tests, they receive 1783 experience points each. For each test failed, reduce that number by 100.
- If the PCs successfully acquire the skull from the Museum and left the city with it, they receive 4140 experience points each.
- For each enemy or group of enemies avoided during the mission = 100% CR value of encounters
- For each enemy or group of enemies killed during the mission = 100% CR value of encounters

Monetary Rewards

Upon completion of their mission, Rhokhan will reward the PCs for their efforts with new or upgraded equipment.

In addition to being granted a base of operations in the Necrologium (with the benefits mentioned under *Endings* above), the PCs will have access to the full spellcasting services of both the Temple of the Vizier and the Necrologium itself. Each PC can also request the issuing or construction of custom equipment (mundane or magical/psionic). Such items will likely require at least several days to procure as per the standard item creation rules in the DMG. Feel free to assume a week for most things, including delays and shortages. The items will, however, arrive before Rhokhan's next mission for the PCs begins.

Flawless Success

Very impressed with the PCs' resourcefulness, Rhokhan grants the PCs a total of 20,000cp to be divided equally amongst themselves.

Success

Pleased the PCs have lived up to her expectations, Rhokhan grants the PCs a total of 12,000cp to be divided equally amongst themselves.

Partial Success

Very unhappy with the party's clumsiness, Rhokhan nevertheless grants the PCs a total of 1,500cp to be divided equally amongst themselves.

Failure

If they utterly fail at their mission, Rhokhan does not reward the PCs for their performance, as they are in fact lucky to escape her wrath with their unives intact. The PCs receive 0cp, but can still make use of the ability to requestion new equipment with any funds they might have.

Further Adventures

Depending on how successful the PCs are, there are several directions the DMs could take for their next adventure:

Following on from their success with their first mission (especially if the PCs were acting as agents of Gretch, see **DM's Option - Agents of Gretch**), Rhokhan might receive an offer that is too good to refuse. Too good that is, until a simple assassination plot turns into a double-cross... (see the adventure *The Bait*)

After the events at the Gala, Qwith blames another nation for the theft and that nation's agents are sent to Deshentu to investigate, with the PCs being assigned to "assist" the investigators. The PCs will need to keep the investigators distracted, lest they discover the truth of what happened in Shadowmourn.

Perhaps as they become known as capable adventurers, the PCs will be tasked with retrieving a lost artifact, *if they're* brave enough to travel deep into the Buglands. (see the adventure *The Jewel in the Hive*)

If the PCs made an incredible mess of their mission and were captured (as per **Spectacular Failure**, above), Qwith will eventually come to them in offer to make them her own agents. Should the PCs accept, Qwith will send them to disrupt events in enemy nations (the Kingdoms of Gretch, Deshentu, and Harkor) but outfitted so as to appear to be agents of a different enemy nation. If these missions are successful, the enemies of Shadowmourn will quickly be set against each other - a situation that Qwith (and her newest favorites - the PCs) can only hope to profit from





Appendix 1 – Monsters and NPCs

Lesser Namech Servant CR 3

Namech Human Fighter 2

LE Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Human, Psionic)

Init: +6; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +9, Search +7, Spot +9

Aura: Revulsion (30 ft, DC 11 or nauseated)

Languages: Classic Tanysh, Ulyanese

AC: 19; touch 12, flat-footed 17

(+2 Dex, +4 Nat, +3 Armor)

hp 13 (2 HD; 2d12)

Damage Reduction: 5/magic; **Spell Resistance:** 14

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Turn Submission -4 (as 1 HD)

Saves: Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +1

Speed: 30 ft.

Melee: Dagger +7 (1d4+4; 19-20/x2) or Claw +6 (1d6+4; 20/x2) or Bite +6 (1d4+4; 20/x2)

Full Melee: Dagger +7 (1d4+4; 19-10/x2) and Claw +1 (1d6+2; 20/x2) and Bite +1 (1d4+2; 20/x2)

Ranged: Dagger +5 (1d4+4; 19-20/x2)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +2; **Grapple:** +6

Combat Options: **Blinding Touch (DC 11)**, **Rotting Touch (DC 11)**

Combat Gear: MW Studded Leather, Obsidian Dagger

Psi-Like Abilities: 1/day - precognition; ML = HD.

Abilities: Str 19, Dex 14, Con --, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 10

SQ: Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60 ft., Revulsion, **Spell Resistance**, **Spirit Master**, Turn Submission (-4).

Feats: Alertness, Improved Initiative^B, Weapon Focus (Dagger)^B, Power Attack

Skills: Climb +8, Intimidate +5, Jump +8, Listen +9, Move Silently +8, Search +7, Sense Motive +7, Spot +9.

Possessions: Combat gear

Revulsion (Su): A powerful aura of revulsion surrounds a namech. Any creature within 30 ft. that

fails a Fortitude save (DC of 10 + 1/2 namech's HD + namech's Cha modifier) becomes nauseated for 1d6 rounds. Whether or not the save is successful, that creature cannot be affected again by the same namech's aura for 24 hours.

Spirit Master (Su): Only undead under the control of another can have this power. The master psychically offers knowledge and advice, allowing the creature to use *precognition* once per day.



Mindless Skeletons CR 1/3

Male and Female Human Skeleton

Neutral Evil Medium Undead

Init: +5; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0

Languages: - (understands Ulyanese)

AC: 13; touch 11, flat-footed 12

(+1 Dex, +2 Natural)

hp 6 (1d12)

Damage Reduction: 5/bludgeoning

Immune: Cold, Undead Traits

Saves: Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +2

Speed: 30 ft (can't run).

Melee: Claw +1 (1d6+1)

Full Melee: 2 Claws +1 (1d6+1)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +1; **Grapple:** +2

Combat Options: -

Abilities: Str 13, Dex 13, Con --, Int 2, Wis 10, Cha 1

SQ: Damage Reduction 5/bludgeoning, Darkvision, Immunity to Cold, Undead Traits

Feats: Improved Initiative

Skills: -



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Mindless Zombies CR 1/2

Medium Undead

Init: -1; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0

Languages: - (understands Ulyanese)

AC: 11; touch 9, flat-footed 11
(-1 Dex, +2 Nat)

hp 16 (HD 2d12+3)

Damage Reduction: 5/slashing

Immune: Undead Traits

Saves: Fort +0, Ref -1, Will +3

Speed: 30 ft (can't run)

Melee: Slam +2 (1d6+1)

Full Melee: Slam +2 (1d6+1)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +1; **Grapple:** +2

Combat Options: -

Abilities: Str 12, Dex 8, Con --, Int 2, Wis 10, Cha 1

SQ: Single actions only, Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60 ft., Undead Traits

Feats: Toughness

Skills: -



"The Running Thief" CR 3

Elf Thinking Zombie Rogue 2

CE Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Elf)

Init: +4; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft., Low-Light Vision; Listen +11, Spot +11

Languages: Classic Elven, Classic Tanysh, Ulyanese Giant, Ulyanese

AC: 20; touch 13, flat-footed 17

(+3 Dex, +4 Nat, +3 armor)

hp 15 (2 HD; 2d12+2)

Resistances: Cold 10, Electricity 10

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Vulnerability to Blessed Elements

Saves: Fort +0, Ref +3, Will +0; Evasion

Speed: 40 ft.

Melee: Claw +4 (1d4+3) or Bite +4 (1d6+3)

Full Melee: 2x Claw +4 (1d4+3) and Bite -1 (1d6+1)

Ranged: Comp. Longbow +5 (1d8+3; range 110 ft; 20/x3)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +1; **Grapple:** +3

Combat Options: Disease (DC 13), Sneak Attack (+1d6)

Combat Gear: MW Composite (+3) Longbow, MW Studded Leather Armor

Abilities: Str 16, Dex 17, Con --, Int 16, Wis 10, Cha 15

SQ: Evasion, **Gray Toughness I**, Low-Light Vision, **Nondetection**, Resistances, Skills, Trapfinding, Undead Traits, Vulnerability to Blessed Elements.

Skills: Balance +5, Bluff +5, Climb +8, Diplomacy +5, Hide +8, Intimidate +7, Jump +8, Listen +11, Move Silently +8, Perform +2, Search +14, Sense Motive +6, Sleight of Hand +5, Spot +11, Tumble +6.

Feats: Improved Initiative

Possessions: Combat Gear

Disease (Su): A thinking zombie's bite delivers one of the following diseases (50% chance of either). The save DC is 10 + 1/2 thinking zombie's HD + thinking zombie's Cha modifier.

- Filth fever - bite, Fortitude save, incubation period 1d3 days, damage 1d3 Dex and 1d3 Con.
- Red ache - bite, Fortitude save, incubation period 1d3 days, damage 1d6 Str.

Elf Traits:

- Proficient with all bows.
- Weapon Familiarity: Elven longblade. All elves treat the elven longblade (page 115) as a martial weapon.
- a +2 racial bonus to Listen, Perform, Search and Spot checks. Elves have keen senses.

Nondetection (Su): The undead is difficult to detect using divination spells, as though it were protected by the *nondetection* spell. The DC to detect the undead equals 10 + HD.

Vulnerability to Blessed Elements: Thinking zombie takes half again as much (+50%) damage as normal from blessed elements.



Thinking Zombie Shadowmourn Security CR 3

Human Thinking Zombie Fighter 2

LE Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Human)

Init +1; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft., Listen +6, Search +6, Spot +5

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Languages: Classic Tanysh, Ulyanese Giant, Ulyanese, Remaan

AC: 20; touch 11, flat-footed 19
(+1 Dex, +4 natural, +4 armor, +1 shield)

hp 15 (2d12+2);

Resistances: Cold 10, Electricity 10

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Vulnerability to Blessed Elements

Saves: Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +0

Speed: 30 ft.

Melee: Heavy Mace +8 (1d8+4) or Claw +6 (1d4+4) or Bite +6 (1d6+4)

Full Melee: Heavy Mace +8 (1d8+4) and Bite +1 (1d6+2) or Claw +6 (1d4+4) and Bite +1 (1d6+2)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +2; **Grapple:** +6

Combat Options: **Curse (DC 11)**, Disease (DC 11)

Combat Gear: Masterwork Chitin Armor, Masterwork Light Chitin Shield, Masterwork Stone Heavy Mace

Abilities: Str 19, Dex 12, Con -, Int 15, Wis 11, Cha 11

SQ: Gray Toughness I, Resistance to Cold and Electricity, Undead Traits, Vulnerability to Blessed Elements.

Feats: Blind-fighting, Combat Expertise, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (Heavy Mace)

Skills: Climb +5, Intimidate +5, Jump +5, Listen +6, Ride +1, Search +6, Sense Motive +4, Spot +5

Possessions: Combat Gear plus: -.

Curse (Su): The undead can curse an individual when it is destroyed. As the final blow is made that kills the creature, the undead can curse its destroyer, as the *bestow curse* spell.

Disease (Su): A thinking zombie's bite delivers one of the following diseases (50% chance of either). The save DC is 10 + ½ thinking zombie's HD + thinking zombie's Cha modifier.

- Filth fever - bite, Fortitude save, incubation period 1d3 days, damage 1d3 Dex and 1d3 Con.
- Red ache - bite, Fortitude save, incubation period 1d3 days, damage 1d6 Str.



Fallen Captain of the Guard CR 7

Human Fallen Fighter 6

LE Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Human)

Init: +2; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft., Low-Light Vision; Listen +7, Search +6, Spot +7

Aura: Despair (10ft, DC 14)

Languages: Ulyanese

AC: 25; touch 12, flat-footed 23
(+2 Dex, +6 Nat, +4 armor, +3 shield)

hp 51 (6 HD; 6d12+12)

Damage Reduction: 5/magic

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Code of Honor

Saves: Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +6

Speed: 30 ft.

Melee: Heavy Mace +13 (1d8+8; 20/x2) or Dagger +11 (1d4+5; 19-20/x2)

Full Melee: Heavy Mace +13/+8 (1d8+8; 20/x2) or Dagger +11/+6 (1d4+5; 19-20/x2)

Ranged: Comp. Longbow +10 (1d8+5; 20/x3)

Full Ranged: Comp. Longbow +10/+5 (1d8+5; 20/x3)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +6/+1; **Grapple:** +11

Combat Options: Cleave, Create Spawn, Power Attack, Psionic Meditation (Move action), Psionic Weapon (+2d6).

Combat Gear: Chitin Armor +1, MW Dagger, MW Composite (+5) Longbow, Heavy Mace +1, Heavy Shield +1.

Psi-Like Abilities: At will—call weaponry*, death knell, deathwatch, mindlink*; 1/day—recall agony*. ML = HD. The save DCs are Charisma-based. *Power can be augmented.

Abilities: Str 20, Dex 14, Con --, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 12

SQ: Code of Honor, Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60 ft., Gray Toughness, Low-Light Vision, Skills, undead traits.

Feats: Cleave ^B, Iron Will, Power Attack ^B, Psionic Meditation ^B, Psionic Weapon ^B, Quick Draw, Weapon Focus (Heavy Mace), Weapon Specialization (Heavy Mace).

Skills: Climb +13, Intimidate +10, Jump +13, Listen +7, Ride +3, Search +6, Sense Motive +6, Spot +6.

Possessions: 5,600cp or Combat Gear plus: Potion-Orb of Shield of Faith (CL 1st) x4, Vest of Resistance +1.

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Code of Honor (Ex): Fallen are bound to follow a code of honor reflecting idealized rules of war. Evil fallen attempt to break or twist codes to avoid getting killed.

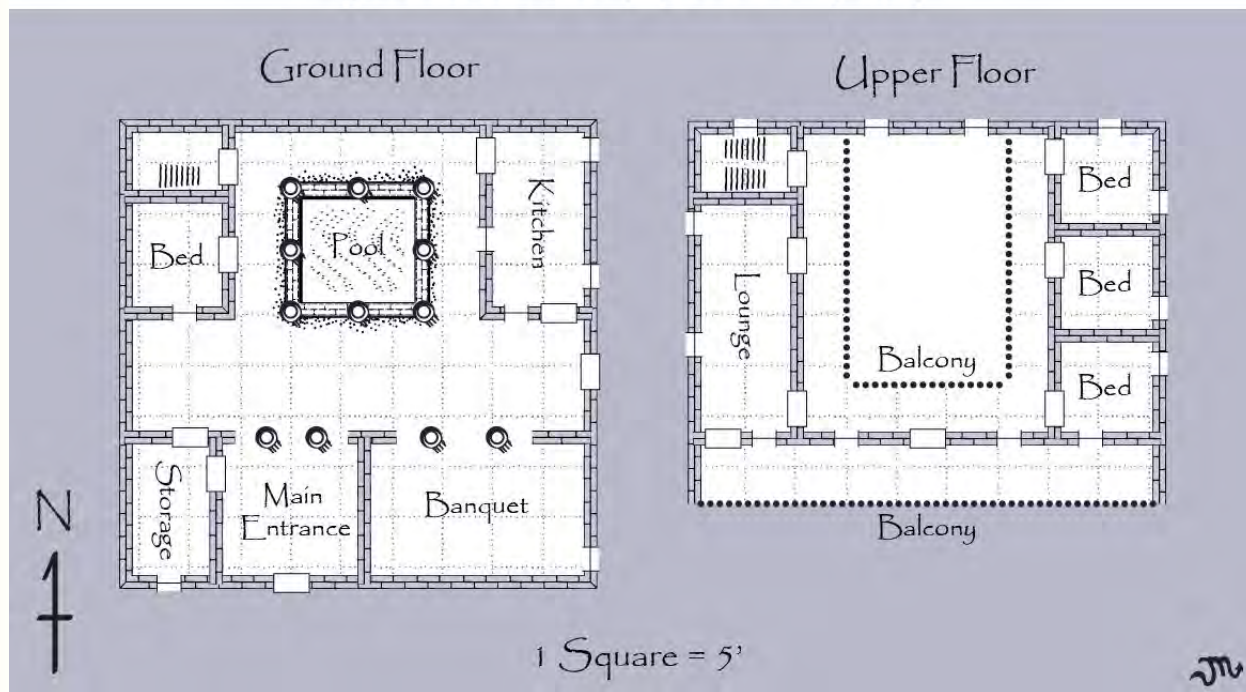
Create Spawn (Su): A giant, humanoid, or monstrous humanoid slain by a fallen's death knell power rises as fallen after 1d4 rounds. A fallen can have spawn with Hit Dice totaling twice its own.

Despair (Su): Fallen radiate an aura of doom and hopelessness, causing creatures within 10 ft. to make a Will save (DC 10 + $\frac{1}{2}$ fallen's HD + fallen's Cha modifier). Creatures that fail are shaken. Whether or not the save is successful, that creature cannot be affected again by the same undead's aura for 24 hours. Fallen can suppress or reactivate this ability as a standard action in order to achieve surprise in close quarters.

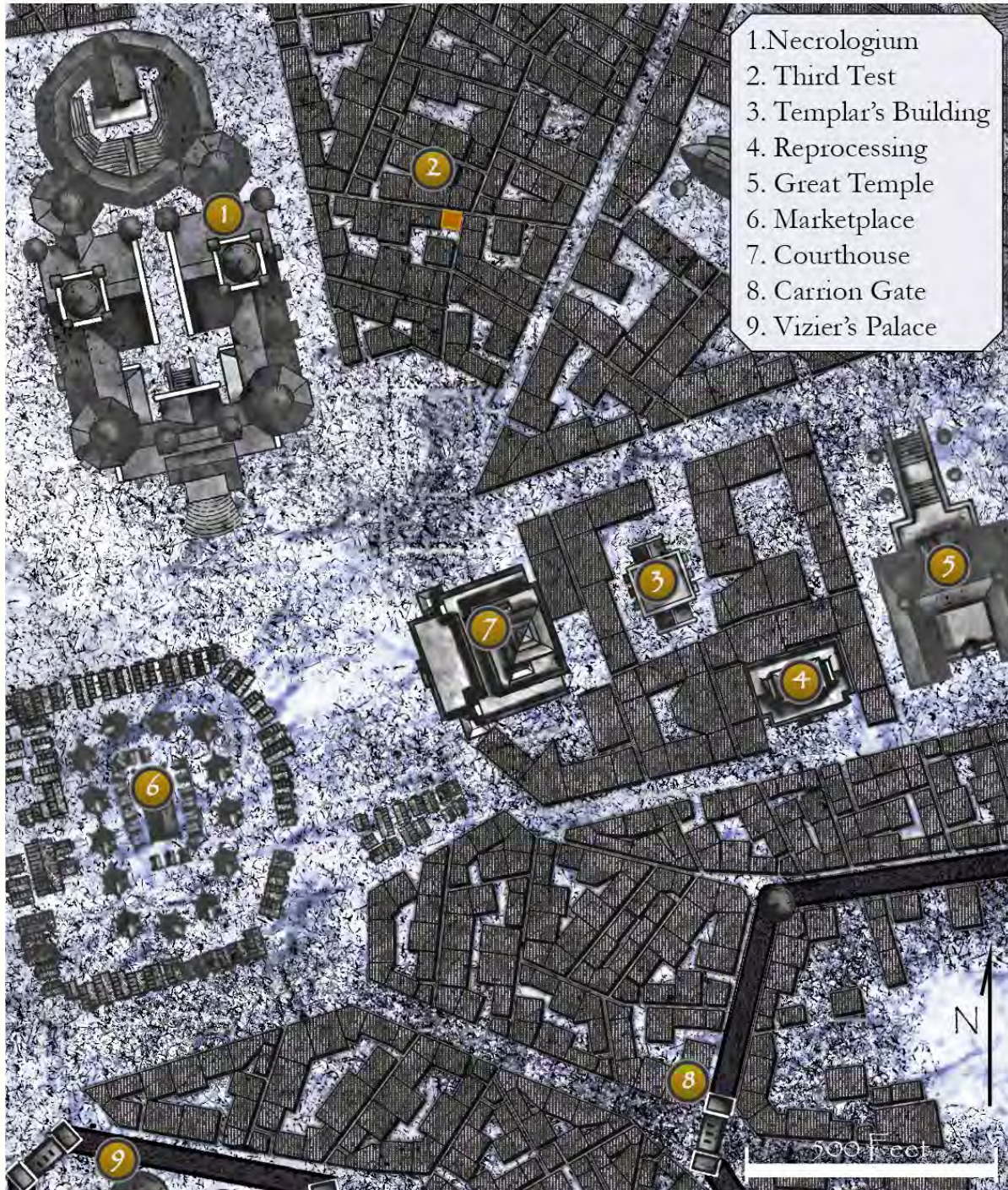


Appendix 2 - Player Maps

Rhokhan's Third Test (Deshenten Noble's Villa)



Deshentarum City Centre Player Map



Adventures in the Dead Lands

The Bait

Tales of the Unbound, part 2



A Dark Sun 3.5e adventure module for four 4th-level characters

The Unbound's patron has received a request that is too interesting to pass up: one of Gretch's kings - Vassahi Eomwa - wants them to assassinate...himself!

Credits

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Introduction

The Bait is a short D&D adventure for four 4th-level player characters (PCs). Consult the Scaling the Adventure sidebar for ways to modify the scenario for higher or lower levels of play.

The adventure assumes all characters are undead “Unbound” characters, created using the template listed in Appendix 5 and is a sequel to the adventure Unbound and Unleashed. At least one should have some skill with a missile weapon (either arrow or crossbow bolt), and at least one PC should know how to read (preferably more than one).

Developer’s notes

When we wrote Faces of the Dead Lands, we were given the opportunity to flesh out many characters which had only been given at most a single sentence description in Secrets of the Dead Lands. We decided to seize this opportunity and add a depth of culture and history to the lands that was previously completely absent. And in some cases, adding character details which fundamentally changed the entire dynamic of a kingdom.

This was the case with Vassahi Eomwa and Chuul. These characters are my total subversion of many of Dark Sun’s most overused tropes. Indeed, this whole adventure was designed as an overall subversion of all the things DMs can do with a Dark Sun adventure—a stealth mission involving faking an assassination with a mystery to be solved at the core. -JM

Preparation

You (the DM) will need the 3rd edition revised D&D core rulebooks, including the *Player’s Handbook*, the *Dungeon Master’s Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*, as well as the *Expanded Psionics Handbook*. This adventure also uses material from *Faces of the Dead Lands*, *Secrets of the Dead Lands*, *Terrors of the Dead Lands*, and the *Dark Sun 3.5 conversion* rulebook from Athas.org, but all necessary rules are already included.

Consult Appendix 4 for additional rules for communicating with the residents of, and surviving in, the Dead Lands.

Background

The PCs’ patron in Deshentu, the High Wizard Rhokhan, has received a request that is too interesting to pass up: One of Gretch’s kings - Vassahi Eomwa, the Regent of the kingdom of Chuul - is hosting a “peace summit” between the neighboring kingdoms of Kiwk and Ireylul to broker a ceasefire (the two have been fighting for the past few years). The summit is simply a ruse, however, a means to get two bitter enemies into a room with him. During the peace talks, Vassahi plans to stage his own assassination, knowing that it will result in the two warring leaders being so busy blaming the other for the assassination that no one will question his death.

To that end, Vassahi has contacted Rhokhan through a third party, contracting the PCs to perform an unspecified assassination.

Overview

The Unbound have been tasked with making a convincing show of Vassahi’s assassination in order to have the desired effect on the in-progress peace talks between Ireylul and Kiwk.

In addition to planning the assassination, there is far more going on than initially meets the eye, especially when it becomes clear that one of the factions wants Vassahi actually murdered. The party must gather clues to discover what is truly happening, what Vassahi actually is trying to do, and ultimately which side to serve in the assassination attempt.

Mysteries and Clues

This adventure is structured as a mystery. PCs cannot just fight their way through this and expect to succeed. Indeed, the XP rewards at the end of the adventure will be based on how clear a picture the PCs are able to build up of the circumstances.

To this end, to ensure the players feel like they are making progress, the DM must provide a steady stream of clues and allow the players to draw their own conclusions. While it’s fair to ensure the PCs are earning the information they discover, if the players

Adventures in the Dead Lands

are consistently rolling poorly on skill checks the DM should give them some of the clues anyway, especially if they're looking in the right places.

XP awards

PCs will be awarded based on both how many clues the party can find, which will help them develop an idea of what's truly going on in Vassahi's palace, and their successful execution of the assassination itself.

The list of experience rewards can be found in the Concluding the Adventure section at the end of the adventure. When the PCs speak with an NPC, some answers will have an asterisk (*) next to them. The discovery of these secrets will earn the PCs experience points.

Treasure/Loot

Unless they pick up weapons off the bodies, the PCs won't have much time to steal things. Therefore, rewards would be given at the conclusion of the adventure.

Adventure Hooks

This adventure is intended as a follow-up to the adventure *Unbound and Unleashed*, but can easily be used by parties that have not played through the adventure.

As a Standalone Adventure

A party of new PCs are most likely a group of unknown and unaffiliated troublemakers (aka

adventurers) that have been contacted directly by Vassahi's agents (possibly as scapegoats). In Deshentu, The Vizier's agents have caught wind of this and recruited the PCs with offers of new equipment and patronage.

As a Follow-up from Unbound and Unleashed

There are several ways a party might become involved in The Bait after completing Unbound and Unleashed, depending on their performance in the previous adventure.

- If the PCs were successful, then Rhokhan is quite pleased with the PCs' performance and requests their aid on this next mission as her top new agents.
- If the PCs failed, then Rhokhan has decided to give the PCs one last chance before sending their bodies for reclamation, and is very clear on this point.
- If the PCs used the Agents of Gretch option in Unbound and Unleashed and were successful at creating mayhem at Shadowmourn's gala, then Rhokhan is quite displeased with the PCs, but is not quite ready to send them for "reprocessing" just yet, believing that they still show promise. Rhokhan's archivist Anzaias (and her secret patron, Gretch) are quite pleased with the PCs' previous performance, and will once again have secret instructions for them (see DM's Option – Agents of Gretch, below).

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DM's Option – Agents of Gretch

The Bait is designed for a party of four 4th level characters, but with some additional setup, the adventure can be used for a party of four 11th level characters.

In this scenario, Gretch, through his double-agent Anzatias, again secretly tasks the Necrologium's best new agents (the PCs) with serving his goals alongside those of Deshentu. Gretch has, partially through one of his Uncrowned - Fnuthaar, learned that Vassahi plans to stage his assassination as a diversion.

Anzatias' instructions for the PCs are:

- Search around Vassahi's palace and discover what he is attempting to distract everyone from.
- Steal Fnuthaar's journal (he always carries it with him) and find out what he knows regarding Vassahi's plans.
- Truly assassinate Vassahi. He has outlived his usefulness, and his timely death would aid in his further plans in that region and with the continuing war between Kiwk and Ireyl.
- Discover who among the palace staff are colluding with Vassahi and eliminate them once the assassination is complete. They will serve as a warning to others.

Part 1: Introduction

A Suicidal Proposal (EL -)

The PCs have been summoned to meet with Rhokhan. When they arrive, she is in her library reading an ancient and tattered book (a Spot check, DC 10, determines it is a history of the Kingdoms of Gretch). She stands to receive the PCs.

"I have received a proposition from an unexpected place. How familiar are you with the Kingdoms of Gretch?"

She waits for the players to answer, then continues:

"Vassahi Eomwa, the Regent of Chuul, has called for our assistance in an assassination. Given the endless plotting and internecine wars of Gretch's Kingdoms, that on its own is not particularly unusual. However, their choice of target is unusual..."

"...The Regent wishes us to kill him."

She gives the PCs a chance to react and ask questions. Then continues:

"Obviously this is meant as a trick of some sort. I believe he wants to stage his assassination. But I'm still unclear as to who is being tricked and for what purpose. Therefore, as your next challenge I'm offering the task to you of assisting the Regent while you investigate what his true designs are. Will you accept?"

If the PCs accept, read the following:

"Splendid. The armorer is already on standby to help you make preparations."

"If Vassahi's request for assistance is genuine, then it is to our advantage to help him— Vassahi is one of the most ruthless and cunning leaders of one of Gretch's kingdoms, and as he was not created by Gretch the Manipulator himself, Vassahi is not necessarily bound to him. A favor from the Regent of Chuul would be most valuable."

If the PCs ask what to do if this is a trick, she smiles and says:

"You do what you've been trained to do: take what information you can and get out quickly. Do not under any circumstances try to directly engage Vassahi in a fight—agents who previously tried had to be scraped from the walls."

"Timing for this mission will be short, you must leave tonight. I must now leave you to make other preparations. Prepare yourselves and come to the planar research room in six hours. My archivist Anzatias is now available to provide you with any information on Chuul or its regent Vassahi Eomwa that might help you on your mission. I suggest you use her knowledge. When you are finished with her, the Armorer will be expecting you."

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She then leaves the PCs with archivist Anzatias who will give them a briefing on the realm of Chuul. The DM should handle it as questions and answers, with the following key points to communicate:

What Anzatias the Archivist knows

- Chuul was originally founded by a king of the same name, a being created by Gretch out of one of his former rivals who met his death under dubious circumstances.
- Some of the senior members of the Necrologium were around when Chuul was still in power. He apparently had a reputation for being vain and decadent, and throwing lavish parties to spite the other rulers surrounding him.
- Centuries after the kingdom was founded, an elven nomad named Vassahi Eomwa came to visit from the east. He impressed Chuul with his powers and insights, earning his trust and becoming his court psion. Not long afterwards, Chuul was betrayed and killed by Vassahi, who took over his kingdom and reshaped it in his own image. Gretch was sufficiently impressed by Vassahi's brutal ruthlessness and efficiency that he allowed Vassahi to rule over the kingdom of Chuul unchallenged.
- Gretch has always micromanaged and spied on his puppet kingdoms, often manipulating them into fighting or competing against each other for his own amusement. Sometimes these wars or plots can run on for many years. He does this both through his magic and through his right-hand servants: the Uncrowned.
- Gretch's Uncrowned are: Las-ufar, Fnuthaar, Col'raoz, and Uzhgabr.
- The Uncrowned are Gretch's enforcers, and perhaps some of the most terrifyingly dangerous undead entities to wander freely within the Dead Lands. Each one has a particular set of skills which makes them disturbingly well-suited to their respective purposes: manipulation, surveillance, marshaling armies of undead, and intimidation.
- While we have not been able to fully confirm, it is believed that Vassahi is given slightly more leeway than most of Gretch's kings in terms of his actions. Vassahi also maintains some of the most extensive and aggressive psionic and magical countermeasures in his kingdom to block scrying and teleportation. No one pries or enters into his small kingdom through magical or psionic means without his knowledge or consent. Gretch has not

only allowed this but taken advantage of it, using Chuul's kingdom as one of his interrogation sites, or on a few occasions a place to hide captives he does not want found.

- While Vassahi's court has been described by our sources as luxurious, the streets and lands outside are known to make for dangerous travel. The recent war between Ireyul and Kiwk has made attacks by uncontrolled undead creatures even more frequent and severe. The guards in Chuul's capital city Mehwar, already notoriously unfriendly, are now even more oppressive and impatient. On your way to the fortified palace grounds, I would advise you to be prepared to fight.

If PCs ask questions beyond what is covered above, the Archivist politely tells them *"This is all the information I've been able to find in our records."*

The Armorer has prepared two single-use *gems of sending* for the party. One is intended for the PCs' initial report to Anzatias, and the other to request extraction when the PCs are ready to leave.

Once they are finished, the PCs have just enough time to get their equipment sorted out and prepare spells as needed before they depart. After the PCs get equipped, they meet in the planar research room per Rhokhan's earlier instructions:

You find yourselves in a large, round research room with tables holding books, and various valuable and complicated-looking devices for unknown purposes. The black domed ceiling overhead is decorated with constellation patterns which match the stars in the sky, along with motifs suggesting what the constellations represent. There is also a large, clean, round elevated platform to one side of the room made of veined marble, next to a drawing board with various spidery diagrams onto it.

Rhokhan explains: *"Vassahi has agreed to assist with teleportation into his kingdom, and has prepared a reception site. This will save you all the many days of travel and effort it would have otherwise taken you to cross or circumvent the Forbidden Mountains."*

As you are stepping up onto the platform, Rhokhan continues: *"Report back to Anzatias once you have spoken with him and agreed to help, then again once the task is done. My assistants will aid in your extraction upon your signal."*

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If they wish, PCs may have just barely enough time to identify some of the items in the room. (A Knowledge - Arcana check, DC 18, identifies the devices on the table as telescopes, astrolabes, and other equipment for measuring the movement of stars. A Knowledge - The Planes check, also DC 23, determines that the diagram on the board details planar travel across the Gray.)

Development: After all the PCs have spent one round on the platform, Rhokhan will raise her hand in her casual salute, one of her assistants will send the signal to Chuul, and the PCs are *teleported* to Mehwar.

Welcoming Party (EL -)

When the PCs arrive on the teleportation platform, read the following:

The discomfort of daylight has now passed as the crimson sun has dropped below the horizon and the rapidly fading twilight is more comfortable to your eyes. As your eyes adjust again to your new surroundings, you find the stone platform sits upon the slopes of a range of viciously sharp blackglass mountains. There is a road in good repair winding down the mountain from the stone platform on where you stand, cutting a zig-zagging line down the slope to the base of the mountain.

Before you stand what must be Chuul's guards. Some are human, some are elven. All bear the symbols of Chuul's kingdom on their armor and share the same humorless stony expression under their helmets. Their captain, an elven woman who looks to stand about 5'2" glares at you impatiently.

"Don't just stand there! We must be inside the city before nightfall! Move!", the captain barks at you.

You can see the roadway leads down to a gatehouse which is the only entry point in the eastern wall.

If the PCs stop to look around, read:

The city of Mehwar itself is built on a low slope backing onto the steep flanks of the mountain range to the north. There are squat blackglass walls surrounding the city, running in an uneven arc surrounding the city. The square, mostly featureless, obsidian walls are dotted with many round guard towers and seem quite well staffed with guards.

From your high vantage point on the mountainside, you can glimpse some of the city over the walls. Clusters of low small buildings make up the majority of the modestly sized settlement, with slightly larger more impressive dwellings adjacent to the grand walled citadel at the center and the conspicuously large amphitheater north of the citadel and central plaza.

Glancing out beyond the city, the vast expanse of an obsidian plain is all that can be seen in the twilight, along with a vague heat haze left over from the sun's blistering journey through the day.

Development: The teleport platform is 750 feet from the city and it should take about 12 turns for the group to reach the safety of the city walls. Each round the DM should roll a D6. On a result of 1, they have attracted the attention of local undead predators, who begin stalking the group. Such an attack only occurs once - see the Predator Pack counter, below.

Predator Pack (EL 4-5)

Undead Predator (CR 2) 2-3x - See Appendix 1



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The guards accompanying you seem to have been growing increasingly nervous as you travel from the teleportation platform to the city gates.

Tactics: The PCs become aware of the undead predators from 100 feet or more away (have the PCs make a Listen or Spot check. The beginning encounter distance is equal to the Listen/Spot check x10 feet away; i.e., result of 10 yields 100 feet, a result of 25 yields 250 feet, etc.). The undead predators will move to single out one or two targets and pull them down.

Development: When the last of the pack of predators has fallen, the PCs can see that most of the guards

survived the attack, though some were wounded. The quickly regroup and reform their perimeter. From this point on, the captain of the guard will warm slightly from this point on. If asked her name, she offers it - Zebah.

The captain of the guard kicks the impaled head of the undead predator off her spear, and shakes off the ichor. "Well fought. Thank you for your assistance."

She looks down at the carcass and then back at you: "Now you know why we don't dawdle outside the city. There will be more soon. Come."

MEHWAB, CAPITAL OF CHUOL



Part 2: Grand Entrance

The capitals of Gretch's kingdoms are all rather small - Mehwar, capital of Chuul, has a population of only around 5,000, consisting of a mix of refugees from surrounding kingdoms and other cities both inside and outside of the Kingdoms of Gretch. It is not uncommon to see humans, dwarves, mountain elves, trolls, and ogres walking the streets. The most common types of undead in the city are thinking zombies, zhen, and fael (in that order), with a scattering of other types of undead.

Mehwar is remarkable for two reasons - the first is its aggressive protections against teleportation and scrying. Vassahi is a very powerful psion, and he maintains very aggressive countermeasures against anyone who dares to spy or travel unauthorized into his city. This may be why Gretch has tolerated Vassahi taking over the kingdom, as it's not uncommon for the Uncrowned to use the city to hide their captives during interrogation. The second reason is that Mehwar is the only city in the Kingdoms of Gretch which actually abuts the Forbidden Mountains. The walls facing the mountains are higher than those facing the obsidian plains to the south, and the guards are well trained in fending off occasional wraith attacks on the city.

The city's guards have a reputation for being dour and unfriendly because they regularly fight against assailants from all directions: wraiths and flying bugdead attack from the mountains, and various undead predators attack from the plains. With the recent war between Ireyul and Kiwk, this situation has only become worse.

The opening of the stone gates is a welcoming sight to you and your escort as you pass through a solidly built gatehouse complete with large stone doors, a bone portcullis, and a number of guards, all wearing the geometric motif of Chuul.

Once you have passed through the gates and into the city, the surly captain in scale armor speaks again: *"Welcome to Mehwar, the Regent is expecting you. This way."*

As you head up the slope towards the city center, you can see a fortified citadel which the guards always seem to be keeping on their left as they wind around the city streets.

Eventually the buildings open up to reveal a large plaza cobblestoned with matte obsidian tiles in unrecognized geometric sigil patterns. To your right



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you see a grand amphitheater, the back of the stage opens to the plaza. To the left, the citadel opens up to reveal a beautifully presented square palace with a single spire rising from its center.

The Palace

As you pass through the gatehouse, the only apparent entry into the palace, you observe more guards with the same surly expression you witnessed previously.

The palace is an impressive building. The majority of its construction is of plain obsidian blocks but in several places decorative features have been added, with regular vertical lines of geometric pictograms running up the walls and alternating sections of polished and matte blocks.

Climbing the steps up to the entrance, grand decorated double doors open up before you and you are escorted inside.

The immediate interior of the palace is bare stone, cavernous and echoing. This long central hall is colonnaded, with large pillars placed at regular intervals along each side.

Directly ahead, a number of steps surmount a dais upon which sits a huge obsidian throne. This must be where supplicants petition the Regent.

Allow the PCs to look around the room for a moment if they wish. When they begin to ask questions about the chamber or if they seem disinterested, read:

Only a few moments after your arrival, a figure sweeps in from the right-hand side of the chamber.

Debonair and strikingly dressed, the dark-skinned elven figure moves with a purpose. Dressed in a flowing patterned gown and a colorful robe decorated with geometric patterns stitched in gold thread, he makes an impressive sight on entry to the throne room.

A smaller, more elderly figure follows the Regent into the room.

"We all know you are not here to bask in my radiance, yes? You are here upon my invitation. Come, allow me to explain."

Vassahi and his manservant escort you into the front parlor of the palace. As you enter the room, you see another man leaving. He is a sinewy darkly-tanned human man with severe features and a bluish-gray toga. A predatory greenish glow shines in his eyes, and his mouth opens into an unnaturally large and wicked smile. He stares at you for what feels like far too long before stepping out through the door.

Vassahi makes no mention of the man as he gestures for you all to be seated. When you are all situated, Vassahi turns to address you. *"You already know I have requested your assistance to help me perform an assassination."* He looks around before continuing. *"What you do not know yet are the circumstances of this assassination."*

"For the next three days, I will be hosting a peace summit for leaders Kivk and Ireyl and their entourages. They wish to make use of my hospitality in Mehwar for neutral ground to negotiate a cease-fire. They have spent many years now fighting to a stalemate, and wish to have a pause in the fighting to rebuild."

"While I am of course more than happy to play the gracious host, I do not want these two factions making peace. I want them both plunging back into their internecine war, taking their attention away from me and my own border. A very public assassination of the mediator during these talks would cause them to blame each other for sabotaging the peace summit, and send them back to war. I want you to assassinate me."

"I trust darling Rhokhan has already told you to accept my request, yes?"

From here, Vassahi is open to questions about what the PCs are being asked to do. DMs should use the information below to inform the answers Vassahi gives PCs.

What Vassahi knows

- Ireyl is one of Gretch's earliest creations. He is a being unlike any other in the Dead Lands, a unique combination of golem and undead created with psionics and magic. All of the creatures in his land have been mutilated into something similarly inhuman. Strangely enough, his vanity still clings to the pretense and appearance of humanity, so you will usually see him in public draped in his illusionary disguise as a well-dressed young man of 15 years.

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- Kiwk was one of Gretch's rare experiments with beasts. To Kiwk's credit, he was the smartest beast that Gretch ever transformed, but that really is not saying that much. He and the other feylaar who follow him are as brutal and aggressive as any monster you will ever see in the Dead Lands, but this aggression is also matched by a ruthless cunning which makes it possible to negotiate with him. It is ironic that the very necromancy which made him more monstrous has also made him easier to reason with.
- The man who just left the room? That is Fnuthaar of the Uncrowned. Perhaps because Gretch the Manipulator has no faith in my negotiation skills, or perhaps he just cannot resist meddling in the affairs of his kingdoms, we are also hosting one of his notorious Uncrowned. Fnuthaar is Gretch's infiltrator and inquisitor. I would not get too close to him if I were you.
- I have made this peace conference into a three-day event. The waiting game is a crucial negotiation move when dealing with adversaries such as these, who are both known for their bad tempers and tendencies to hold grudges. This is why the Uncrowned is so valuable here— everyone is naturally on their best behavior when under the watchful eye of Gretch's hand and his warriors.
- The peace conference schedule is as follows: (see Part 4 for more information)
 - Day 1 - Kings and their entourages arrive at dawn.
 - Day 2 - Meetings and discussions are held throughout the day. The last meeting of the day will be the final discussion of the treaty terms.
 - Day 3 - Treaty signing ceremony is just after noon. Last chance to publicly assassinate Vassahi
- The third day is when the treaty will be signed, to which everyone will bear witness. I would suggest that this is your best and last opportunity to "strike". How you do that is up to you, but there are tools that can be made available to you to help with the staging. Speak to my chief of staff Aminata.
- To have the desired effect, we want this assassination attempt to be as visible as possible. Ideally, it should be witnessed by every delegation and Fnuthaar the Uncrowned.

Once the questions have been asked and answered, read:

"Excellent!" He claps his hands twice. *"Aminata!"*

As a handsome elven zhen manservant steps forward, Vassahi tells the PCs: *"To grant you access to the palace, you will join my service staff, under the supervision of my chief of staff Aminata. He shall be your point of communication with me, and my eyes and ears."*

"I trust you have also met my captain of the guard Zebah, yes? You may also speak with her as needed for your preparations."

He then turns to Aminata: *"Escort them to their rooms and provide them with what they need to begin their tasks."*

"And now I must take my leave and make further preparations for tomorrow's arriving guests. Farewell!"

Development: With that, Vassahi leaves the PCs in the care of his manservant Aminata, who is tasked with appointing them to service roles appropriate to their skill sets.

Shown to their Room

Once Vassahi has left, Aminata shows the PCs to their room and walks them through their cover identities.

Once Vassahi has gone, Aminata waves your party through the door. Walking through the throne room and up the stairs, Aminata shakes his head at the previous interaction.

"Vassahi always makes the management of staff sound far easier than it is. We will discuss your assignments amongst the service staff in a moment."

Aminata will not say anything else on the matter beyond this, and will silence PCs if they bring up any matters related to their meeting with Vassahi or their mission, saying *"Allow me to show you to your quarters before we discuss your job responsibilities."* PCs who think to look around (Spot check, DC 15) catch sight of one of the Uncrowned's bodyguards watching them as they move upstairs. When the PCs reach their room, read:

Stepping through the door, you see what appears to be an elegantly constructed but austere bedroom with several stone slabs, a few tables, and the same enigmatic purplish light sources on the walls which can be found throughout the rest of the palace. There are enough stone "beds" in here for each of you.

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There is a selection of several different types of uniforms laid out on each of the beds.

As you walk in, Aminata checks the hall before closing the door, and then speaks:

"You are being watched not just by the Uncrowned, but also by both delegations. You must mind what you say within earshot of anyone else.

"For our stratagem and ruse to succeed, we must place you in staff departments where you will not stand out. We've divided the service staff into five different departments: Cleaning, Groundskeeping, Food Service, Ushers, and Guards.

- If you are skilled at fighting or bad at staying hidden, I would suggest Groundskeeping or Guards.

- If you are skilled at sneaking, I would suggest Cleaning or perhaps Ushers.

- If you are skilled with magic or psionics, I would suggest Food Service or perhaps Cleaning.

- If you are able to effectively talk to others without blowing your cover, then I would suggest Ushers.

"I do not mind how you divide your team, but I would suggest covering as many departments as possible to give you multiple angles."

Aminata will be expecting the PCs to decide here and now which roles they are to take. If the PCs waffle for too long, the DM can have Aminata nudge them towards a decision.

Once they have chosen their job roles or asked any questions, Aminata will nod and inform them where they will report for the respective duties:

- Cleaning will report to the Throne Room outside the Servants Quarters (Area 1)
- Groundskeeping will report in the Courtyard (Area 9)
- G
- uards will report in the Guard Station on the First Floor (Area 13)
- Food Service will report to the kitchen (Area 4)
- Ushers will report to the balcony outside the Day Room (Area 19)

He will then ask if there are any other questions. What Aminata knows follows:

- Once you take on your roles as servants, any direct interaction with the Regent will be highly conspicuous, and could endanger your cover. If

you must pass a message to the Regent, pass it through me.

- We have a tool which you can make use of as you need: an arrow which creates an illusion to replicate the effects of an *arrow of slaying*.

If you wish to know the schedule of events, the head of Food Service keeps a copy of the order of events in the Dining room near the kitchen Entrance.

- I have left the various uniforms here should you need to switch roles. I would strongly advise against it, as it will look quite suspicious, but it might become necessary.
- What part do I play in all of this? This palace is my home and all those within are my family. I do what is best for them, even if it pains me to do so...
- * Who else is staying here? We have the two kings and the Uncrowned. I'm not concerned about anyone being too unruly. And we still have some unoccupied cells down in the dungeon. (a clue)

Once the questions are finished, he takes his leave: *"Very good. You must report to your respective posts in one hour. From this point on, I will be happy to discuss or answer any further questions if you find me, but you will need to address me as 'Sir' to maintain your cover. I'll leave you now to prepare yourselves."*

Development: Aminata then leaves the PCs to their privacy; they have the opportunity to contact their master if they wish, or explore a bit on their way to reporting for duty.

Only Your Humble Servants...

From this point on, the party will likely be split up, and each will be experiencing different things at different times of each day. Consult each servant's section below for the time of day and what the PCs will be exploring and finding.

Conspicuousness and the Uncrowned

Fnuthaar the Uncrowned and his three bodyguards are wandering the palace, monitoring the peace process. At any given time, one of them is with Vassahi, one is with each of the other two kings, and the last one is wandering the palace and grounds. Their exact position and movements during the day are up to the DM.

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From this point on, the DM will keep track of a separate Conspicuousness score for each of the PCs. Each PC starts at a score of 0, but the following modifiers can affect them:

- Each time a PC changes duties +3
- Each time the PC is seen by an entourage (the Fnuthaar's, Kiwk's, or Ireyl's) using arcane or divine magic +5
- Each time the PC is seen by an entourage (the Fnuthaar's, Kiwk's, or Ireyl's) in combat while not working as a guard +5
- Each time the PC is spotted by an entourage (the Fnuthaar's, Kiwk's, or Ireyl's) carrying weapons while not working as a guard +2
- Each time Fnuthaar or a member of his entourage catches a PC in an area or doing something outside of their standard duties +3
- Each time one of the other staff members catch the PC in an area or doing something outside of their standard duties +1
- If Fnuthaar is the one confronting the PCs (see the Confrontation rule below) +4
- For each day that passes -5

At the end of each shift, the PCs will have the chance to meet in their room to discuss what they have discovered. On any given night, there is a % chance equal to the PCs' Conspicuous score that a member of the Uncrowned retinue is listening either through the wall in the next room, or in the hallway (DM's choice).

Each role gives access to different information and parts of the palace or amphitheater, and has its own potential threats for blowing the PCs' cover. Note these duties have the potential to reveal more information with each day worked, and have some redundancy between the various days. (For example, if a PC worked guard duty all three days, they would start picking up information which overlaps with what they would discover from working as Ushers or Groundskeepers, etc.).

PCs will be able to detect their eavesdropper either with a successful Listen check (DC 18), or with appropriate magic or psionics. If the Uncrowned is undetected and the PCs say something that could be taken as suspicious (see the list above), then the PCs will be confronted the next day (See Appendix).

Confrontation

In addition, whenever the PCs encounter Fnuthaar or his bodyguards (that is, gets within 10' of them) and has a 20 or higher Conspicuousness score, then the Uncrowned will confront them. This should only occur once per day at most. The first time they are confronted, the member of the Uncrowned retinue will attempt to bully them into a confession, threatening them with evidence as discussed in the list above. How the PCs handle this is up to them, but award experience points if the PCs employ good de-escalation strategies or manage to find another creative solution. The bodyguards are strong and pugnacious, but they can be outwitted. If the PCs think a violent solution will work at this point, remind them there is no way they would be able to hide the bodies even if they won the fight, and their absence would be quickly noticed.

The second time the PCs are confronted, they will simply be captured and subdued as necessary, and the PCs will be brought in front of Vassahi and the other delegations to expose their espionage attempts. If this happens, the mission is over (go to "If the PCs are caught" at the ending).

The goal for the PCs is to discover an effective and very public way of assassinating Vassahi. However, while they're working, they may also discover secrets which point to there being far more going on than meets the eye. This in turn could affect their decision as to whether to make Vassahi's death staged or real.

Part 3: The Next Three Days

The schedule for the summit is as follows

- Day 0 - PCs arrive in the evening.
- Day 1 - Kings and their entourages arrive at dawn, Ireyl first, then Kiwk. Formal reception of the guests.
- Day 2 - Meetings and discussions are held in several different areas at scheduled times. The last meeting of the day is the final discussion of the treaty terms in the throne room. This is the PCs first chance to publicly assassinate Vassahi.
- Day 3 - Treaty signing ceremony is just after noon. Last chance to publicly assassinate Vassahi.

First Day on the Job

Read or paraphrase the following introductory section for each respective first day on the job:

Cleaning Staff

The PC starts in the Throne Room (Area 1), at the door leading to the Servants Quarters (Area 6).

You stand in the throne room outside the door to the servants' quarters, one in a line of other cleaners seemingly awaiting inspection. You are surprised when an old woman steps out of a shadow, walking with her cane down the line, eyeing each staff member before giving them a list of tasks to accomplish. She stops when she gets to you.

"You must be the new ones." She looks at you with her one good eye. Her stern, withered face is uncomfortably close to yours, enough to where you can smell the noxiousness of her breath. "Never forget. The Regent trusts us with his dirty laundry in every sense of the word, as if his life depended on us. Can we trust you, I wonder?"

After a long moment, she gives you your list and then moves on to the next servant. After each has been assigned their tasks, she steps back and says to the group:

"Each of you has your list of which rooms you are to clean. I expect you to have completed these by the end of the day. Note that there is a morning and an afternoon cleaning. You must clean the morning rooms in the morning, and

the afternoon rooms in the afternoon. We are to stay out of sight of our visitors where possible.

"When you are finished with your tasks, report to me here. Now go."

As you are leaving, you almost think you see her briefly glance at you with a smile on her face.

The old woman is Ramae, head of the custodial staff. She is aware of the trust she has been granted in her position by the Regent, and she never lets her staff forget it.

She is also in on the fake assassination plot (she takes care of the Regent like a surrogate grandmother), but she knows others are listening. She will turn a blind eye to the PCs stepping out of their normal bounds provided they do not get caught.

If the PCs are caught or publicly blow their cover, they will get no support from Ramae.

What Ramae Knows

Ramae will answer up to 3 PC questions per day, always insisting "Fine. But hurry up about it. We don't have all day!"

- I've been doing this job for centuries, ever since this kingdom was first founded.
- Chuul himself animated me.
- I was there when Vassahi came to court and met Chuul for the first time. Vassahi was a traveling performer and mystic, and he dazzled the entire court with his brilliance, especially Chuul himself.
- * The day when my king Chuul was usurped was a strange one. Vassahi caught Chuul outside of his bedchambers and made him vanish. Only dust remained. (a clue)
- My new Regent has been a stern master, but not as cruel as he would lead you to believe.

Groundskeeping Staff

Bouna (CR 10) 1x - See Appendix 2

The PC starts in the Courtyard (Area 9). Read:

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As you arrive in the Courtyard, you are greeted by what looks like a massive decrepit ogre zombie. His eyes are black holes which burn dimly white. One of his horns is splintered and bent, and the other is severed close to his skull. He glowers at you with an air of menace.

Seeing you, he growls in a commanding voice that makes you freeze and stand to attention: "LATE!"

He then immediately drops the contents of his massive hands on the ground in front of you. It seems to be rake-like tools made of bone and bound with strips of flesh.

He then motions ungracefully at the scattered shards of obsidian littering the ground of the courtyard and the area beyond and shouts "CLEAN!" before glowering at you again, waiting for you to start moving.

The ogre is known as Incurious Bouna, groundskeeper of the Regent. He rules over his charges by intimidation and sheer force of will. He is used to getting servants who are poorly suited for any other job and often discipline cases, so in spite of his abrupt tendency to use only single word answers, he knows how to effectively bully and coerce his staff into doing what needs to be done.

As the PCs work through the day, Bouna will regularly check on them, praising them for good work ("GOOD.") and chiding them for bad work or laziness ("AGAIN."). Bouna does not care if the PCs investigate or snoop around, so long as they do their jobs. Bouna is not privy to the assassination plot, nor does he particularly care.

What Bouna Knows

Bouna can be asked questions while their chores are being performed. As close as he'll get to conversation is to answer yes or no questions. He will tolerate 1d4+1 questions per day before simply responding with: "WORK!"

- What is your name? BOUNA
- Where are you from originally? EARTHNE
- Were you always here with the palace? NO
- Were you animated by Vassahi? NO
- Were you animated during Vassahi's rule? YES
- Is there another wizard here? YES
- Where is that wizard? DOWN
- Did Chuul animate you? YES
- * Is Chuul still around? YES (a clue)

"Food" preparations and service

Kilata (CR 10) 1x - See Appendix 1

The PC starts in the kitchen (Area 4). Read:

As you enter the kitchen, you see a large-headed slavering female troll looking over a row of zombies dressed as waiters. You quickly step into line as she staggers toward your end of the line. She wears a leather apron stained with untold years of gore and viscera. Her mouth and teeth seem unnaturally large and wide. Between that, her obese belly, and the blue glow in her eyes, you know she is likely a fael.

"Ahhh... you must be the new ones." She sticks her short stubby nose in your face and grins an evil grin. "The Regent knows we're always looking for fresh meat..."

"You each have a series of tasks to perform in the Banquet Hall, Salon, Parlor, and Day Room. Each assigned task must be completed in the right order. We must not let the Regent down, we have guests! Now off you go!" She claps her long hands twice.

This is Kilata, Vassahi's "head chef". Pinning her down to ask a question is going to be exceptionally difficult, as she is always moving around and shouting at someone. She will only tolerate three questions before chasing the PCs off with the threat of being on the day's menu. Kilata has no knowledge of the assassination plot, but if the PCs inform her and convince her (Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate check - DC 18) that it will actually aid Vassahi, then she becomes sympathetic as helpful as she can be (in her limited capacity as head chef).

What Kilata knows

Kilata is aware of the situation with Chuul and Vassahi, but knows that it is a life-or-death secret, so she'll be very careful about parting with information. She is not aware of the assassination plot, but if she was made aware, she might actually prove more helpful (she very much likes Vassahi).

- She was recruited from Nuubark in exchange for a substantial shipment of "meat".
- She's only been here a decade, so the regime change happened before her time.

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- She is better treated here than she ever was in Nuubark. Vassahi's accommodation of her own particular undead needs has made her quite loyal.
- She has a taste for flesh and blood (even dead flesh and blood), but she has standards of quality. She will not tolerate any bad quality "meat" or "wine" being served in her presence!
- * She knows what the oil being produced in the Kitchen (See Appendix) is for (T'liz oil), and who it's for, but she'll only say "for guests" if anyone asks. (a clue)

Kilata will quickly and carefully explain the tasks for each day, berating the PCs until they have the tasks and order memorized:

Day 1

- Butcher corpses for blood and flesh (harvest parts from the dungeon)
- "Wine" and hors d'oeuvres, Banquet Hall
- Prepare oil

Day 2

- "Wine" and hors d'oeuvres, Salon (do not disturb the meetings)
- Deliver "Wine" and oil (several locations: Vassahi's room, the Banquet Hall, the Golden Cells)

Day 3

- Deliver food to prisoners
- "Wine" and hors d'oeuvres, Amphitheatre

Event Ushers

The PC starts in the Day Room (Area 11 on the Upper Floor). Read:

As you enter the room, you see Aminata himself standing there, opposite two other ushers. Aminata does not acknowledge you in any special way, simply clearing his throat and politely motioning you to take your position. Once you are in line, he speaks to the group:

"As a reminder, your duties are to accompany and escort the dignitaries during their stay, calling for servants to cater to their requests if they have any. You are also there to remind the dignitaries of the schedule for the summit meetings and other events. The plaques on the table in front of you each contain the names and schedules for the

dignitaries you will be charged with escorting for the duration of their time here.

"Only once you have seen them back to their rooms will you be dismissed for the evening, and I will expect you to be waiting outside their doors in the morning.

"If there is an incident, you must report it immediately to me or the head of security. Understood?"

"Very good. Now go and introduce yourselves to your delegation."

The PCs have a choice of whom they want to escort: Kiwk, Ireyl, or Fnuthaar.

If they choose Kiwk

Kiwk's usher will spend much of their time running back and forth between the kitchen and the parlor, where Kiwk and his feylaars will be engaging in either binge eating/drinking and violent posturing. It's likely (50% chance each day) that the usher will have to persuade them (Bluff, Diplomacy or Intimidate check, DC 15) to go to the meetings on time. If they fail, the usher will be met with the disapproval of all parties involved.

One advantage to this is that the PC will find themselves spending time in rooms other ushers would not be visiting. After four such trips to the kitchen, head chef Kilata will simply send the usher down to the dungeon to get body parts themselves (giving them access to the dungeon).

If they choose Ireyl

At best, Ireyl and his abominations make for sullen company. They are always in pain and thus always in a foul mood. However, they will request a tour of the castle grounds and the amphitheater during free time. After that, they will retire to the library. On any given day, there is a 10% chance each hour that the usher is sent away at some point on a short, frivolous errand, while Ireyl restores his disguise spells.

If they choose Fnuthaar

Fnuthaar's usher will be greeted with cold suspicion (especially if they're not human). As the usher follows the Uncrowned inquisitor around, the usher will spend their day attending him while doing rounds among his men and the other delegations, and being asked the occasional idle question (such as "What do you think of this?"). Note that none of this will have

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any effect on how likely the PCs will be eavesdropped at night.

The usher will not learn any secrets or have any time to investigate, but there are other benefits:

- Provided the usher doesn't say anything overly suspicious, they will not be at risk of increasing their Conspicuousness score.
- The usher will also learn exactly how suspicious Fnuthaar is of the PCs. (They gain knowledge of their Conspicuousness score - None: 0-5, Low: 6-10, Medium: 11-15, High: 16+).
- The usher will also gain insight into Fnuthaar's magical/psionic abilities.

The morning of Day 3, when the usher meets with Fnuthaar, they can see he's carrying something in his pocket. They can attempt to acquire this journal with a Slight of Hand or Bluff check (DC 20). However, Fnuthaar may (if he beats the usher's Sleight of Hand/Bluff result with a Spot check) notice the theft. If he notices the theft, it triggers an immediate Confrontation (see the Conspicuousness and the Uncrowned sidebar, above).

The journal is Fnuthaar's and (written in Ulyanese) paints a picture of his contempt and intolerance of everyone he's observing...and also his resentment of Gretch himself. The journal's completeness makes it clear that Fnuthaar has not learned of Vassahi's secret plan to escape with Chuul, perhaps (Sense Motive - DC 18) because it never occurred to him that an undead might be capable of love or anything other than selfish cruelty.

This journal could be used as blackmail material against Fnuthaar if the PCs get cornered during their escape, or perhaps later in a negotiation with Fnuthaar, or even with Gretch himself...

Guard Duty

Zebah (CR 10) 1x - See Appendix 1

The PC starts in the Guard Station (Area 13 on the Vassahi's Palace - Upper Floor map, see pg 28). Read:

When you arrive at the guard station, you recognise Zebah from your arrival outside the city. She seems to remember you, and while she is still gruff, she is somewhat warmer in her greeting than she was last time.

"Now that I know you can handle yourselves, I can trust you with security. We're not expecting a full-scale battle to erupt over these three days, but we cannot rule out the possibility of some small-scale skirmishes. Also, there is the issue of the local undead predators.

"We rotate guards through the various stations so that we can keep fresh eyes on the situation and catch possible threats. You are now in squad A; you will be expected to be with your squad at all times during a duty shift. Go with them through all the required checkpoints during the day." She motions to the group standing beside her: two elves, a human, and an orc.

"Remember to stay with your squad for safety reasons and report back to me here at the end of your shift."

The members of the squad don't know much about the situation in the palace, as several of them are barely sentient. The orc is relatively bright, but if the PCs speak with him, he won't stop talking about leatherworking and how he hopes to one day start his own leatherworking business.

What Zebah Knows

Once per day, the PCs can attempt to talk to Zebah. She is willing to answer two of the PCs' questions a day, as she has little time to spare.

- I was actually here before the Regent. There were many elven refugees headed this way after the Obsidian Flood, and I was one of them.
- I was one of the few capable warriors in a group of elven refugees from the eastern outskirts of Ulyan. We had died in the marshes during the early parts of the siege of Elsavos, but had been resurrected by the obsidian tide, and wandered west when we found our way up the wall impassable.
- I had known of Vassahi from his time in Elsavos and when he came here, and I vouched for him with Chuul.
- Yes, I knew about Vassahi's plan to overthrow Chuul.
- * I stand by my reputation: no sovereign has ever died on my watch. I have nothing else to say about that. (a clue)

The Palace - Ground Floor

In each area room description, the following information has been provided:

- A list of types of servants who can visit there without raising their Conspicuousness score.
- Information for the Assassination: useful information for how the PCs might stage the assassination.
- Secrets to Discover: information for the PCs' investigation of the secrets underlying the assassination plot.

The DM should remind the players that they will be rewarded for both the information they discover as well as the effectiveness of their assassination plan.

1 - Throne Room

Safe to visit: All types of servants

As you already noted during your arrival, the throne room is the first space into which palace visitors enter. Its cavernous space is bare stone, causing sounds to echo and reverberate off the walls. Two rows of large pillars stand at regular intervals along each side of the room and lead to the dais upon which Vasaaahi's huge obsidian throne sits.

There are a number of stone doors that lead out of this room to other parts of the palace.

As the PCs pass through this area on their way back and forth to other parts of the palace there is a good chance they encounter any of the following:

- Other servants
- Fnuthaar the Uncrowned's bodyguards.
- Members of the Kiwk or Ireylul delegations.

Information for the Assassination

There are two guards at all times outside the front door, and one guard to either side of the throne. In addition, the guard station (area 13) has a clear view of the throne through a barred window from the upper floor.

Besides the amphitheater, there is no place more public in which to conduct an assassination. The only issue is how to do so without getting caught. Other than

running for the tower and jumping off the roof, there are four possible ways out of the throne room (through the front door, the banquet hall, the servant's quarters, and the dungeon if the secret passage has been found), but each involves running through rooms crowded with furniture and palace staff or past guards.

Secrets to Discover

This room is so heavily trafficked, there is nothing to discover here unless it involves a direct confrontation with a member of the Uncrowned retinue.

2 - Salon

Safe to visit: Cleaning, Food Service

Moving to enter the salon, you approach a large door. The handle is worn from use and smooth to the touch. Though the portal appears to be heavy, it swings open with surprising ease, revealing a small room beyond - richly furnished and decorated. The door has a large sliding bar, enabling it to be secured from the inside.

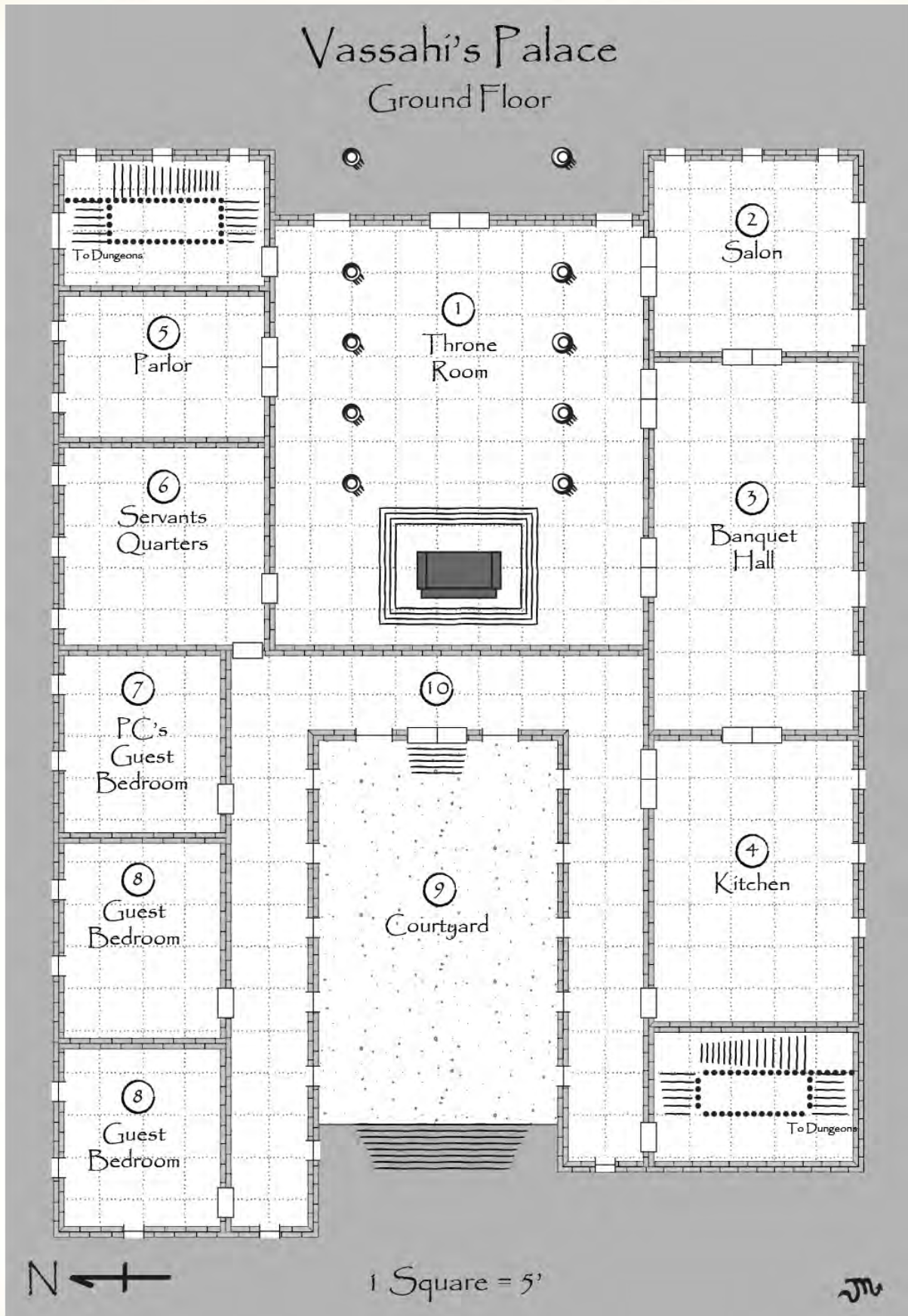
Two large woven tapestries depicting strange scenes hang on poles flush to the northern wall and a pair of carved stone chairs sit facing a large window. Numerous smaller shelves line the room, filled with a variety of stone, bone, textile and wooden objects. A desk sits in front of the tapestries upon which a scatter of notes can be seen, along with two small crystal flasks. Finally, against the west wall, an object sitting atop a plinth lies covered with a cloth.

Secrets to Discover

The Tapestries

The first tapestry depicts dark skinned elves living in the hills and mountains above towering cliffs and a cascading waterfall. The elves are depicted skirmishing across a lake with seafaring orcs on one side and with lizardfolk at the foot of the cliffs to the other.

The second tapestry shows scenes of a massacre. An army of humans clad in steel and armed with magic marches upon their cities and villages, killing all in their path. As the last bastion falls, refugees brave the swamps of the lizardfolk and flee west.



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With a Knowledge - History or Local (Elsavos or the Sea of Chalat) check (DC 25), the PCs can discover that craftsmanship of these is elven and that they date back to the Green Age. It seems likely that Vassahi had these tapestries brought to Chuul after learning of their existence.

The Flasks

These stoppered crystalline flasks are facet cut and catch the last remnants of twilight leaking through the windows, revealing a pearlescent liquid within.

A cursory examination will reveal a fragrant spiced oil within but a successful Knowledge (Religion) or Spellcraft check (DC 20) identifies the liquid as an oil used to help preserve some undead bodies - most commonly used by t'liz.

The Notes

The desk appears almost new and is made from well-polished obsidian. The thin obsidian slabs on the desk reveal little, dealing mainly with guard dispositions and plans of Ireylul and Kiwk's border guard stations.

With a successful Search check (DC 20), notes (in Ulyanese) can be found here which tell of how the undead predator attacks have been escalating steadily since Kiwk invaded Ireylul and drove the predators east. The notes also speak of how Kiwk was responding to Ireylul's provocations, which were caused in turn by misinformation from an unknown source. It seems Vassahi suspects that this was the work of Gretch's Uncrowned, based upon similar "compulsive meddling" that has happened with other kingdoms.

The Shelves

The objects on the shelves are composed of tribal masks, decorated ceramics, and fragments of woven textiles.

A Knowledge (Local - Elsavos or Sea of Chalat) (DC 20) check will reveal these items come from the eastern Dead Lands above Elsavos, a region called the Sea of Chalat.

Lifting the cloth reveals a one-foot diameter black disk sitting in a bone cradle. It is made from pure,

polished obsidian of the finest quality. It seems to be an obsidian mirror.

A DC 20 Spellcraft check will reveal a faint magical aura and that the device is used as a focus for magical scrying.

Vassahi and Chuul have been viewing far off places, longing for the opportunity to visit them and have sought objects and curios from many such destinations either through trade or by killing any arriving visitors from distant lands, dreaming of the day they can leave the Dead Lands and explore the wider world together.

3 - Banquet Hall

Safe to visit: Cleaning, Food service

Entering through a set of large stone double doors, the room's most prominent feature is a long stone table in the center of the room, surrounded by well-crafted bone and leather chairs. The walls are undecorated.

Two large stone statues stand equally spaced against the western wall near the head of the table.

On a small stone lectern, just inside the door, sits a thin slab of obsidian bearing the room layout.

Secrets to Discover

The Stone Figures

The stone figures stand 8' tall and are well carved but seem partially damaged from the ravages of time. Each is wearing ancient leather armor and holding a chitin shield in one hand and a metal tipped spear in the other.

These statues are ancient, recovered by Chuul long before Vassahi's arrival. They are a form of stone golem and while they are still functional, their animating magics have faded over time. The golems will only animate by command of Chuul (though Vassahi does not know this).

The Guest List

On the small stone lectern is a full list of all guests staying in the palace, including the name of the Uncrowned Fnuthaar.

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4- Kitchen

Safe to visit: Food Service

This large room is much warmer than the rest of the palace. Several other members of the palace staff are already hard at work and barely look up as you enter.

Many bodies hang from hooks on the ceiling all along the entire left side of the chamber, as workers move about harvesting flesh with sharp obsidian tools or collect blood and ichor in pots.

In the far corner, a low smoldering fire springs forth directly from a low stone platform. Above this, you see an assortment of well-carved scraps of flesh, hanging and sizzling over the fire, producing a mouth-watering scent. A small, hunched man dressed in rags with ash-gray skin drawn tight over his bones rotates the contents of the bone hooks with a pair of tongs.

Resting on a huge stone table in the center of the room is the decaying carcass, seemingly one of the undead predators that attacked you while entering the city. Currently it is being dissected and placed onto large ceramic platters by two of the workers.

Information for the Assassination

This is one of the ways out of the throne room, if the PCs decide to stage their assassination in there. Unfortunately, in order to use the kitchen to escape, the PCs would have to get past the kitchen staff, and especially the head chef herself, Kilata. Doing so will most likely mean explaining the assassination plan to Kilata ahead of time.

Secrets to discover

The Manufacture of Oil

A Knowledge (Arcana or Religion) check (DC 20) reveals the copper alembic equipment and contents to be involved with the production of T'liz oil. Observant PCs (Search or Spot check - DC 20) might match the facet cut crystal vials seen in the Salon.

5 - Parlor

Safe to visit: Cleaning

You hear the clamor from this room before the door even opens. This room seems to have once been used as a games and seating parlor, with many obsidian open-back chairs laying broken around the floor next to obsidian game tables.

Within, you can clearly see the massive feylaar guards wrestling and arguing amongst themselves. There is, however, one particularly sturdy desk in the corner which is still intact.

This is one of the places the Cleaning Servants will frequent on their daily rounds. This is the most likely place for Kiwk and his entourage to frequent when they are not in their rooms or involved in various activities.

Secrets to Discover

Kiwk's Agenda

If the PCs spend long enough in this room, they will hear one of Kiwk's lieutenants (or perhaps even Kiwk himself) blurting out something that betrays their agenda. When they do so, paraphrase the following:

- They hate being bossed around by anyone, and couldn't care less about making peace.
- Everyone is scared of the "Crowned Eye" (what they call the Gretch - after his symbol), so he always gets what he wants.
- That "weasley prick" with a long tongue (the Uncrowned, Fnuthaar) sees to it that He (Gretch) does.
- If they could find a way to spite the "Crowned Eye" without any real repercussions, they would.

While they are clearly too tactless and belligerent to keep a secret before the assassination, cunning PCs could use this information to avoid a fight with Kiwk or his bodyguards after the assassination takes place.

7 - PCs Guest Room

This is where the PCs gather back together each night. It is also the only time and place they can interact with each other and openly share information without raising their Conspicuousness score.

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Information for the Assassination

Several things will happen with the PCs' room at different times over the three days.

Mint on the Pillow

When the PCs first arrive in their room, underneath the piles of clothes they will find a gift-wrapped *arrow of misleading* (which is programmed to feign *disintegrate*), along with a psionic message crystal (useable by anyone) that contains: "Make it look real, and give them a good show..."

Eavesdropper?

There is always a chance that someone is eavesdropping on this room (roll a % dice against the PCs' combined Conspicuousness score). If they are being eavesdropped upon, this can be noticed with a Listen check (DC 18) or appropriate psionics or *scrying*. The listener would be the Uncrowned or one of his bodyguards.

Apparently a Popular Gift

On the first evening after their work shift ends, the PCs receive a knock on their door.

When they open the door, they find a sealed bone tube, a glass of the kitchen's "wine" (blood), and a psionic message crystal on an obsidian platter on the floor.

Inside the bone tube can be found a *greater arrow of undead slaying*. The crystal contains the following message:

"While you might be fooling my master, I know who you are. I speak for the Manipulator.

"We know the Regent is up to something, and we know you're going to stage his assassination to cover that up. But my master likes the idea of the assassination and what it would bring, so I have been instructed to help you.

"Whisper the name of your unliving enemy when you fire this arrow, and they shall be unmade where they stand.

"Should you complete this task, it would be a boon to my master, and you would be rewarded.

"It would be a dangerous mistake to tell the Regent or his servants of our discussion.

"I will be watching."

If the PCs go into the hallway, they will find no one in the halls.

The PCs will likely realize this message is from Fnuthaar. But astute PCs might also realize that in sending this message, he has also shown he is still unclear on what Vassahi is hiding. This means that Vassahi's plan could work if the PCs cooperated, but it also means the PCs could choose to kill Vassahi freely to curry favor with Gretch. The fate of the Regent is now entirely in the PCs' hands.

If the PCs report this to the Necrologium, they will receive a missive in response saying only "That is both interesting and concerning. Continue with the plan, and see what else you can find out."

Secrets to Discover

The Night Before

(Only use this event if none of the PCs have discovered Chuul's secret cell yet.)

On the second night, when the PCs return to their rooms, they will discover a small parcel on their bed wrapped in leather. Inside they'll find a golden key, a somewhat squashed, carefully folded parchment origami flower (a white damask rose), and a psionic message stone containing: "If you had a chance at redemption, a chance to fix the wrongs of the past, what would you do? If you can make this ruse perfect, you will save not just one soul, but two..." Upon the PCs reading the message, the message crystal crumbles to dust.

After that, the PCs will be left to themselves for the rest of the evening to make their choice.

8 - Guest Bedrooms

Safe to visit: Cleaning

All of the guest bedrooms are the same. They are currently hosting one of the following, based on DM's discretion:

- 3 of the Uncrowned's bodyguards
- 3 of Ireyl's abomination bodyguards
- 2 of Kiwk's feylar bodyguards
- Empty

Occupants will be mostly indifferent to cleaning staff visiting, but highly hostile to any other staff, at the very least forcing them back out the door.

Adventures in the Dead Lands

9 - Courtyard and Garden

Safe to visit: Groundskeeping, Guards

Stepping into this open courtyard, it's hard to think of any purpose behind this space other than decorative. Gracefully carved obsidian steps lead back into the palace at one end, and further steps lead down into the garden at the other. A series of archways and round pillars carved with geometric motifs line the hallway encircling the entire courtyard. All of the courtyard and garden are made of obsidian, even the bare ground.

In the garden itself, there are what appear to be sculptures of bushes and trees, again sculpted more out of aesthetic pleasure than any real purpose.

As a quirk of its design and wind current patterns, these areas tend to naturally gather shards from obsidian storms. The Regent employs his groundskeeping crew to keep them tidy on a regular basis.

Secrets to Discover

See the Garden section below.

10 - Lower Hallway

Safe to visit: all, but See Appendix

Travel through these corridors is expected for all servants, but stopping or delaying for too long while observed will add to their Conspicuousness score (+1 for every consecutive 5 rounds spent in the hallway).

The Palace Upper Floor

11 - Day Room

Safe to visit: Cleaning, Ushers

This is the room in which the leaders of the various factions and their bodyguards will gather when awaiting escort to the various peace events. When both

leaders are in the room, the tension is palpable, but since the Uncrowned and his guards are also present, no one dares to initiate violence.

Secrets to Discover

The Hospitality Plan

On a shelf in the corner can be found a document detailing the accommodation plan for the delegations, including where each individual is staying.

12 - Guards Quarters

Safe to visit: Cleaning, Guards

13 - Guard Station

Safe to visit: Guards

This is where Guard servants will report each day, to be sent on security duty to one of several possible locations.

Information for the Assassination

Due to the high volume of guests, there is often no one in the Guard Station. Indeed, even when it is manned, a modest attempt at persuasion (Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate check - DC 12) is enough to convince the single guard stationed here that the PC is their replacement.

The barred window here looks down on the throne below, possibly providing a clear shot. Making an escape after the assassination attempt might be difficult, however. No quick exit routes are near this location and all exterior windows are barred with obsidian shafts.

Secrets to Discover

Security Patrol Schedule

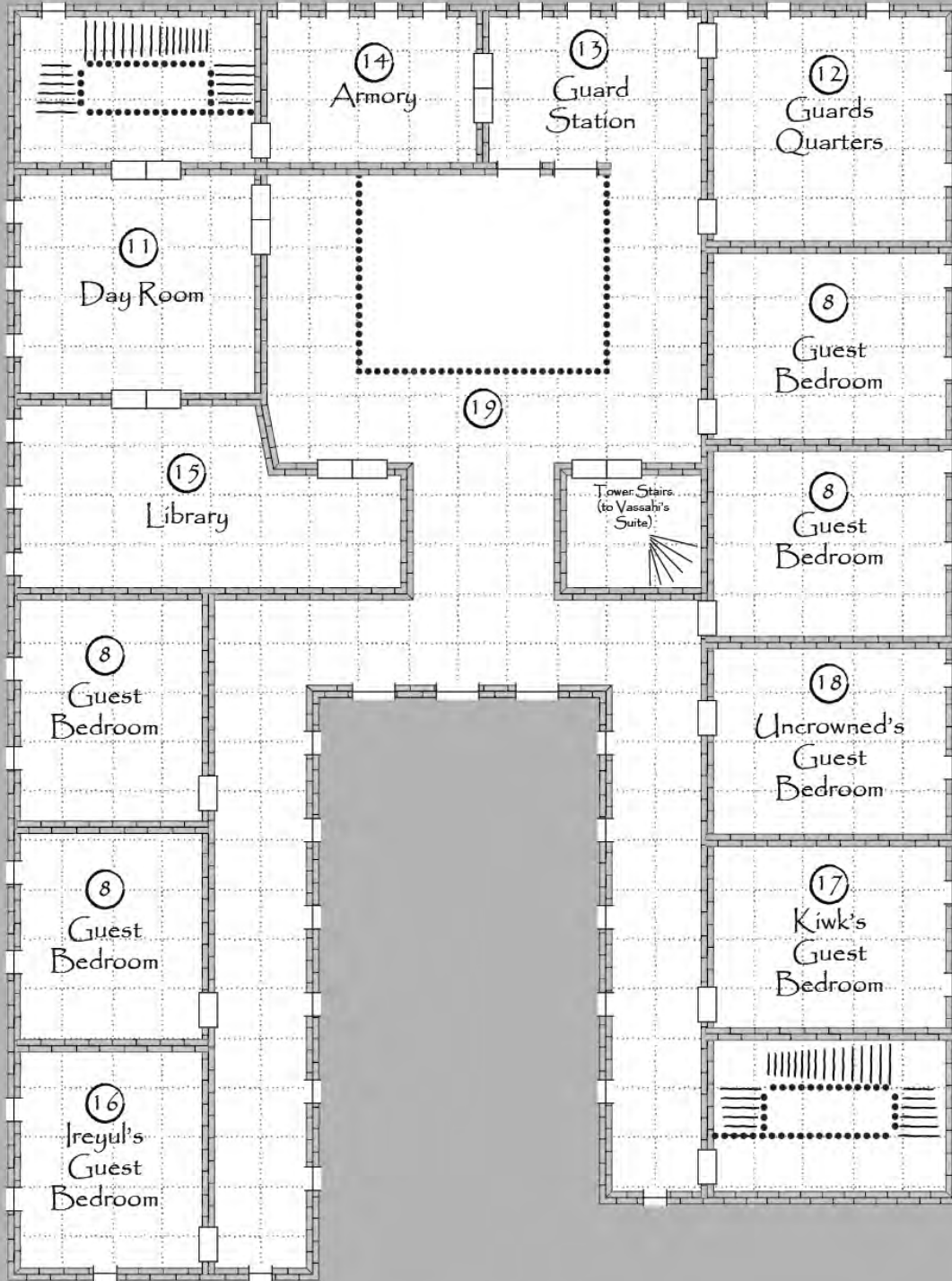
This thin obsidian slab details the routes to be followed by each round of guards. It mentions several locations the players may not be familiar with yet, including a hidden Greenhouse.

14 - Armory

Safe to visit: Guards

Vassahi's Palace

Upper Floor



1 Square = 5'



Adventures in the Dead Lands

This door is always locked, but the guard on duty in the Guard Station has the key.

Information for the Assassination

There is a good stock of serviceable weapons here, made of bone, stone or obsidian: bows, swords, spears, daggers, etc. This is the only place where weapons and armor can be found within the palace, other than those worn by the various guards, bodyguards, and leaders.

15 - Library

Safe to visit: Cleaning

This is the room where Ireylul and his abominations are most likely to be found in when they are not involved with the various events on the schedules.

As mentioned above, Ireylul and his abominations make for poor company. They don't talk much, instead suffering their continuous pain in silence, reading books, and occasionally snapping at each other in irritation.

Secrets to Discover

Ireylul's Nature

Any amount of time spent here observing Ireylul will reveal hints about his true nature. It is very clear he is hiding something about himself. In this case, it is only his appearance (he's under constant spells to disguise his hideous appearance, out of vanity and shame).

However, this information is not relevant to the PCs' cause, and will likely prove a distraction.

Ireylul does not care for either Kiwk or Vassahi, and is happy to find any opportunity to make either of them suffer. If he discovers the PCs plans, Ireylul will blow their cover without a second thought.

16 - Ireylul's Guest Room

Safe to visit: none

When you knock on this door, one of the stark and gruesome abominations which serve Ireylul stands in the doorway. After a moment, it simply grunts before closing the door abruptly.

This is where Ireylul and his delegation stay. The PCs will never see this door open, and no one will ever let them inside willingly.

17 - Kiwk's Guest Room

Safe to visit: Cleaning

This once graceful guest room looks as if a herd of wild animals rampaged through it. Almost every piece of furniture is broken, and the walls have several impact cracks.

This is where Kiwk and his lieutenants are staying. The room has already been quite wrecked and Kiwk does not care if the cleaning staff enter the room.

Perceptive PCs might notice (Sense Motive or Spot check, DC 20) that the damage to this room is far more extensive than could have possibly been caused accidentally and could only have been caused through deliberate, malicious effort.

18 - Uncrowned's Guest Room

Safe to visit: none

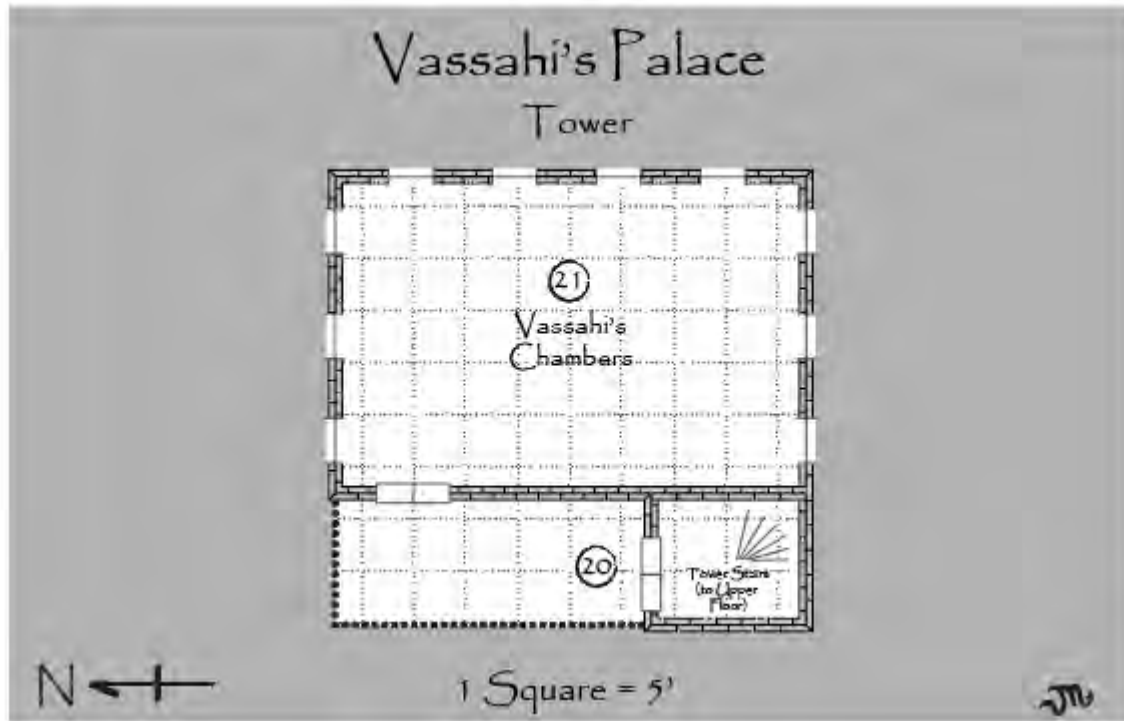
While still rather austere, the VIP guest rooms have been given somewhat more attention than the regular bedrooms. The signature vertical geometric pictograms of Chuul run down the pillars and walls, adding some decorative texture to the interiors. And the base and sides of the beds have a bit more elegant carving than the standard guest rooms, but otherwise the layout is quite similar.

This is where Fnuthaar the Uncrowned and his bodyguards stay. None of the cleaning staff has had the nerve to disturb them and no PC on Cleaning duty will be required to do so.

19 - Upper Hallways

Safe to visit: See Appendix

Travel through these halls is expected for all indoor servants, but stopping or delaying for too long within this hall will add to their Conspicuousness score (+1 for every 10 consecutive rounds spent here).



The Palace Tower

20 - Balcony

Safe to visit: Cleaning, Food Service, Guards

Exiting from the stairwell through double doors, you step onto a wide balcony overlooking the western portion of the city. The flagged surface is laid out in yet more geometric patterns favored in Chuul. A low, carved balustrade surrounds the space. Further double doors toward the other side of the balcony would appear to lead back inside.

From the balcony it is possible to get a clear view of the entire western side of Chuul, all the way to the border with the kingdom of Ireyl.

Information for the Assassination

It is possible to exit the palace via this balcony and the roof, but doing so would draw a lot of attention, and the 50 foot fall to the ground would be potentially deadly (5d6 falling damage). The citadel walls are 50' away from the balustrade and roughly the same height, so unless the PCs can fly or jump that distance,

they would not make it over the walls, and would still be trapped in the citadel.

This balcony does grant a superb view, including a very long (~550 feet) but possibly clear shot at anyone leaving the citadel in the direction of the amphitheater (north). This would be a tough long range shot (suffering a -8 penalty to hit, lacking effects to increase the weapon's range) for a composite longbow or heavy crossbow, and nearly impossible for other ranged weapons. Considering how long it would take for guards to reach the PCs' location however, it could be an interesting option.

21 - Vassahi's Chambers

Safe to visit: Cleaning, Food Service

Opening the heavy double doors allows entry to what must be Vassahi's chambers. This large room is well lit from the many window openings all of which have open shutters. The dominant feature of the room is a giant bed of carved obsidian, with long silks draped on three sides. A number of stone alcoves sit between the windows on the eastern wall. In which hang many colorful robes and cloaks. Two small bookcases and a set of shelves are positioned similarly against the western wall, and a desk and chair are positioned to look out over the city.

Adventures in the Dead Lands

Secrets to Discover

The Desk

Servants who visit here have a high chance of seeing Vassahi's documents detailing the "Living Lands".

A closer observation of the desk reveals it to be a tidy workspace. Copper-tipped styluses sit well sharpened and neatly laid out in a row on the desktop. Two stacks of thin obsidian slabs sit next to an incredibly ancient and tattered tome.

The tome dates back to the Green Age and is incredibly fragile, requiring a Dexterity check (DC 15) to handle without damaging the pages. Inside are various descriptions of the lands to the north of a place called Ulyan - the northern lands are referred to as the "Heartlands", including historical accounts of old trade routes to places called Celik and Alak-a-Tamwa.

The obsidian slabs are etched with scrying notes and eyewitness accounts of the lands beyond the obsidian to the north, with some accounts being as recent as this year. There are even descriptions of living humans and elves, described as being much different than those found in the Dead Lands, but also still living.

*Also on the desk can be found a stack of parchment, of the same type used to make the origami flowers... (a clue)

The Vase

The vase on his desk contains carefully folded parchment flowers. They have the same appearance as the other folded (as if made using origami) parchment flowers found occasionally around the palace.

The Palace Dungeons

22 - Guard Station

Safe to visit: Guards, Food Service

Exiting the stairwell through a stone door, you enter a guard room. It would seem the entire dungeon is deep enough underground so as to be made out of actual stone.

The atmosphere under the palace is thick and heavy and the smell of rot hangs in the air. Several obsidian trestle tables and benches fill one side of the room and a large rack of weapons and shields sits ready to hand against the eastern wall.

There are six guards present, all of whom seem invested in the game of knucklebones being played by a pair of the guards seated at one of the tables.

Secrets to Discover

The Prisoners' Log

Hanging on the wall is a the prisoner's log, on which can be found records of 21 cells (8 gold cells, 2 large stone cells, and 11 small stone cells), even though their patrolling passes only show there are 20 doors (7 gold cells, 2 large cells, and 11 small cells, one of which is broken). Also, while the contents of the cells are somewhat up to date, the 21st cell looks like the occupant's name is scratched out.

The Keys

The keys are color-coded for the types of cells they open: gold cells are opened by golden (bronze) keys, the large cells have larger keys, and small cells are opened by stone keys. If these golden keys are taken by the PCs, they could be sold for 100cp each.

23 - Prison Corridor

Safe to visit: Guards, Food Service

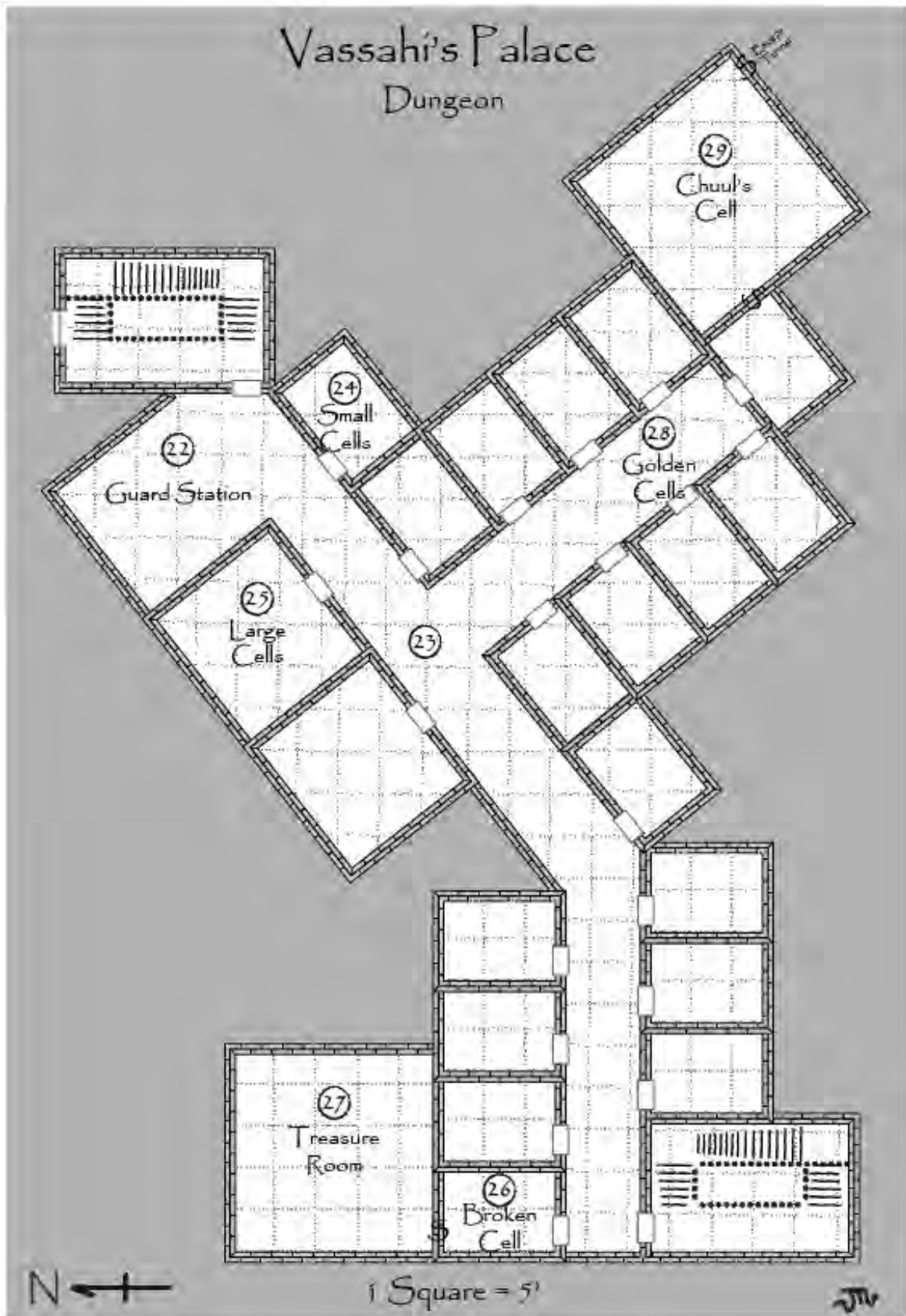
This corridor is lined with stone doors, with a side hallway containing golden-clad doors.

24 - Small Cells

Safe to visit: Guards

Each of these smaller cells appears to be roughly 10' by 12' in size. Restraints can be seen on the walls of some of the cells, whilst others are bare stone. Within several of these cells lies a gruesome sight- bodies partially fused into the walls. Most of the unfortunates are destroyed, but some are still animate.

Adventures in the Dead Lands



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A successful Knowledge (Arcana or Psionics) check (DC 18) will identify these as victims of a botched *teleportation effect*. These are the victims of Vassahi's destructive use of *teleportation* on his enemies. These are also where the head chef gathers the parts and materials for her food and "wine"...

Presently, all six of the southernmost cells contain fused and dissected bodies. Of the remaining 4 cells around the corner, only one has an occupant - one of Ireyl's abominations who was caught trespassing.

25 - Large Cells

Safe to visit: Guards

Behind each of these cell doors lies a large cell, roughly 18' square. The first is empty apart from some moldering boxes and ceramic vessels in one corner.

The other cell contains two 5' square cages made from the large bones of some ancient creature that have been sturdily lashed together. Inside the cages, four-legged undead creatures growl and gnash their teeth, railing against the bars and desperate to escape.

If the PCs somehow release these undead predators (see Appendix 1 for stats), refer to Encounter - Predator Pack, for tactics.

26 - Broken Cell

Safe to visit: None

The door of this cell moves slightly when pushed and appears to have a broken lock. A large rusty iron chain now holds it closed and is secured with an ancient-looking padlock. Staring through the hatch in the door, you can see this cell is in a poor state of repair with the exterior wall partially collapsed and the crushed remains of old furniture laying beneath the rubble.

Nothing else can be discerned about the cell from the outside of the door. There is, however, a carefully concealed secret door at the rear of this cell leading to the treasure room.

Secrets to Discover

If a player makes a Search check (DC 25) on the door, they find that while incredibly ancient and rusty, the

padlock is still functional and shows signs of recent use.

The mechanism to open the secret door is one of the two metal hoops embedded into the northeast wall, seemingly a former attachment point for a manacle. If the ring is pulled out, the secret door will open.

27 - Treasure Room

Safe to visit: None

As the secret door opens, you are greeted to a wondrous sight. This large square room is lined on every side with stone shelving and alcoves. Every inch of which is full of sparkling treasures: coins of various metals, jewelry, flasks, jars and small caskets. There are even several weapons and pieces of armor. The center of the room contains a large number of boxes and stone chests.

This treasure is as real and impressive as it looks, but stealing this treasure in any way will enrage Vassahi and Chuul and likely result in the mission being compromised. If everything in this room were to be carted away, it would be worth 40,000 cp.

However, the coins and treasures are heavy, and smuggling them out while remaining inconspicuous will be a challenge all its own (it can also prove a distraction from the mission).

Any attempts to even touch the chests will trigger a magical *alarm* spell which will sound, notifying every guard in the palace of the theft (resulting in all the guards from Area 22 coming to capture the PCs within 4 rounds, followed by further reinforcements of another 6 guards from upstairs in 6 rounds). The *alarm* can only be detected via detect magic or a Search check (DC 26 - restricted to Rogues and others with the Trapfinding ability) and removed with a Disable Device check (DC 26) or by casting *dispel magic* (DC 26 caster level check).

28 - Golden Cells

Safe to visit: Guards, Food Service

While the stone cells are grim and reserved for the worst offenders of the land, and these gold cells (so named after the golden decorations on their doors) are reserved for VIP prisoners, hostages, and other important captives. Currently they are all empty. Each requires a specific golden key to open.

Adventures in the Dead Lands

Secrets to Discover

The Last Cell

The golden cell at the end of the hallway is always empty, and yet at one point during the PCs' shift, one of the other guards is asked to deliver a tray to it. If the PCs notice (Spot check - DC 20) or otherwise examine the tray's contents, they find it to be a bottle of oil and a delicately folded parchment flower (a white damask rose).

If PCs search the cell, they may (Search check - DC 18) discover a locked secret door in the northwest corner of the cell. This lock will prove quite difficult to pick (Open Lock check - DC 24), but it can easily be opened with the right golden key.

29 - Chuul's Cell

Safe to visit: See Appendix

In the event the PCs can find and unlock the door to this room, they will meet the secret guest.

The secret door unlocks with a click, revealing an unexpected sight. Inside lies a windowless stone room decorated and draped more like a sumptuous boudoir than a dungeon cell. Remarkably well-preserved silks hang from the walls and drape across leather furnishings. In one corner there is a table with scrolls and written leather manuscripts. A grand stone-frame bed with a draped silk canopy sits against one wall in the middle of the chamber.

While it is clear this cell has been lived in recently (and rather luxuriously), at the moment there doesn't seem to be anyone here.

If the PCs look around, they will easily find a tray with an empty bottle of oil placed on a stone bed-side table.

If the PCs spend more than 6 rounds in the room, allow them to make a Listen check (DC10). If they succeed, they will hear the sounds of the undead predators (like those held in the cages in the large cell) coming from the west corner of the room (where the secret door is). If the PCs stay in the secret room long enough, the sound will get louder as it seems like more and more of them are coming.

This is an auditory illusion cast by Chuul, who is invisibly hiding in a corner.

A *detect magic* will reveal the presence of both the *invisibility* and *minor image* spells. Simply waiting for

several more minutes will call his bluff, and force him out of hiding.

Materializing out of the darkness, you see a thin man with dark hair in what must have once been a fashionable hairstyle. His lean, handsome, sharp features are focused on you with fury. "You cannot be here!"

As he prepares to cast a spell at you, he notices something about your reactions. His features immediately change, and his spell is instantly stopped. "By *Ral*... you're 'the assassins', aren't you?"

Once the PCs introduce themselves, Chuul's demeanor warms rapidly. He is, however, nervous about their presence:

"The fact you have managed to find me tells me everything I need to know about your resourcefulness. Vassahi's faith in you is clearly well placed. If he trusts you with his life, then I will trust you with mine as well.

"I cannot talk any longer. Return here immediately after the deed is done, but no sooner, and I shall help you escape the kingdom. You must not tell a soul of what you have seen here. If anyone finds out about us, all is lost..."

With that, he rushes the PCs out, and closes the door quickly but silently.

Chuul will not allow anyone into the room again until after the assassination, and will cast *arcane lock* and *wall of force* if anyone tries to force their way through into the room early.

If the PCs report Chuul's presence to the Necrologium, they will receive a missive in response saying "How interesting, the plot thickens. Continue with the plan, and see what else you can find out." If the PCs are acting as agents of Gretch (see DM's Option - Agents of Gretch, above), Anzatias will respond with: "So Vassahi is hiding Chuul's existence, how delicious. Our master will be quite pleased with this news. Vassahi must die, Chuul must not."

The Palace Grounds

The Palace “Gardens”

The grounds sit within the thick, squat, crenelated walls that completely enclose the palace. The walls appear to be made of a slightly newer obsidian - less pitted and weathered than the obsidian found elsewhere in the palace and the city’s construction.

Much of the grounds are given over to sculptures depicting a variety of races. The statues are all in combat poses but there is a despondent air to the appearance of them, in contrast to the flamboyance of the palace interior.

The walls are a relatively new addition to the palace. The stone for this construction came from a different quarry site at the edge of the Forbidden Mountains to the west of the city.

The largest part of the grounds lies to the west and contains a multitude of round stone basins and troughs. All contain a gray powdery ash, along with various petrified stumps, stalks and rosettes of what seem to have once been plantlife.

A Knowledge (Nature) check (DC 15) reveals that the gray ash was once soil and that the remains in each pot were a variety of plants, each with one thing in common: they were all regarded (whether Ulyan or the Tablelands) as possessing beautiful flowers or blossoms of some sort - all failed attempts by Eomwa to bring some sort of beauty to his palace.

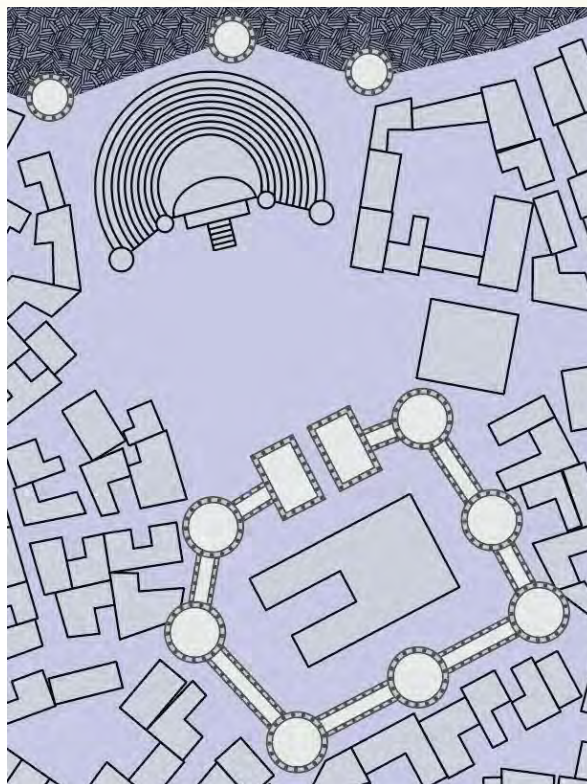
Also in the garden are what appear to be sculptures of bushes and trees, created more for aesthetic pleasure than any real practical purpose.

As a quirk of the garden’s design and local wind current patterns, these areas tend to naturally gather shards from obsidian storms. The Regent employs his groundskeeping crew to tidy them on a regular basis.

Secrets to Discover

A Discarded Tunnel

The obsidian shards are gathered in the northwest side of the garden, where they are eventually gathered in bundles and moved out of the city by cartload. On any given day, on a successful Search check (DC 20) by a



groundskeeping PC will discover a hidden tunnel entrance under a pile of obsidian shards. If followed, the tunnel runs for 300 feet and takes them into the Dungeon (room 29) to Chuul’s secret door. If followed in the opposite direction, the tunnel exits 2400 feet later, in the mountains outside the city walls.

The Central Plaza and Amphitheater

The Central Plaza

Safe to visit: Guards, Ushers

Just outside the walled and fortified compound of the palace is Mehwar’s large central plaza, paved with obsidian blocks in complex (some might even say confusing) geometric designs. With the palace to the south, the western and eastern edges of the plaza are lined with the squat low dwellings that form the majority of the city.

To the north, a huge amphitheater stands with the mountains as its backdrop, dominating the plaza.

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The Amphitheater

Safe to visit: Ushers

Mehwar's amphitheater is a beautiful structure, aesthetically making the most of the contrast between the stone and obsidian to create quite a dramatic stage, bracketed by two short but grand towers on either side, perhaps constructed to allow dignitaries a higher view of the stage and the picturesque obsidian mountain range behind it.

When the PCs enter the amphitheater itself, read:

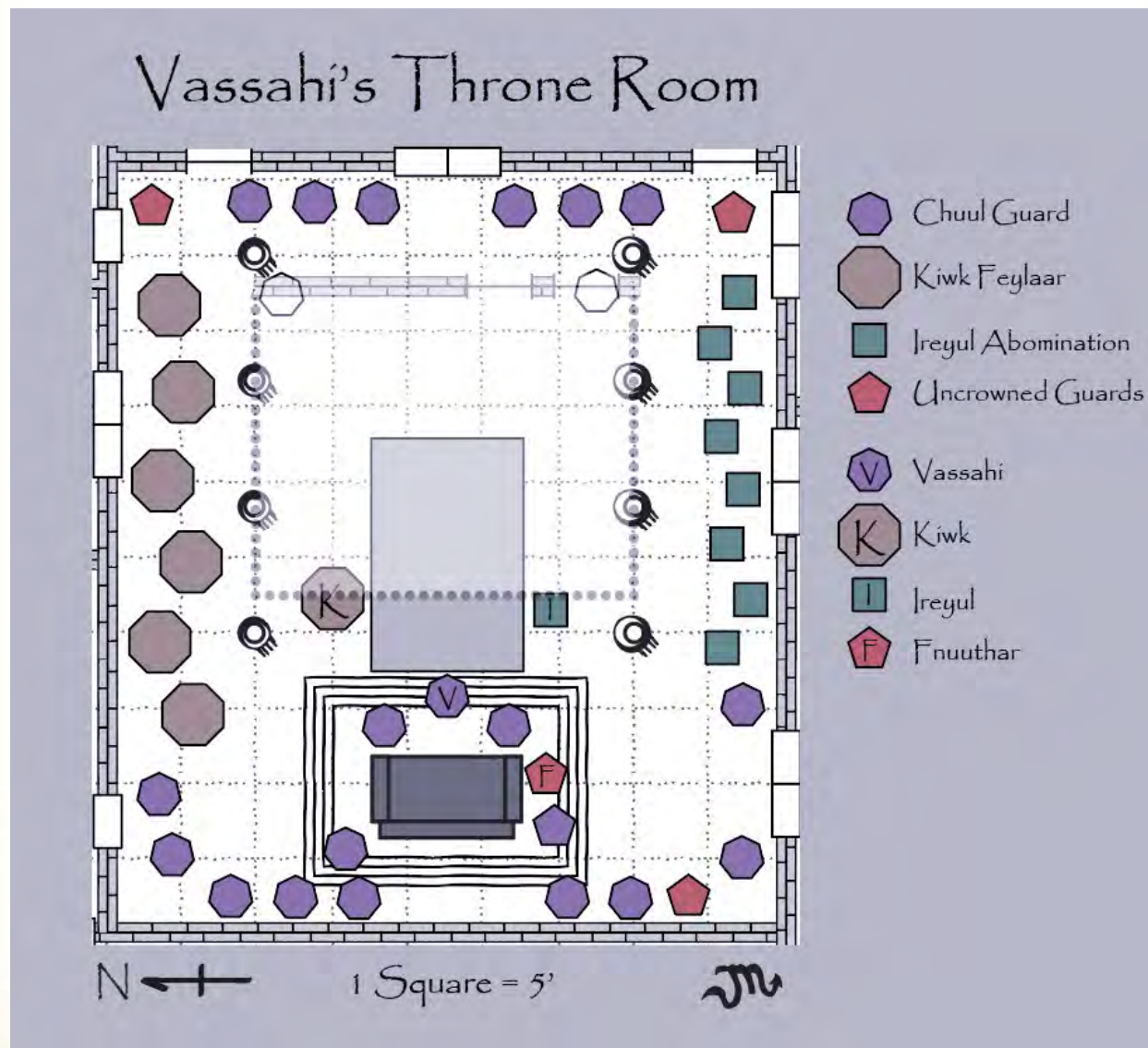
Entering the structure, you move past the stage and up onto one of the many semi-circular rings of seating. From this higher vantage you can see the

stage. The arrangements for the visit of representatives from Kiwk and Ireylul are well underway. The main part of the stage now features a long stone table where the treaty will likely be signed.

Information for the Assassination

The Towers

Both viewing towers could easily provide a clear shot of the main stage area 40 feet away. There are always two guards at the single entrance to each viewing tower.



Part 4: To Kill a King

A) The Assassination

There are two good choices for when to stage the assassination. The first is at the end of Day 2, during the final discussion of the treaty in the throne room. The second is midday on Day 3, during the signing ceremony.

Treaty Discussion

On the evening of the second day, a table is brought into the throne room, and the heads of each delegation sit with the Regent to discuss the final details of the peace treaty while their bodyguards and palace guards stand or mill around the edges of the room.

With a properly lined up shot (likely from the second-floor guard station), the PCs could execute their assassination attempt during this event.

Signing Ceremony

On the third day, all of the dignitaries (along with most of the Guard and Usher servants) are escorted to the amphitheater for the signing of the cease-fire treaty between Kiwk and Ireyl. This is the second and final chance for the PCs to attempt the assassination.

Any PCs assigned to either role will be part of the escort. If they are absent, the absence will be noticed as suspicious, and the Uncrowned entourage will demand the missing PCs be captured on sight.

B) Assassination Results

What happens next very much depends on their choice of actions. The following text assumes the PCs use one of the two arrows provided earlier in the adventure:

If the PCs are Caught, or Their Cover is Blown

Dragged into the throne room, you stand in restraints and are surrounded by Vassahi's guards. The Uncrowned Fnuthaar recites the charges being brought against you, as the Regent looks down on you with a look of bitter disappointment.

Kiwk and Ireyl look on with their respective delegations from either side of the room. It's hard to gauge Ireyl's reaction, but it is clear he is not currently hostile to Kiwk. Kiwk seems to actually approve of the Regent's show of strength and swift cracking down on the attempted treason.

After the long deliberation, Vassahi claps his hands twice to call for silence, then stands to speak:

"I have made my decision. While the penalty for treason is death, I wish to know more of this conspiracy. I will interrogate them myself once we have signed the treaty." And with that, he holds up his hands and the world around you disappears, and you find yourself inside a dark, empty, windowless cell.

After several rounds, a hidden door opens in the side of the cell, opening into a room filled with magical darkness. A shrouded figure whispers: "Come on!" and beckons the PCs to follow.

Leaving the Palace

The figure will resist all attempts at conversation, merely saying "This way. Hurry, before they see you are missing!". Using magic or psionics, the identity of the figure can be discovered to be Chuul (acting on behalf of Vassahi to repay a favor to the Necrologium).

The PCs will be escorted by the shrouded figure into Chuul's secret cell (filled with magical darkness), through the secret escape tunnel, out of the palace, and to the Teleportation Platform. At which point the figure will then disappear back into the tunnel, closing it behind the PCs.

Use the Failure section in Aftermath.

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If the Assassination Attempt Fails (Real or Fake)

The arrow whizzes by, missing its target. Vassahi turns his head to look where it struck the ground, looking disgusted. The two Gretch-kings on either side of him also look at the arrow and then break into mocking laughter. The ceremony continues as before.

eyes. The two Gretch-kings on either side of him watch in shocked silence as he disintegrates into dust. The whole room is stunned into silence for a brief moment, then chaos erupts as the two kings and their men start shouting blame at each other and drawing weapons. The two kings' entourages fall in to protect their respective masters.

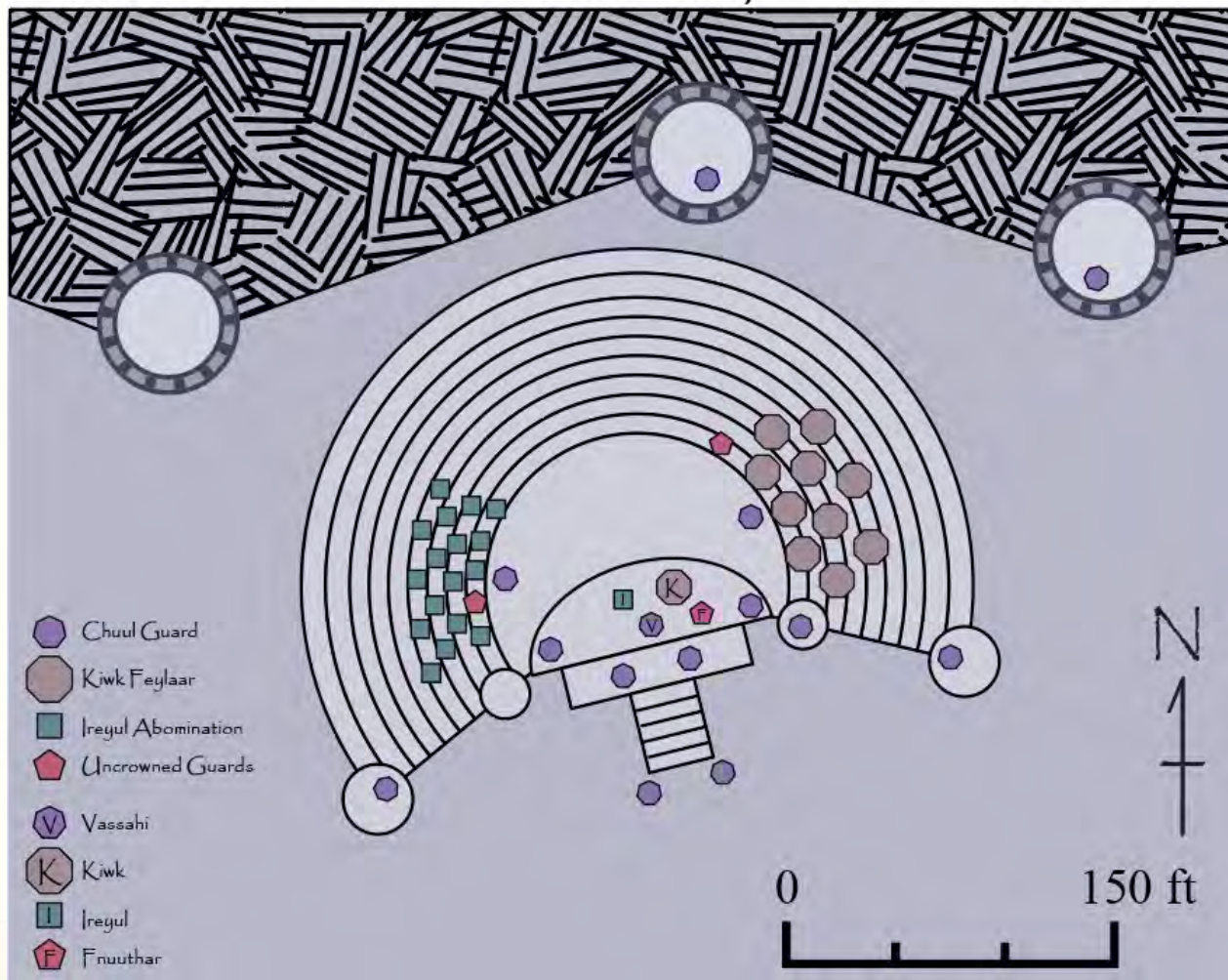
If the Assassination Attempt Succeeds

As Vassahi is mid-sentence, the arrow strikes him in the chest. He looks down as the light fades from his

If the PCs Choose to Kill One of the Other Kings

As Vassahi is mid-sentence, an arrow strikes one of the kings in the chest. A collective gasp emanates from the crowd, and the other leaders look upon the target in shock as he disintegrates on the spot. The

Summit at the Amphitheater



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other leader laughs as the room erupts into chaos. As you are stepping away from your hiding place you notice the Uncrowned is staring straight at your position.

The bodyguards of the assassinated Gretch-king will begin actively hunting for the assassins. Proceed to the Escaping the Lockdown section below.

If the PCs Choose to Kill Fnuthaar

As Vassahi is mid-sentence, an arrow strikes Fnuthaar in the chest. A collective gasp emanates from the crowd, and the other leaders look upon the target in shock as they disintegrate on the spot. For a moment, everyone stands in shocked silence.

Suddenly you each receive a message in your minds, from Vassahi himself: *"That was a fatal mistake. I'm sure Gretch saw that: run!"*

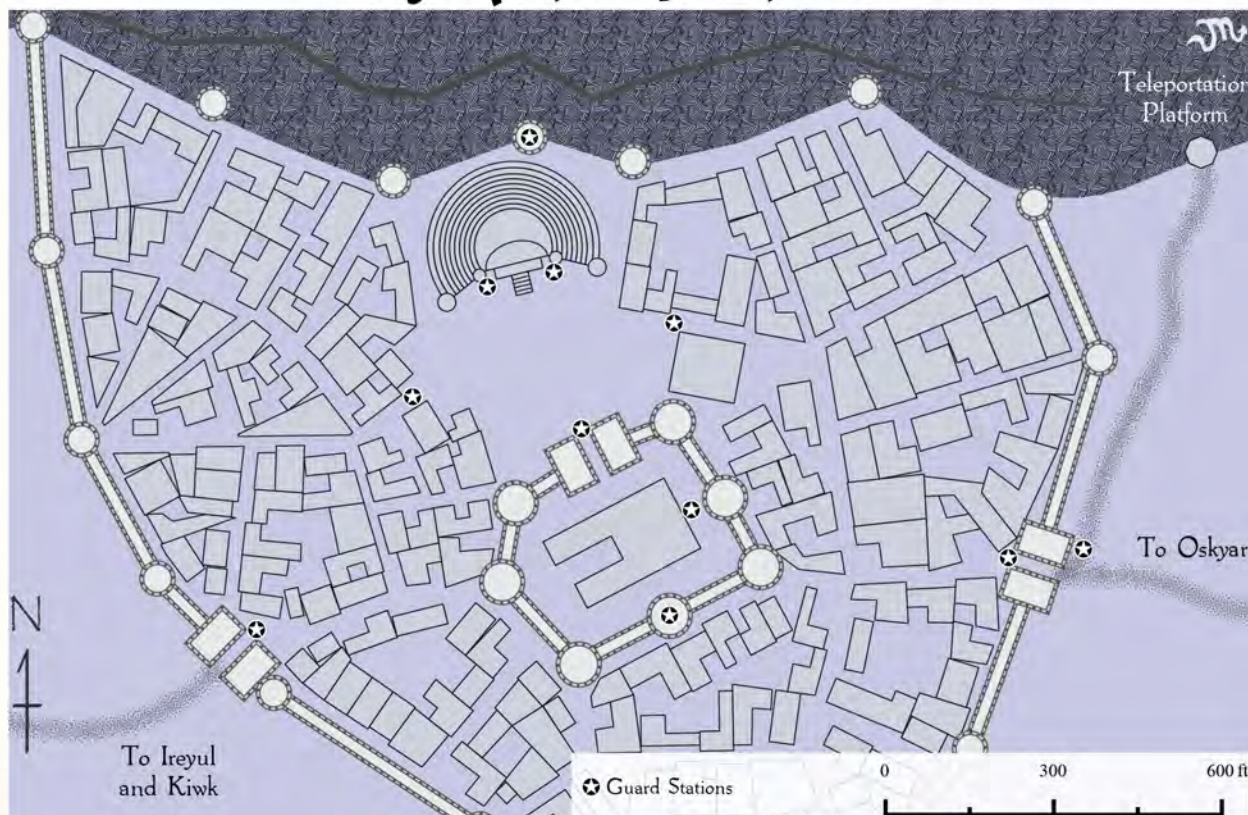
From the moment the Uncrowned is struck down, his bodyguards will lead the charge to locate the assassins. Proceed to the Escaping the Lockdown section.

C) Escaping the Lockdown

Once the assassination has been attempted or successfully performed, Chuul's captain of the guard shouts: "Lock down the city!". From this point, consult the Escaping the Lockdown map below. For each round that passes, keep track of the lockdown status to determine how many guards will be at the various checkpoints on the map.

If Vassahi was the assassination target, the PCs will have a 5 round head start before the word spreads and the lockdown begins in earnest; if another leader was assassinated, the PCs will only have a 2-round head start. After that, for every round that passes, add 0-1 (1d2-1) guards to each checkpoint shown on the map (roll separately for each checkpoint).

CITY GUARD STATIONS



Adventures in the Dead Lands

In addition to the guards, the Uncrowned bodyguards will begin searching for the assassins. There is a non-cumulative 15% chance each round of encountering one of the Uncrowned bodyguards as long as the PCs are within the palace or city. In any round that the PCs are engaged in combat with guards, double this to a 30% chance. If either of Gretch's kings was the assassination target, that king's entourage will also be searching for the assassins, with an equal chance (15% or 30%) of locating the PCs each round.

The PCs ultimately only have two means of escape: the teleportation platform or the city gates, and both require exiting the city.

The PCs will have to find a way to escape the city without drawing attention to themselves. One way to do this would be to use the secret escape tunnel connected to the palace dungeons, but it is also possible to escape through the city itself. If the PCs are observant (Spot check - DC 20), they will notice one of the Uncrowned bodyguards attempting to follow them. Having split up to look for suspicious activity and taking notice of the PCs, the bodyguard will either have to be evaded or killed outright (risking drawing

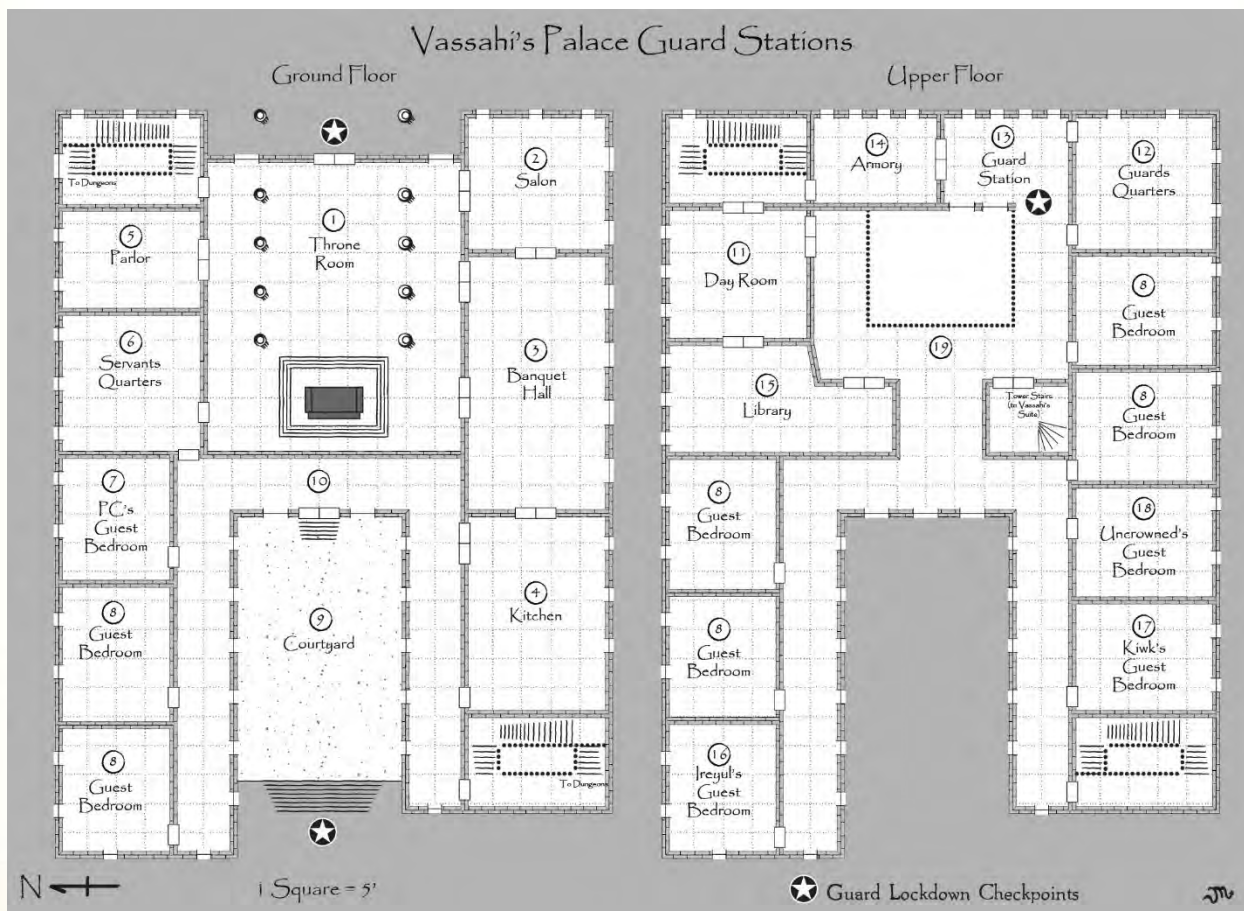
the attention of others unless they pick their battleground carefully).

Chuul's Suite

If the PCs figured out the key they received was for Chuul's secret suite and go there to escape, any bodyguards following them will need to be killed or locked out of the suite in order to preserve the secret of Chuul's existence.

If Vassahi's assassination was faked, the PCs arrive in time to see Vassahi opening the door to the suite. If Vassahi was truly assassinated, Chuul (having received one last telepathic message from him: "goodbye") will realize the PCs have killed his beloved and respond with murderous rage if they come to his suite, attacking the PCs with everything he has. The PCs will not be able to escape through Chuul's suite, but must instead run and hope they survive yet another pursuer.

Within the suite, the PCs will (if they have not already done so) discover the prisoner inside is none other than Chuul himself. They will see Vassahi and Chuul briefly



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embrace, before Vassahi takes Chuul's hand and says to everyone: "This way! Hurry!" Vassahi will guide the party through the secret escape tunnel, exiting in the mountains 300 feet up the trail from the Teleportation Platform.

As you stop, Chuul is laughing excitedly and says to Vassahi: "You're out of your rotten mind, you know that?"

Vassahi smiles lovingly back: "This is our one chance to find a way to leave this endless struggle behind. In the living lands, we may even be able to find ways for us to live again. At the very least, we'll be able to be together and no longer under the Manipulator's thumb..."

Chuul, seemingly laughing and crying at the same time, embraces Vassahi passionately and kisses him. In his expression, you can see the centuries of sheer weariness. How long had he been hiding away in that prison, shielded from the eyes of Gretch?

After a moment, Vassahi stops and turns his attention to the group. This time his manner is very different. No longer presenting himself as a showman, his smile and regard for the party is genuine:

"I am certain I have asked too much of you all already, but please know that what you've done here today is a good thing, and we cannot thank you enough. If you can keep the secret of our disappearance, I offer you both our gratitude and a reward for each of you..."

He hands you a small pouch and says "Run down this trail and you should still have time to make the platform before your mistress recalls you. Farewell!"

With that, the two of them run up onto the Teleportation Platform, quickly disappearing from sight.

Inside the pouch the PCs will find a collection of *pearls of precognition* - golden pearls (one for each character). When a character opens the pouch, they hear Vassahi's voice saying "Speak my name and I shall grant you a favor" (via a *magic mouth* spell). In the future, the PCs can use these to call upon assistance from Vassahi and Chuul in any location except within the Kingdoms of Gretch.

Extraction

The PCs need to contact Anzatias to begin their extraction, whether from outside the city gates or via the teleportation platform. If the PCs are leaving using the teleportation platform, in response to their message they receive the reply: "We will activate the teleportation platform in one minute" (10 rounds).

If the PCs exited Mehwar through the city gates and cannot make their way to the teleportation platform, they receive the following reply: "Remain where you are. Our agent will arrive in two minutes (20 rounds) to teleport you out." to their message. Immediately afterward, they hear (DC 0 Listen check) the howl of a pack of undead predators.

If the PCs are currently being pursued by or engaged in combat with any of the guards or bodyguards from Mehwar, the undead predators will not attack. If, however, the PCs are alone, a group of 2-3 undead predators will attack in 4 rounds.

Undead Predator (CR 2) 2-3x – See Appendix 1

Once the PCs have successfully teleported out of Chuul, use the Success section in Aftermath.

Concluding the Adventure

Outcome

Regardless of what happens, the PCs will most likely be returning to Rhokhan. Her reaction will depend on what occurred.

Success - Vassahi Survived

Rhokhan will be pleased with the PCs performance. They will each have the gifts from Vassahi and Chuul and Rhokhan will reward them for a job well done.

Success - Vassahi Died

Rhokhan will be pleased with their performance. Since Fnuthaar the Uncrowned made it clear that Gretch wanted Vassahi dead, Rhokhan will have already been notified that Gretch will grant the PCs one favor in the future. In addition, Rhokhan will reward them for a job well done.

Failure - Assassination was unsuccessful or another target was assassinated

Rhokhan will be disappointed in their performance, admonishing them for possibly earning Gretch's wrath.

Experience Point Awards

Experience Point (XP) rewards for certain actions are listed below. The final XP total is the amount the party receives and should be divided between the PCs equally. The second set of XP values (listed in parentheses) are the XP awards if using the "Agents of Gretch" option.

XP Action Rewards

- For killing the undead predators = CR value of encounter

- For successfully executing the assassination (real or fake) = 4,500 XP (12,500 XP)
- For successfully escaping (via teleportation) = 8,600 XP (18,500 XP)
- For each group of guards avoided during the escape = 50% CR value of encounters
- For guards / bodyguards killed = 50% CR value of encounters
- For other minor NPCs killed = none (or full CR value)

XP Clue Rewards

- For each secret the PCs learn (the 6 answers marked with a *) = 500 XP each (1,000 XP each)
- For discovering Vassahi's real reason for escaping = 1500 XP (3,000 XP each)
- For finding/meeting Chuul = 1000 XP (2,000 XP each)
- For discovering the secret tunnel before the assassination day = 500 XP (1,000 XP each)
- For discovering Kiwk's agenda = 500 XP (1,000 XP each)
- For discovering Ireyl's secret = 500 XP (1,000 XP each)
- For detecting the PCs' eavesdropper = 500 XP (1,000 XP each)
- For obtaining Fnuthaar's journal = 1000 XP (9,000 XP)

Monetary Rewards

Upon completion of their mission, Rhokhan will reward the PCs for their efforts with new or upgraded equipment.

As before (see *Unbond and Unchained*), the PCs will have access to the full spellcasting services of both the Temple of the Vizier and the Necrologium itself. Each PC can also request the issuing or construction of custom equipment (mundane or magical/psionic). Such items will likely require at least several days to procure as per the standard item creation rules in the DMG. Feel free to assume a week for most things, including delays and shortages. The items will, however, arrive before Rhokhan's next mission for the PCs begins.

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Success

Pleased with the success of their mission, Rhokhan grants the PCs a total of 13,000cp to be divided equally amongst themselves.

Success (DM's Option - Agents of Gretch)

Rhokhan is pleased with the success of the PCs' mission, as is Anzatias' secret master, Gretch, resulting in the PCs being rewarded with a total of 41,000cp to be divided equally amongst themselves.

Failure

Disappointed with the failure of their mission, but still aware that new tools might make the difference between success and failure in their next endeavor, Rhokhan grants the PCs a total of 5,000cp to be divided equally amongst themselves.

Further Adventures

Depending on what choices the PCs make during this adventure, many subsequent adventures could follow.

If the faux assassination was successful, Vassahi and Chuul might contact the PCs many months later. After escaping to the so-called "Living Lands" together, they

have been trying to acclimate to the Tablelands and need assistance.

- Perhaps the pair are hiding beneath decadent and tumultuous Raam, hoping that no one there will take notice of their existence, but they have somehow drawn the unwanted attention of a powerful faction in the city.
- Vassahi and Chuul, feeling homesick for the Dead Lands, may have settled in Bodach among the other undead, drawing the ire of the city's most powerful undead guardians.
- Power-hungry and still quite dangerous, the couple could have settled in Kalidnay or even Celik in order to 'test the waters' of the Tablelands before finding a place for themselves.
- Alternatively, Vassahi and Chuul need assistance tracking down a powerful druid and convincing them to help the pair escape their cursed undead existences and return to life once more.

As the PCs' meddling helped put them into power, the new Gretch-king of Chuul might need the PCs' help in vetting underlings - wishing to know which palace servants were loyal to Vassahi, Chuul, or Gretch.

Perhaps irritated with the newly installed Gretch-king, Mehwar's palace staff contacts the PCs, wishing to enlist their help with a coup to replace the new king.

After some time has passed, perhaps Fnuthaar or one of the other Uncrowned hunts down and corners the PCs, telling them that Gretch is furious with the PCs for letting Chuul escape without his knowledge. The Uncrowned gives the PCs an ultimatum: perform a new task for Gretch "or suffer the consequences".



Appendix 1: NPCs

Aminata - Chamberlain CR 10

Male Elf Zhen Bard 8

LE Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Elf, Psionic)

Init +4; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft., Low-Light Vision; Listen +16, Spot +22

Aura: -

Languages: Classic Dwarven, Classic Elven, Orcish, Ulyanese, Ulyanese Giant

AC: 22; touch 12, flat-footed 20**

(+2 Dex, +10 Nat)

hp 60 (8 HD; 8d12+8); Fast Healing 3

Damage Reduction: 5/magic

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects

Saves: Fort +6, Ref +8, Will +9

Speed: 30 ft; Obsidian Climb

Melee: Slam +9 (1d8+3)

Full Melee: 2x Slam +9 (1d8+3)

Ranged: Ranged Touch +8 (by power)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +6/+1; **Grapple:** +9

Combat Options: Bardic Music (8/day), Chance (1/day), **Create Spawn**, Improved Poison Use.

Combat Gear: -

Psi-Like Abilities: At will—aura sight*, body adjustment*, body equilibrium, catfall*, control light, elfsight**, false sensory input*, psionic charm*, psionic daze*, psionic suggestion*, ubiquitous vision**. ML = HD. The save DCs are Charisma-based. *Power can be augmented.

Psionic Powers (ML 4th, PP: 10, DC 14 + spell level):
1st: conceal thoughts.

Spell-Like Abilities: 1/day - animate dead; CL = HD.

Abilities: Str 16, Dex 14, Con --, Int 18, Wis 16, Cha 18

SQ: Bardic Knowledge (+14), Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60ft., Enhanced Senses**, Fast Healing, Gray Toughness I, Low-Light Vision, Mental

Resistance, Quick Thinking, Rebuke Undead (CL 8th, 6/day), Skills, Smuggler, Street Smart, Trade Secret (Coolheaded, Skilled - Sense Motive), Undead Traits, Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects.

Feats: Dissimulated*, Hidden Talent, Improved Hidden Talent.

Skills: Appraise +9, Bluff +22, Craft (Alchemy) +11, Diplomacy +18, Gather Information +12, Intimidate +18, Knowledge (Arcana) +9, Knowledge (History) +9, Knowledge (Local - Dead Lands) +9, Knowledge (Psionics) +9, Knowledge (Religion) +9, Listen +16, Perform +18, Search +21, Sense Motive +24, Sleight of Hand +8, Spot +22, Use Magic Device +9, Use Psionic Device +9.

Possessions: 9,400cp or Combat Gear plus: Circlet of Persuasion, Cloak of Charisma +2, Hand of the Mage.

Bardic Knowledge: A bard may make a special bardic knowledge check with a bonus equal to his bard level + his Intelligence modifier to see whether he knows some relevant information about local notable people, legendary items, or noteworthy places. (If the bard has 5 or more ranks in Knowledge (history), he gains a +2 bonus on this check.)

A successful bardic knowledge check will not reveal the powers of a magic item but may give a hint as to its general function. A bard may not take 10 or take 20 on this check; this sort of knowledge is essentially random.

Bardic Music: Once per day per bard level, a bard can use his song or poetics to produce magical effects on those around him (usually including himself, if desired). While these abilities fall under the category of bardic music and the descriptions discuss singing or playing instruments, they can all be activated by reciting poetry, chanting, singing lyrical songs, singing melodies, whistling, playing an instrument, or playing an instrument in combination with some spoken performance. Each ability requires both a minimum bard level and a minimum number of ranks in the Perform skill to qualify; if a bard does not have the required number of ranks in at least one Perform skill,

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he does not gain the bardic music ability until he acquires the needed ranks.

Starting a bardic music effect is a standard action. Some bardic music abilities require concentration, which means the bard must take a standard action each round to maintain the ability. Even while using bardic music that doesn't require concentration, a bard cannot cast spells, activate magic items by spell completion (such as scrolls), spell trigger (such as wands), or command word. Just as for casting a spell with a verbal component, a deaf bard has a 20% chance to fail when attempting to use bardic music. If he fails, the attempt still counts against his daily limit.

- **Countersong (Su):** A bard with 3 or more ranks in a Perform skill can use his music or poetics to counter magical effects that depend on sound (but not spells that simply have verbal components). Each round of the countersong, he makes a Perform check. Any creature within 30 feet of the bard (including the bard himself) that is affected by a sonic or language-dependent magical attack may use the bard's Perform check result in place of its saving throw if, after the saving throw is rolled, the Perform check result proves to be higher. If a creature within range of the countersong is already under the effect of a noninstantaneous sonic or language-dependent magical attack, it gains another saving throw against the effect each round it hears the countersong, but it must use the bard's Perform check result for the save. Countersong has no effect against effects that don't allow saves. The bard may keep up the countersong for 10 rounds.
- **Fascinate (Sp):** A bard with 3 or more ranks in a Perform skill can use his music or poetics to cause one or more creatures to become fascinated with him. Each creature to be fascinated must be within 90 feet, able to see and hear the bard, and able to pay attention to him. The bard must also be able to see the creature. The distraction of a nearby combat or other dangers prevents the ability from working. For every three levels a bard attains beyond 1st, he can target one additional creature with a single use of this ability.

To use the ability, a bard makes a Perform check. His check result is the DC for each affected creature's Will save against the effect. If a creature's saving throw succeeds, the bard cannot attempt to fascinate that

creature again for 24 hours. If its saving throw fails, the creature sits quietly and listens to the song, taking no other actions, for as long as the bard continues to play and concentrate (up to a maximum of 1 round per bard level). While fascinated, a target takes a -4 penalty on skill checks made as reactions, such as Listen and Spot checks. Any potential threat requires the bard to make another Perform check and allows the creature a new saving throw against a DC equal to the new Perform check result.

Any obvious threat, such as someone drawing a weapon, casting a spell, or aiming a ranged weapon at the target, automatically breaks the effect. Fascinate is an enchantment (compulsion), mind-affecting ability.

- **Inspire Courage (Su):** A bard with 3 or more ranks in a Perform skill can use song or poetics to inspire courage in his allies (including himself), bolstering them against fear and improving their combat abilities. To be affected, an ally must be able to hear the bard sing. The effect lasts for as long as the ally hears the bard sing and for 5 rounds thereafter. An affected ally receives a +1 morale bonus on saving throws against charm and fear effects and a +1 morale bonus on attack and weapon damage rolls. At 8th level, and every six bard levels thereafter, this bonus increases by 1 (+2 at 8th, +3 at 14th, and +4 at 20th). Inspire courage is a mind-affecting ability.
- **Inspire Competence (Su):** A bard of 3rd level or higher with 6 or more ranks in a Perform skill can use his music or poetics to help an ally succeed at a task. The ally must be within 30 feet and able to see and hear the bard. The bard must also be able to see the ally.

The ally gets a +2 competence bonus on skill checks with a particular skill as long as he or she continues to hear the bard's music. Certain uses of this ability are infeasible. The effect lasts as long as the bard concentrates, up to a maximum of 2 minutes. A bard can't inspire competence in himself. Inspire competence is a mind-affecting ability.

- **Suggestion (Sp):** A bard of 6th level or higher with 9 or more ranks in a Perform skill can make a suggestion (as the spell) to a creature that he has already fascinated. Using this ability does not break the bard's concentration on the fascinate effect, nor does

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it allow a second saving throw against the fascinate effect.

Making a suggestion doesn't count against a bard's daily limit on bardic music performances. A Will saving throw (DC 10 + ½ bard's level + bard's Cha modifier) negates the effect. This ability affects only a single creature (but see mass suggestion, below). Suggestion is an enchantment (compulsion), mind-affecting, language dependent ability.

Chance: Bards live on the edge in many ways. At 7th level you may reroll one single d20 roll once per day, but have to keep the latter result—for better or for worse. At 14th level you may use this ability two times per day.

Elf Traits (Ex):

- Elves receive the Martial Weapon Proficiency feats for the longsword, rapier, longbow (including composite longbow), and shortbow (including composite shortbow) as bonus feats.
- Immunity to magic sleep effects, and a +2 racial saving throw bonus against enchantment spells or effects.
- +2 racial bonus on Listen, Search, and Spot checks. An elf who merely passes within 5 feet of a secret or concealed door is entitled to a Search check to notice it as if she were actively looking for it.

Enhanced Senses (Su): Elfsight and ubiquitous vision continually grant the zhen a +6 bonus on Spot and Search checks. The zhen also has low-light vision, can detect secret doors without actively searching, and retains its Dexterity bonus when flat-footed.*

Improved Poison Use (Ex): At 6th level, you can apply poison to a weapon as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity.

Mental Resistance (Ex): Bards carry many dark secrets they would prefer remain secret. This, combined with a large amount of knowledge based on half-truths and false rumors makes your mind unreliable to those who would seek to mentally affect it. At 5th level you receive a +2 morale bonus to saves made against telepathic powers and enchantment/charm spells.

Poison Use: Bards are trained in the use of poisons, and as of 2nd level, never risk accidentally poisoning themselves when applying poison to a blade.

Quick Thinking: Bards often find themselves in a tight spot where they have to act quickly, whether it is to escape a templar patrol or strike first when in confrontation with a foe. At 6th level, you get a +2 bonus on initiative checks. This bonus increases by 2 at 11th and 16th level.

Trade Secret - Coolheaded: You may take 10 on Bluff and Diplomacy checks.

Trade Secret - Skilled: Add one-half your bard level (rounded down) as a competence bonus to the following skill: Sense Motive.

Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects (Ex): Unlike most undead, zhen can be affected by mind-affecting effects if the base creature could be.



Bodyguards, Fnuthaar's & Kiwķ's CR 9

Male or Female Human Fallen Fighter 8

LE Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Psionic)

Init: +6; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft.; Listen +8, Search +7, Spot +13

Aura: Despair (10 ft range, DC 14 or Shaken)

Languages: Ulyanese, Ulyanese Giant, Classic Dwarven

AC: 24; touch 13, flat-footed 22; Dodge, Mobility (+2 Dex, +6 Nat, +5 armor, +1 Def)

hp 68 (8 HD; 8d12+16)

Damage Reduction: 10/magic

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Code of Honor, Vulnerability to Obsidian

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +5

Speed: 30 ft.

Melee: Greatclub +16 (1d10+9; 20/x2)

Full Melee: Greatclub +16/+11 (1d10+9; 20/x2)

Ranged: Javelin +10 (1d6+6; 30ft range; 20/x2)

Space: 5 ft.; Reach: 5 ft.

Base Attack: +8/+3; **Grapple:** +16

Combat Options: Curse, Create Spawn, Great Cleave, Power Attack, Psionic Weapon (+2d6), Spring Attack

Combat Gear: Chitin Armor +1, Javelin x10, Obsidian Greatclub +1

Psi-Like Abilities: At will—call weaponry*, death knell, deathwatch, mindlink*; 1/day—recall

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agony*. ML = HD. The save DCs are Charisma-based. *Power can be augmented.

Abilities: Str 22, Dex 14, Con --, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 10
SQ: Code of Honor, **Damage Reduction**, Darkvision 60 ft., Gray Toughness, Undead Traits, **Vulnerability to Obsidian**.

Feats: Cleave ^B, Dodge, Great Cleave, Improved Initiative ^B, Mobility, Power Attack ^B, Psionic Weapon, Spring Attack, Weapon Focus (Greatclub) ^B, Weapon Specialization (Greatclub) ^B.

Skills: Climb +6+11=17, Intimidate +0+11=11, Jump +6+11=17, Listen +2+0+6=8, Knowledge (Warcraft) +1+4=5, Search +1+0+6=7, Sense Motive +2+0+6=8, Spot +2+(10/2)+6=13.

Possessions: 9,400cp or Combat Gear plus: Cloak of Resistance +1, Crawling Tattoo of Energy Ray (ML 1st) x2, Gauntlets of Ogre Strength +2, Ring of Protection +1, Psionic Tattoo of Biofeedback (ML 3rd).

Code of Honor (Ex): Fallen are bound to follow a code of honor reflecting idealized rules of war. Evil fallen attempt to break or twist codes to avoid getting killed.

Curse (Su): The undead can curse an individual when it is destroyed. As the final blow is made that kills the creature, the undead can curse its destroyer, as the *bestow curse* spell.

Create Spawn (Su): A giant, humanoid, or monstrous humanoid slain by a fallen's death knell power rises as fallen after 1d4 rounds. A fallen can have spawn with Hit Dice totaling twice its own.

Damage Reduction (Su): A fallen has damage reduction 5/magic. Its natural weapons are treated as magic weapons for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

Despair (Su): Fallen radiate an aura of doom and hopelessness, causing creatures within 10 ft. to make a Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 fallen's HD + fallen's Cha modifier). Creatures that fail are shaken. Whether or not the save is successful, that creature cannot be affected again by the same undead's aura for 24 hours. Fallen can suppress or reactivate this ability as a standard action in order to achieve surprise in close quarters.

Skills: Fallen receive a +6 racial bonus on Listen, Search, Sense Motive, and Spot checks.

Vulnerability to Obsidian (Ex): The undead can be harmed by non-magical weapons made of obsidian.

No matter the type of damage reduction, it is overcome by these common weapons.



Bouna - Groundskeeper CR 10

Male Elite Ogre Thinking Zombie Warrior 5

LE Large Undead (Augmented Giant)

Init: +0; Senses: Darkvision 60ft., Low-Light Vision; Listen +9, Spot +6

Aura: -

Languages: Ulyanese Giant

AC: 18; touch 9, flat-footed 18

(-1 size, +0 Dex, +9 Nat)

hp 67 (9 HD; 9d12+9);

Resistances: Cold 10, Electricity 10

Immune: **Turning**, Undead Traits; **Weakness:** **Code of Honor**, Vulnerability to Blessed Elements

Saves: Fort +8, Ref +2, Will +3

Speed: 40 ft

Melee: Slam +17 (2d6+10) or Claw +17 (1d6+10) or Bite +17 (1d8+10)

Full Melee: 2x Slam +17 (2d6+10) and Bite +12 (1d8+5) or 2x Claw +17 (1d6+10) and Bite +12 (1d8+5)

Space: 10 ft.; **Reach:** 10 ft.

Base Attack: +8/+3; **Grapple:** +22

Special Actions/Combat Options: Disease (DC 15), **Despair (DC 15)**, **Insanity (DC 15)**, Power Attack

Combat Gear: -

Abilities: Str 30, Dex 10, Con --, Int 8, Wis 13, Cha 12

SQ: Darkvision 60ft., Gray Toughness I, **Immunity to Turning**, Low-Light Vision, Resistance to Cold and Electricity, Undead Traits, Vulnerability to Blessed Elements.

Feats: Improved Natural Attack (Slam), Open Minded, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Intimidate).

Skills: Climb +10+0, Intimidate +1+12+3, Jump +10+0, Listen +1+4+4, Search -1+0+4, Sense Motive +1+0+4, Spot +1+1+4

Possessions: none (-1 CR)

Disease (Su): A thinking zombie's bite delivers one of the following diseases (50% chance of either). The save DC is 10 + 1/2 thinking zombie's HD + thinking zombie's Cha modifier.

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- Filth fever - bite, Fortitude save, incubation period 1d3 days, damage 1d3 Dex and 1d3 Con.
- Red ache - bite, Fortitude save, incubation period 1d3 days, damage 1d6 Str.

Despair (Su): At the mere sight of the undead, the viewer must succeed on Will save or be paralyzed with fear for 1d4 rounds. Whether or not the save is successful, that creature cannot be affected again by the same undead's despair ability for 24 hours.

Insanity (Su): The undead's natural attacks afflict its victim with temporary insanity. If the creature fails a Will save, it is confused for 2d10 minutes. The victim has no sense of right or wrong and behaves unpredictably.



Fnuthaar the Uncrowned CR 20

Male Human Morg Psion (Kineticist) 8 / Ranger 7
NE Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Fire, Human, Psionic)

Init: +7; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft.; Listen +20, Search +26, Spot +20

Aura: Fear (< 5 HD, 60ft, DC 18)

Languages: Orcish, Remaan, Classic Elven, Ulyanese, Ulyanese Giant

AC: 20; touch 15, flat-footed 17
(+3 Dex, +4 Nat, +2 shield, +2 Def)

hp 127 (15 HD; 15d12+30); **Fast Healing** 1

Damage Reduction: 10/magic; **Resistances:** Cold 10

Immune: Fire, Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Light Sensitivity, **Turn Submission (as 11 HD undead),** Vulnerability to Cold

Saves: Fort +10, Ref +13, Will +12

Speed: 30 ft.; Woodland Stride

Melee: Tongue +15 (1d6+4; 20/x2) or Dagger +17 (1d4+5; 19-20/x2) or Touch +15 (by spell)

Full Melee: Dagger +15/+10/+5 (1d4+5; 19-20/x2) and Dagger +15/+10 (1d4+2; 19-20/x2) and Tongue +10 (1d6+2; 20/x2)

Ranged: Ranged Touch +13 (by spell)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft. (10ft w/ Tongue)

Base Attack: +11/+6/+1; **Grapple:** +15

Combat Options: Constrict, Create Spawn, Energy Drain (DC 18), Favored Enemy (Undead +4),

Favored Terrain (Obsidian Waste +2), Greater Psionic Endowment (+2 DC, spend Focus), **Immolation (1/day, 5 ft, 20d6 Fire dmg, 5 rounds, DC 18)**, Improved Grab, Psionic Meditation (Move action), **Rotting Touch (20d4 vs plants)**

Combat Gear: MW Obsidian Dagger x2

Psion Powers (ML 8th, PP: 46+28, DC 17 + power level):

4th: energy ball, mindwipe, psionic dimension door, psionic divination.

3rd: body adjustment, danger sense, energy cone, psionic blast.

2nd: elfsight, energy push, energy missile, psionic knock.

1st: detect psionics, energy ray, far hand, inertial armor, mind thrust.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will - *gaseous form*; **CL = HD.**

Abilities: Str 19, Dex 16, Con --, Int 26, Wis 14, Cha 12

SQ: Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60 ft., Fast Healing, Fire Immunity, Gray Toughness, Improved Combat Style (2-weapon), Light Sensitivity, **Nondetection (DC 25)**, Resistances, Skills, Turn Submission (-4), Undead Traits, Vulnerability to Cold.

Feats: Combat Reflexes, Empower Power, Endurance^B, Enlarge Power, Greater Psionic Endowment^B, Improved Initiative, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting^B, Psionic Endowment^B, Psionic Meditation, Track^B, Two-Weapon Defense, Two-Weapon Fighting^B, Up the Walls, Weapon Focus (Dagger).

Skills: Climb +4+5, Concentration +1+18, Disable Device +3+18, Hide +3+15, Intimidate +1+18, Jump +4+5, Knowledge (Psionics) +8+12, Knowledge (Religion) +8+14, Listen +2+12+6, Move Silently +3+6+10, Psicraft +8+10, Search +8+12+6, Sense Motive +2+0+6, Spot +2+12+6, Survival +2+15.

Possessions: 59,000cp or Combat Gear plus: Cloak of Resistance +3, Dorje of Psionic Knock (ML 3rd, 20 charges), Headband of Intelligence +6, Gauntlets of Dexterity +2, Potion-Orb of Expeditious Retreat (CL 1st) x4, Ring of Protection +2.

Immolation (Su): The undead has the fire subtype. Once per day as a standard action, it can cause itself to burst into flames, dealing 1d6 points of fire damage per CR (adjusted by special abilities and weaknesses) to creatures within 5 ft. (Reflex save for half damage).

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The undead continues to burn for 5 rounds, during which time its natural attacks deal 1d6 points of fire damage in addition to their normal damage. Those hit by the undead's attacks also must succeed on a Reflex save or catch on fire. The flame burns for 1d4 rounds. A burning creature can take a move action to put out the flame. Creatures hitting the undead with natural weapons or unarmed attacks take fire damage as though hit by it, and also catch on fire unless they succeed on a Reflex save.

Nondetection (Su): The undead is difficult to detect using divination spells, as though it were protected by the *nondetection* spell. The DC to detect the undead equals 10 + HD.

Rotting Touch (Su): The creature's touch turns living plants into a useless, rotting mess. Within hours of the undead's touch, plants wither and die, fruits become inedible, and water even becomes sulfurous, dealing a creature that drinks it 1d4 points of nonlethal damage per gallon. The undead can make a touch attack against a plant creature, dealing 1d4 points of damage per CR (adjusted by special abilities and weaknesses).

Turn Submission (Ex): Some undead have a weak link to the Gray. The undead is turned or rebuked as if it were 4 HD lower.

Appearance

Fnuthaar had rather pale skin when alive, but between the morg-birth and the fires that rage within him, his skin has darkened to a brown-black shade.

Fnuthaar's tongue is especially large for a morg; it tends to coil around him when frustrated and he absent-mindedly runs its cartilaginous ribs along hard objects when thinking deeply: click, click, click...

Personality Notes

Fnuthaar is a planner above all things and he will always have several back-up contingencies in any situation. Fnuthaar enjoys challenges and prefers to keep busy; if not for Gretch, Fnuthaar would probably be a wandering assassin, just for the challenge.

Fnuthaar has no friends nor enemies, only assets and targets.

Strategy and Tactics

Fnuthaar prefers to engage enemies for extreme long range, if he must, blasting at them with his psionics. But woe to those who assume he is defenseless in melee: when necessary he will attack with a flurry of strikes crushing with his prehensile tongue while furiously stabbing away with daggers in both hands.

When hard pressed in melee, Fnuthaar will either release a psionic blast of fire centered on his position or allow the fires within himself to burst forth, damaging all around him while leaving himself unscathed.



Ireyul's Abominations CR 8

NE Large Undead

Init: +0; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft., Low-Light Vision; Listen +0, Search +0, Spot +0

Aura: -

Languages: -

AC: 18; touch 9, flat-footed 18; Extra Eyes (-1 size, +9 Nat)

hp 196 (14 HD; 14d12+28)

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Necrotic Spray

Saves: Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +9

Speed: 20 ft.

Melee: Abominable Assault +17 (2d6+16; 20/x2)

Full Melee: 2x Abominable Assault +17 (2d6+16; 20/x2)

Space: 10 ft.; **Reach:** 10 ft.

Base Attack: +7; Grapple: +22

Combat Options: Abominable Assault, Frenzy, Necrotic Spray.

Combat Gear: -

Abilities: Str 33, Dex 10, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 1
SQ: Crafted Flesh, Darkvision 60 ft., Extra Eyes, Gray Toughness 2, Low-Light Vision, Undead Traits.

Feats: -

Skills: Listen +0, Spot +0.

Possessions: -

Environment: Any (Deadlands)

Organization: Solitary, band (2-4) or gang (4-10)

Treasure: none

Alignment: Always neutral evil

Advancement: 28 HD (Large); 29-42 HD (Huge)

Level Adjustment: -

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Abominable Assault (Ex): Abominations are assembled from a mixture of humanoid, animal and insectile remains. Each time an abomination attacks, it uses a different type of natural weapon. Roll 1d6 to determine the type of damage: 1-2 - bludgeoning, 3-4 - piercing, 5-6 - slashing.

Crafted Flesh (Ex): An abomination always gains the maximum hit points possible per Hit Die.

Extra Eyes (Ex): Abominations have extra eyes placed on their head or torso, literally granting them "eyes in the back of their head". They are immune to flanking.

Frenzy (Ex): When three or more opponents are within reach, an abomination can make a multitude of attacks. The abomination can give up its regular attacks and instead make one melee attack against each opponent within reach. When it does so, it also forfeits any bonus or extra attacks granted by other feats, spells, or abilities.

Necrotic Spray (Ex): Potent necrotic fluids are used to assemble and animate an abomination. These fluids react violently when exposed to the air. An abomination takes an extra 1d6 points of damage when it takes at least 1 point of damage from a piercing or slashing weapon. These fluids deal the same amount of acid damage to a melee attacker. When an abomination is destroyed, the damage is 2d6.



Kilata - Head Chef CR 10

Female Elite Troll Fael Expert 3

NE Large Undead (Augmented Giant)

Init: +2; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft., Low-Light Vision, Scent; Listen +15, Spot +15

Languages: Ulyanese Giant

AC: 20; touch 11, flat-footed 18

(-1 size, +2 Dex, +9 Nat)

hp 76 (9 HD; 9d12+18); **Fast Healing 3**

Damage Reduction: 5/magic; **Spell Resistance: 21**

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Vulnerability to Sunlight

Saves: Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +7

Speed: 30 ft

Melee: **Claw** +13 (1d8+8) or Slam +13 (1d8+8) or Bite +13 (2d8+8; 18-20/x3)

Full Melee: 2x **Claw** +13 (1d8+8) and Bite +11 (2d8+8; 18-20/x3) or 2x Slam +13 (1d8+8) and Bite +11 (2d8+8; 18-20/x3)

Space: 10 ft.; **Reach:** 10 ft.

Base Attack: +6/+1; **Grapple:** +18

Combat Options: **Breath Weapon** (3/day, 15 ft Cone of ice, DC 12, 10d6 dmg, 50% Bludgeoning / 50% Cold), Cleave, Power Attack, Rend (2d6+12)

Combat Gear: -

Abilities: Str 27, Dex 14, Con --, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 8

SQ: Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60ft., **Fast Healing**, Gray Toughness 2, Low-Light Vision, Scent, **Spell Resistance**, Undead Traits, **Vulnerability to Sunlight**.

Feats: Cleave, Multiattack, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Profession - Cook).

Skills: Climb +8, Intimidate -1, Jump +8, Listen +15, Profession (Butcher) +11, Profession (Cook) +14, Search +4, Sense Motive +6, Spot +15.

Possessions: none (-1 CR)

Breath Weapon (Su): The creature has a breath weapon. The creature can breathe in a cone up to three times per day, dealing 1d6 points of damage per CR (adjusted by special abilities and weaknesses). A successful Reflex save halves the damage.

Vulnerability to Sunlight (Ex): Direct sunlight deals the undead 1d6 points of damage each round.



Ramae - Head Custodian CR 9

Female Human Zhen Expert 5

NE Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Psionic)

Init: +1; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft., Low-Light Vision; Listen +18, Spot +24

Languages: Classic Elven, Goblin, Orcish, Ulyanese, Ulyanese Giant

AC: 21; touch 11, flat-footed 20**

(+1 Dex, +10 Nat)

hp 37 (5 HD; 5d12+5); **Fast Healing 6**

Damage Reduction: 5/magic

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects

Saves: Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +10

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Speed: 30 ft; Obsidian Climb
Melee: Slam +6 (1d8+3)
Full Melee: 2x Slam +6 (1d8+3)
Ranged: -
Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.
Base Attack: +3; **Grapple:** +6
Combat Options: -
Combat Gear: -

Psi-Like Abilities: At will—aura sight*, body adjustment*, body equilibrium, catfall*, control light, elfsight**, false sensory input*, psionic charm*, psionic daze*, psionic suggestion*, ubiquitous vision**. ML = HD. The save DCs are Charisma-based. *Power can be augmented.

Spell-Like Abilities: 3/day - *transformation*; CL = HD.

Abilities: Str 16, Dex 12, Con -, Int 16, Wis 18, Cha 15
SQ: Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60ft., Enhanced Senses**, **Fast Healing**, Gray Toughness I, Low-Light Vision, **Rebuke Undead (CL 9th, 5/day)**, Skills, Undead Traits, Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects.

Feats: Inquisitor, Iron Will.

Skills: Bluff +10, Diplomacy +14, Gather Information +10, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (Religion) +11, Listen +18, Search +24, Sense Motive +18(+10), Spot +24.

Possessions: none (-1 CR)

Enhanced Senses (Su): Elfsight and ubiquitous vision continually grant the zhen a +6 bonus on Spot and Search checks. The zhen also has low-light vision, can detect secret doors without actively searching, and retains its Dexterity bonus when flat-footed. *

Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects (Ex): Unlike most undead, zhen can be affected by mind-affecting effects if the base creature could be.



Thinking Zombie Guard CR 3

Elf Thinking Zombie Fighter 2

LE Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Elf)
Init: +3; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft., Low-light vision;
Listen +7, Search +5, Spot +7
Aura: **Fear (60 ft., DC 11)**
Languages: Elven, Orcish, Ulyanese Giant, Ulyanese

AC: 24; touch 13, flat-footed 21
(+3 Dex, +4 natural, +5 armor, +2 shield)
hp 15 (2d12+2);
Resistances: Cold 10, Electricity 10
Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Vulnerability to Blessed Elements
Saves: Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +1

Speed: 30ft.
Melee: Longsword +7 (1d8+4; 19-20/x2) or Claw +6 (1d4+4) or Bite +6 (1d6+4)
Full Melee: Longsword +7 (1d8+4; 19-20/x2) and Bite +1 (1d6+2) or 2x Claw +6 (1d4+4) and Bite +1 (1d6+2)
Ranged: Composite Longbow +5 (1d8+3; Range 110 feet; 20/x3)
Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.
Base Attack: +2; **Grapple:** +6
Combat Options: Combat Expertise, Disease (DC 12), Power Attack
Combat Gear: Chitin Armor +1, Composite (+3) Longbow, MW Bone Longsword, MW Heavy Chitin Shield

Abilities: Str 19, Dex 16, Con -, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 12
SQ: Gray Toughness I, Resistance to Cold and Electricity, Undead Traits, Vulnerability to Blessed Elements.

Feats: Combat Expertise, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (Longsword)^B.

Skills: Climb +4+3-2 = +5, Intimidate +1+5 = +6, Jump +4+4-2 = +6, Listen +1+(4/2)+4 = +7, Search +2+0+4 = +6, Sense Motive +1+0+4 = +5, Spot +1+(4/2)+4 = +7

Possessions: 2,000 cp or Combat Gear plus: -

Fear Aura (Su): The undead is shrouded in a dreadful aura of death and evil. Creatures in a 60-foot radius that look at the undead must make a Will save. Creatures with fewer than 5 HD that fail their save become panicked. Creatures with fewer HD than the undead that fail their save become shaken. Whether or not the save is successful, that creature cannot be affected again by the same undead's aura for 24 hours.

Disease (Su): A thinking zombie's bite delivers one of the following diseases (50% chance of either). The save DC is 10 + ½ thinking zombie's HD + thinking zombie's Cha modifier.

- Filth fever - bite, Fortitude save, incubation period 1d3 days, damage 1d3 Dex and 1d3 Con.
- Red ache - bite, Fortitude save, incubation period 1d3 days, damage 1d6 Str.

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Undead Predators CR 2

NE Medium Undead (Augmented Animal)

Init: +1; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft., Low-Light Vision, Scent; Listen +3, Search +0, Spot +3

Languages: -

AC: 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14

(+1 Dex, +4 Nat)

hp 13 (2 HD; 2d12)

Immune: Undead Traits;

Saves: Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +1

Speed: 50 ft.

Melee: Bite +5 (1d6+4) or Slam +4 (1d6+3)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +1; **Grapple:** +4

Combat Options: Trip (1d20+3)

Abilities: Str 17, Dex 13, Con -, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6

SQ: Darkvision 60 ft., Low-light vision, scent, Undead Traits.

Feats: Track ^B, Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills: Hide +1, Listen +3, Move Silently +2, Spot +3, Survival +1(+4)

Environment: Any (Deadlands)

Organization: Solitary, pair, or pack (7-16)

Treasure: none

Alignment: Always neutral evil

Advancement: 3 HD (Medium); 4-6 HD (Large)

Level Adjustment: -

Trip (Ex): An undead predator that hits with a bite attack can attempt to trip the opponent as a free action without making a touch attack or provoking an attack of opportunity. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip the undead predator.

Skills: Undead predators have a +4 racial bonus on Survival checks when tracking by scent.



Zebah - Captain of the Guard CR 10

Female Elf Zhen Fighter 8

LE Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Elf)

Init: +9; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft., Low-Light Vision; Listen +9, Spot +15

Languages: Classic Elven, Orcish, Ulyanese

AC: 27; touch 15, flat-footed 24**

(+5 Dex, +10 Nat, +4 armor)

hp 60 (8 HD; 8d12+8); Fast Healing 3

Damage Reduction: 10/magic

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +8, Will +6

Speed: 30 ft; Obsidian Climb

Melee: Guisarme +17 (2d4+10; 20/x3) or Slam +14 (1d8+5)

Full Melee: Guisarme +17/+11 (2d4+10; 20/x3) or 2x Slam +14 (1d8+5)

Ranged: Composite Longbow +15 (1d8+7; Range 110 ft; 20/x3)

Full Ranged: Composite Longbow +15/+10 (1d8+7; Range 110 ft; 20/x3)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft. (10 ft / Guisarme)

Base Attack: +8/+3; **Grapple:** +14

Combat Options: Combat Expertise, Create Spawn, Improved Trip (+4).

Combat Gear: Bronze Guisarme +1, MW Composite (+5) Longbow, Obsidian Arrows x100, Studded Leather Armor +1

Psi-Like Abilities: At will—aura sight*, body adjustment*, body equilibrium, catfall*, control light, elfsight**, false sensory input*, psionic charm*, psionic daze*, psionic suggestion*, ubiquitous vision**. ML = HD. The save DCs are Charisma-based. *Power can be augmented.

Abilities: Str 20, Dex 20, Con --, Int 13, Wis 16, Cha 13

SQ: Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60ft., Enhanced Ability (attack rolls), Enhanced Senses**, Fast Healing, Gray Toughness I, Low-Light Vision, Rebuke Undead (CL 8th, 5/day), Skills, Undead Traits, Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects.

Feats: Combat Expertise, Greater Weapon Focus (Guisarme), Improved Initiative ^B, Improved Trip ^B, Weapon Focus (Guisarme) ^B, Weapon Focus (Longbow), Weapon Specialization (Guisarme) ^B, Weapon Specialization (Longbow) ^B.

Skills: Climb +5+11, Intimidate +1+11, Jump +5+11, Listen +3+0+6, Search +1+0+6+6, Sense Motive +3+0+6, Spot +3+0+6+6.

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Possessions: 9,400cp or Combat Gear plus: Cloak of Resistance, Gloves of Dexterity +2, Psionic Tattoo of *Dissolving Weapon*.

Elf Traits (Ex):

- Elves receive the Martial Weapon Proficiency feats for the longsword, rapier, longbow (including composite longbow), and shortbow (including composite shortbow) as bonus feats.
- Immunity to magic sleep effects, and a +2 racial saving throw bonus against enchantment spells or effects.

- +2 racial bonus on Listen, Search, and Spot checks. An elf who merely passes within 5 feet of a secret or concealed door is entitled to a Search check to notice it as if she were actively looking for it.

Enhanced Senses (Su): Elfsight and ubiquitous vision continually grant the zhen a +6 bonus on Spot and Search checks. The zhen also has low-light vision, can detect secret doors without actively searching, and retains its Dexterity bonus when flat-footed. *

Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects (Ex): Unlike most undead, zhen can be affected by mind-affecting effects if the base creature could be.



Appendix 2: New Items

Gem of Sending

This is a small crystal just small enough to fit in a cupped human hand.

A *gem of sending* is single-use and, once activated, functions just like a *sending* spell, allowing the user to contact a particular creature with which they are familiar and send a short message of twenty-five words or less to the subject. The subject recognizes the user if known to them and can answer in a like manner immediately. A creature with an Intelligence score as low as 1 can understand the *sending*, though the subject's ability to react is limited as normal by its Intelligence score. Even if the *sending* is received, the subject is not obligated to act upon it in any manner.

Moderate evocation; CL 9th; Craft Wondrous Item, *sending*; Cost 2,250 cp.

Pearl of Precognition

These golden pearls were gifted to you by Vassahi Eomwa. When used, subtle hints of advice from the former regent of Chuul fill the bearer's mind when needed most.

A *pearl of precognition* is single-use and, once used, activates a *greater precognition* power, granting a +4 insight bonus that the user can apply at any time in the next 11 hours to either an attack roll, a damage roll, a saving throw, or a skill check. The user can elect to apply the bonus to the roll after determining that the unmodified roll is lower than desired.

Moderate clairsentience; CL 11th; Craft Universal Item, *greater precognition*; Cost 3,300 cp.



Other Body Experiences

Tales of the Unbound, part 3



A Dark Sun 3.5e adventure module for four 5th-level characters

Rumors come flowing out of the Kingdoms of Gretch that Queen Wujarrt has developed a new and powerful method of flawlessly controlling even the most powerful of undead, and the Necrologium must have this new device.

Credits

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Introduction

Other Body Experiences is a short D&D adventure for four 5th-level player characters (PCs). This scenario is designed for Unbound characters (see the Unbound template in Appendix 5) and is the third adventure in the four-part Unbound Operations mini-arc, but can easily be used as a stand-alone adventure. Consult the Scaling the Adventure sidebar for ways to modify the scenario for higher or lower levels of play.

Rumors coming out of the Kingdom of Wujarrt indicate that Queen Wujarrt has developed a method of flawlessly controlling even the most powerful of undead. Rhokhan sends the PCs to infiltrate the Apodexos Arena and recover one of the newly developed devices.

Developer's notes

This concept came out of some conversations for idea development with Jason Wills-Starin (Preserver3), who was briefly a member of our team. It was always about the idea of making undead remote controls and putting the PCs at risk. The tricky part was making this a real threat for the party without actually taking away control of their characters, and giving them a reason to care about the victims. -JM

Preparation

You (the DM) will need the 3rd edition revised D&D core rulebooks, including the *Player's Handbook*, the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*, as well as the *Expanded Psionics Handbook*. This adventure also uses material from *Faces of the Dead Lands*, *Secrets of the Dead Lands*, *Terrors of the Dead Lands*, and the *Dark Sun 3.5 conversion* rulebook from Athas.org, but all necessary rules are already included.

Consult Appendix 3 for additional rules for communicating with the residents of, and surviving in, the Dead Lands.

Adventure Background

Gretch, also known as Gretch the Manipulator, rules a vast swath of the central Dead Lands, located south of the Forbidden Mountains. A powerful necromancer, Gretch's undead creations rule these Kingdoms of Gretch at his behest, but Gretch amuses himself by setting these kingdoms against each other, often through subtle political machinations.

Wujarrt, ruler of one of Gretch's kingdoms, has always seemed obsessed with pitting her kingdom's soldiers against each other; Wujarrt's courtiers claim that she is simply testing her forces - training them to confront the inevitable next wave of bugdead - but it's clear that this "training" is simply an exercise in brutality and sadism.

Over time, Wujarrt has refined this testing of her troops to its ultimate culmination - the construction of the Apodexos gladiatorial arena. As time went on, it became increasingly clear that these "training" combats had a higher entertainment value than military value, and word spread throughout the Dead Lands, attracting undead nobles in search of relief from their eternal ennui. To accommodate (and profit from) these spectators, Apodexos arena was built.

Within the arena, Wujarrt's lieutenants no longer pit just soldiers against each other, but force slave gladiators - criminals, prisoners of war, and nearly anyone else - into the arena against beasts, trained soldiers, and even other slaves; all for the amusement of the visiting nobles.

Overview

Recent reports coming out of the Kingdom of Wujarrt speak of devices that can control even the most recalcitrant and willful of undead. These rumors suggest that at the Apodexos arena, undead patricians are being offered the chance (for a price) to subsume the will of other undead and fight in an arena using the borrowed bodies. Obviously the ability to flawlessly control any undead interests the Necrologium, and so

Adventures in the Dead Lands

Rhokhan tasks the PCs with recovering an example of these devices.

The PCs must make their way to the Kingdom of Wujarrt, to the settlement of Apodexos, find a way to infiltrate the arena where these control devices are being used, and bring one back to Deshentu. To enter the arena, the party must either present themselves as nobles seeking to partake of the games or as newly arrived gladiatorial slaves bound for the fighting pits.

Once within the arena, the PCs will need to make their way down into the slave pits and up into the Arena Master's storeroom to collect the *control crowns* they need. Along the way, they might well need to put their bodies and souls on the line to pass for nobles, escape a death sentence as gladiatorial slaves, or perhaps even both, all the while being careful to avoid arousing the suspicions of the Arena Master and his guards.

Adventure Hooks

This adventure is intended as a follow-up to the adventure *The Bait* (part two of the Tales of the Unbound mini-arc), but can easily be used by parties that have not played through that adventure.

- If the PCs have not played through *The Bait*, or are otherwise not affiliated with the Necrologium, then one of their contacts has received an invitation to visit Wujarrt's fighting pits and has reached out, suggesting the PCs go in their stead. The Vizier's agents have caught wind of this and recruited the PCs with offers of new equipment and patronage, with the intent of using the invitation to investigate what Wujarrt is really up to.
- If the PCs work for the Necrologium and were successful in their last mission (see *The Bait*), either by faking Vassahi's assassination or in actually assassinating Vassahi, then Rhokhan continues to be pleased with the PCs' performance and requests their aid on this next mission.
- If the PCs work for the Necrologium but failed to successfully remove Vassahi (see *The Bait*), then Rhokhan has decided to give the PCs one last chance before sending their bodies for reclamation; she is very clear on this point.

Scaling the Adventure

Other Body Experiences is designed for a party of four 5th-level adventurers, but it can be modified easily to present an appropriate challenge for parties of different sizes or levels.

Consider adapting the adventure for PCs of average levels 3 to 7 by adding effective positive or negative levels to the creatures in each encounter to change their effective Challenge Rating. A creature takes the following penalties/bonuses for each positive/negative level it has gained:

- +/-1 on all skill checks and ability checks.
- +/-1 on attack rolls and saving throws.
- +/-5 hit points.
- +/-1 effective level (whenever the creature's level is used in a die roll or calculation, reduce it by one for each negative level).
- If the creature casts spells, she gains/loses one spell slot of her highest-level spells. (If she has more than one spell at her highest level, she chooses which she gains/loses.) In addition, when she next prepares spells or regains spell slots, she gets one more/less spell slot at her highest spell level. If the creature is a manifester, she gains/loses enough power points to manifest her highest-level power once.

Part I: An Invitation

The adventure begins with the PCs meeting with Rhokhan.

After a short period of waiting, Rhokhan and her archivist Anzatias walk in. Rhokhan looks you over for a moment, smiles faintly, and begins talking as she paces around the room.

"The Vizier has taken notice of you. That is both a good thing and a bad thing: it is good, in that your successes might bring you great prestige. However, much will now be asked of you.

"That brings me to our task for you: recently we have learned of an innovation in controlling other undead that has been made in the Kingdom of Wujarrt. We would like to study this device ourselves, but of course Queen Wujarrt is not interested in sharing her toys.

"We have already sent one team of infiltrators to acquire an example, however, they have not reported back in some time.

"Your task is to discover the status of the previous team and retrieve one of Queen Wujarrt's control crowns for us.

"As usual, Anzatias will give you details and information on the logistics of travel."

And with that, Rhokhan departs.

Anzatias then gives the PCs a briefing on the Kingdom of Wujarrt and the Apodexos arena. The DM should handle it as a question-and-answer session.

What Anzatias the Archivist knows

- The Kingdom of Wujarrt is ruled by Wujarrt, one of Gretch's vassals. Queen Wujarrt is uncontrollably brutal and wicked, and her realm reflects this, with lethal "training" combats between soldiers being commonplace throughout the kingdom.
- The town of Apodexos, located in the far northwestern extent of Wujarrt's kingdom, is really more of a fortified garrison town than a true settlement. Its location initially chosen simply on a whim by Wujarrt, Apodexos has proven to be well-placed to defend against attacks by the neighboring kingdoms of Ceeryl and Erthne.
- The arena has two possible modes of entrance: the two Guest Entrances and the Service Entrance. Access through the Guest Entrances is usually reserved for VIPs - nobles and powerful or otherwise important individuals. The Service Entrance is generally where the arena workers enter and exit when on errands, but it also seems to be where prisoners are received to be used as gladiatorial slaves, so entry there might be a backup option.
- You will be provided with disguises to allow them to pose as minor nobles for their approach into Apodexos and given invitations that should grant them entry into the Arena.

DM's Option - Agents of Gretch

Other Body Experiences is designed for a party of four 5th level characters, but with some additional setup, the adventure can be used for a party of four 12th level characters.

In this scenario, Gretch, through his double-agent Anzatias, once again secretly tasks the Necrologium's best junior agents (the PCs) with serving his goals alongside those of Deshentu. Gretch is interested in (some might even say jealous) of this new innovation in undead control and wishes to examine it.

Anzatias' instructions for the PCs are:

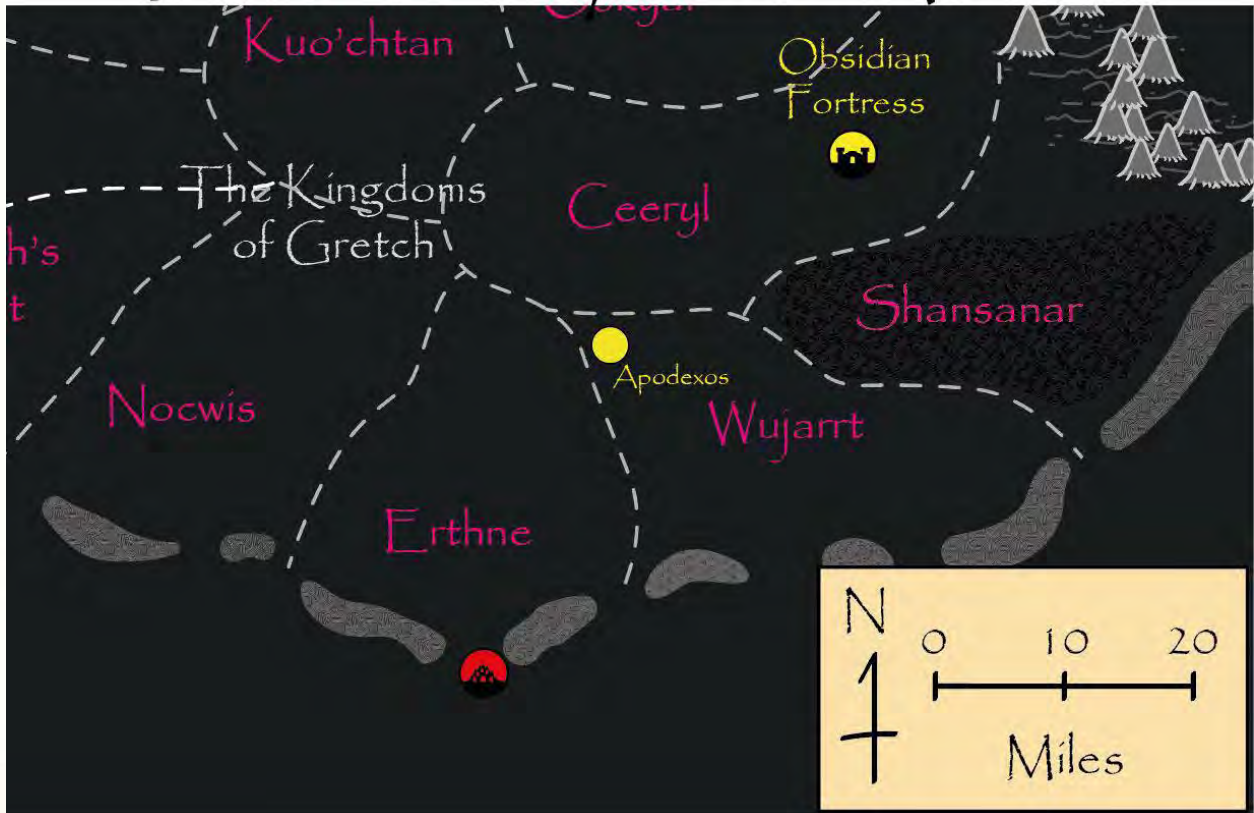
- Procure one of the devices in question for Gretch. If at all possible, it should be in addition to the one for Rhokhan.
- Butcher everyone within the arena; leave no witnesses.
- Plant evidence (weapons and badges bearing the Exilarchate's symbol - three mountains with a river flowing from the third, largest peak - See Appendix), implicating Erthne's forces for the attack.

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The emblem of Erthne's Exilarchate



SOUTHWESTERN KINGDOMS OF GRETCH



Adventures in the Dead Lands

- The ability to completely and remotely control any undead is too powerful and game-changing for it to not already have been implemented on the battlefield by Wujarrt, so it's likely that there is some limitation to the effect - perhaps requiring an item be worn on both the controller and the victim. If so, we will need an example of each device, preferably a matched set.
- Our previous team of infiltrators may or may not still be within the arena. They were:
 - Bynmae, a female half-elven thinking zombie
 - Kori, a male elven zhen
 - Ruswen, a male skeletal gnome
 - Uggona, a female dwarven banshee berserker
- Wujarrt has recently declared a total ban on teleportation into, out of, and within her kingdom, but special arrangements have been made with the neighboring kingdom of Ceeryl, allowing you to *teleport* there and then make the short journey across the border.

A) Getting There is Half the Fun

With each of Gretch's monarchs, their lands must be approached differently. In the case of Wujarrt, she is deeply distrustful of outsiders who travel into or through her realm via *teleportation* effects. Fortunately, the Necrologium has called in a favor with Ceeryl, and can arrive in her kingdom and travel overland to Wujarrt's domain.

In the blink of an eye, you teleport from the inside of the Necrologium's ornate obsidian walls to... a green meadow?

You find yourselves in inexplicable surroundings: rolling hills covered with soft green vegetation and wildflowers surround you. A small bubbling brook twists around between the hills, with flowering trees hanging their long boughs down to just barely touch the water. A rainbow shimmers off in the distance against the clear blue sky.

As you examine your surroundings, you are approached by a fat hairy dwarf with golden curly hair. He seems to be wearing clean, finely made clothes and, despite his uncommonly cheerful appearance, his face is grim and unfriendly.

"Come with me." he grunts out.

The entire realm is covered by a series of continuously active illusion spells. Any attempts to use *detect magic* or *Spellcraft* (DC 15) will reveal an overwhelming number of overlapping powerful illusions.

The dwarf, whose name is Murd, has been instructed by Ceeryl to rendezvous with the PCs and escort them to the border with the Kingdom of Wujarrt. Murd is singularly uncommunicative and, if asked any questions about himself, he will simply restate his instructions. As the PCs pass various features (trees, ponds, rivers, animals, etc), he will provide stern warnings ("DON'T GO NEAR THE WATER!" "DO NOT TOUCH THE TREES!"). If the PCs blunder too close to a particular feature, he will shout at them repeatedly. If the PCs ignore the warnings, or if they carefully approach the feature and attempt to pierce the illusions (Will save, DC 18), they will discover the true nature of these features (perhaps the hard way):

- The rivers and ponds are actually dry gullies filled with razor sharp obsidian shards
- The trees are all obsidian towers, studded with spikes.
- The small, cheerful huts are fortified guard barracks.
- All the brightly dressed folk they meet are thinking zombie followers of Ceeryl.
- The fauna are all skeletal beasts, reassembled from various, mismatched bones.

The illusions continue until the border of Wujarrt, where they abruptly end, leaving a stark border between a sunny, green pastoral landscape and a searing, barren expanse of obsidian dotted with fortified war camps.

Development: The border between the kingdoms of Ceeryl and Wujarrt is only lightly fortified here, as Gretch rarely manipulates Ceeryl and Wujarrt into warring with each other, and both Murd and the PCs' map can clearly indicate the way to Apodexos from here. The border crossing is uneventful (unless the DM wishes otherwise); proceed to Part 2b: The Village of Apodexos.

B) The Village of Apodexos

The arena where the PCs are headed is in the training camp of Apodexos, situated in the northwestern corner of Wujarrt's kingdom (not far from the border with Erthne).

Arriving at Apodexos, it is apparent that it is a permanent military encampment rather than an actual village: beyond the imposing walls and large double-gates, the settlement largely consists of barracks and armories, simply fabricated out of unadorned obsidian slabs.

The sole exception is the arena. Standing in the center of the outpost lies a small but impressively built colosseum, taller and far more finished than the surrounding buildings.

At the entrance gate to Apodexos, the guards will stop the PCs and demand to know why they want to enter

the settlement. If the PCs are posing as undead nobles or acting as the envoys of actual undead nobles, then gaining entry will be a simple matter of the party showing their invitation. If the PCs are here attempting to gain entry under another pretense, then they will need to convince (Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate check, DC 15) the guards to allow them entry.

Closer to the arena, you can see there are at least two routes in. There is a well-appointed entrance facing the town's main gate and a smaller entrance around the side. The upscale entrance is perhaps for receiving VIPs and their entourages, while the side entrance is likely for arena workers and "featured entertainment" (prisoners brought in to fight and die in the arena).

Development: To begin their investigation, the PCs will need to not only get into the arena, but also secure examples of the *control crowns*. The PCs need to either find a way into the VIP area (proceed to Part 2C: VIP Entrance) or present themselves as one of the new captives (proceed to Part 2D: Service Entrance).

Part 2: Getting In

A) VIP Entrance

The PCs might attempt to enter the arena as invited VIPs, especially if they are here instead of a patron.

1) Invitations Please (EL 7 or -)

Modek/Arth (CR 5) 1x - see Appendix 1

Nurhon/Gerrum (CR 5) 1x - see Appendix 1

If the PCs attempt to enter the arena as VIPs, they'll need to do so at one of the Guest Entrances (L1), located at the north and south ends of the arena.

Approaching the VIP entrance, you catch sight of a surly-looking undead mul who looks miserable even for a zombie. Standing next to him is a well-dressed, nearly fleshless skeleton whose bare skull somehow manages to give the impression of smiling broadly.

The skeleton nods and, in a friendly tone, says: "Greetings, and welcome to the Apodexos arena. Your invitation, please?"

To use this entrance, the PCs are going to have to talk their way past the doormen (Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate check, DC 25), or they will be turned away. If the PCs have an invite from a patron, this will grant them a +5 bonus on the check.

If the PCs choose to attack, the doormen (Modek and Nurhon at the northern entrance, Arth and Gerrum at the southern one) will give a cry, summoning the arena guards. After alerting the guards, Nurhon/Gerrum will attack one of the PCs while Modek/Arth will move behind the same target and attack. Three rounds later, ten guards will arrive from within the arena. If the PCs do not flee, the guards will engage them until the PCs can be captured using *hold undead* spells. If the PCs are caught, proceed to Encounter #8 - Orientation.

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2) Noble pursuits (EL -)

At the top of the stairs, you find yourselves on the mezzanine level, which offers an excellent view of the arena floor. Below, a fight is currently occurring between a hulking humanoid creature and some kind of golem-like creature. The ground shakes as the golem crashes against the humanoid, knocking them both down.

A beautiful female zhen in fine clothes saunters up to you with a pair of obsidian goblets, "Welcome to the Apodexos arena. The next match will be starting soon." She hands you the goblets and says: "I am Iona. You may place your bets with me."

The hulking humanoid is an undead ogre.

Development: If the PCs ask about betting, see the Possible Wagers sidebar below.

If the players ask questions about if or how the gladiators are controlled, Iona smiles inscrutably and says "This way." The PCs are then led to a series of small, square cubicles. Two of the cubicles are

occupied, each with a well-dressed undead sitting on the floor in an intense trance, wearing a crown on their head and shouting silently at something unseen. "Would you like to join the fight yourself?" If the PCs wish to try out the *control crowns*, proceed to Encounter #3 - Test drive.

3) Test Drive (EL -)

Alig-Fa (CR 6) 1x - see Appendix 1

Arena Guard (CR 5) 8x - see Appendix 1

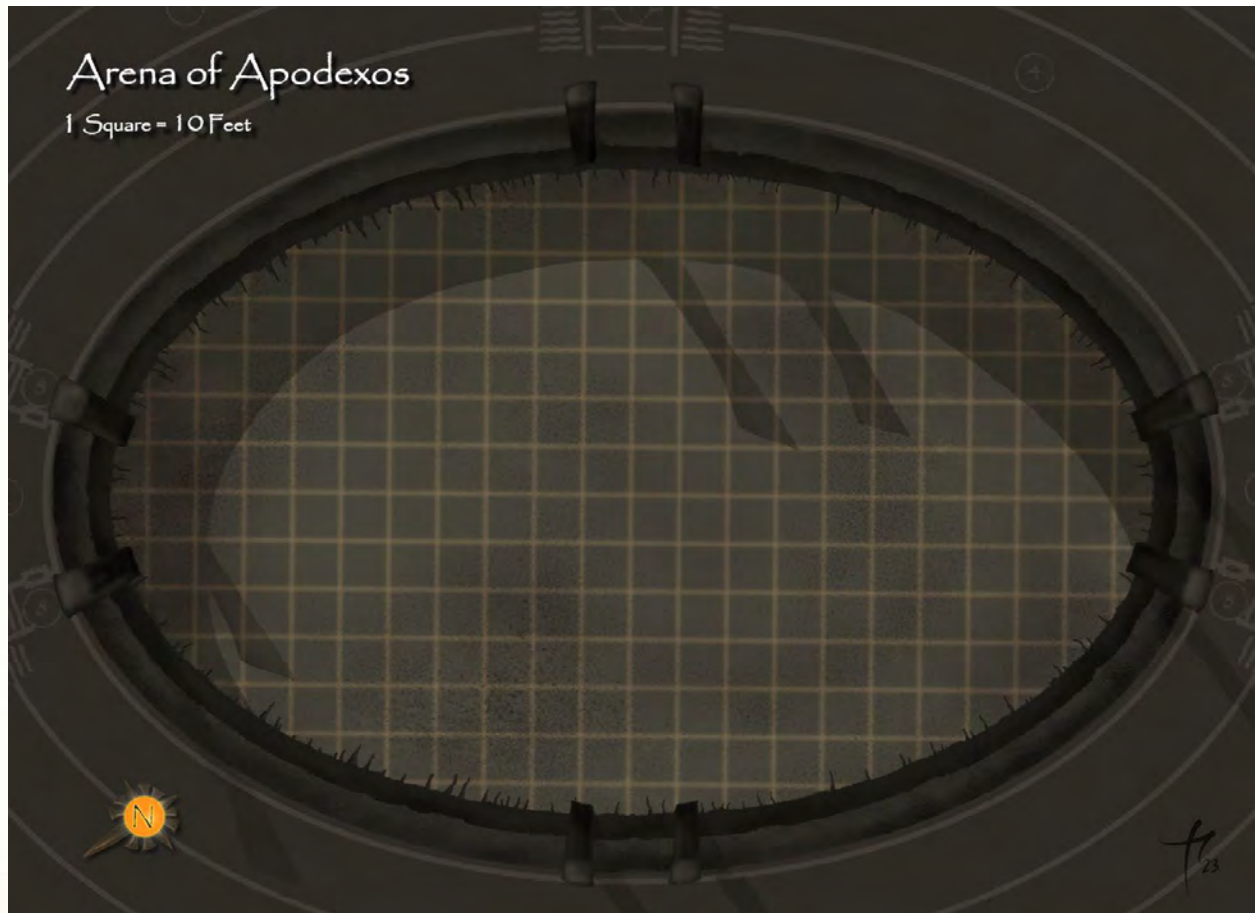
Buleata (CR 6) 1x - see Appendix 1

Kelen (CR 6) 1x - see Appendix 1

Maxien (CR 6) 1x - see Appendix 1

Stohn (CR 6) 1x - see Appendix 1

The Pitmaster (CR 9) 1x - see Appendix 1



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Yalak (CR 6) 1x - see Appendix 1

Once the combat between the ogre and golem ends, Iona shows the PCs several crowns of undead control. For their first fight, no one will insist on the PCs placing a wager, but if they wish to do so, they may (see Possible Wagers, below).

Iona leads you to a table on the balcony overlooking the arena floor. On a table are five crowns made of golden metal, each with a different symbol. There are several segmented spikes jutting out of the top and several differently-sized gemstones arrayed along the sides, culminating with a large deep red oval stone on the front.

"Please," Iona says, "each of you choose one."

The choice of crown correlates with the gladiator the players will control. If the PCs ask about the symbols or about the gladiator the crowns control, Iona will share the following information (it is recommended the DM allow the players to look at each gladiator's stats before making a final decision):

- Cloud and hammer = Alig-Fa - Orc Fallen Fighter/Rain Cleric
- Eye on block = Maxien - Half-Elf Thinking Zombie Psion (Shaper)
- Screaming mouth = Stohn - Human Thinking Zombie Wilder
- Shield and axe = Buleata - Dwarf Fallen Fighter
- Sword with eye = Yalak - Human Fael Psionic Warrior
- Crossbow and daggers = Kelen - Kobold Namech Rogue

After taking a crown, you are each guided to an alcove. Iona then looks at each of you and says, *"Try it on. You'll see."*

When you put on the crown, there is a moment of disorientation as your senses shift from your alcove to a chamber along the arena floor. You seem to now be equipped as a gladiator.

As you look around, you see several other undead in the chamber, looking confused and also equipped as gladiators. Through the bars, you see a fierce-looking warrior with a palpable air of authority. Seeing your movement, he begins speaking in a commanding tone:

"A-ha! We have some new riders to control this fresh meat for the pit! I hope you last longer than the last group!"

"Listen up! I'm the Pitmaster and those crowns on your head mean you now possess these lucky gladiators. Your actions are theirs, their pain is yours. If they die, it won't kill you, but you'll wish it had."

"Your goal in this first little bout is to learn to control your gladiator and survive longer than the other lucky saps facing you. It's that simple. If you can do that, you'll earn back any wager you've made and then some."

"For this first training bout, you'll be fighting against each other until submission."

With that, a gong sounds, the gate to the arena is opened, and you are free to walk out onto the obsidian sands of the arena floor.

As the PC-controlled gladiators step out into the arena, the Pitmaster says "Go on! Fight!", and the scattered onlookers start chanting "Fight! Fight! Fight!"

Tactics: During this bout, when a gladiator drops to 5 hp or fewer, a spellcaster monitoring the arena will enclose that gladiator in a *wall of force* dome to prevent their destruction. When only one gladiator is left standing, the onlookers cheer the champion, and the guards lead them back into the pen.

After a few moments, the gate behind you opens up again, and the Pitmaster in the bugdead helmet and the guards usher you all back into cages.

Once inside, the Pitmaster tells you *"You'll need to take off your crowns. The crowns on this side will stay on, but yours will be removed. It's the only way to break the connection."*

Taking your crown off brings the same disorientating jolt to your senses, and you find yourselves back in your original bodies. Outside your alcoves, you see Iona and a man in a skull mask standing nearby. He looks to you and says, *"Well done, champions. I am the Arena Master."*

"I appreciate how far you've traveled to join us today, even more so because of the skills you just demonstrated. A few more performances like that, and you'll be the talk of the arena."

Development: If they are interested, the Arena Master offers to allow the PCs to fight in a "real" arena bout. If they accept, proceed to Encounter #4 - Round Two.

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Possible Wagers

Since the Dead Lands do not have currency, wagers are placed on things the undead actually value. The following are possible wagers, and what it will mean to the PC to win or lose such a bet. Each “ante” in the list is seen as being of increasing value.

1. A pint of blood (can be bet a maximum of 2 times)
Win: +10 temporary hit points
Lose: take 10 damage
2. A pound of flesh (can be bet a maximum of 2 times)
Win: +1 armor class for 1 day
Lose: -10 maximum hit points for one day
3. Their flesh
Win: Granted one zombie slave, commanded to serve the appropriate PC.
Lose: The flesh is stripped from the PC's bones in a special process, making them a skeletal creature; permanent -2 to Strength (not available for already skeletal undead)
4. Their body
Win: Granted one skeletal thinking zombie slave, commanded to serve the appropriate PC (treat as an undead NPC hireling, with an Effective Character Level two levels below that of the PC)
Lose: They (or a companion) are taken straight into the gladiator pits (see Encounter #8 - Orientation)

4) Round Two (EL -)

Goblin Fael (CR 4) 3x - see Appendix 1

Before a “real” match begins, the Arena Master will require each player to provide an “ante”, to participate.

“How about a real challenge? This time, let's make it interesting...”

Once the PCs have each provided an “ante” (see the Possible Wagers sidebar), they may once again don their crowns and take part in an arena bout. The

enslaved gladiators will have been healed of any damage from the previous bout. They will have one round to get their bearings and make preparations before the fight begins. The fight begins with the PCs and the goblin faels being released from their pens.

When the gong sounds for this bout, the gate to the arena simply opens.

Across the arena, another set of gates opens and a group of short humanoid undead creep out of their cage towards you. The creatures are completely skinless, with slightly bulbous heads, large eyes, and surprisingly large mouths full of needle-sharp teeth.

The creatures spread out slightly as they advance.

Tactics: The goblin faels will attempt to move into positions to flank one of the PCs, in order to make sneak attacks. They will tumble to avoid attacks of opportunity as necessary, and will feint to achieve sneak attacks if their efforts to flank a PC are unsuccessful.

The match will continue until the PCs or their opponents are destroyed.

If the PCs defeat the goblin faels, read:

As the last of your opponents falls, the onlookers cheer your victory.

Above the arena floor, Iona stands next to the burly Arena Master. Looking around, he raises his fists and shouts “Hail to our new champions!” Those watching the bout give up a great cheer.

Development: After the bout, the Arena Master offers to have Iona to show the PCs around the arena. If they accept, proceed to Encounter #5 - Mid-Match Break and Tour.

If the PCs instead wish to take part in another arena bout, proceed to Encounter #6 - Third Time's a Charm.

5) Mid-Match Break and Tour

The Arena Master is impressed with how quickly the PCs have learned to use the *control crowns*, whether they won or lost.

“Good showing out there! It's exhilarating, isn't it?”

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"Your skills are quite impressive - you fight like much more experienced 'riders', ha, ha. I can't wait to get you into the arena again."

"But for now, a tour is in order, I believe. Iona, give our guests a tour of the arena please."

Iona will lead any interested party members away for a tour. If any PCs follow, continue:

Iona leads you south across the mezzanine level along the arena's outer curve. The mezzanine features booths and stalls, all providing decadent goods and services to the arena's patrons - treats of flesh and bodily fluids to sate the most jaded of undead appetites, souvenir daggers and bits of armor, and commemorative badges and crowns - which seem to be quite popular.

A full quarter of the way around the arena's circumference, the hostess accompanies you down several flights of stairs and into the arena's lower level. Passing through one of the ticket halls, Iona leads you through several doors and begins pointing out the purpose of each chamber your group passes through: *"On the left here is one of our 'security offices' - guards are stationed here to provide security for our patrons."*

"This is where gladiators are checked and fitted for the arena" she says, gesturing to the right. "And here on the left are the holding cages where new gladiators are held until needed for your amusement. There are also chambers here serving as an armory, an office for the arena's attendants, and another guard chamber." "And that brings us to the stairs going back up!" After leading your group back to the upper level and back to the control balcony, Iona gives you a charming smile and asks: *"Care for another wager?"*

Iona's tour runs from the western Gladiator Boxes (U3), down around the Mezzanine Level (U5) to the Entrance Stairs (U1). From there, the tour leads back to the northeast again, passing through the Ticket Hall (L2), past the Security Office (L4) and then the Fitting Room (L12). The tour then leads past the Humanoid Holding Cages (L8), Armory (L15), Arena Attendants Office (L16), and Pit Guard Chambers (L9) before ascending the stairs to the upper level (U8) and returning to the western Gladiator Boxes (U3).

Iona is careful to show just enough of the horrors of the arena to titillate patrons, but not so much as to give away the arena's procedures or secrets. If the players

want to truly investigate the arena, they will need to figure out how to either escape her or distract her while they look around.

Development: When the tour is complete (or when the PCs return to the VIP level after having snuck away), the Arena Master meets up with them again.

6) Third Time's a Charm (EL -)

Giant Bugdead Scorpion (CR 12) 1x - see Appendix 1

The Arena Master has grown suspicious of the PCs, and wants them captured for interrogation. To that end, he pits them against a much more powerful opponent.

"How about another match? And another wager, of course. Perhaps something different this time; something more befitting your skills..."

Once again, the PCs enslaved gladiators will have been healed of any damage from the previous bout. The wager should again be chosen from the list of "antes" in Encounter #4 - Round Two. The Arena Master controls the massive undead scorpion himself, hoping to test the PCs' abilities to the fullest.

Tactics: The Arena Master will wade the bugdead scorpion directly into the thick of melee combat, striking as many gladiators each round with the bugdead's claws and sting, and reveling in the feel of rending undead flesh in its claws.

Having no interest in wasting such a valuable creature, the Arena Master will call the match if the bugdead scorpion drops below 25 hp, surrendering rather than face Wujarrt's wrath.

Development: In the unlikely event the PCs win this fight, the Arena Master feels his suspicions about them have been confirmed and has them taken prisoner, calling them "cheats and frauds." Proceed to Encounter #8 - Orientation

If the PCs lose the battle, the Arena Master will collect his winnings, and his suspicions about the PCs will be allayed somewhat (for now). The PCs can then continue competing in arena bouts, bet on other matches, or explore the arena. If the PCs go exploring the arena, proceed to Part 3 - The Investigation.

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If the PCs wish to continue placing bets and fighting in the arena, they may do so - the Arena Master will happily send a continuous stream of humanoid undead and constructs at the party. For undead gladiators, reskinned versions of the gladiators that the PCs control (see Encounter #3 - Test Drive) should suffice; flesh golems, bone golems, and obsidian golems are the types of constructs that the arena has on

B) Service Entrance

The surest but most fraught way of entering the arena is through the service entrance (location L5).



hand.

7) Abandon All Hope, All Ye Who Enter Here (EL -)

Walking around the arena to the service entrance, you see a group of prisoners being escorted into the arena. The service entrance is a small man-sized door in a much larger bone and obsidian gate.

The crowd of captured undead is a run-down and pitiful lot, even for the Dead Lands. As the bound captives are unloaded from a nearby caged wagon, you can see examples of many different types of undead and races spanning the breadth of the Dead Lands.

As all the guards and service personnel know each other (and rarely leave the arena), the PCs will need to be highly persuasive (Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate check, DC 25) to convince the guards that they are newly assigned guards or service personnel. Otherwise, the party will need to pose as captives to enter here.

Joining this group of new slaves or otherwise slipping in through the service entrance should prove a fairly easy task (DC 15), as the guards are happy to take any prisoners and are largely only concerned about keeping people from escaping, not entering. Entrance can be gained through distractions or lies (Bluff), disguises (Disguise), or stealth (Hide/Move Silently).

Development: Once the PCs are inside, proceed to Encounter #8 - Orientation.

8) Orientation (EL -)

Once within the arena, prisoners have all their weapons, armor, and equipment removed (but not their clothing), are checked for physical damage, and have their bindings checked (in location L6 - the Slave Sorting Area). After the prisoners have been processed, they are brought into a large area filled with small pens (location L8 - the Humanoid Holding Cages) for their "orientation".

After being processed - disarmed, searched, and stripped of all but the most minimal of clothing - you and the other prisoners have been brought to a series of narrow cells, row upon row, each scarcely large enough to stand up in. An imposing-looking warrior

in a skull helmet stands beyond the cells, pacing up and down the corridor as he speaks:

"Welcome. I am the Arena Master.

"You are part of a grand experiment in entertainment. And best of all, you are all now kings for a day."

Guards step up to each of the cells and place a crown on each prisoner's head. With the crown in place on your head, you feel strangely blurry-headed and disoriented, and when you catch a glimpse of them, your fellows look to feel the same way. After the guards are finished, a smile creeps across the Arena Master's face.

"Congratulations, the rest of your pitiful existence will be spent under the control of our patrons. Good luck, you'll need it."

The PCs then see three guards walk up to the occupied cell closest to the exit and escort the slave in that cell around the corner, ensuring their crown is still on their head. The Arena Master then casually walks up to a gated door and pounds on it. The gated door rolls open for him and then loudly slams shut.

The guards return about once every hour, escorting out one prisoner each time. Observant PCs (Spot check, DC 12) can see that the gladiator-slaves are being taken from closest to furthest from the exit. Given this information, the PCs can determine they likely have five hours before the first of them is taken away to fight.

Refer to the description of the Humanoid Holding Cages (L8) for details on how the PCs might escape the cages.

Development: If one or more of the PCs manage to escape their cell before being taken away by the guards, proceed to Part 3 - The Investigation. If not, proceed to Encounter #9 - Out of the Frying Pan....

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9) Out of the Frying Pan...

When it is the PCs turn, they are led away and prepped to fight in the arena.

When it comes time for the first of you to be led away, you hear the guards calling out to each other from down the hall: "Oi! Bring more guards down, enough to handle all of these ones; boss wants a group event!"

This is the PCs' last chance to escape before being led away to fight in the arena. If they remain in their cages when the guards arrive, read:

The guards arrive to lead you away - three for each of you. You are each taken down the hall and around the corner, where two guards hold you in place while a third checks the crown atop your head.

After your crown is checked, you are each led through a doorway and pushed into one of a series of small holding pens. All too soon, once all of you are penned in, you are each taken out of your cell one at a time, escorted further down the hall, and walked into a larger gated chamber.

Within the chamber, you are all handed weapons and armor (all the while heavily under guard). Through the gate, the sands of the arena floor can be seen and the cheers and jeers of the spectators can be heard.

Development: After five minutes (whether or not the PCs have finished equipping themselves), the Pitmaster comes by to give his speech. Proceed to Encounter #10 - And Into the Fire.

10) ...And Into the Fire (EL -)

Equipped and made ready for their bout, the PCs' slave crowns fail to take control of their bodies, leaving them free to act, but also faced with a dilemma.

Through the gate, you see a fierce-looking warrior with a palpable air of authority. He begins speaking in a commanding tone:

"A-ha! We have some new riders to control our fresh meat for the pit! I hope you last longer than the last group!"

"Listen up! I'm the Pitmaster and those crowns on your head mean you now possess these lucky gladiators. Your actions are theirs, their pain is yours. If they die, it won't kill you, but you'll wish it had."

"Your goal in this first little bout is to learn to control your gladiator and survive longer than the other lucky saps facing you. It's that simple. If you can do that, you'll earn back your wager and then some."

"Normally we'd do a training bout first, but we have something special for VIPs like you: a fight to the death!"

With that, a gong sounds, the gate is opened to the arena, and you are free to walk out onto the ground-obsidian sands of the arena floor.

Development: The PCs' slave crowns have, for some reason, failed to function, leaving the PCs still completely in control of their actions. They now have a choice to make - to act like they are in fact controlled by others or to let on that they are not.

If the party moves out into the arena as if ready for combat, proceed to Encounter #11 - Playing a Bad Hand. If the PCs instead let on that they are not under the control of others (by refusing to step out into the arena to fight, for instance), proceed to Encounter #12 - Interrogation.



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11) Playing a Bad Hand (EL 5)

Zombie Bugdead Domestic Soldier Kank (CR 3)
2x - see Appendix 1

The PCs are free of external control but must fight for their lives in the arena to maintain the illusion of their enslavement.

Stepping out onto the ground-obsidian sands of the arena floor, you hear the Pitmaster shout "Go on! Fight!" and the scattered onlookers chanting "Fight! Fight! Fight!"

Across the arena, another set of gates open and a pair of especially large undead kanks skitter out.

Tactics: The bugdead fight simply, rushing over to the two nearest PCs and attacking until either they or the PCs are destroyed. Agitated by their strange surroundings and the presence of so many humanoid undead, the kanks are easily distracted and will not focus on any specific PC, but will rather attack the nearest opponent in any given round.

Development: If the PCs fight normally, the Arena Master makes a show of it, giving credit to the nobles for their creativity as fighters. If the PCs instead let on that they are not under the control of others (by refusing to step out into the arena to fight, for instance), the Arena Master is furious at the public blunder and the crowd is aghast.

Either way, the PCs are then captured and locked up. Proceed to Encounter #12 - Interrogation.

12) Interrogation

After the failure of their *control crowns*, the PCs end up locked in isolated holding cages (the northern Warrior's Feed - area L13), where the Arena Master interrogates them

After your combat bout, you find yourselves disarmed, led back to the nearest series of holding cells, and confronted by both the Arena Master and the Pitmaster:

"How did you deactivate your slave crowns?" screams the Arena Master "Tell me how! By the moons, I'll grind your bones to dust and feed you - still screaming - to the bugdead if you don't tell me what I want to know!"

If the PCs fought normally in Encounter #11 - Playing a Bad Hand, the Arena Master and the Pitmaster are instead (relatively) well disposed towards the PCs and willing to give them the benefit of the doubt. If so, read:

"Sir." the Pitmaster interrupts "We HAVE been having trouble with some of the crowns lately. We should interrogate these slaves more, but perhaps they simply received a bad batch of crowns? It would be simple to verify."

"Hmm, if so, your guards will PAY for this embarrassment - you're just lucky it didn't happen when queen Wujarrt was here, or we'd all be chopping ourselves to bits at her command." the Arena Master says. "Fine. Get a mage in here to check the crowns and then torture these wretches until they go mad. You'd better be right, Pitmaster."

If the PCs instead previously let on that they were not under the control of others, instead read the following:

"Sir." the Pitmaster interrupts "These slaves are clearly defective troublemakers. Why not just let some of the VIPs chop at them for training practice and have them reanimated?"

"Hmm, perhaps you're right - we might still get some entertainment out of them that way, and maybe they'll come back as more compliant slaves on the next reanimation..." the Arena Master says. "Fine, do it - you're just lucky it didn't happen when queen Wujarrt was here, or we'd all be chopping ourselves to bits at her command."

Development: Once the Arena Master and Pitmaster are finished interrogating the party, they leave the PCs alone in the holding cages for approximately an hour. If one or more of the PCs manage to escape their cell before then, proceed to Part 3 - The Investigation. Refer to the description of the Humanoid Holding Cages (L8) for details on how the PCs might escape the cages.

If the PCs do not escape and they fought normally in Encounter #11 - Playing a Bad Hand, proceed to Encounter #13 - Friends in Low Places.

If the PCs instead previously let on that they were not under the control of others (by refusing to step out into the arena to fight, for instance), the PCs are left alone in the holding cages for approximately an hour. Then proceed to Encounter #14 - The Charnel Pit.

13) Friends in Low Places (EL -)

Ash (CR 10) 1x - see Appendix 1

After their interrogation, if they have not already escaped, parties that played along and fought in the arena receive a surprise visitor.

Having not escaped, you still stand trapped in your holding cages when whistling and footsteps can be heard coming your way. Approaching from around the corner is a female zhen with gleaming but cracked flesh. Her sparse hair is pulled back into a knot at the back of her head and when she stops whistling, an amused grin spreads across her face.

"Well, let's see what the problem is now. Bring your head here, lean forwards - don't make me enspell you, or we'll both start having a very bad day!" she says cheerfully.

As the undead woman leans forward to examine one of your slave crowns, you hear a voice in your head: "Say nothing, make absolutely no noises. Do you want to get out of these cages? Nod if the answer is yes." she seems to still be examining the crown, but her eyes are now filled with deadly seriousness, just like the voice in your head.

Assuming the PCs respond in the affirmative (by nodding their heads silently), read:

After a moment, each of you feels a gentle pressure in your mind, holding at the edge of your perception as if awaiting entry. When you allow the presence in, you hear the same mental voice as before: "Ah, good - now we can communicate safely. You can call me Ash. Let's see what we can do to get you out of here..."

PCs knowledgeable with psionic powers might realize (Psicraft, DC 16 each) that Ash used a *missive* power and then a *mindlink* power to communicate with them.

Speaking with Ash:

- How do we get free: "I'll unlock these cages in a moment. Then you can exit the arena and go be free."
- Why didn't the crowns work on us: "Oh, you got lucky. Several crowns have shown up defective lately, so I've taken the liberty of disabling even

more of them, but it's just pure luck that all of yours were non-functional."

- Who ARE you: "I'm Ash, duh. I just told you that - is that crown crushing your skull? Let me take a look at that."
- Why are you doing this: "Oh, yeah, that. I was captured much like you all were, I imagine. My crown was defective, and I have...abilities that made it easy for me to escape and replace one of the arena mages that I...disappeared. Now I help others escape the arena - this place is too brutal, even for the Dead Lands."
- What abilities: "Well, I have some talent with the Way, and..." then Ash's form flows like water and takes on the features of a far more masculine-looking but completely fleshless skeleton before changing back to her previous form "and there's that."
- How do we move through the arena without being recaptured: "Ah, yes. I'll give you each a bobble that will allow you to change your appearance for a couple of hours - that should be long enough for you to just walk back out of here and be on your way. I'd suggest looking like you're guards, or VIPs."
- What about the guards: "Hmm...I can call out to the guards - you'll have left your cells by then, so that'll make a fine reason. Then you can just walk up the stairs or out the door."
- Can you help us further: "No, not without endangering my cover. And if you get caught again, I won't be able to help you again - I'm not stupid or suicidal."

Development: Once the PCs are finished asking questions, Ash unlocks their cells, hands each of the PCs a potion-orb of *extended alter self* (CL 6th, lasts for 2 hours) and moves out of the way so they can walk away before she calls for a guard. Once the party has activated their potion-orbs and is out of sight, they hear Ash yell out: "Hey, guards! Aren't there supposed to be SLAVES in these cells? I'm supposed to check their crowns - where'd they go?" Proceed to Part 3 - The Investigation.

If the PCs refuse to communicate with Ash or, worse yet, begin speaking out loud, Ash hisses: "Fools..." and then yells out: "Guards! These crowns are defective! Bring me some more and I'll make sure they actually work this time." Proceed to Encounter #14 - The Charnel Pit.

Ash is usually found around the arena performing her regular duties or in the Arena Attendants Office (L16).

14) The Charnel Pit (EL -)

After their interrogation, PCs that have not escaped get used for weapons practice, but end up surprisingly not dead.

Having not escaped, you are held within your cages for quite a while - possibly merely hours, possibly days.

When the guards finally come to release you, it is with a grim chuckle "So, weapons practice, huh? The boss must be REALLY mad with you. See you on the other side of the meat grinder. Ha!"

Once in the arena, you see what the guards meant: each of you is secured to an obsidian post and used to allow seemingly combat-inept VIP 'drivers' to learn what they are doing - by clumsily hacking at you until only pieces remain. It is a long, brutal, torturous process that only ends with the darkness of oblivion.

So, it's an especially pleasant surprise when you awake - more or less whole - on a slab in a large room. Looking around, you can see your companions on similar slabs and stacks of body parts all around the perimeter of the room. None of the body parts look to be currently rotting but the chamber has an overpowering stench of rotten flesh nonetheless.

The PCs were in fact destroyed as weapons practice but were recently reanimated (though a week has

passed). Rather than the confused and bumbling undead that normally result from reanimation, the PCs are mentally whole and capable of escaping (perhaps due to their status as unbound).

The PCs are in the Reanimator's Office (location L22). There is a locked but untrapped secret door in the exterior wall (for exporting body pieces that are too damaged to be reanimated again) (Search, DC 10 to find; Open Locks, DC 20 to open). Scattered around the room are dozens of preserved (with *gentle repose*) bodies awaiting reanimation, many of which still have weapons, armor, or their slave crowns (no check to find one of the slave crowns present, Search check, DC 10 to find a random weapon or armor that is common in the Dead Lands, DC 20 to find a specific item).

Development: The PCs are free to either escape out the secret door (potentially with one or more slave crowns) at this time. If they do so, proceed to Concluding the Adventure.

If the PCs instead choose to leave the Reanimator's Office through one of the doors leading into the arena's lower level and continue to explore the arena, they are free to do so, although interacting with the Arena Master or Pitmaster afterwards without arousing their suspicions will require some kind of disguise or for the reanimated PC to pretend to have new personalities (Disguise or Bluff, DC 15). Proceed to Part 3 - The Investigation.

Part 3: The Investigation

Once the PCs are free to explore the arena, they can truly begin to search for *control crowns* to bring back to their patrons.

14) Poking Around (EL 7 or -)

Arena Guards (CR 5) 2x

Guards are usually stationed in pairs and are only actively stationed at the following locations: both sets of Entrance Stairs (U1), both Ticket Halls (L2), the Service Entrance (L5), the Gear Storage (L7), the Armory (L11), the Beast Entrance (L17), and the four Service Stairs (U8). Guards can also be found at: both Security Offices (L4) and both Pit Guard chambers (L9). Otherwise, depending on their cover story and

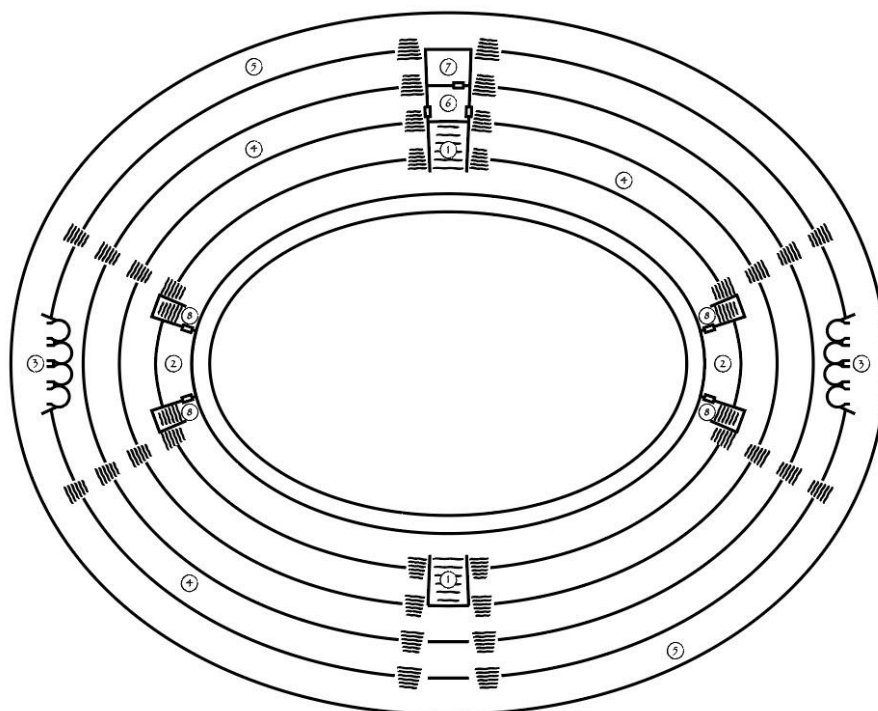
how they present themselves, the PCs will have nearly unrestricted access to all areas of the Apodexos Arena.

When the PCs do attempt to move through these checkpoints, the guards there will need to be persuaded to allow the PCs to pass (Bluff, Diplomacy, Disguise, or Intimidate check, DC 15). If such an attempt fails, the guards will simply turn the characters away, stating: "Authorized personnel only, move along." Only if the PCs press the issue or are clearly acting like escaped gladiator slaves will the guards attack - and then only to capture, not kill. Guards are rotated every four hours to keep them attentive and polite to the VIPs. If the party has previously failed to move through a particular checkpoint, a new check may be made with the location's newly posted guards.

ARENA OF APODEXOS MAP - UPPER LEVEL

- U1. Stairs From Entrances
- U2. VIP Seating Box
- U3. Gladiator Box and Control Seats
- U4. General Seating
- U5. Mezzanine Level
- U6. Arena Master's Office
- U7. Crown Room
- U8. Service Stairs

Scale: 1 square=10'



To be successful in their mission, the PCs must retrieve at least one master *control crown* and at least one slave *control crown*. Though the PCs are unlikely to know it initially, master *control crowns* are stored in the Crown Room (U7) and slave *control crowns* can be found in both the Pitmaster's Office (L10) and Reanimator's Office (L22).

The Upper Level:

U1 - Entrance Stairs: Here VIPs proceeding up from the Ticket Hall below first experience the full majesty of the Apodexos Arena: the proud, tall walls, the glittering obsidian sands of the arena floor, and the waiting pleasures of the Mezzanine Level - luxuries to sate even the most debauched of undead appetites. Two guards are stationed here at any given time.

U2 - VIP Seating Boxes: The VIP seating boxes in the colosseum are opulent: the floor is carved to resemble paving stones and the box walls are painted with vibrant reds and golds - the most color you have seen in all of Wujarrt's kingdom. The obsidian couches and chairs have soft skins laid atop them and in one corner, a table holds an array of goblets.

U3 - Gladiatorial Boxes and Control Seating: Perched high above each end of the gladiatorial arena stand a series of four balconies, each a regal alcove where a VIP

can stand ready to control a gladiator. The balconies provide a commanding, panoramic view of the arena and feature polished obsidian floors, fine stone railings, and ample space for guards and attendants to stand nearby.

U4 - General Seating: The general seating boasts a grim ambiance. Jagged shards of obsidian jut out from the walls, casting ominous shadows upon the spectators, and an arid scent of decay fills the air. Rows of simple, weathered, obsidian tiered seating stretch out in a circular formation, providing a suitable vantage point for numerous onlookers, though the stands are rarely full unless Queen Wujarrt is in attendance. No canopy stretches above to shield the spectators from the harsh crimson sun and the obsidian seats often grow hot enough to cook undead flesh.

U5 - Mezzanine Level: Concession booths and stalls stand along the arena's outer wall here. Many stands carry an assortment of goods catering to the depraved and decadent appetites of the arena's guests: fleshy treats that are freshly carved from losing gladiators, various bodily fluids and ichors from a selection of fierce beasts and fighters, and sun-baked flecks of bugdead carapace. Other booths offer an array of souvenirs: weapons and bits of armor - both new and

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certified used by gladiators, commemorative badges, and obsidian crowns that have been enspelled to glow.

U6 - Arena Master's Office: Inside the Arena Master's Office is an elegantly polished and adorned table with a single chair pushed up against the southern wall and its window. Near the eastern entrance is an obsidian (likely magically shaped) cask full of the arena's best beverage. The walls are barren except for a single humanoid skull hung on the wall; the skull is etched with strange runes, but is otherwise unadorned (the runes possess meaning only to the Arena Master - they are not a code or language and are impossible to translate). In the southeast corner of the room is a small empty lidless cage. Upon close inspection, some gore and other fluids stain the cage, as if whatever had been imprisoned there did not enjoy the experience.

The doors to the Arena Master's office are locked (Open Locks, DC 15), but the office's open window overlooks the arena floor. It would not be difficult (Climb, DC 15) to climb into the office through the window to bypass the locked doors, but the climber would be visible to nearly everyone in the arena. The door to the Crown Room (U7) is trapped but not locked; the trap only activates if someone touches the door to the Crown Room without saying the name 'Wujarrt' first. The pit trap drops victims into the northern Ticket Hall (L2) in addition to dealing its damage.

Spiked Pit Trap: CR 3; mechanical; magical and touch trigger; manual reset; DC 20 Reflex Save avoids; 20 ft. deep (2d6, fall); multiple targets (first target in each of two adjacent 5-ft. squares); pit spikes (Atk +10 melee, 1d4 spikes per target for 1d4+2 each); Search DC 21; Disable Device DC 20. Market Price: 3,600 gp.

U7 - Crown Room: Currently disused master-crowns are stored in the back room of the Arena Master's office. Within are a dozen master *control crowns* stored on shelves, each clearly marked with a unique identifying symbol.

U8 - Service Stairs: These stairwells allow easy travel between the upper and lower levels for the arena's service staff - mostly the guards and the Arena Master. Two guards are stationed at each set of stairs at all times.

The Lower Level:

L1 - Guest Entrance: The VIP entrance to the arena is large, roughly 20 feet wide by 10 feet tall with a rising arch, well suited for large gatherings to quickly enter and leave. The obsidian here is polished and well maintained. While only two attendants are stationed here to verify tickets, they are some of the most seasoned and dangerous in the entire building. They are also quick to call for help from guards stationed nearby. The entrance has several banners decorating it, all from previous events and in surprisingly good condition.

L2 - Ticket Hall: The ticket hall is located just through the entrance doors. The walls are decorated with obsidian-flake and bone-chip mosaics depicting battle scenes. The sound of chatter and excitement fills the air as visitors eagerly acquire their tickets and make their way up the stairs and into the arena. The ticket halls are always guarded by at least two arena guards.

L3 - Stairs to Mezzanine Level: Ascending from the ticket hall of the gladiator games, an opulent stairway unveils itself, serving as a gateway to the upper levels teeming with excitement. Crafted from polished obsidian, the stairs stretch upward grandly, each step adorned with intricate engravings depicting battles. Stone handrails, polished to a brilliant shine, guide spectators' hands, and vibrant mosaics of chipped obsidian and bone grace the walls, showcasing great scenes of triumph.

L4 - Security Office: A modest guard room where diligent guards find respite during their brief moments of leisure. The room's walls bear the marks of wear and tear. Worn obsidian benches for guards to sit upon and racks fill the room. Spare weapons and armor, though limited in quantity, hang from the racks and scattered hooks, waiting for the next shift or emergency. Four to six guards can usually be found in each of these chambers at any given time.

L5 - Service Entrance: The service entrance of the Apodexos colosseum is a dimly-lit, utilitarian space. The entrance itself is flanked by heavy obsidian doors and leads to a wide passageway. Despite its drab appearance, the service entrance is a hub of activity, with workers moving quickly, making sure that everything is in place for the next event. Prisoners are occasionally taken in through this entrance as well - whenever a shipment arrives. Two guards are stationed here at all times.

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L6 - Slave Sorting Area: Undead prisoners, often disoriented and bewildered, are ushered into a slave sorting area when they first enter the arena. Here, stern-faced guards dispassionately strip them of their gear and sort it for storage and later evaluation. Each slave is subjected to a thorough screening, and is examined and probed for any hidden contraband or potential threats. Once scrutinized, they are methodically sorted based on some criteria known only to the guards, organized into ordered lines, and made to march to individual holding cells.

L7 - Gear Storage: Only a single guard stands at the entrance to the equipment storage. Containing items confiscated from the prisoners turned gladiatorial slaves and goods won from visiting VIPs, items are held here until examined, identified, and properly dispensed. Occasionally, an arena attendant can be seen to approach, nod at the guard, enter, and exit soon after with a basket of items in tow.

Scattered throughout the chamber are an Amulet of Natural Armor +1, Bracers of Armor +1, Crawling Tattoo of Energy Ray (ML 1st, fire dmg), Potion-Orb of Blur (CL 3rd), Potion-Orb of Resist Fire (CL 3rd), Psionic Tattoo of Force Screen (ML 1st), and a Wand of Summon Monster (CL 1st, 20 charges); if using the

Agents of Gretch option, there is also a Cloak of Resistance +3 in the chamber.

L8 - Holding Cages (Humanoid): Each of these sections feature row upon row of cramped bone and obsidian cages. Each is only large enough for a Medium-sized humanoid to stand up in, barely allowing their occupants to move around at all. The holding cages see a fairly regular stream of prisoners moving in and out, as new prisoners are processed and brought in to replace those sent into the arena. When the guards are not here moving prisoners about or verbally abusing them, the air is often punctuated by low moans, haunted whispers, and the occasional frustrated rattling as undead captives strain against their confinement.

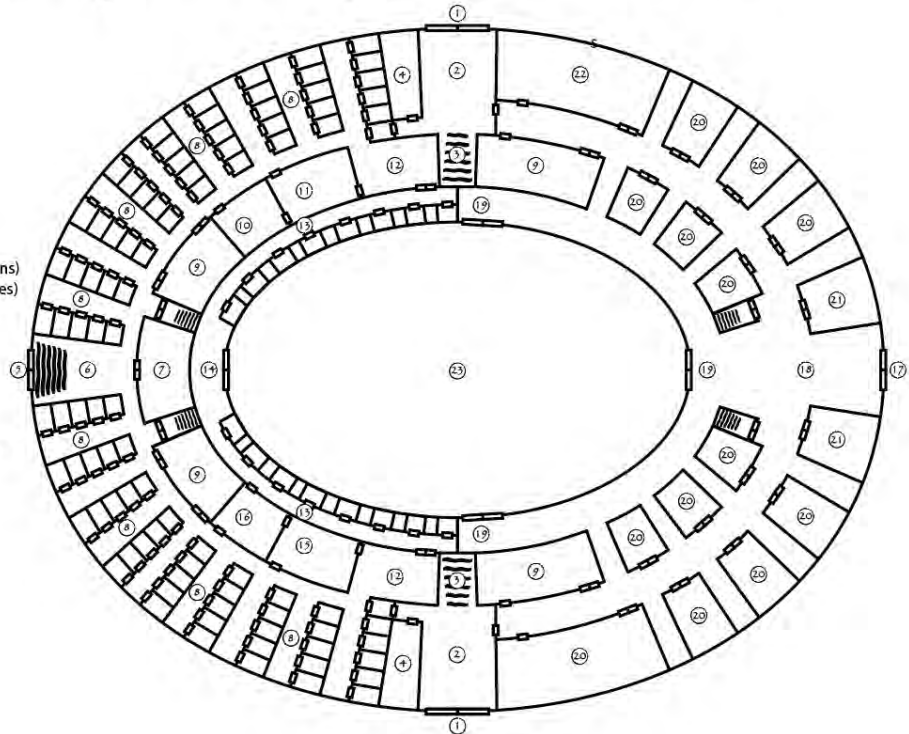
The bars of the cages are made of obsidian (DC 16 Strength check to break) and so cramped that they largely restrict movement (-4 penalty to Strength checks to break the bars from within a cage). The cages are locked with simple sliding bars made of bone; the bars are simple enough to slide from outside the cages, but are difficult to operate from within a cage (DC 16 Disable Device to open).

L9 - Pit Guard Chambers: Situated near the Slave Sorting Area (L6) for additional security, the sparse

ARENA OF APODEXOS MAP - LOWER LEVEL

- L1. Guest Entrance
- L2. Ticket Hall
- L3. Stairs to Mezzanine
- L4. Security Office
- L5. Service Entrance
- L6. Slave Sorting Area
- L7. Gear Storage
- L8. Holding Cages - Humanoid
- L9. Pit Guard Chambers
- L10. Pitmaster Office
- L11. Armory
- L12. Fitting Room (control crowns, weapons)
- L13. Warrior's Feed (queue of holding cages)
- L14. Staging Area
- L15. Armory
- L16. Arena Attendant's Office
- L17. Beast Entrance
- L18. Beast Ramp and Processing
- L19. Beast Staging Area
- L20. Beast Cages
- L21. Construct and Beast Crown Storage
- L22. Reanimator's Office
- L23. Fighting Arena

Scale: 1 square=10'



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guard rooms sit, starkly contrasting with the public areas of the arena. The walls, crudely constructed from rough-cut obsidian, bear the marks of neglect and abuse. Within, guards rest upon discarded obsidian blocks and small disused bone cages. The reclining guards' weapons and armor lie in a disorganized heap in the center of the floor. Four to six guards can usually be found in each of these chambers at any given time.

L10 - Pitmaster Office: This chamber is a small office and a place of rest for the Pitmaster. The walls are adorned with the severed heads, claws, and pincers of monstrous beasts. A cluttered desk holds scattered obsidian tablets filled with etched writing, some stacked neatly, some haphazardly discarded about the desk. But it is the trophies that catch the eye: severed, desiccated fingers filling well-crafted obsidian jars, rotting severed tongues nailed to the wall with bronze spikes, and broken shields and shattered weapons, all lining the shelves and walls. Amidst the relics, a bare obsidian slab offers a place of rest for the overworked Pitmaster.

Beneath the desk in an obsidian box - hidden by the bulk of the desk from the doorway, but readily visible from behind the desk - are seven brand new slave *control crowns*, ready for use at any time.

L11 - Armory: The armory walls are lined with racks of armor and weapons - including swords, shields, spears, and axes. Each shield and piece of armor, though generally basic and serviceable, has intricate designs, etchings, or engravings adorning them. One guard is stationed at each entrance to the armory at all times.

L12 - Fitting Room: This chamber's obsidian walls are etched with scenes of dominance and submission. Within the chamber, an assortment of weaponry and armor stands ready for use by new slave gladiators. These items are not freely accessed, however, as the room is heavily staffed by armed guards. Here, final checks on the gladiators' slave crowns are done and they are fitted with weapons and armor. Several guards (usually at least two per slave gladiator) carefully monitor the process while an additional guard does the actual checks and outfitting. Once made ready, a slave gladiator is escorted through the double doors and locked into a cell in the Warrior's Feed (L13).

L13 - Warrior's Feed (Queue): This area is filled with an array of impossibly tight cages much like the Holding Cages (L8). Prepped gladiators are kept here, their bodies tightly bound, until the moment they are

taken to the Staging Area (L14) to prevent escape attempts.

L14 - Staging Area: The staging area is a gruesome location. The obsidian walls and floor here are broken, scratched, and smeared with foul-colored paste. The guards here are well armed, quiet, and alert. Near the eastern wall, a small vase crafted from gray stone rests, containing a collection of long bones within its hollow. These bones bear the marks of fire, and their tips are charred and blackened with soot. Before especially festive bouts (usually when Queen Wujarrt is in attendance), the bones in the vase are smeared with a strange-colored sand, then lit on fire, creating a cascade of different-colored lights and smoke which are used to signal the beginnings of games.

L15 - Armory: The south armory is identical to the northern armory.

L16 - Arena Attendants Office: This room glows with an unusually soft blue light. There are several small obsidian chests arrayed along the southern wall and the western wall is lined with shelves. Several chairs surround the two tables that stand in the center of the room. The arena's handful of assigned spellcasters and manifesters work, rest, and congregate here, crafting items, repairing *control crowns*, and otherwise preparing for upcoming matches.

L17 - Beast Entrance: This large rear entrance is the gateway through which the most fearsome of the arena's combatants are ushered - the monstrous beasts of the wastes. It is through this portal that giant bugdead scorpions and other monstrous creatures are taken into the arena, often fighting their handlers every step of the way. Two guards are stationed here at all times.

L18 - Beast Ramp and Processing: A large open chamber, this chamber is built for the assessment and subjugation of beasts. The floor is made of rough obsidian, chipped and gouged by the relentless blows of undead paws and claws. Powerful glyphs and sigils are etched into the walls, meant to subdue and control the restless beasts.

L19 - Beast Staging Area: The beast staging area is wholly unremarkable, with the exception of how filthy it is. Blood, gore, and waste cover the floor where the creatures wait to be let loose in the arena. Before a battle, the guards do their best to enrage the beasts without harming them unduly. The demeanor of any guards stationed here is morose, as it does not appear to be a highly prestigious assignment.

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L20 - Beast Cages: Stout bars of psionically hardened bone and obsidian prevent the creatures within from escaping their torment. The echoes of snarls, growls, and roars reverberate throughout, creating an unsettling symphony of primal aggression. The floor is littered with shattered obsidian and bone, remnants of previous battles and unsuccessful escape attempts.

L21 - Construct and Beast Crown Storage: This chamber is one of the more quiet and unmanned locations in the arena. Tools such as hammers and chisels, as well as large and oddly-shaped harnesses and crowns, hang on the wall, some with some visible wear on them. Several golems stand along the wall, inactive and awaiting orders to proceed into the arena for battle; most are constructed from obsidian, but at least one or two are composed of bone or flesh instead. The center of each room is purposely kept open to allow room for working on constructs or beast crowns when needed.

The “oddly-shaped harnesses and crowns” that hang on the chamber walls are inactive *control crowns* that are sized and shaped for the beasts that sometimes fight in the arena. Active slave crowns for beasts can only be found on the beasts (usually in L20, the Beast Cages), and active master crowns for beasts are stored in the east Control Balcony (U3).

L22 - Reanimator’s Office: This chamber’s contents are gruesome in the extreme – row upon row of bodies and body parts, all carefully stacked like morbid supplies. The reek of rot and decay fills the hot, stuffy air, but not so much as one might imagine - a result of the preservative magics inherent to the chamber. The bodies appear to be in various states of disrepair, but are meticulously arranged to facilitate easy reassembly when the time comes. Occasionally, the skilled attendants - necromancers all - enter the chamber, almost always entering alone but often exiting with a retinue of freshly reanimated undead in tow.

Within the office, several slave-crowns can easily be seen on as-of-yet un-reanimated gladiators. Some nearly-whole corpses are stacked up like cordwood, others are tossed into random piles of assorted body parts. Some of the crowns are on already-severed heads, but carrying a severed head will seem suspicious to any guards that the PCs encounter. Removing a *control crown* from a head will either require deactivation of the *crown* (via a Disable Device or Use Magic Device check, or a *remove curse* spell) or a truly grizzly amount of chopping at or smashing of the head.

L23 - Fighting Arena: Within the heart of the Apodexos Arena lies the arena itself. The floor, composed of coarse obsidian sand, stretches out like an ominous canvas, bearing the stains of bodily fluids and ichor here and there, sometimes making maneuvering difficult. Tall gleaming obsidian walls - polished to a high shine whenever Queen Wujarrt is expected - rise to encircle the arena. Despite the walls’ gleam, close inspection will reveal many gouges and cracks - evidence of many years of desperate fighting in the arena.

15) Cage of the Beast (EL -)

Giant Bugdead Scorpion (CR 12) 1x - see Appendix 1

Within one of the Beast Cages (L20) - specifically the southernmost cage located nearest to the Beast Staging Area (L19) - lurks the giant bugdead scorpion from Encounter #6 - Third Time’s a Charm (or an identical one, should the PCs have managed to have killed the beast). If released, the scorpion’s actions will depend on the PCs’ behavior: if the PCs taunt or otherwise rile the large bugdead up, it will follow and attack them if released; if the PCs generally leave the undead arachnid alone - or better yet, hide - the scorpion will move to attack the arena’s personnel if released.

If the PCs wish to attempt to gain control of the beast, its master *control crown* is located in the eastern Gladiator Box (U3). Regardless of whether the creature is controlled or released to rampage on its own, the bugdead scorpion could greatly aid in the PCs eventual escape (see Part 4: Escaping the Arena for details).

16) Berserk Brute (EL - or 7)

Flesh Golem (CR 7) 1x - see Appendix 1

In the northern Construct and Beast Crown Storage chamber (L21) stands a flesh golem on the brink of going berserk. The golem is a particularly hideous example of its kind: produced from smashed and useless bits of flesh and bone, the golem looks more like it was molded out of flesh-like clay than constructed from severed body parts. It has no eyes, mouth, or fingers, instead having a featureless lump of flesh for a head and crude, mitten-like hands.

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The construct currently stands just to the right of the room's door, facing the back wall, and will go berserk if it sees anyone without receiving its command password (the word "biscuits" in Ulanese; which is only known to the arena staff). If the golem sees the PCs and goes berserk, it will immediately move to attack the nearest creature or object each round until it is properly commanded to stand down or is destroyed. The flesh golem has no *control crown* (being simply commanded to fight or stand-down via verbal commands by the arena staff), but if left to rampage on its own, the golem could greatly aid in the PCs eventual escape (see Part 4: Escaping the Arena for details).

17) Trapped Souls (EL - or 8+)

Captive Gladiators (CR 8) 8x - see Appendix 1

Trapped within hideously-small cages along the Warrior's Queue (L13) are the arena's current crop of active gladiatorial slaves. While the amount of time each has been held captive within the arena varies, all have been destroyed and reanimated several times at least and many have lost all hope. Those gladiators who can see or hear each other don't bother to converse, unless it is to snap at one another during a discussion with the PCs - they have all long since grown sick of each other's company.

Alig-Fa: Even with much of the flesh scorched from his body, this bulky captive still nearly fills his cage. When approached, Alig-Fa is quiet and appears strangely comfortable in his tiny cell. The male orc will watch the players, but will not speak unless spoken to. Extremely determined and given succor by his continued faith in paraelemental Rain, Alig-Fa's confidence can be observed if the PCs converse with him. Alig-Fa is direct and honest, and will happily escape captivity if released, seeking to turn the tables on his tormentors. If a PC has previously controlled Alig-Fa, only glimpses of his religious joy might (Will save, DC 15 to resist) come to mind when they see him: the feeling of pure, clean, cool rainwater running down his face during a summer storm - his willpower having prevented any further intrusion into his mind.

Buleata: Buleata is a pale-skinned but strongly-built male dwarf that angrily thrashes (as much as he can) within his cell, cursing incoherently the whole time. Buleata will immediately attack those around him if released. If a PC has previously controlled Buleata,

glimpses of Buleata's life might (Will save, DC 15 to resist) come to mind when they see him: visions of joining the army of Nagarvos to protect his fellow citizens, of facing off against a vast army of humans on the shores of a river, and of being cut down by a powerful magical spell before he even realized the battle had begun.

Kelen: Disheveled, shabby-scaled, and dressed in rags, Kelen is a female kobold namech. Kelen's unlife has been more like her living days than most in the Dead Lands. Kelen will say anything she must to be released, as she desperately wants to escape the horrors of the arena. She will, however, also betray the group if things appear dire, hoping for some small amount of mercy from the guards if the escape attempt fails. If a PC has previously controlled Kelen, glimpses of her past might (Will save, DC 15 to resist) come to mind when they see her: visions of Kelen being ejected from her warren due to clan politics, of her stealing to live on the streets of a bustling city, and of being caught by one of the city's terrifying undead guardians and made its undying slave.

Kori: While the other trapped gladiators seem unhappy, this is not the case with the elven zhen known as Kori. He will seem friendly and in good spirits when meeting the party: "Oh visitors! What a delight!" Animated in conversation, the elf can and will answer questions that the other gladiators seem either unwilling or unable to answer in regards to their captivity. As the conversation develops, however, it may dawn on the PCs (Sense Motive check, DC 15 to realize) that Kori is not at all what he appears to be. Kori's mind has been compromised by his time here in the arena and he has gone mad. He is in fact suffering from something akin to Stockholm syndrome, having come to relish the torture and degradation of possession and arena combat, love the patrons and arena staff, and completely distrust anyone who would take him away from all of it. He will betray the group if released, either by moving too slowly, being too loud, or by taking whatever chance he can get to turn on his supposed saviors and side with his captors. Kori is one of the surviving members of the Necrologium's previous team of infiltrators.

Maxien: A relatively beautiful (for a thinking zombie) half-elven woman, Maxien has somehow maneuvered to be kneeling down within her cage, but quickly rises to her feet as the PCs approach, responding simply with: "Yea?" Maxien will begin any conversation afraid of the PCs, but if freedom is hinted at, her

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attitude will immediately change and she will quickly do anything to escape. If a PC has previously controlled Maxien, glimpses of her unlife might (Will save, DC 15 to resist) come to mind when they see her: visions of Maxien begging Wujarrt to forgive her for some small slight.

Ruswen: Ruswen is a small skeletal undead, child or halfling-sized (he was in fact a gnome in life), that somehow has a wild look to the pinpricks of white light in his eye sockets. Both excited and frightened by the appearance of the PCs, he will be slow to become friendly with the group. Ruswen is one of the surviving members of the Necrologium's previous team of infiltrators.

Stohn: Stohn is a badly-decayed human thinking zombie wearing tattered and worn robes. When the PCs approach, Stohn will be meditating with his eyes closed. If addressed, he will speak slowly and without emotion: "You do not belong here. Why have you come to my prison?" Stohn does not believe that

escaping will do any good, as he believes it's safer in the pens for him than anywhere else on Athas; he will not, however, go into detail on why he believes this. If a PC has previously controlled Stohn, glimpses of his past might (Will save, DC 15 to resist) come to mind when they see him: visions of running around and over sand dune after sand dune, pushed beyond his limits but still somehow going on, though it is unclear if he is running towards or away from something.

Yalak: Grottesquely plump yet still strangely emaciated-looking, Yalak is a male human fael. Completely filling his cell, Yalak stands with his head slumped against the bars, staring down at the floor blankly. Puppeted so many times that he has long-since lost count, Yalak is now reduced to a nearly continuous catatonic state, and even if released, he makes no indication that he is aware of anyone else's presence. If a PC has previously controlled Yalak, glimpses of his unlife before the arena might (Will save, DC 15 to resist) come to mind when they see him: visions of Yalak scheming to overthrow Wujarrt.

Part 4: Escaping the Arena

Eventually, whether or not their efforts have been successful, the PCs will want to leave the Apodexos arena. When they attempt to do so, the Arena Master (being both canny and paranoid) will be there to confront the party.

18) Confrontation (EL 8 or 12)

The Arena Master (CR 11) 1x - see Appendix 1

Arena Guard (CR 5) 2x - see Appendix 1

Just as the PCs are about to make their exit, the Arena Master appears with guards to stop them.

Having decided to finally leave the horrors and degradation of the Apodexos arena behind, you are mere steps from the exit when the Arena Master and several guards step out to block your path: "And where do you think you're going? You're NOT leaving - your bodies belong to us, to Wujarrt."

Tactics: The Arena Master's plan is simply to block the escape of the party (whether it's just the PCs or they have a whole army of freed gladiators with them) and cut down anyone who tries to move past him through the exit. The Arena Master and his guards will not move away from their positions near the exit and will fight to the death.

While this may SEEM like an impossible battle, the party only needs to move past their opposition to exit the arena and escape the encounter, not defeat the Arena Master and his guards.

If the PCs have released either the bugdead scorpion or the berserk golem (or both), they might (if the DM is feeling generous) arrive amidst the battle, distracting the Arena Master and the guards and making the PCs escape easier. If the PCs manage to locate the *control crown* for the bugdead scorpion and lead it into battle, this will obviously also make their escape easier.

Development: Once the PCs exit the arena (whether or not they defeated the Arena Master), proceed to Concluding the Adventure.



Concluding the Adventure

Once the PCs have escaped the Apodexos arena (whether via the secret door in the Reanimator's Office, the Service Entrance, the Beast Entrance, or one of the Guest Entrances), the adventure is essentially over. Used to strange coming and goings, the residents of Apodexos will not bother to stop or question those exiting the arena, even if they are running screaming from the arena while nearly naked and covered in gore.

Once away from the settlement of Apodexos, the party will need to make their way out of the Kingdom of Wujarrt and back to Deshentu. This journey is assumed to be uneventful, but the DM should feel free to add further encounters along the way as necessary. Possible encounters might include a run-in with troops from Erthne's Exilarchate raiding into the Kingdom of Wujarrt, insane residents of the kingdom of Ceeryl who mistake the PCs for illusion-cloaked monsters, or a small horde of bugdead that have made it past the Crunch.

Once back in Deshentu, the PCs need only report in with Rhokhan to receive whatever rewards they might deserve.

Outcome and Monetary Rewards

Regardless of what happens, the PCs will most likely be returning to Rhokhan - her reaction will depend on what occurred in Apodexos. Upon completion of their mission, Rhokhan will reward the PCs for their efforts with new or upgraded equipment.

As before, the PCs will have access to the full spellcasting services of both the Temple of the Vizier and the Necrologium itself. Each PC can also request the issuing or construction of custom equipment (mundane or magical/psionic). Such items will likely require at least several days to procure as per the standard item creation rules in the DMG. Feel free to assume a week for most things, including delays and shortages. The items will, however, arrive before Rhokhan's next mission for the PCs begins.

Success

If the PCs successfully infiltrated the arena, did not somehow reveal who their patrons were, and returned with both types of *control crown* (a master and slave

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crown), Rhokhan is satisfied with their performance, calling the mission a success. She will congratulate the PCs and reward them for a job well done.

Pleased with the success of their mission, Rhokhan grants the PCs a total of 28,000cp to be divided equally amongst themselves.

Partial Success

If the PCs successfully infiltrated the arena but somehow made it known who their patrons were or only returned with only one type of *control crown* (either a master or slave crown), Rhokhan will be moderately disappointed in their performance, calling the mission a partial success. She will not punish the PCs, however, as the PCs performed adequately and Necrologium might still learn something from whatever crowns the party did return with.

Dismayed with the results of their mission, but still pleased at what they did manage to accomplish, Rhokhan grants the PCs a total of 14,000cp to be divided equally amongst themselves.

Complete Failure

If the PCs failed to successfully infiltrate the arena, somehow made it known who their patrons were, or did not return with any *control crowns*, Rhokhan will be disappointed in their performance, calling the mission a complete failure and threatening to send the party to the Reanimation center.

Disappointed with the fumbling of their mission, but still desperately hoping the PCs might be successful in their next endeavor (and aware that new tools might make the difference between future success and failure), Rhokhan grants the PCs a total of 9,000cp to be divided equally amongst themselves.

DM's Option - Agents of Gretch

Regardless of the successfulness of their primary mission (from Rhokhan), if the PCs returned with a set of *control crowns* for Gretch, slaughtered the majority of those in the Apodexos arena, or planted evidence implicating Erthne's forces for the attack, Anzatias will also privately congratulate the PCs on their success, further rewarding the PCs on behalf of per secret patron Gretch.

Anzatias (and her secret master Gretch) is pleased with the success of the PCs' mission, resulting in the PCs being rewarded with 16,000cp (beyond whatever rewards Rhokhan might have given them) per completed task (for a total of 48,000cp if the PCs completed all three of Gretch's tasks) to be divided equally amongst themselves.

Experience Point Awards

Experience Point (XP) rewards for certain actions are listed below. The final XP total is the amount the party receives and should be divided between the PCs equally. The second set of XP values (listed in parentheses) are the XP awards if using the "Agents of Gretch" option.

XP Action Rewards

- For entering via a Guest Entrance = 2,250 XP
- For entering via the Service Entrance = 1,000 XP
- For participating in Encounter #3 - Test Drive = 1,800 XP
- For participating in Encounter #4 - Round Two = 2,700 XP
- For participating in Encounter #6 - Third Time's a Charm = 5,400 XP
- For each group of arena guards bypassed by persuasion = 100% CR value of encounters
- For each arena guard killed = 50% CR value of encounters (100% CR value of encounters)
- For each other combat encounter (in the PCs' own bodies) = 100% CR value of encounters
- For other minor NPCs killed = none (or full CR value)
- For killing all NPCs in the arena = 0 XP (7,200 XP)
- For planting evidence implicating Erthne's Exilarchate in the attack = 0 XP (7,200 XP)
- For successfully escaping the arena (by any means necessary) = 1,500 XP (7,200 XP)
- For successfully delivering a single *control crown* to a patron = 750 XP (3,600 XP)
- For successfully delivering a matching pair of *control crowns* to a patron = 1,500 XP (7,200 XP)

Further Adventures

Depending on the PCs' actions during the adventure, many subsequent adventures could follow.

If the PCs caused a great deal of trouble while passing through Ceeryl's realm, or if they had a violent encounter with some of Ceeryl's forces (see *Concluding the Adventure*, above), a war party of unhinged fanatics from Ceeryl's realm might attempt to seek out the PCs and redress a slight (real or imagined). Such an attack might even precipitate a conflict between the kingdom of Ceeryl and Deshentu, if not handled quickly and carefully.

Should the party end up personally fighting in the arena, they might meet and be rescued by Ash - the shapeshifting mage/psion. If so, they might encounter Ash outside the Apodexos arena later on. Having taken on a new appearance and identity, the PCs are unlikely to recognise Ash, but they will recognise the PCs and ask for their aid. Ash will once again find themselves in a desperate situation, and while more than capable of extracting themselves from the situation, Ash needs the PCs' help to free the downtrodden undead they had been assisting. If the PCs can find a way to do so, their handlers in Deshentu will likely be very pleased with their recruitment of a canny, shapechanging, infiltrator with field experience.

If the party leaves any indications of who they truly are in Apodexos arena, Wujarrt is sure to learn of it. Incensed by the idea of outsiders infiltrating her arena and stealing from her, queen Wujarrt will seek retribution for the offense, sending crack strike teams of her ruthless, well-trained soldiers to hunt the PCs down and return them to her arena.

Should the PCs have served Gretch by butchering everyone within the arena and planting items to implicate Erthne's Exilarchate in the attack, war will erupt between the Exilarchate and the Kingdom of Wujarrt. Opportunities to infiltrate, sabotage, or betray either kingdom will abound, as each kingdom will be too involved with the conflict to closely monitor covert missions that might be occurring within their borders. Ultimately, the war will likely grind on until either Gretch or a bugdead invasion forces it to be put on hold - unless, of course, the PCs are sent to broker a peace or topple a kingdom's leadership to end the conflict earlier...

Regardless of whom the PCs recovered the *control crowns* for, their patrons will likely wonder who created them, where they are located, and if they have any other new and equally interesting inventions. Such a search could well lead the PCs across the Kingdom of Wujarrt and indeed across the Dead Lands themselves in search of the items' creator - perhaps a wayward apprentice of Gretch himself or a renegade zagath.





Appendix 1: Monsters & NPCs

Aliq-Fa CR 6

Male Orc Fallen Cleric 3 / Fighter 3

Lawful Evil Medium Humanoid (Orc, Psionic)

Init: +5; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft.; Listen +8, Spot +8

Aura: Despair (10 ft, DC 12 or Shaken)

Languages: Orcish, Ulyanese

AC: 19, touch 11, flat-footed 18

(+1 Dex, +6 Nat, +2 armor)

hp 51 (6d12+12)

Damage Reduction: 5/magic; **Resistance:** Cold 3

Immune: Turning, Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Code of Honor, Phobia (Disease)

Saves: Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +4

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee: Maul +10 (1d12+6; 20/x2)

Full Melee: Maul +10 (1d12+6; 20/x2)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +5; **Grapple:** +9

Combat Actions: Cleave, Curse (DC 12), Create Spawn, Power Attack

Combat Gear: Maul +1 (from *call weaponry*)*, Studded Leather Armor* (*item possessed only when in the arena.)

Cleric Spells (CL 3+3rd, DC 12 + spell level):

2nd: chill metal (d), silence, spiritual weapon.

1st: Chill touch (d), divine favor, shield of faith, summon monster I;

0th: detect magic, guidance, resistance, virtue;

Psi-Like Abilities: At will - call weaponry*, death knell, deathwatch, mindlink*; 1/day - precognition, recall agony*; ML = HD. The save DCs are Charisma-based.

Abilities: Str 18, Dex 12, Con -, Int 11, Wis 14, Cha 8

SQ: Code of Honor, Cold Resistance, Damage Reduction 5/magic, Darkvision 60 ft., Domains, Gray Toughness 2, Immunity to Turning, Skills, Undead Traits, Phobia (Disease).

Feats: Cleave ^B, Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Power Attack ^B, Practiced Spellcaster (Cleric).

Skills: Climb +4, Concentration +8(+4), Diplomacy -1, Intimidate +5, Jump +4, Listen +8, Search +6, Sense Motive +8, Spellcraft +3, Spot +8.

Possessions: none (-1 CR)

Code of Honor (Ex): Fallen are bound to follow a code of honor reflecting idealized rules of war. Evil fallen attempt to break or twist codes to avoid getting killed.

Curse (Su): The undead can curse an individual when it is destroyed. As the final blow is made that kills the creature, the undead can curse its destroyer, as the *bestow curse* spell.

Create Spawn (Su): A giant, humanoid, or monstrous humanoid slain by a fallen's death knell power rises as fallen after 1d4 rounds. A fallen can have spawn with Hit Dice totaling twice its own.

Despair (Su): Fallen radiate an aura of doom and hopelessness, causing creatures within 10 ft. to make a Will save (DC 10 + ½ fallen's HD + fallen's Cha modifier). Creatures that fail are shaken. Whether or not the save is successful, that creature cannot be affected again by the same undead's aura for 24 hours. Fallen can suppress or reactivate this ability as a standard action in order to achieve surprise in close quarters.

Domains:

- **Cold Malice** - Class Skill: Move Silently; Weapon: Garrote; Granted Power: You gain your cleric level in cold resistance.
- **Furious Storm** - Class Skill: Intimidate; Weapon: Small macahuitl; Granted Power: You get a +4 bonus to resist being bull rushed or tripped, and are treated as one size larger against wind effects (such as *gust of wind*).

Light Sensitivity: Orcs are dazzled in bright sunlight or within the radius of a *daylight* spell.

Phobia (Ex): The undead is terrified of a particular object or creature and flees from it as though affected by the aversion power. If the object of the phobia is an individual or a physical object, the undead prefers not to approach within 30 feet of it. If it is a word, the undead tries not to utter it; if it is an action, the undead

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does not willingly attempt to perform it; and if it is an event, the undead does not willingly attend it. The undead takes reasonable steps to avoid the object of its aversion, but will not put itself in jeopardy by doing so.

If the undead is forced into taking an action it has an aversion to, it takes a –2 penalty on any attack rolls, ability checks, or skill checks involved.



Arena Guard CR 5

Male Human Thinking Zombie Fighter 4

LE Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Human, Psionic)

Init: +6; Senses: Darkvision 60ft.; Listen +5, Spot +5

Aura: -

Languages: Classic Dwarven, Ulyanese

AC: 20; touch 12, flat-footed 18

(+2 Dex, +4 Nat, +4 armor)

hp 30 (4 HD; 4d12+4)

Resistances: Cold 10, Electricity 10

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Cast No Shadow, Vulnerability to Blessed Elements

Saves: Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +3

Speed: 30 ft.

Melee: Heavy Mace +11 (1d8+7) or Claw +9 (1d4+5) or Bite +9 (1d6+5)

Full Melee: Heavy Mace +11 (1d8+7) and Bite +4 (1d6+2)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +4; **Grapple:** +9

Combat Actions: Disease (DC 14), Great Cleave, **Curse (DC 14)**, Power Attack

Combat Gear: MW Heavy Mace, Studded Leather +1

Abilities: Str 20, Dex 14, Con –, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 15

SQ: **Cast No Shadow**, Darkvision 60 ft., Gray Toughness 1, Resistances, Skills, **Spirit Master**, Undead Traits, Vulnerability to Blessed Elements.

Feats: Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Initiative ^B, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (Heavy Mace) ^B, Weapon Specialization (Heavy Mace) ^B.

Skills: Climb +12, Intimidate +8, Jump +11, Listen +7, Ride +2, Search +5, Sense Motive +5, Spot +7.

Possessions: 3,300cp or Combat Gear plus: Psionic Tattoo of *Force Screen* (ML 1st) x2, Psionic Tattoo of *Ubiquitous Vision* (ML 5th), Vest of Resistance +1.

Curse (Su): The undead can curse an individual when it is destroyed. As the final blow is made that kills the creature, the undead can curse its destroyer, as the *bestow curse* spell.

Resistance to Cold 10 and Electricity 10 (Ex): A thinking zombie resists cold and electricity attacks.

Spirit Master (Su): Only undead under the control of another can have this power. The master psychically offers knowledge and advice, allowing the creature to use *precognition* once per day.

Vulnerability to Blessed Elements (Ex): A thinking zombie takes half again as much (+50%) damage as normal from blessed elements.



Ash CR 10

Male Human Thinking Zombie Psion (Telepath) 2 / Wizard 5

CN Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Human, Psionic)

Init: +2; Senses: Darkvision 60ft.; Listen +6, Spot +6

Aura: -

Languages: Classic Elven, Classic Dwarven, Goblin, Ulyanese

AC: 16; touch 12, flat-footed 14

(+2 Dex, +4 Nat)

hp 52 (7 HD; 7d12+7)

Resistances: Cold 10, Electricity 10

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Vulnerability to Blessed Elements

Saves: Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +9

Speed: 30 ft.

Melee: Claw +5 (1d4+2) or Touch +5 (by power or spell)

Full Melee: Claw +5 (1d4+2) and Bite +0 (1d6+1)

Ranged: Ranged Touch +4 (by power or spell)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +3; **Grapple:** +5

Combat Actions: **Death Cry (2/day, DC 16)**, Disease (DC 16)

Combat Gear: -

Psion Powers (ML 6th, PSP: 19, DC 15 + power level):
1st: call to mind, mindlink, mind thrust, missive, psionic charm.

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Wizard Spells (CL 7th, DC 15 + spell level):

3rd: dispel magic, extended invisibility

2nd: alter self, invisibility, minor image, touch of idiocy

1st: comprehend languages, mage armor, magic missile, shocking grasp, silent image

0th: detect magic, mage hand x2, read magic

Abilities: Str 14, Dex 12, Con –, Int 20, Wis 15, Cha 16

SQ: **Change Shape**, Darkvision 60 ft., **Enhanced Ability (bonus feat)**, Gray Toughness 1, **Necromant**, Resistances, Skills, Undead Traits, Vulnerability to Blessed Elements.

Feats: Brew Potion, Extend Spell ^B, Psionic Talent x3, Practiced Manifester (Psion) ^B, Practiced Spellcaster (Wizard), Scribe Scroll ^B.

Skills: Bluff +13, Concentration +13, Diplomacy +9, Disguise +20, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (Arcana) +9, Knowledge (Psionics) +9, Knowledge (Religion) +9, Listen +6, Psicraft +11, Search +8, Sense Motive +11, Spellcraft +11, Spot +6.

Possessions: 7,200 cp or Combat Gear plus: Chime of Opening, Headband of Intellect +2.

Change Shape (Su): Only corporeal undead can have this ability. The undead can mimic the voice and appearance of any humanoid creature of the same size. In humanoid form, the undead loses its natural attacks. It can remain in its humanoid form until it chooses to assume a new one. A change in form cannot be dispelled, but the undead reverts to its natural form when killed. The undead gains a +10 circumstance bonus on Disguise checks while in another form. A true seeing spell or ability reveals its natural form.

Death Cry (Su): The sound of the undead's voice is enough to kill lesser creatures. Twice per day as a standard action, the undead can scream and wail. This unholy scream slays a total number of HD equal to half the undead's HD, affecting a 30-ft. radius and killing creatures with the least HD first unless they make a Fortitude save. Deaf creatures are immune to this power.

Disease (Su): The undead's natural attacks infect their victims with a disease. A creature dealt damage by the undead must make a Fortitude save or contract either filth fever (50%) or red ache (50%).

Resistance to Cold 10 and Electricity 10 (Ex): A thinking zombie resists cold and electricity attacks.

Vulnerability to Blessed Elements (Ex): A thinking zombie takes half again as much (+50%) damage as normal from blessed elements.



Buleata CR 6

Male Dwarf Fallen Fighter 6

Lawful Evil Medium Humanoid (Dwarf, Psionic)

Init +3; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft.; Listen +7, Spot +7

Aura: Despair (10 ft, DC 14 or Shaken)

Languages: Dwarven, Ulyanese

AC: 23, touch 13, flat-footed 20

(+3 Dex, +6 Nat, +2 armor, +2 shield)

hp 51 (6d12+12);

Damage Reduction: 5/magic

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** **Cast No Shadow**, Code of Honor, **Vulnerability to Sunlight**

Saves: Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +3

Speed: 20+10 ft. (6 squares)

Melee: Battleaxe +11 (1d8+6; 20/x3)

Full Melee: Battleaxe +11/+6 (1d8+6; 20/x3)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +6/+1; **Grapple:** +9

Combat Actions: Blind-Fight, Combat Expertise, Create Spawn, Improved Trip, Stand Still

Combat Gear: Battleaxe +1 (from *call weaponry*) *, Heavy Chitin Shield *, Studded Leather Armor * (*Item possessed only when in the arena.)

Psi-Like Abilities: At will - call weaponry*, death knell, deathwatch, mindlink*; 1/day - precognition, recall agony*; ML = HD. The save DCs are Charisma-based.

Abilities: Str 16, Dex 16, Con –, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 12

SQ: **Cast No Shadow**, Code of Honor, Damage Reduction 5/magic, Darkvision 60 ft., Dwarf Traits, **Enduring Focus**, Gray Toughness 2, Skills, **Spirit Master**, Undead Traits, **Vulnerability to Sunlight**.

Feats: Blind-Fight ^B, Combat Expertise, Improved Trip ^B, Speed of Thought, Stand Still, Weapon Focus (Battleaxe) ^B, Weapon Specialization (Battleaxe) ^B.

Skills: Climb +7, Craft (Armorsmithing) +2, Intimidate +10, Jump +7, Listen +7, Search +7, Sense Motive +7, Spot +7.

Possessions: none (-1 CR)

Cast No Shadow (Su): The undead casts no shadow and does not show a reflection in a mirror. It has a -4 circumstance penalty on Disguise checks when its weakness is observable, such as in sunlight.

Code of Honor (Ex): Fallen are bound to follow a code of honor reflecting idealized rules of war. Evil fallen attempt to break or twist codes to avoid getting killed.

Create Spawn (Su): A giant, humanoid, or monstrous humanoid slain by a fallen's death knell power rises as fallen after 1d4 rounds. A fallen can have spawn with Hit Dice totaling twice its own.

Despair (Su): Fallen radiate an aura of doom and hopelessness, causing creatures within 10 ft. to make a Will save (DC 10 + ½ fallen's HD + fallen's Cha modifier). Creatures that fail are shaken. Whether or not the save is successful, that creature cannot be affected again by the same undead's aura for 24 hours. Fallen can suppress or reactivate this ability as a standard action in order to achieve surprise in close quarters.

Dwarf Traits:

- **Stability:** A dwarf gains a +4 bonus on ability checks made to resist being bull rushed or tripped when standing on the ground (but not when climbing, flying, riding, or otherwise not standing firmly on the ground).
- **Weapons Familiarity:** To dwarves, the urgrosh is treated as a martial rather than exotic weapon.
- a +2 racial bonus on saving throws against spells and spell-like effects.
- a +1 morale bonus on all checks directly related to their focus. This includes a skill bonus, an attack bonus, a damage bonus, or a saving throw bonus, or even a bonus to manifestation or spell save DCs.

Enduring Focus: The undead's life force is tied to a focus, either an object or an unfulfilled task. As long as this object (usually called a phylactery) is intact or the task unfinished, the undead cannot be permanently killed; it reforms 1d100 days after its apparent death. The phylactery has the hardness and hit points of a normal object of its kind.

Killing the undead in the Gray prevents it from returning from destruction.

Spirit Master (Su): Only undead under the control of another can have this power. The master psychically offers knowledge and advice, allowing the creature to use *precognition* once per day.

Vulnerability to Sunlight (Ex): Direct sunlight deals the undead 1d6 points of damage each round.



Giant Bugdead Scorpion CR 12

Elite Huge Zombie Bugdead Monstrous Scorpion

NE Huge undead

Init: +2; Senses: Darkvision 60 ft., Tremorsense 60 ft.; Listen +1, Spot +1

Aura: -

Languages: -

AC: 22; touch 10, flat-footed 22

(-2 size, +2 Dex, +12 Nat)

hp 117 (18 HD; 18d12)

Damage Reduction: 3/metal; **Resistances:** Fire 5; **Spell Resistance:** 23

Immune: Cold, Electricity, Undead Traits

Saves: Fort +6, Ref +8, Will +12

Speed: 50 ft. (10 squares)

Melee: Claw +18 (1d8+11)

Full Melee: 2x Claw +18 (1d8+11) and Sting +13 (2d4+5 plus poison)

Space: 15 ft.; **Reach:** 10 ft.

Base Attack: +9; **Grapple:** +28

Combat Options: Constrict (1d8+7), Improved Grab, Poison (DC 15)

Abilities: Str 32, Dex 14, Con -, Int -, Wis 13, Cha 1

SQ: Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60 ft., Immunity to Cold and Electricity, Resistance to Fire 5, **Spell Resistance**, Tremorsense 60 ft., Undead Traits.

Feats: -

Skills: -

Constrict (Ex): A monstrous scorpion deals automatic claw damage on a successful grapple check.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a monstrous scorpion must hit with a claw attack. A monstrous scorpion can use either its Strength modifier or Dexterity modifier for grapple checks, whichever is better.

Poison (Ex): A huge monstrous scorpion has a poisonous sting. Save is Constitution-based, DC 15. Initial and secondary damage both 1d6 Con.



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Goblin Fael CR 4

Male & Female Goblin Fael Rogue 3

NE Small Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Goblin)

Init: +6; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft.; Listen +12, Spot +12

Aura: -

Languages: Goblin, Ulyanese

AC: 19; touch 13, flat-footed 17

(+1 size, +2 Dex, +4 Nat, +2 armor)

hp 28 (3 HD; 3d12+9); **Fast Healing** 3

Damage Reduction: 5/magic

Immune: Undead Traits

Saves: Fort +1, Ref +5, Will +3; Evasion

Speed: 30 ft.

Melee: **Bite +5 (2d6+1; 18-20/x3)** or Slam +5 (1d4+1)

Full Melee: Slam +5 (1d4+1) and **Bite +0 (2d6; 18-20/x3)**

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +2; **Grapple:** -1

Combat Options: Death's Ruin, Sneak Attack (+2d6)

Combat Gear: Leather Armor

Abilities: Str 12, Dex 15, Con --, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 13

SQ: Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60 ft., Evasion, **Gray Toughness 3**, Skills, Trapfinding, Undead Traits.

Feats: Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse.

Skills: Balance +4, Bluff +7, Hide +12, Jump +3, Listen +12, Move Silently +12, Ride +6, Search +11, Sense Motive +12, Spot +12, Tumble +8.

Possessions: none (-1 CR)

Death's Ruin (Su): You can make sneak attacks against undead creatures. However, you roll only one-half your normal sneak attack dice (rounded down) when determining bonus damage for such attacks. This is a supernatural ability. This replaces the trap sense class feature, including trap sense bonuses gained at higher levels of the rogue class. From *Complete Champion*, pg 51.



Kelen CR 6

Female Kobold Namech Rogue 6

NE Small Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Reptilian)

Init: +4; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft.; Listen +16, Spot +16

Aura: Revulsion (DC 15)

Languages: Kobold, Ulyanese, Ulyanese Giant

AC: 20; touch 15, flat-footed 15

(+1 size, +4 Dex, +5 Nat)

hp 39 (6 HD; 6d12); **Fast Healing** 3

Damage Reduction: 5/magic

Immune: **Spells** (*burning hands*, *cure moderate wounds*, *sound burst*, *summon monster IV*), Undead Traits;

Weakness: **Stench**, Turn Submission (-4; as 2 HD),

Vulnerability to Fire (150% dmg).

Saves: Fort +2, Ref +9, Will +3; Evasion

Speed: 30 ft.

Melee: **Bite +9 (1d6)** or Claw +9 (1d3)

Full Melee: 2x Claw +9 (1d3) and **Bite +4 (1d6)**

Ranged: Lt. Crossbow +9 (1d6; 19-20/x2)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +4; **Grapple:** +0

Combat Options: Combat Expertise, Death's Ruin, Improved Feint (move action), Sneak Attack (+3d6)

Combat Gear: Small Light Crossbow* (*Items possessed only when in the arena)

Abilities: Str 10, Dex 18, Con --, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 14

SQ: Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60 ft., Evasion, **Fast Healing**, Light Sensitivity, **Nondetection (DC 16)**, Skills, **Spell Immunity** (*burning hands*, *cure moderate wounds*, *sound burst*, *summon monster IV*), **Stench** (a dry, exaggerated, reptilian smell), Trapfinding, Turn Submission (-4), Undead Traits, **Vulnerability to Fire.**

Feats: Combat Expertise, Improved Feint, Weapon Finesse.

Skills: Appraise +5, Bluff +11, Climb +3, Craft (Trapmaking) +4, Diplomacy +15, Escape Artist +7, Hide +17, Jump +6, Listen +16, Move Silently +19, Profession (Miner) +3, Search +19, Sense Motive +16, Spot +16, Tumble +10.

Possessions: none (-1 CR)

Death's Ruin (Su): You can make sneak attacks against undead creatures. However, you roll only one-half your normal sneak attack dice (rounded down) when determining bonus damage for such attacks. This is a supernatural ability. This replaces the trap sense class feature, including trap sense bonuses gained at higher levels of the rogue class. From *Complete Champion*, pg 51.

Light Sensitivity (Ex): Kobolds are dazzled in bright sunlight or within the radius of a *daylight* spell.

Nondetection (Su): The undead is difficult to detect using divination spells, as though it were protected by the *nondetection* spell.

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Skills: Kobolds have a +2 racial bonus on Craft (trapmaking), Profession (miner), and Search checks. Namechs receive a +6 racial bonus on Listen, Move Silently, Search, Sense Motive, and Spot checks.

Stench (Ex): The creature's flesh is rotten and putrefying, emitting a foul stench easily identifiable as undead.

Revulsion (Su): A powerful aura of revulsion surrounds a namech. Any creature within 30 ft. that fails a Fortitude save (DC of 10 + 1/2 namech's HD + namech's Cha modifier) becomes nauseated for 1d6 rounds. Whether or not the save is successful, that creature cannot be affected again by the same namech's aura for 24 hours.



Maxien CR 6

Female Half-Elf Thinking Zombie Psion (Shaper) 6
NE Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Elf, Psionic)

Init: +3; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft., Low-Light Vision; Listen +6, Spot +6

Aura: -

Languages: Classic Dwarven, Classic Elven, Gnomish, Orcish, Ulyanese, Ulyanese Giant

AC: 17; touch 13, flat-footed 14

(+3 Dex, +4 Nat)

hp 51 (6 HD; 6d12+12); **Fast Healing** 3

Resistances: Cold 10, Electricity 10

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Distractible, Vulnerability to Blessed Elements

Saves: Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +6

Speed: 30 ft.

Melee: Claw +5 (1d4+2) or Heavy Mace +5 (1d8+2) or Bite +5 (1d6+2)

Full Melee: Claw +5 (1d4+2) and Bite +0 (1d6+1)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +3; **Grapple:** +5

Combat Options: Boost Construct, Extend Power, Greater Power Penetration

Combat Gear: Obsidian Heavy Mace* (*Items possessed only when in the arena)

Psion Powers (ML 6th, PSP: 35+12, DC 14 + power level):

3rd: ectoplasmic cocoon, energy retort, greater concealing amorpha, telekinetic thrust

2nd: energy stun, recall agony, specified energy adaption, swarm of crystals

1st: astral construct, detect psionics, inertial armor, mind thrust, vigor

Abilities: Str 14, Dex 16, Con --, Int 18, Wis 12, Cha 13

SQ: Darkvision 60 ft., **Distractible (extremely beautiful women, Cha 17+)**, **Fast Healing**, **Gray Toughness 2**, Low-Light Vision, Resistances, Skills, Undead Traits, Vulnerability to Blessed Elements.

Feats: Boost Construct, Extend Power^B, Greater Power Penetration^B, Power Penetration, Skill Focus (Concentration).

Skills: Bluff +9, Concentration +13, Disguise +3(+2), Handle Animal +3, Knowledge (Psionics) +13, Listen +6, Psicraft +13, Search +6, Sense Motive +5, Spot +6, Survival +3, Use Psionic Device +10.

Possessions: none (-1 CR)

Distractible (Ex): The undead is easily distracted by a creature, object, or action that aggravates it to the point of rage. In combat, the undead rids itself of the distraction, eliminating the source even before dealing with prominent threats.

Resistance to Cold 10 and Electricity 10 (Ex): A thinking zombie resists cold and electricity attacks.

Vulnerability to Blessed Elements (Ex): A thinking zombie takes half again as much (+50%) damage as normal from blessed elements.



Modek/Arth CR 5

Male Human Zhen Rogue 3

NE Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Human, Psionic)

Init: +2; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft., Low-Light Vision; Listen +14, Search +21, Spot +25

Aura: -

Languages: Classic Dwarven, Goblin, Ulyanese, Ulyanese Giant

AC: 22; touch 12, flat-footed 20

(+2 Dex, +10 Nat)

hp 22 (3 HD; 3d12+3); **Fast Healing:** 6

Damage Reduction: 5/magic

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Deterioration, Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects

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Saves: Fort +1, Ref +5, Will +5; Evasion

Speed: 30 ft.; Obsidian Climb

Melee: Slam +5 (1d8+3) or Touch +5 (by spell or power)

Ranged: Ranged Touch +4 (by spell or power)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +2; **Grapple:** +5

Combat Options: Sneak Attack (+2d6)

Combat Gear: -

Psi-Like Abilities: At will—aura sight*, body adjustment*, body equilibrium, catfall*, control light, elfsight**, false sensory input*, psionic charm*, psionic daze*, psionic suggestion*, ubiquitous vision**. ML = HD. The save DCs are Charisma-based. *Power can be augmented.

Abilities: Str 16, Dex 14, Con --, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 15

SQ: Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60 ft., **Deterioration**, **Enduring Focus (find his lost family)**, Evasion, **Fast Healing**, Gray Toughness 1, Obsidian Climb, Rebuke Undead (CL 3rd, 5/day), Skills, Surging Euphoria, Trap Sense (+1), Trapfinding, Undead Traits, Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects.

Feats: Iron Will, Negotiator, Persuasive.

Skills: Appraise +9, Bluff +10, Climb +6, Concentration +5, Diplomacy +14, Intimidate +18, Jump +8, Knowledge (Local) +1, Listen +8, Search +21, Sense Motive +16, Sleight of Hand +10, Spot +25, Tumble +10.

Possessions: 2,500cp or Combat Gear plus: Eyes of the Eagle.

Deterioration (Ex): The undead's body deteriorates rapidly unless the undead applies special preserving oils. Without this oil, its skin becomes dry and flaky, and its bones snap with heavy exertion. Each day the undead fails to apply one ounce of the oil, it takes a cumulative -2 penalty to Dexterity. At 0 Dexterity, the undead becomes paralyzed. For each day it receives oil thereafter, it regains 2 points of Dexterity. This oil costs the undead 100 Cp per ounce.

Enhanced Senses (Su): Elfsight and ubiquitous vision continually grant the zhen a +6 bonus on Spot and Search checks. The zhen also has low-light vision, can detect secret doors without actively searching, and retains its Dexterity bonus when flat-footed. *



Nurhon/Gerrum CR 5

Male Mul Thinking Zombie Fighter 4

LE Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Dwarf)

Init: +6; Senses: Darkvision 60ft.; Listen +5, Spot +5

Aura: -

Languages: Classic Dwarven, Ulyanese

AC: 20; touch 12, flat-footed 18

(+2 Dex, +4 Nat, +4 armor)

hp 30 (4 HD; 4d12+4)

Resistances: Cold 10, Electricity 10

Immune: **Spells (Cure Moderate Wounds)**, Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Cast No Shadow, Vulnerability to Blessed Elements

Saves: Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +3

Speed: 30 ft.

Melee: Maul +13 (1d12+12) or Claw +11 (1d4+7) or Bite +11 (1d6+7)

Full Melee: Maul +13 (1d12+12) and Bite +6 (1d6+3)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +4; **Grapple:** +11

Combat Options: **Blinding Touch (DC 13)**, Cleave, Disease (DC 13), Power Attack

Combat Gear: MW Maul, Studded Leather +1

Abilities: Str 24, Dex 14, Con --, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 13

SQ: **Cast No Shadow**, Darkvision 60 ft., Gray Toughness 1, Resistances, Skills, **Spell Immunity**, Undead Traits, Vulnerability to Blessed Elements.

Feats: Cleave, Improved Initiative ^B, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (Maul) ^B, Weapon Specialization (Maul) ^B.

Skills: Climb +14, Intimidate +8, Jump +14, Listen +5, Ride +2, Search +5, Sense Motive +5, Spot +5.

Possessions: 3,300cp or Combat Gear plus: Psionic Tattoo of *Force Screen* (ML 1st) x2, Psionic Tattoo of *Ubiquitous Vision* (ML 5th), Vest of Resistance +1.

Disease (Su): A thinking zombie's bite delivers one of the following diseases (50% chance of either). The save DC is 10 + ½ thinking zombie's HD + thinking zombie's Cha modifier.

- Filth fever—bite, Fortitude save, incubation period 1d3 days, damage 1d3 Dex and 1d3 Con.
- Red ache—bite, Fortitude save, incubation period 1d3 days, damage 1d6 Str.

Resistance to Cold 10 and Electricity 10 (Ex): A thinking zombie resists cold and electricity attacks.

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Vulnerability to Blessed Elements (Ex): A thinking zombie takes half again as much (+50%) damage as normal from blessed elements.



Stohn CR 6

Male Human Thinking Zombie Wilder 6

CE Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Human, Psionic)

Init: +2; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft.; Listen +14, Spot +14

Aura: -

Languages: Orc, Ulyanese

AC: 19; touch 16, flat-footed 17; **Elude Touch** (+2 Dex, +4 Nat, +3 armor)

hp 53 (6 HD; 6d12+8)

Resistances: Cold 10, Electricity 10

Immune: Turning, Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Psychic Enervation, Vulnerability to Blessed Elements

Saves: Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +6

Speed: 30 ft.

Melee: Claw +7 (1d4+3) or Dagger (1d4+3) or Bite +7 (1d6+3)

Full Melee: Claw +7 (1d4+3) and Bite +2 (1d6+1)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +4; **Grapple:** +7

Combat Options: Disease (DC 15), Greater Power Endowment (+2 DC), Psionic Meditation (Move action), Surging Euphoria (+1), Wild Surge (+2)

Combat Gear: Obsidian Dagger x2 *, Studded Leather Armor* (*Items possessed only when in the arena.)

Wilder Powers (ML 6th, PSP: 35+12, DC 14 + power level):

3rd: energy burst

2nd: concussion blast

1st: force shield, mind thrust

Abilities: Str 16, Dex 14, Con --, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 18

SQ: Darkvision 60 ft., Elude Touch, **Enhanced Ability (Feat)**, Gray Toughness 1, **Immunity to Turning**, Psychic Enervation, Resistances, Skills, Undead Traits, Volatile Mind (1 point), Vulnerability to Blessed Elements.

Feats: Ability Focus (Disease), Greater Power Endowment, Power Endowment, Psionic Body, Psionic Meditation.

Skills: Bluff +13, Climb +3, Concentration +13, Jump +3, Knowledge (Psionics) +4, Listen +14, Psicraft +7, Search +5, Sense Motive +14, Spot +14.

Possessions: none (-1 CR)

Disease (Su): A thinking zombie's bite delivers one of the following diseases (50% chance of either). The save DC is 10 + ½ thinking zombie's HD + thinking zombie's Cha modifier.

- Filth fever—bite, Fortitude save, incubation period 1d3 days, damage 1d3 Dex and 1d3 Con.
- Red ache—bite, Fortitude save, incubation period 1d3 days, damage 1d6 Str.

Elude Touch (Ex): Starting at 2nd level, a wilder's intuition supersedes her intellect, alerting her to danger from touch attacks (including rays). She gains a bonus to Armor Class against all touch attacks equal to her Charisma bonus; however, her touch AC can never exceed her Armor Class against normal attacks.

Psychic Enervation (Ex): Pushing oneself by invoking a wild surge is dangerous. Immediately following each wild surge, a wilder may be overcome by the strain of her effort. The chance of suffering psychic enervation is equal to 5% per manifester level added with the wild surge.

A wilder who is overcome by psychic enervation is dazed until the end of her next turn and loses a number of power points equal to her wilder level.

Resistance to Cold 10 and Electricity 10 (Ex): A thinking zombie resists cold and electricity attacks.

Surging Euphoria (Ex): Starting at 4th level, when a wilder uses her wild surge ability, she gains a +1 morale bonus on attack rolls, damage rolls, and saving throws for a number of rounds equal to the intensity of her wild surge.

If a wilder is overcome by psychic enervation following her wild surge, she does not gain the morale bonus for this use of her wild surge ability.

Volatile Mind (Ex): A wilder's temperamental mind is hard to encompass with the discipline of telepathy. When any telepathy power is manifested on a wilder of 5th level or higher, the manifester of the power must pay 1 power point more than he otherwise would have spent.

The extra cost is not a natural part of that power's cost. It does not augment the power; it is simply a wasted power point. The wilder's volatile mind can force the

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manifesters of the telepathy power to exceed the normal power point limit of 1 point per manifester level. If the extra cost raises the telepathy power's cost to more points than the manifester has remaining in his reserve, the power simply fails, and the manifester exhausts the rest of his power points.

As a standard action, a wilder can choose to lower this effect for 1 round.

Vulnerability to Blessed Elements (Ex): A thinking zombie takes half again as much (+50%) damage as normal from blessed elements.

Wild Surge (Su): A wilder can let her passion and emotion rise to the surface in a wild surge when she manifests a power. During a wild surge, a wilder gains phenomenal psionic strength, but may harm herself by the reckless use of her power (see Psychic Enervation).

A wilder can choose to invoke a wild surge whenever she manifests a power. When she does so, she gains +1 to her manifester level with that manifestation of the power. The manifester level boost gives her the ability to augment her powers to a higher degree than she otherwise could; however, she pays no extra power point for this wild surge. Instead, the additional 1 power point that would normally be required to augment the power is effectively supplied by the wild surge.

Level-dependent power effects are also improved, depending on the power a wilder manifests with her wild surge.

This improvement in manifester level does not grant her any other benefits (psicrystal abilities do not advance, she does not gain higher-level class abilities, and so on).

She cannot use the Overchannel psionic feat and invoke her wild surge at the same time.

At 3rd level, a wilder can choose to boost her manifester level by two instead of one. At 7th level, she can boost her manifester level by up to three; at 11th level, by up to four; at 15th level, by up to five; and at 19th level, by up to six.

In all cases, the wild surge effectively pays the extra power point cost that is normally required to augment the power; only the unaugmented power point cost is subtracted from the wilder's power point reserve.



The Arena Master CR 11

Male Human Thinking Zombie Gladiator 10

NE Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Human)

Init: +7; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft.; Listen +4, Spot +17

Aura: -

Languages: Classic Elven, Common, Ulyanese

AC: 23; touch 13, flat-footed 20; Improved Uncanny Dodge

(+3 Dex, +4 Nat, +1+5 armor)

hp 65 (10 HD; 10d12+10)

Resistances: Cold 10, Electricity 10; **Spell Resistance:** 22

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** **Stench, Turn Submission (-4; as 6 HD)**, Vulnerability to Blessed Elements

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +10, Will +3

Speed: 30 ft.

Melee: Alhulak +17 (1d6+7; 20/x3) or Claw +16 (1d4+7) or **Bite** +16 (1d8+7)

Full Melee: Alhulak +17/+12 (1d6+7; 20/x3) and **Bite** +11 (1d8+4)

Ranged: Zerka +13 (1d8+7; 18-20/x2)

Full Ranged: Zerka +13/+8 (1d8+7; 18-20/x2)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft. (10 ft. w/ Alhulak)

Base Attack: +10/+5; **Grapple:** +16

Combat Options: Cleave, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Disease (DC 19), Gladiatorial Performance, Improved Feint, Mercy, No Mercy, Power Attack

Combat Gear: Alhulak +1, Chitin Breastplate +1, Zerka x5.

Abilities: Str 22, Dex 16, Con --, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 18
SQ: Armor Optimization, Darkvision 60 ft., **Enhanced Ability (+1 dmg)**, Gray Toughness 1, Improved Uncanny Dodge, Resistances, Skills, **Spell Resistance, Stench, Turn Submission**, Undead Traits, Uncanny Dodge, Vulnerability to Blessed Elements.

Feats: Cleave, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Cahulak, Net, Zerka)^B, Improved Feint^B, Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Strike^B, Power Attack.

Skills: Balance +7, Bluff +17(+5), Climb +9, Diplomacy +8, Intimidate +19, Jump +11, Listen +4, Perform +17, Search +6, Sense Motive +17(+5), Spot +17, Tumble +11.

Possessions: 16,000cp or Combat Gear plus: Belt of Strength +2, Cloak of Charisma +2, Gloves of

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Dexterity +2, Potion-Orb of *Blur* (CL 3rd), Psionic Tattoo of *Force Screen* (ML 1st) x2.

Arena Guile: Starting at 2nd level, you add one-half your gladiator level (round down) as a bonus to all Bluff and Sense Motive checks that relate directly to melee combat.

Armor Optimization: At 5th level, 10th, 15th, and 20th level, choose one of the following benefits which applies whenever you are wearing any armor you are proficient with:

- +1 bonus to AC.
- Armor is treated as one category lighter (e.g. medium armor is treated as light armor).

Gladiatorial Performance: Once per day per gladiator level, you can use your talents to affect enemies and allies. Each ability requires both a minimum gladiator level and a minimum number of ranks in the Perform skill to qualify.

Starting a gladiatorial performance effect is a standard action unless otherwise stated. Some effects require concentration, which means you must take a standard action each round to maintain the ability.

- **Combat Stance:** A gladiator with 3 or more ranks in Perform can assume a combat stance, showing off to spectators and displaying a warning to opponents. You receive a +2 competence bonus to AC against the first attack made against you within 5 rounds after assuming the stance. At 6th level combat stance can be assumed as a move action, and at 12th level as a swift action.
- **Martial Display:** A gladiator with 3 or more ranks in Perform can entertain the crowd and intimidate enemies with a display of unarmed attacks or weapon prowess. You receive a +2 competence bonus to the first attack roll you make within 5 rounds after ending the martial display. At 6th level martial display can be assumed as a move action, and at 12th level as a swift action.
- **Team Strike:** A gladiator with 3 or more ranks in Perform can distract an enemy so an ally can exploit a vital spot when making a melee attack. Team strike can only be used against an enemy you threaten with a melee weapon. The ally must act on the same initiative as you or before your next turn to gain the benefit of team strike. The ally receives a +1 bonus to hit and inflicts an

additional 1d4 points of damage on the next melee attack against the target. If the enemy moves out of your threat range before your ally attacks, the ally does not receive the benefits of team strike. Creatures immune to sneak attack damage and critical hits are immune to team strike. At 7th level and every six levels thereafter these bonuses increase by +1 to attack and +1d4 to damage (+2 attack and +2d4 damage at 7th, +3 attack and +3d4 at 13th, +4 attack and +4d4 at 19th).

- **Taunt:** A gladiator of 3rd or higher level with 6 or more ranks in Perform can demoralize enemies by verbal ridicule. Enemies must be within 30 feet of the gladiator and capable of hearing you, and you must be able to see your enemies. Each enemy affected suffers a -1 morale penalty to attack and damage rolls, and a -1 morale penalty on saving throws versus charm and fear effects. The effect lasts as long as enemies hear your taunts and for 5 rounds thereafter. At 8th level and every six gladiator levels thereafter, the penalties increase by 1 (-2 at 8th, -3 at 14th and -4 at 20th). Taunt is a mind-affecting ability.
- **Shake Off:** A gladiator of 6th or higher level with 9 or more ranks in Perform can try to end a mind-affecting effect in play on himself or an ally. You shake your head violently to clear your mind, or slap an ally to bring her back to her senses. The recipient of the shake off can reroll a single failed save or opposed skill check (with the same DC as the failed roll) to end a mind-affecting effect. If there is no save or check to avoid the mind-affecting effect, the effect ends automatically.
- **Trick:** A gladiator of 9th or higher level with 12 or more ranks in Perform can temporarily confuse an adversary through the use of ploy and deception. The creature to be tricked must be within 30 feet, able to see and hear you. You must also be able to see the creature. You make an opposed Bluff check (vs. Sense Motive) as a move action. If the creature succeeds on the opposed roll, you cannot attempt to trick that creature again for 24 hours. If its roll fails, the creature becomes dazed (unable to act, but can defend normally) for 1 round. For every three gladiator levels attained beyond 9th, you can target one additional creature with a single use of this ability (two at 12th level, three at 15th, four at 18th).

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Improved Uncanny Dodge (Ex): At 8th level and higher, you can no longer be flanked. This defense denies a rogue the ability to sneak attack you by flanking you, unless the attacker has at least four more rogue levels than you have gladiator levels. If you already have uncanny dodge (see above) from a second class, the levels from all classes that grant uncanny dodge stack to determine the minimum level a rogue must be to flank you.

Mercy: At 1st level, you suffer no penalty to attack rolls when attacking with a weapon to inflict nonlethal damage.

No Mercy: Beginning at 6th level, you can perform a coup de grace as a standard action rather than a full-round action.

Resistance to Cold 10 and Electricity 10 (Ex): A thinking zombie resists cold and electricity attacks.

Turn Submission (Ex): Certain undead individuals have a weaker link to the Gray. The undead is turned or rebuked as if it were 4 HD lower.

Uncanny Dodge (Ex): At 4th level, you retain your Dexterity bonus to AC (if any) even if you are caught flatfooted or struck by an invisible attacker. However, you still lose your Dexterity bonus to AC if immobilized. If you already have uncanny dodge from a different class, you automatically gain improved uncanny dodge (See Appendix) instead.

Vulnerability to Blessed Elements (Ex): A thinking zombie takes half again as much (+50%) damage as normal from blessed elements.



The Pitmaster CR 9

Male Human Fallen Fighter 8

Lawful Evil Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Human, Psionic)

Init +3; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft.; Listen +8, Spot +8

Aura: Despair (10 ft, DC 15), **Fear Aura (60ft, DC 15)**

Languages: Dwarven, Goblin, Ulyanese

AC: 22, touch 13, flat-footed 19

(+3 Dex, +6 Nat, +3 armor)

hp 68 (8d12+16); **Fast Healing 3**

Damage Reduction: 5/magic

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** **Bound to Area (Apodexos arena)**, Code of Honor, **Deterioration**

Saves: Fort +8, Ref +7, Will +4

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee: Greatsword +15 (2d6+8; 19-20/x2)

Full Melee: Greatsword +15/+10 (2d6+8; 19-20/x2)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +8/+3; **Grapple:** +13

Combat Actions: **Brand (3/day)**, Combat Expertise, Cornered Fighter, Create Spawn, Fearsome, Improved Disarm, Improved Trip, Intimidating Presence.

Combat Gear: Greatsword +1 (from *call weaponry*), Studded Leather Armor +1

Psi-Like Abilities: At will - call weaponry *, death knell, deathwatch, mindlink *; 1/day - precognition, recall agony *; ML = HD. The save DCs are Charisma-based.

Abilities: Str 20, Dex 16, Con -, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 13

SQ: **Bound to Area (Apodexos arena)**, Code of Honor, Damage Reduction 5/magic, Darkvision 60 ft., **Deterioration**, **Enhanced Senses**, **Fast Healing**, Gray Toughness 2, Skills, Undead Traits.

Feats: Combat Expertise ^B, Cornered Fighter, Fearsome, Improved Disarm ^B, Improved Trip ^B, Intimidating Presence ^B, Skill Focus (Intimidate), Weapon Focus (Greatsword) ^B.

Skills: Climb +11, Intimidate +21, Jump +11, Knowledge (Warcraft) +12, Listen +8, Search +7, Sense Motive +11, Spot +8.

Possessions: 9,400cp or Combat Gear plus: Belt of Strength +2, Cloak of Resistance +2, Crawling Tattoo of Entangling Ectoplasm (ML 1st) x2; 150cp.

Bound to Area (Su): The undead cannot leave a particular area without weakening its connection to the Gray. The area may range from one room to several square miles. Each day the undead is away, it gains a negative level. When its negative levels equal its HD, the undead is destroyed. If it returns, it recovers 1 negative level per day.

Brand (Su): Up to three times per day, the creature can trace a lasting mark on a creature's skin with its fingers by making a touch attack. This touch deals 1d8 points of damage and inflicts a -2 penalty on any interaction checks the victim makes (such as Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate, and Sense Motive); the brand leaves a disturbing impression on anyone who sees it. Both the damage and penalty are permanent. A remove curse or heal spell removes the brand and its negative effects.

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Code of Honor (Ex): Fallen are bound to follow a code of honor reflecting idealized rules of war. Evil fallen attempt to break or twist codes to avoid getting killed.

Cornered Fighter (feat): You receive a +2 bonus on attack rolls and a +2 bonus to AC when fighting against opponents who flank you.

Create Spawn (Su): A giant, humanoid, or monstrous humanoid slain by a fallen's death knell power rises as fallen after 1d4 rounds. A fallen can have spawn with Hit Dice totaling twice its own.

Despair (Su): Fallen radiate an aura of doom and hopelessness, causing creatures within 10 ft. to make a Will save (DC 10 + ½ fallen's HD + fallen's Cha modifier). Creatures that fail are shaken. Whether or not the save is successful, that creature cannot be affected again by the same undead's aura for 24 hours. Fallen can suppress or reactivate this ability as a standard action in order to achieve surprise in close quarters.

Deterioration (Ex): Only corporeal undead may have this weakness. The undead's body deteriorates rapidly unless the undead applies special preserving oils. Without this oil, its skin becomes dry and flaky, and its bones snap with heavy exertion. Each day the undead fails to apply one ounce of the oil, it takes a cumulative -2 penalty to Dexterity. At 0 Dexterity, the undead becomes paralyzed. For each day it receives oil thereafter, it regains 2 points of Dexterity. This oil costs the undead 100 Cp per ounce.

Fear Aura (Su): Creatures in a 60-foot radius that look at the undead must make a Will save. Creatures with fewer than 5 HD that fail their save become panicked. Creatures with fewer HD than the undead that fail their save become shaken. Whether or not the save is successful, that creature cannot be affected again by the same undead's aura for 24 hours.

Fearsome (feat): You can use your Strength modifier instead of your Charisma modifier on Intimidate checks. Additionally, you receive a +2 bonus on Intimidate checks.

Intimidating Presence (feat): You can demoralize (PH 76) a number of opponents per round equal to your Charisma modifier. Normally, you can demoralize only a single opponent per round.



Yalak CR 6

Male Human Fael Psychic Warrior 6

Neutral Evil Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Human, Psionic)

Init: +1; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +6, Spot +6

Aura: -

Languages: Classic Dwarven, Ulyanese

AC: 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14

(+1 Dex, +4 Nat)

hp 51 (6d12 +12);

Damage Reduction: 5/magic

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Phobia (being scratched by claws)

Saves: Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +4

Speed: 30 ft (6 squares)

Melee: Greatclub +7 (1d10+4) or Slam +7 (1d6+3) or Bite +7 (2d6+3; 18-20/x3)

Full Melee: 2x Slam +7 (1d6+3) and Bite +2 (2d6+1; 18-20/x3)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +4; **Grapple:** +7

Combat Actions: Power Attack, Psionic Meditation (Move action), Psionic Weapon

Combat Gear: Obsidian Greatclub * (*Items possessed only when in the arena.)

Psychic Warrior Powers (ML 6th, PSP: 11+6+9, DC 12 + power level):

2nd: animal affinity, hustle, prowess

1st: expansion, inertial armor, offensive precognition

Spell-Like Abilities: At will - *deeper darkness*; CL 6th.

Abilities: Str 16, Dex 12, Con -, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 12

SQ: Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60 ft., *Deeper Darkness*, *Enduring Focus* (recover the stash of treasure he hid before the Champions' armies attacked), Gray Toughness 2, Maw, Skills, Undead Traits.

Feats: Power Attack, Psionic Body ^B, Psionic Meditation ^B, Psionic Talent (2+3+4) x3, Psionic Weapon ^B.

Skills: Climb +9, Concentration +10, Jump +9, Knowledge (Psionics) +4, Listen +6, Search +8, Sense Motive +6, Spot +6.

Possessions: none (-1 CR)

Enduring Focus (Su): The undead's life force is tied to a focus, either an object or an unfulfilled task. As long as this object (usually called a phylactery) is intact or

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the task unfinished, the undead cannot be permanently killed; it reforms 1d100 days after its apparent death. The phylactery has the hardness and hit points of a normal object of its kind.

Killing the undead in the Gray prevents it from returning from destruction.

Phobia (Ex): The undead is terrified of a particular object or creature and flees from it as though affected by the aversion power. If the object of the phobia is an individual or a physical object, the undead prefers not to approach within 30 feet of it. If it is a word, the undead tries not to utter it; if it is an action, the undead does not willingly attempt to perform it; and if it is an event, the undead does not willingly attend it. The undead takes reasonable steps to avoid the object of its aversion, but will not put itself in jeopardy by doing so.

If the undead is forced into taking an action it has an aversion to, it takes a -2 penalty on any attack rolls, ability checks, or skill checks involved.



Zombie Bugdead Domestic Soldier Kank CR3

NE Large Undead

Init: -1; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft., Tremorsense 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0.

Aura: -

Languages: -

AC: 14; touch 8, flat-footed 14 (-1 size, -1 Dex, +6 natural)

hp 13 (2 HD; 2d12)

Damage Reduction: 3/metal; **Resistance:** Fire 5

Immunities: Cold, Undead Traits

Saves: Fort +0, Ref -1, Will +3

Speed: 40 ft. (8 squares)

Melee: Bite +5 (1d8+7 plus poison)

Full Melee: Bite +5 (1d8+7 plus poison)

Space: 10 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +1; **Grapple:** +10

Combat Options: Improved Grab, Poison (DC 11)

Abilities: Str 20, Dex 9, Con -, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 1

SQ: Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60 ft., Immunity to Cold and Electricity, Resistance to Fire 5, Tremorsense 60 ft., Undead Traits.

Feats: -

Skills: -

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a zombie bugdead kank must hit with its bite attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 11, initial and secondary damage 1d6 Str. The save DC is Constitution-based.



Zombie Slave CR 1/2

Human Commoner Zombie

NE Medium Undead

Init: -1; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0

Aura: -

Languages: -

AC: 11; touch 9, flat-footed 11 (-1 Dex, +2 Nat)

hp 16 (2 HD; 2d12)

Damage Reduction: 5/slashing

Immune: Undead Traits

Saves: Fort +0, Ref -1, Will +3

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares; can't run)

Melee: Slam +2 (1d6+1) or Club +2 (1d6+1)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +1; **Grapple:** +2

Combat Options: Single Actions Only

Abilities: Str 12, Dex 8, Con -, Int 1 (- outside the Dead Lands), Wis 10, Cha 1

SQ: Damage Reduction, Darkvision, Undead Traits.

Feats: -

Skills: -

Single Actions Only (Ex): Zombies have poor reflexes and can perform only a single move action or attack action each round. A zombie can move up to its speed and attack in the same round, but only if it attempts a charge.

Appendix 2: New Items

Crown of Undead Domination

Crowns of undead domination (or *control crowns*, as Wujarrt's arena staff are currently calling them) are paired sets of headgear that allow complete control of an undead creature by another being. The *control crowns* are always created in linked pairs - a master crown and a slave crown. Master crowns are usually well made of intricately carved obsidian and made to resemble the type of crown a king or other noble would wear. Slave crowns are almost always simple circlets of unadorned obsidian.

Crowns of domination grant direct and complete control of the undead being wearing a slave crown to the individual wearing the linked master crown. It is only effective in controlling creatures of the undead type.

A wearer of a slave crown may make a Will save (DC 23) to resist its control when the crown is first put on. On a failed save, they may not resist the control exercised by the wearer of the corresponding master crown.

The wearer of a master crown gains direct and complete control of the actions of the wearer of the linked slave crown, as long as both crowns are within 270 feet. The control is instantaneous, allowing the wearer to see and experience events through the senses of the undead creature wearing the slave crown.

Master crowns may be removed at any time by anyone, including their wearer. Slave crowns, once worn, are almost impossible to remove by normal means while



the wearer is still animate, requiring either a *remove curse* spell or the wearer's destruction to remove. A slave crown may also be removed by the wearer of the linked master crown. If either a master crown or slave crown is destroyed, the remaining linked crown will become useless until a new crown of the appropriate type can be created and linked (part of the creation process).

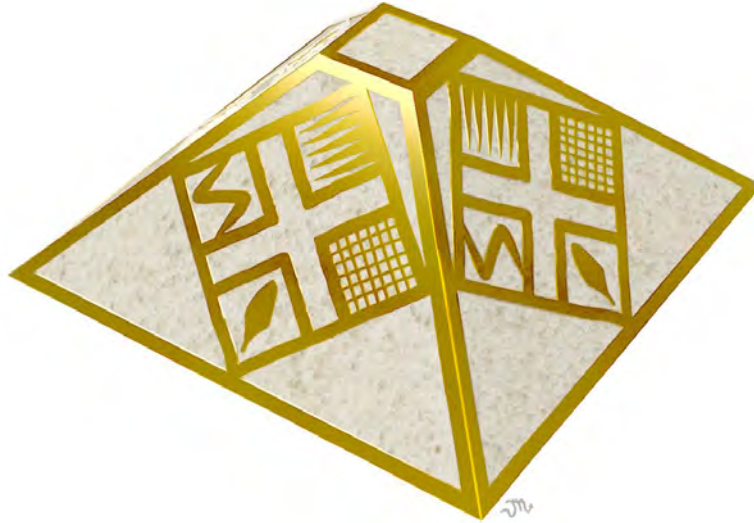
Strong enchantment and necromancy; CL 17th; Craft Wondrous Item, *control undead*, *dominate monster*; Price 120,000 gp.



Adventures in the Dead Lands

An Ancient Auction

Tales of the Unbound, part 4



A Dark Sun 3.5e adventure module for four 6th-level characters

Guinswai the Forbidding is in possession of a powerful item from before the fall of Nagarvos and is auctioning it off to the highest bidder, and Qwith wants the PCs to get it for her, one way or another.

Credits

WRITING

Adam Cieszlak, Jack Meyer

EDITING

Geoff LiCalzi, Stuart Lynch

IMAGES/GRAPHICS

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Introduction

An Ancient Auction is a short D&D adventure for four 6th-level player characters (PCs). This scenario is designed for unbound characters (see the Unbound template in Appendix 5) and is the fourth adventure in the four-part Tales of the Unbound mini-arc, but can easily be used as a stand-alone adventure. Consult the Scaling the Adventure sidebar for ways to modify the scenario for higher or lower levels of play.

Qwith, still incensed about the damage that Deshentent agents (perhaps even the PCs) did to her city during her festival (detailed in the adventure *Unbound and Unleashed*), has decided to leverage Deshentent's agents (the party) to act as her expendable pawns. Their task: attend an auction being held by Guinswai the Forbidding in the City of a Thousand Dead and recover the powerful artifact he has recently rediscovered, and is now offering in a silent auction.

Developer's notes

Not only is this the last adventure in this book, it was also the last adventure we made for this series. In spite of all the adventures we had made all over the Dead Lands, we belatedly realized we had never set a single adventure inside The City of a Thousand Dead. That didn't feel right, so we tried to figure out what an urban Dead Lands adventure would look like.

The result is this roleplaying interaction-heavy heist caper, like "Ocean's Twelve" if it was run with Vampire: the Masquerade. -JM

Preparation

The DM will need the 3rd edition revised D&D core rulebooks, including the *Player's Handbook*, the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*, as well as the *Expanded Psionics Handbook*. This adventure also uses material from *Faces of the Dead Lands*, *Secrets of the Dead Lands*, *Terrors of the Dead Lands*, and the *Dark Sun 3.5 conversion* rulebook from Athas.org, but all necessary rules are already included.

Consult Appendix 4 for additional rules for communicating with the residents of, and surviving in, the Dead Lands.

Adventure Background

During the Green Age, the city of Nagarvos stood where the City of a Thousand Dead now stands. Destroyed in the Cleansing Wars, the remains of Nagarvos were buried when the Navel was built atop its ruins and submerged deep beneath the obsidian when the Obsidian Tide struck. Today, the ruins of Nagarvos still exist as the catacombs of the City of a Thousand Dead.

Guinswai the Forbidding has spent King's Ages digging through the catacombs, both as part of his never-ending research and to supply his brisk trade in ancient relics. Menacing in appearance but surprisingly amiable, Guinswai leads his own small faction of undead, maintaining good relations with the larger factions to facilitate his constant archaeological digs into the city's past. Recently, he has stumbled upon a very interesting secret - during the Siege of Nagarvos, the Psionic Temple (alongside other desperate and powerful defenders of the city) participated in a secret project to create their own version of a Champion using experimental psionics and magics. While Guinswai did not learn the fate of the test subject, he did discover the general location of the sealed laboratory, the power source they used (the Keystone), and most importantly, how to access the laboratory.

The Keystone was the power source of the Psionic Temple's Guardian's Altar, which was part of the lost ritual used to facilitate the creation of Undying Guardians (meorties). Composed of petrified coral, chased with gold, and bearing bygone runes said to represent the Elements, the Keystone is in fact a separate and even more ancient relic of great power, rumored to date back to the Blue Age. Removed from the Guardian's Altar during the Siege of Nagarvos, the Keystone was used in a desperate ritual in an attempt to counter the power of Rajaat's Champions.

The experimental ritual was a failure, but the experiment's test subject, Rubza'if, survived the process as a hideous monstrosity, constantly wracked by pain. Still sealed within his Transformation Vault, Rubza'if's only companions are his caretaker Duk'kneq and the raked spirit of his mother, Nafrai. Driven mad

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by his constant torment, trapped with no hope of escape, and too powerful to expire on his own, Rubza'if - now known as Rubza'if-in-Pain - seeks only to end his torment and suffering.

Guinswai's true goal, the reason for his excavations, is to find information that will aid him in his dream to rejuvenate Athas, and he believes such a secret lies within the Transformation Vault. Knowing only that something terrible and powerful might lurk in the Transformation Vault, and that he possesses the means to open it, Guinswai has decided to hold a special auction to covertly acquire powerful allies to aid him in the exploration the Vault; if the Keystone is the price for such knowledge and allies, then so be it.

To host this auction, Guinswai has traded a previous favor to the Champions' Daughters, one of the more powerful and militant factions of the City of a Thousand Dead, for the temporary use of a villa they recently claimed from a former tenant.

Overview

In the City of a Thousand Dead, Guinswai the Forbidding is hosting an auction for a powerful artifact he has recently discovered called the Keystone. There are many factions who would kill to get their hands on this relic for study, and Guinswai is selling it to the highest bidder, having retained the Champions' Daughters as security.

Qwith contacts the PCs (though the Necrologium) to leverage them into helping her obtain the Keystone. She is still angry with them for the damage caused in a recent adventure, but she has decided they are more useful to her alive than dead...for now. The PCs must travel to the City of a Thousand Dead, represent Qwith in the auction, and acquire the Keystone through whatever means necessary.

The PCs must either win the auction, negotiating or jockeying with representatives of various City factions along the way, or somehow break into Guinswai's storage vault and steal the item. What no one knows is

that Guinswai only possesses the items which grant access to the sealed laboratory-turned-crypt where the Keystone lies, rather than the Keystone itself. What the PCs don't know, and Guinswai only suspects, is what terrible creature awaits them inside the Transformation Vault; within, Rubza'if-in-Pain has remained locked away with his madness (and the Keystone) for millennia...

Adventure Hooks

This adventure is intended as a follow-up to the adventure *Other Body Experiences* (part three of the Tales of the Unbound mini-arc), but can easily be used by parties that have not played through that adventure.

- While the introduction seems to assume that PCs have already played through the adventure Unbound and Unleashed, if they have not or are otherwise not affiliated with the Necrologium, then Qwith has, in a pique of rage, assumed that the PCs are in league with the Necrologium and blamed both groups for the events that occurred during Unbound and Unleashed. Rhokhan, well aware of Qwith's power and temper, suggests they both make the best of the situation and go along with it, hoping both the Necrologium and the PCs might profit from (or at least walk away with their unives intact) the successful completion of the Duchess' task.
- If the PCs work for the Necrologium and were successful in their last mission (see *Other Body Experiences*), having returned with a matched slave and control crown, then Rhokhan continues to be pleased with the PCs' performance and requests their aid on this next mission.
- If the PCs work for the Necrologium but failed to successfully return with a matched slave and control crown (see *Other Body Experiences*), then Rhokhan has decided to give the PCs one final chance before turning them over to Qwith as scapegoats, who will likely inflict unimaginable suffering upon them.

Adventures in the Dead Lands

Scaling the Adventure

An Ancient Auction is designed for a party of four 6th-level adventurers, but it can be easily modified to present an appropriate challenge for parties of different sizes or levels.

Consider adapting the adventure for PCs of average levels 4 to 8 by adding effective positive or negative levels to the creatures in each encounter to change their effective Challenge Rating. A creature takes the following penalties/bonuses for each positive/negative level it has gained:

- +/-1 on all skill checks and ability checks.
- +/-1 on attack rolls and saving throws.
- +/-5 hit points.
- +/-1 effective level (whenever the creature's level is used in a die roll or calculation, reduce it by one for each negative level).
- If the creature casts spells, she gains/loses one spell slot of her highest-level spells. (If she has more than one spell at her highest level, she chooses which she gains/loses.) In addition, when she next prepares spells or regains spell slots, she gets one more/less spell slot at her highest spell level. If the creature is a manifester, she gains/loses enough power points to manifest her highest-level power once.

Part I: An Offer They Cannot Refuse

1) The Missive (EL -)

The PCs are summoned by Rhokhan. When they arrive in her chamber, she holds up a small black sphere and speaks to the PCs.

"This has arrived via messenger from Shadowmourn today."

She places the sphere on the table and touches it. When she does, a projected image appears in the air, filling the room.

Before you stands an image of the Duchess Qwith - she does not look friendly. She is standing in a circular throne room, all made of solid black obsidian.

"Your silly little spy circus has caused me and my city a lot of nuisance, but I suppose you're proud of that.

"I know where you are. I could simply destroy you now and be rid of your nuisance once and for all, but I have a use for you: in ten days, Guinswai the Forbidding will be auctioning off an item in the City of a Thousand Dead - the Keystone from the Psionic Temple's Guardian's Altar. To compensate me for your actions, you will retrieve this item and bring it to me.

"I have already sent notice that you will be present at the bidding on my behalf. As collateral, I have an item which will very likely win the silent auction - a training spellbook from the Pristine Tower. If this fails to secure the Keystone, then you must acquire it for me in your own way."

"I'll see you soon, one way or another. The auction begins at midnight in three days, you'd better hurry. Oh, and enjoy the auction."

With that, Qwith waves her hand dismissively, and the image fades.

When the room returns to normal, Rhokhan says:

"Yes, I watched the message before you arrived. I think we - you - have no choice but to work with Qwith..."

"...But that doesn't mean we cannot make the most of this situation.

"Our last infiltrators in the City of a Thousand Dead were destroyed a few years ago, and the factions have since stepped up security. So during your visit, I'd like you to plant some items among those faction members attending the auction. These will aid in our ability to gather covert intelligence on those factions."

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"As usual, you will have the support and resources of Anzaias' archive and the Armorer to prepare you for this task. We shall treat it as if it were any other mission."

Development: With that, Rhokhan summons Anzaias to lead the party out of her study.

2) Briefing and Supplies (EL -)

As they are walking, Anzaias answers any questions the PCs might have about the mission or their destination

What Anzaias Knows:

- The City of a Thousand Dead, or Nagarvos as it used to be known, is an ancient metropolis which had existed long before even the Age of Magic began.
- Nagarvos was the first target of Rajaat's Champions, and its siege is considered to be the first battle of what would eventually become known as the Cleansing Wars. Many believe it was chosen as a target specifically because it was considered to be such a beacon of tolerance and innovation.
- After the city was razed to the ground, Qwith and Rajaat himself built a research complex atop the smoking ruins, which they dubbed "the Navel". Our mighty Vizier was once a part of that organization.
- The Navel spent many centuries investigating extradimensional sources of power and had built one of the few variable planar gates the world has ever seen. An assault on the Navel broke this gate and unleashed the Obsidian Tide that destroyed everyone and everything in this land.
- As the undead rose again, the city was rebuilt out of obsidian blocks by the very Guardians who died defending it. I suppose they could not bear to exist without the city's presence.
- Inside those walls, different parts of the forces originally involved in the siege (both defenders and invaders) have long since formed into a myriad of factions, each with its own...complicated relationships with the others. But the largest factions have learned to cooperate in defense of the city from their common enemy: the bugdead swarms who have regularly assaulted the Dead Lands for king's ages now.

- As you would expect from a city with so many factions and powerful entities, there are also many independent agents with their own agendas. Guinswai the Forbidding is one of them. Rather than getting involved in the politics and warfare between the various factions, he has found a niche for himself as a trader in things from the past.
- Guinswai has a talent for finding his way into places buried for millennia. He trades not in money, but in secrets and relics.
- Perhaps because of that access and his uncanny ability to discover things no one knew still existed, Guinswai's residence (wherever it may be at a given time) seems to be considered neutral territory by the major city factions.
- Who else would be at this auction? Good question. If it's a special auction, then it's probably something that would attract the attention of the most powerful factions:
 - The Defenders, one of the three largest factions which make up the city's standing army, such as it is. They used to be the city's garrison.
 - Rajaat's Fugitives, which include the Tetrarchs, former rulers of the city who have become part of this faction of preservers and psions.
 - The Descendants of the Chosen - the former researchers of the Navel, who have now formed several sub-factions of their own.
 - The Champions Daughters, another of the factions that make up the City's standing army. They were once part of the invading force.
- If the auction truly is at midnight in three days, as Qwith claims, you have only a few hours to spare if you are to arrive in time.
- We do not have any recent information on Guinswai or the activities of any of the other factions since losing our agents in the City. We're hoping your status as representatives of Qwith will give you access where our other agents have failed.

As the PCs are leaving, Anzaias says "One more detail you need to be aware of. We have no idea what the other bidders are offering. We know we need to win that bid, so I would suggest you find out what you're up against, and if need be...persuade them to withdraw their bids."

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The Armorer

When the PCs visit the Armorer, he provides them with a selection of *screy* target devices. All of them have been prepared using the same magical and psionic effects to make them easier to detect and *screy* upon, and each has the same type of markings on their surfaces.

- A wooden wedge, 2 inches long by 1 inch wide, ½ inch at thickest point
- A black pearl, ½ inch in diameter
- An obsidian disk, 3 inches in diameter
- A strip of leather, 6 inches long by ½ inch wide
- A molar from an ogre's mouth, 1 inch wide by 1 ½ inches long

The PCs may take up to five of these items, in any combination they wish. The Armorer also informs the PCs that they are authorized to go fully armed and armored for a fight.

Development: When the PCs are finished with the Armorer, proceed to Part 2 - Lead-up to the Auction.

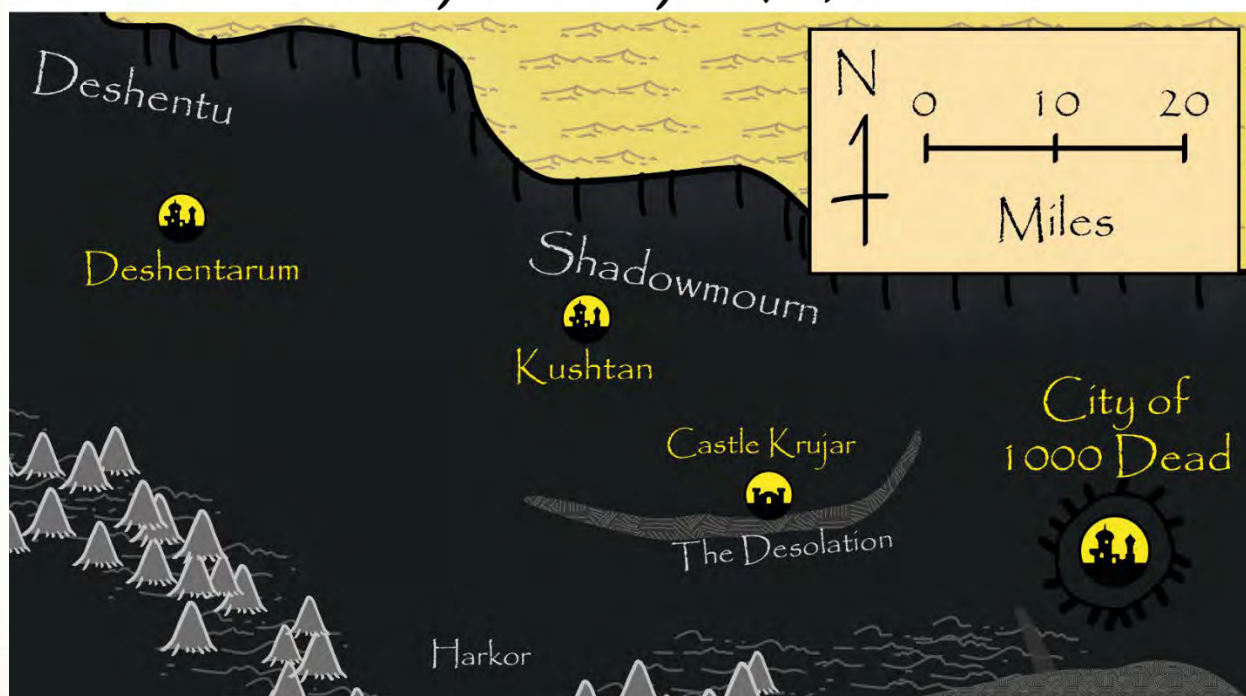
DM's Option - Agents of Gretch

An Ancient Auction is designed for a party of four 6th level characters, but with some additional setup, the adventure can be used for a party of four 13th level characters.

Here, Gretch, once again acting through his double-agent Anzatias, tasks the Necrologium's agents (the PCs) with serving his goals rather than those of Deshentu. Gretch wishes to collect the Keystone, both for its potential usefulness in the creation of meorties and to simply spite Qwith. Anzatias' instructions for the PCs are:

- As before, retrieve the Keystone by any means necessary.
- Deliver it to Gretch, preferably without raising Qwith's or Rhokhan's suspicions until after it has been delivered.

CENTRAL DEAD THRONES



Part 2: Lead-up to the Auction

The PCs must travel from Deshentu to the City of a Thousand Dead, navigate the City's labyrinthine streets and politics, and make their way to Guinswai's Villa.

A) To Guinswai's Villa

To attend the auction, the PCs must first travel to the City of a Thousand Dead and seek out Guinswai's villa.

3) Border Tensions (EL -)

Since Qwith is sponsoring the journey to the City of a Thousand Dead, the PCs will find a (non-optional) military escort from Shadowmourn waiting for them on the border of Deshentu.

As you travel down the road, you find an odd sight awaiting you at the border – a full squad of Shadowmourn's cavalry holding as still as statues on their side of the border, studiously ignoring the Deshenten troops standing toe-to-toe with them on the near side of the border.

As you approach the border, you can see both groups of soldiers are visibly agitated being so close to an enemy force. When you finally come to a stop, the two opposing squads remain facing each other in a prolonged and stony silence.

The Shadowmourn cavalry sergeant has been ordered to collect the PCs and provide them escort across Shadowmourn's lands, but old habits die hard. He and his troops are braced for a conflict, but he will not move or say anything until the PCs speak.

If the PCs communicate with the Shadowmourn troops in any way, the cavalry sergeant will lean forward on his crodru and say "I have been ordered to provide you with this - a spellbook penned by the Warbringer himself - and to escort you across Her Worshipfulness the Duchess' lands."

At this point, the Deshenten sergeant glances back over his shoulder at the PCs and says simply: "Orders, sir?"

Development: The party could easily pick a fight here, as any harsh words are likely to cause violence, but such an act would accomplish nothing, and would be costly for both sides. If they do so, the PCs cause a diplomatic incident between Shadowmourn and Deshentu (which will surely displease both Qwith and Rhokhan), and each PC takes 2d6 damage in the resulting scuffle. Also, at the DM's discretion, the party might need to deal with hostile encounters as they travel through Shadowmourn and the lands surrounding the City of a Thousand Dead.

If the PCs accept the escort, the journey to the City of a Thousand Dead is an uneventful one, though it does offer ample opportunity for roleplaying.

4) The City Gates (EL -)

Once the party arrives at the gates of the City of a Thousand Dead, read the following:

All who dwell in the Dead Lands have heard stories of the immense fortified city known as the City of a



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Thousand Dead, but the sight of the place is always striking. Even at this distance, it almost looks as if the surrounding landscape is a crater inside which a city has been built.

As you approach, the scale of the walls and the city itself gradually becomes clearer. The outermost of the several layers of city walls are a staggering 50 feet high, and feel even higher with the ground sloping upward to the City from every direction.

If the PCs came here with an escort, they will stop about 2000 feet away from the city, wave the PCs towards the city, turn, and leave the PCs to enter the City of One Thousand Dead on their own.

There are a few other small groups joining a queue behind you as you approach the City. It is only as you approach closer that you see the entrance to the City itself, a narrow gap in the imposing outer obsidian wall surrounded by defensive fortifications. Beyond this gap lies another wall, and another, and another - each with a narrow space protected by guard towers and other fortifications you must pass through. At the fourth wall, you finally come to a long narrow space built into the obsidian beneath the inner wall.

As you enter this wide opening (which is just under 15 feet high once you're inside, and seemingly carved cleanly out of the obsidian itself), the passage narrows quickly and takes a sharp turn to the left. You approach a guard station manned by ogres in full ancient armor. Their short, curved horns appear to be polished and sharpened, and they wield impressively maintained greatclubs with an insignia matching their armor.

The closest one speaks: *"State your business!"*

It is up to the PCs where they say they're going. All the PCs need to do is tell the guards which of the factions they will be visiting, and the guard will direct them to the right location:

- Guinswai: "Yeh, we knew you were coming. Surface level, Eastern District near the south end of the mid-district wall. Look for the ball turret."
- The Defenders: The guard will do a double-take, then look at the other two, one of whom will shrug. He'll then turn his eye to the PCs, sizing them up: *"Now why would you be coming to visit little ol' us? Fine... Western District, turn north on the street just before the marketplace, head north along the*

wall towards the dome. At the compound gate ask for Ramli."

- The Descendants of the Chosen: "Those arrogant, destructive fools? Fine... Campus is in the Northern District, due north of the Sunflash Tower, past the edge of The Defenders Compound. Can't bloody miss it."
- Rajaat's Fugitives: "Bang in the middle of the city. Look for the Sunflash Tower. But don't look too hard at it, especially if it's sparkling..." The guards laugh as the PCs leave.
- The Champion's Daughters: The guards immediately begin to glower, any previous smiles disappearing. *"Eastern District. Just go there and they'll find you. Good luck..."*

Development: If the PCs don't have a good answer, the guard will chastise them for wasting his time and send the PCs away unless they can do some fast-talking to get into the city (DC 20 Bluff or Diplomacy check). Worse, each round they spend stalling (or arguing with the gate guard) will result in the groups behind them getting increasingly impatient with the PCs and shouting and yelling at them, causing even more guards to arrive. This will continue until the PCs disengage and leave.

Note that there is more than one entrance to the city, so if the PCs fail to gain entry to the City here, they could try another entrance.

5) In the City of a Thousand Dead (EL -)

The PCs are within the City of a Thousand Dead and free to do as they please, though they have a limited amount of time to do so.

Finally past the gate guards, you follow the long tunnel lined with what look like murder holes along the roof and side walls, eventually leading to a set of heavily reinforced doors that currently stand open. Once through the doors, you find yourself within the bustling metropolis that is the City of a Thousand Dead.

There are many things to see and many places to visit in the City of a Thousand Dead, but unfortunately, the party has less than a single day before the auction begins.

If the PCs didn't get directions to Guinswai's villa from the guards, they'll be in for an awkward time, as the

Adventures in the Dead Lands

locals aren't particularly friendly or especially talkative. For each random local resident approached for directions, roll a d20 for the result:

Random Bystander knowledge of Guinswai

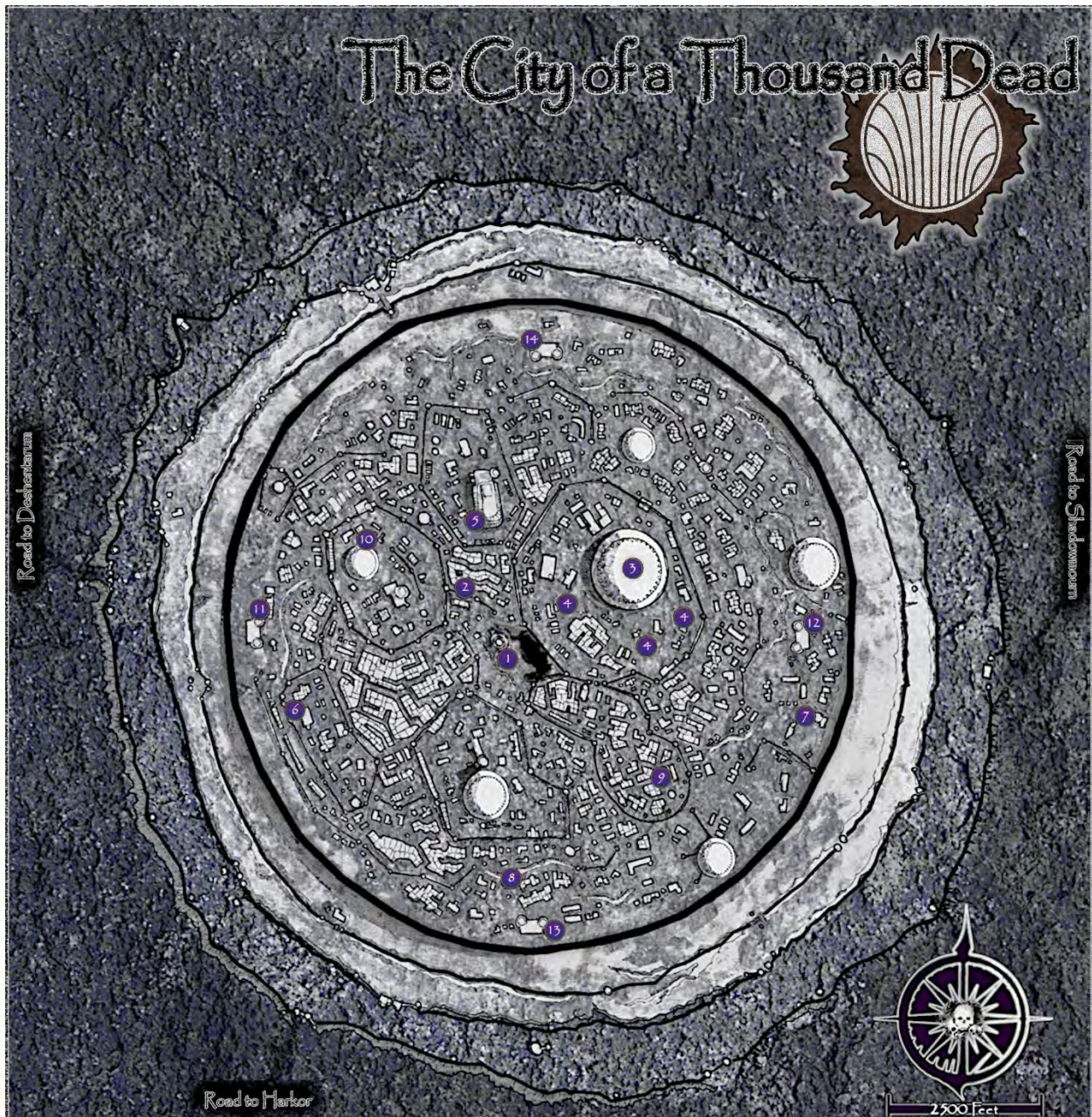
1: "You can't have it! It's mine, mine I say! Get away from me!" The resident screams and berrates the party, attracting the attention of the local militia (use two of Volldrager's Guards, see Appendix #1) within 1d6+3 rounds.

2-5: "Who is Gwin-swine?"

6-10: "Ok, Gwinnie. Yeah, I know her. You're going to want to go through the marketplace, go left, take the first right, then left again, and look for the tattooist market stall. From there, go right, straight on to the fountain, then left again, etc..."

11-15: "Oh, that weird artifact guy? He's all over the place. Never dwells in one place for very long, I hear. Maybe he's in the Eastern District?"

16-19: "Yeah, I've heard of Guinswai. He stole me late aunt's cousin's trinket and sold it to the Hungry



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Ghosts! Last I heard he was in the Eastern District palling around with the Daughters!”

20: “Oh yeah, bloody Guinswai! He’s a grim faced one he is, face like a zombified tari’s backside! Yeah, I heard from a friend he was palling around with the Champion’s Daughters. That would mean he would be in the Eastern District, somewhere near the mid-district wall.”

6) The Eastern District (EL 13)

Champion’s Daughters Recruit (CR 10) 3x

When the PCs reach the Eastern District, there is a 20% cumulative chance each minute that a patrol of Champion’s Daughters will spot them and immediately move to confront them.

As you move amongst the abandoned and unfinished structures in the City of a Thousand Dead’s eastern district, you begin to experience a growing feeling of being watched. At first, it is simply a nagging feeling of discomfort, but after a few minutes you are occasionally catching glimpses of figures in nearby allies and behind buildings, keeping pace with and watching your group.

As you round a blind corner, you are suddenly confronted by a shapely female zhen in a masked helmet and chitin armor. “Halt. You are trespassing in the territory of the Champion’s Daughters.” As she speaks, two more female figures step into view

behind your group, one to the left and one to the right.

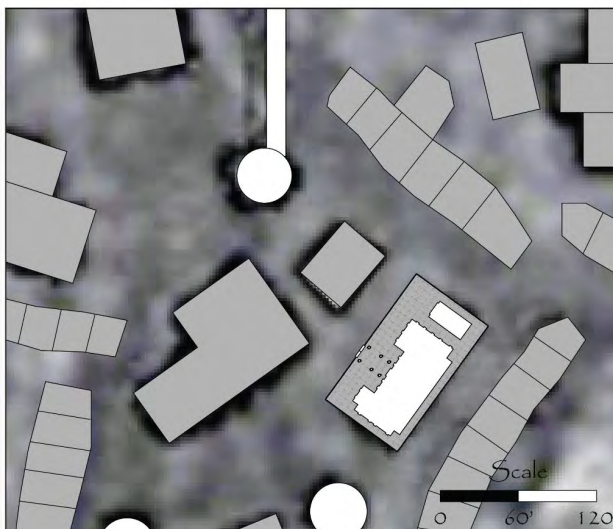
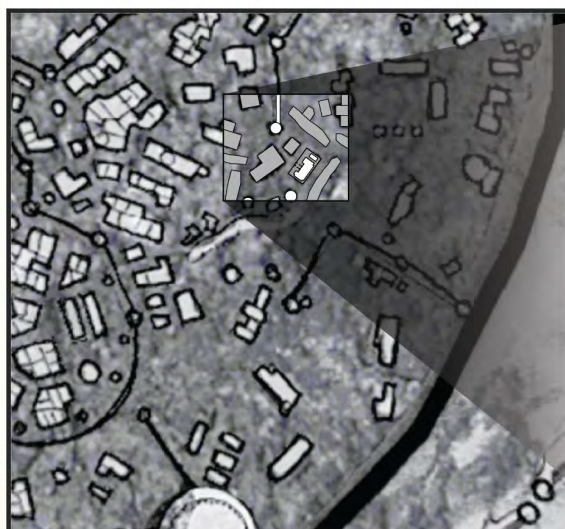
Recently, the Champion’s Daughters have begun accepting new recruits to supplement their forces. These recruits, like the Daughters themselves, must be attractive human female zhen, and are allowed to prove their worth doing menial tasks (like patrolling the fringes of the Daughters’ territory and acting as enforcers for people like Guinswai). The Daughters confronting the PCs are some of these recruits.

Tactics: If not directly attacked, the recruits will surround the PCs to prevent escape and demand to know their business in the district. If the PCs do not respond or respond with force, the Daughters attack with the intention of subduing, capturing, and hauling the PCs off to their own dungeon.

If combat breaks out, the Daughters recruits will use their mobility to their advantage, staying out of melee range as much as possible and rushing in to attack casters and manifesters when they can. Once mired in melee combat, the Daughters will happily wade in, striking for maximum effect with their fists, bites, and shield slams. Desperate to prove themselves, the Champion’s Daughters recruits will fight to the death.

Development: If the PCs mention at any point they are here to see Guinswai, the Daughters will stop any hostilities and one of the Daughters (the highest ranking one present) will curse Guinswai’s name aloud: “Uuggghh, that ugly prig! Where does he get off inviting trespassers into our territory?” and then instruct

REGION AND NEIGHBORHOOD MAPS - GUINSWAI’S VILLA



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to her subordinates to escort the PCs to Guinswai immediately.

7) Guinswai's Villa (EL -)

Once the PCs reach the area around Guinswai's villa, read:

After traveling through the massive, nearly empty city, you have found the Eastern District and what must be the mid-district wall. While still dwarfed by the City's massive exterior fortifications, this curtain wall, along with the others like it you've seen throughout the City of a Thousand Dead, rises fifty feet into the air, making them effective local landmarks - as well as neatly separating the City's various districts and feuding factions.

At the southern tip of this wall, a series of large houses with surrounding grounds can be seen. One such building features a round tower with a spherical dome.

If the party avoided violence on the Deshentu/Shadowmourn border, they make excellent time and arrive a few (1d3+1) hours earlier than expected. If the PCs decide to stealthily investigate Guinswai's compound, go to Part 2B: Infiltrating the Compound.

If the PCs decide to proceed through the courtyard (location #1) and into Guinswai's villa, or if they allowed the situation on the Deshentu/Shadowmourn border to erupt into violence, continue:

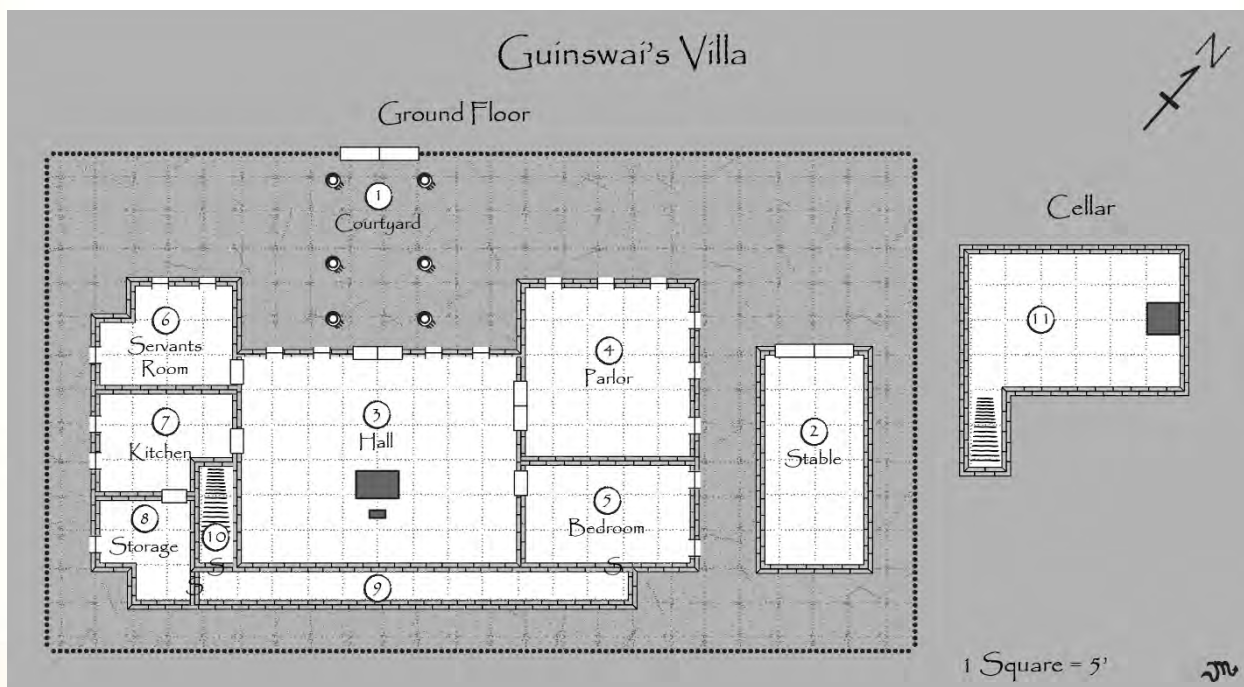
As you move into the courtyard, an emaciated-looking undead steps out of the shadows, bows, and addresses you: "You are representing Shadowmourn, yes? Welcome, we have been told to expect you."

The servant - a namech - leads the PCs into the main reception area of Guinswai's villa. Awaiting them there is Guinswai himself.

Walking through a pair of grand double-doors and into a grand hall, you see three standing figures. To either side stand tall, statuesque female warriors with matching uniforms, including gleaming chitin armor and bronze helmets - these must be some of the City's famed Champions' Daughters.

Between them stands a very unusual looking being. At over seven and a half feet tall, this human zhen seems freakishly tall and lean even for an undead. His face is grotesquely long and looks to have been sculpted of melted wax, and his gangly form is draped in an ancient silvery tunic.

Against such stark and inhuman features, his friendly smile seems weirdly juxtaposed: "Ah, welcome! You've come a long way to join our little event, haven't you? Please come in and join us! I am Guinswai, your host."



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Guinswai leads the party out of the hall (room #3) and into a large parlor room (room #4).

Flanked by his two bodyguards, Guinswai leads you through another set of double doors and into a slightly smaller room with elegantly carved furnishings situated along the edges of the room. *"Welcome to my latest auction house. I recently acquired this fascinating building after the Champions' Daughters evicted the last residents over a disagreement. But this makes for an ideal location for this particular auction, as you shall see..."*

He gestures to the space in which you are standing. *"This room is where our pre-auction reception will be held - there is space here for all the parties and their respective entourages. This way please..."* Guinswai leads you back into the great hall and then through another room. Walking to the room's far wall and pushing on a wall panel, he gestures for you to follow him as an opening in the wall appears, revealing a hidden passage that leads to descending stairs.

After walking down the stairs for quite a while, you find yourselves standing outside what looks like the antechamber of a crypt. Through the doorway you can see an empty-looking room whose floor and walls bear a number of scorch marks. On the far wall, you can see a bronze plate mounted into the wall.

"And here, my dear guests, we have our prize. The winner of tonight's auction will be given access to this vault. I just wanted you all to see how safe and secure the prize is."

If the PCs ask any questions regarding the vault or the protections on its contents, see Encounter #9 - The Vault for further details. Otherwise, continue:

With that, Guinswai leads you back up into the great hall. *"Unless there are any questions, I must take my leave of you..."*

The PCs may find Guinswai is oddly forthcoming in his answers – he is that way with everyone, as he finds it causes the most trouble and opens the choicest opportunities for him. The party will have the chance to ask up to three questions of him before Guinswai is called away by one of his servants to deal with some minor hosting issue.

What Guinswai Knows

- If the PCs ask about his appearance, Guinswai laughs it off: *"Everyone came out differently in the transition to undeath, yes? I'm lucky to only have my*

appearance blighted - I've heard stories about some beings being left in endless torment from their transformation..."

- If asked about the item being auctioned: *"The item being auctioned off is something called the Keystone. It was part of the Psionic Temple of old Nagarvos, and was a tremendously powerful source of energy; the Psionic Temple used it in the creation of 'undying guardians' - meorties. Terribly dangerous in the wrong hands, and even more so in the right hands..."*
- If asked about the other bidders: *"Your competitors are the Descendants of the Chosen, the Tetrarchs from Rajaan's Fugitives, the Defenders, and Volldrager. They'll be here at the party if you wish to meet them..."*
- If asked about the bidding process: *"I'm sorry to hear your mistress hasn't explained how this will work, I will explain: this will be a silent auction; each group will present their offer in turn at the podium while the others watch. We shall verify the truth of the offer with appropriate precautions as it is being presented. After seeing all the offerings, I will announce the winning bid, and after the others depart I will lead the winners down to the vault myself."*
- If asked about the other bids, he smiles and says: *"No, no. I cannot tell you what the others are bidding. I will not know myself until they present it. It's all part of the game..."*
- If the PCs ask about the possibility of violence breaking out: *"Of course there have been fights during my auctions. Why do you think I have security? Since I cannot stop my various prospective clients from threatening or trying to fight each other, I simply make it so their efforts at violence make no difference to the outcome. Eventually, most learn the hard way. Don't worry about violence or destructive magic here, though. These are some of my best clients, and they all know better. Well, the Descendants are a bit of a wild-card, but I believe they all understand the rules now..."*
- If asked about seeing the item itself: *"Hehe, no, we can't risk that kind of access before the auction. No, all bidders will be able to see an image of the item before the bidding begins."*
- If asked about the villa itself: *"This building is not my home, of course. I've merely set up the auction here because of how close it is to a safe place to store the prize. Once my agreement with the Champions' Daughters is over, we will leave."*

Development: After a maximum of three questions have been answered, Guinswai will be approached by one of his servants, who will whisper something in his ear. Guinswai will then say: *"Now if you'll excuse me, I must attend to other matters. I invite you to join my pre-*

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auction reception in the parlor. The reception will begin in a few short _____, and last approximately an hour. The bell calling for the start of the auction will sound promptly at midnight.

Insert “hours” if the PCs avoided conflict on violence on the Deshentu/Shadowmourn border and arrived early; insert “minutes” if the PCs were delayed due to violence on the Deshentu/Shadowmourn border and only arrived on time. If the PCs arrived early, they know they have 1d3+1 hours before midnight.

If the PCs decide to stealthily investigate Guinswai’s compound, go to Part 2B: Infiltrating the Compound. If the PCs wait for the reception to begin, proceed to Part 2C - Introducing The Competition.

B) Infiltrating the Compound

Rather than participating in the auction, the PCs might attempt to sneak into the villa and steal the Keystone (presumably what is stored in the vault).

The compound that Guinswai currently operates out of is a small villa and adjoining stable in a relatively upscale neighborhood.

Guinswai’s villa lies in a neighborhood of similar compounds, each well-built and standing apart from its fellows. Guinswai’s particular villa stands surrounded by a short obsidian fence and is accented by both an outbuilding and a domed second-story turret.

The obsidian fence surrounding Guinswai’s compound is only three feet high. Neighboring buildings are all about thirty to forty feet away and are also less rigorously patrolled than Guinswai’s compound, making them potential places from which to monitor the compound.

Three guards patrol the perimeter of the compound. If the PCs observe the guards to discern their pattern (potentially requiring Bluff, Hide, or Move Silently checks, opposed by the guard’s Sense Motive (+8), Spot (+14), or Listen (+8) checks, as appropriate, to remain unnoticed), they will find that a guard patrol passes by once every two to three rounds (moving at full speed - 60 feet per round). If the PCs instead take their chances without timing out the patrols, they will have a 25% chance of being within detection range of a guard at

any given time they attempt to infiltrate Guinswai’s villa.

The compound’s outbuilding was constructed with the intent of being a stable, but is not currently in use by Guinswai. The patrolling Champion’s Daughters are using it as a bunkhouse, but do not check the outbuilding, making it an excellent potential hideaway for the PCs.

The villa’s windows are all quite similar - open windows (no bars or pane) one foot wide by three feet tall. Small creatures can easily pass through the windows, but Medium-sized creatures must make an Escape Artist check (DC 20) to squeeze through; Large creatures cannot fit through the openings at all. A PC investigating a window must make a Hide check (DC 15) if they wish to avoid being noticed by any inhabitants on the other side of the window.

8) Guard Patrol (EL 10 to EL 13)

Champion’s Daughters Recruit (CR 10) 1x - see Appendix 1

or

Champion’s Daughters Recruit (CR 10) 2x - see Appendix 1

or

Champion’s Daughters Recruit (CR 10) 3x - see Appendix 1

If one of the Champions’ Daughters guards catches the PCs lurking outside Guinswai’s villa, they will immediately move to confront the party. When the next patrolling guard comes within sight, they will also join in. If the PCs cannot evade or defeat the first guard in the first round or two, the encounter will quickly escalate. When a guard detects one or more party members, read:

As you move furtively about Guinswai’s compound, you are suddenly confronted by a shapely female zhen in a masked helmet and chitin armor. “Halt. You are trespassing in the territory of the Champions’ Daughters.”

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Tactics: The Daughters recruits attack with the intention of subduing, capturing, and hauling the PCs in front of Guinswai.

The Daughters recruits will use their mobility to their advantage, staying out of melee range as long as possible and rushing in to attack casters and manifesters when the opportunity presents itself. Once mired in melee combat, the Daughters will strike for maximum effect with their fists, bites, and shield slams. The Champion's Daughters recruits will fight to the death.

Development: If the PCs mention at any point they are here to see Guinswai, the Daughters will stop any hostilities and curse Guinswai's name aloud: *"Uuggghh, that ugly prig! Where does he get off inviting trespassers into our territory!"* and then escort the PCs to Guinswai immediately. The Daughters will also take defeated foes to Guinswai. For his part, Guinswai himself will studiously pretend that the PCs were not caught trying to burgle his villa, instead acting as if the Daughters escorted the party to him as a courtesy.

Guinswai's Villa

1 - Courtyard: Like many of the other villas in this district, there is a three-foot tall fence surrounding the grounds, with enough space on either side for patrolling guards to walk and fight freely. All the posts are capped with spheres of magically shaped bone.

Between the front gate - made from carved obsidian - and the house's main entrance are a series of free-standing pillars. A quick examination of the other houses in the area will reveal that such pillars are a common feature and there likely used to be a kind of stone canopy covering atop pillars, perhaps to provide protection from the elements.

2 - Stable: To the right of the main building is a large outbuilding. Intended to be a stable, there is space in here for at least two crodlu pens and a modest carriage. Currently, the building holds the kits and supplies for Guinswai's full contingent of Champions' Daughters guards. However, the building is almost never occupied, and the guards are constantly active on patrol or bodyguard duty.

If the PCs try to enter this building, there is a chance they will be spotted by either the guards in the parlor or the guards patrolling the compound's perimeter (see Part 2B: Infiltrating the Compound for details), and a Champions' Daughters patrol will arrive 1d6+1

rounds later to investigate (see Encounter #8 - Guard Patrol for further details).

3 - Hall: This space was clearly designed to impress and intimidate: it has a grand (twenty-foot tall) vaulted ceiling with a skylight, tall carved pillars lining the walls, and a circular tiled floor pattern placed in the center of the room. Near the tiled floor pattern stand a large obsidian table and a stone podium, neither of which match the other decor and seem to have been moved here from another location.

4 - Parlor: This is a comfortable space with ornate furniture of carved obsidian and busts lining the walls (investigating the busts' plaques or asking around will reveal the busts are of former leaders of the psionic temple). For the reception, all of the furniture has been pushed to the edges of the room, leaving room for the guests to stand and mingle.

5 - Bedroom: An ornate bedroom with a stone slab bed in the middle, the ceiling here is as tall as the entry hall (twenty feet), with a ladder leading up to a set of bookshelves lining a narrow balcony above. Filling the bookshelves are treatises etched onto thin slabs of obsidian, each discussing magical theory, psionics, or the history of the City of a Thousand Dead. Sitting on a shelf near the ladder is a rather conspicuous item - a very old but well-preserved leatherbound book with parchment (!) pages, the only one in the library, if not one of the only such books in the entire Dead Lands.

Looking within, it seems to be a journal from an unnamed chaplain of the Psionic Temple in Nagarvos (see sidebar below).

6 - Servants Room: This modestly decorated room houses the resting arrangements and supplies for Guinswai's house servants. Currently it is overcrowded and cluttered, as this modestly-sized room is accommodating twelve servants and their things. If any PC tries to enter this room, one of the servants will politely escort them out.

Contents of the Chaplain's Journal

If PCs examine the journal, they will discover it was written (in Ulyanese) by a chaplain from the Psionic Temple dating back to the time of the Siege of Nagarvos. While the early entries simply describe the efforts of a chaplain from the metacreation school and their research of psionic artifacts, the last few entries tell quite an interesting story:

Entry 147 – Even though they have not moved position in more than two weeks, the nearly endless army beyond the city is terrifying to see. Their leaders have been parleying with envoys from both the Tetrarchs and the Sageocracy for several days now, with no word on the envoys' progress in convincing the army to withdraw.

Entry 148 – The leaders of the army (who call themselves "the Champions of Rajaat") have delivered their response – the shambling corpses of both envoys. It was a horrifyingly clear message – they wish to destroy us. My colleagues in the telepathy school started immediately trying to send out missives and emergency requests for aid, but that is when we discovered we were being blocked!

It seems the refugee preserver Pandruj – whose dire warnings we have scorned for so many months – was right after all...

Entry 149 - The fighting has started. We are powerful, but Rajaat's forces wield power unlike anything we've ever seen. In particular, the Champions themselves are no mere mortals.

I have reached out to Pandruj. I would have concerned myself with asking for the Head Seminarian's permission, but he has been too busy coordinating the defense of the city. But Pandruj has agreed to help us after all.

He has shared with me the last thing Rajaat was researching before he had left – something called a psionic enchantment. He is certain this is what is powering these Champions.

As we've spent centuries working on harmonizing both magical and psionic energy at the Psionic Temple, my colleagues and I believe we can replicate these psionic enchantments and imbue our own soldiers with similar power. Unfortunately, time is not on our side.

I will speak to the Head Seminarian and the Tetrarchs, and ask them to buy us time.

Entry 150 – The Tetrarchs have agreed to prioritize our project. Unfortunately, the city is fighting a losing battle against the invaders. Now, all of our most experienced priests, psions, and even our few trained preservers work day and night to develop and refine a fortification process.

Entry 151 - We're very close to having a process that is ready to test. According to the priests, the process will transform both the body and the soul of the subject, making them a true conduit for this new power. The process is invasive and risky, tapping every type of power we have access to, and even then it will require the use of the Keystone - which we've removed from the Temple's Guardian's Altar. Its unique amplification properties are the only way to create an effect powerful enough to catalyze this process.

Entry 152 – We've found a volunteer. Rubza'if, one of our most talented young preservers, has agreed to be subjected to the process. Studying under Pandruj, he has proven to be a magical prodigy. It also helps that his mother is one of our priests at the Psionic Temple and has trained him in the Way since he was a child..

We've finished the conversion chamber deep under the far northern quarter of the city, and are ready to begin. This has come not a moment too soon, however. The inner wall of the city is under attack

Entry 153 – I must assume we have failed.

The screams and crackle of power were audible even through the solid stone of the vault. We knew there was a chance the project could result in unleashing something catastrophic, which might destroy a large portion of the city from within. To prevent this, the vault was to remain completely sealed until the project leader deemed it safe. It has been a full day, and the vault stubbornly remains sealed. All I can do now is assume the worst.

I will not allow myself to feel that all is lost. Head Seminarian G'dranav is organizing a company of the guards as well as the remainder of we priests and mindbenders from the Psionic Temple to make our last stand here on the Arkolak. The invaders have already breached the city walls, but we are making them pay in blood for every section of the city they take. And if I have my way, they will pay the dearest price if they want the Psionic Temple.

For Nagarvos!

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7 - Kitchen: This room is being used for the preparation of blood and flesh appetizers for the reception in the parlor, and there is a small but steady stream of servants between the two rooms all evening. Since the staff are rather spread thin at the moment, there is a 50% chance in any given round this room will be empty. Additionally, if the PCs watch the kitchen to observe the patterns of the staff's coming and goings, it will be possible to anticipate when the room will be empty for at least a few rounds.

8 - Storage: Within this room are several body parts magically preserved with *gentle repose* spells. In the far northeast corner of the room is a secret door (Search check, DC 15 to detect) leading to the secret passageway.

9 - Secret Passageway: This hidden passageway seems to have always been part of the house, designed into it from its initial construction. All of the secret doors that open into the passageway work via a magical mechanism that involves pressing panels on the doors which cause them to open (Search check, DC 15 to detect). Guinswai and his staff know of the secret door in the bedroom (5) and the door from the secret passageway (9) to the stairs (10), but not the secret door to the storage room (8).

10 - Stairs Down: These stairs lead down to the villa's cellar. The staircase is quite long, and past a certain point, the obsidian walls and carved obsidian stairs are replaced by ancient stone.

11 - Cellar: This cellar is located deep underground and has ancient stone walls, indicating it dates back to before the Siege of Nagarvos. The room has many scorch marks and other signs of struggle. See Encounter #9 - The Vault for further details.

9) The Vault (EL 13)

Acid Arrow Trap (CR 8) 3x - see Appendix 2

Alarm Trap (CR 1) 1x - see Appendix 2

Fusillade of Spears Trap (CR 6) 2x - see Appendix 2

Incendiary Cloud Trap (CR 9) 1x - see Appendix 2

The vault is sealed and under heavy magical and psionic protections; no one but Guinswai himself can

access it, and he has laid aggressive levels of traps throughout the chamber.

The vault lies in a wide dedicated chamber, 20 ft by 30 ft across. From where you stand, you can see that the floor and walls of the chamber bear a number of scorch marks.

Approaching closer, you can see that the vault itself is a reclaimed bronze plate mounted into a granite block in the far wall. Many evenly spaced small holes pepper the wall beneath the vault and the floor there seems to be permanently marked with gore stains.

As the PCs might realize, and as Guinswai will gleefully tell visitors, the vault chamber is heavily trapped and secured - though Guinswai will not detail the exact nature of the traps. The traps are:

- Pressure on the floor in front of the vault (from a Small or larger creature) triggers two fusillade of spears traps from the holes in the wall beneath the vault, targeting a 10 ft x 10 ft to either side of the vault door.
- The section of wall the vault is mounted in, including the vault itself, is protected by three separate *acid arrow* traps that trigger when anyone other than Guinswai touches the wall or vault. The wall around the vault door has a break DC of 50, a hardness of 8, and requires 540 hp of damage to remove the vault door.
- The vault door is protected by an *incendiary cloud* trap that activates whenever anyone touches it without holding the key. The vault door has a hardness of 7 and 40 hp.
- The vault's lock is recessed into the vault door and has a DC 25 to open.
- If anyone other than Guinswai opens or otherwise removes the vault door, the *alarm* trap triggers and Guinswai's voice will ring out, shouting "*Thieves are robbing the vault!*".

If the PCs successfully access the vault, read:

Finally looking within the vault, you see a small granite chamber - more like a cubby really - empty except for a small silver knife and a brass key.

Tactics: If the *alarm* trap is triggered, two of Guinswai's Champion's Daughters guards (see Encounter #8 - Guard Patrol) will arrive in 3 rounds to investigate.

Development: If the vault's contents are stolen, Guinswai will discover it after the auction and gather four of his Champion's Daughters guards and head to the area around the Transformation Vault (see Part 3B - The Route to the Transformation Vault).

C) Introducing The Competition

Guinswai has assembled all the bidders for the auction in one place with their entourages for a pre-auction reception. This should make the PCs' unlives much easier, as it is the perfect opportunity to discover what the other parties are bidding and possibly even dissuade them from actually placing a bid. This might also be the PCs' only chance to deliver the Necrologium's *scrying* targets.

There is plenty of time during the reception for chatting with the delegations and attempting to plant the *scrying* targets. If the PCs do so, proceed to Encounter #10 - Planting the Scrying Targets.

When the PCs are ready to attempt to convince several of the factions to withdraw bids, proceed to Encounter #11 - Dissuading the Bidders.

10) Planting the Scrying Targets (Skill Challenge)

At the reception, the PCs have their best chance to meet with the various bidding faction representatives and plant the Necrologium's *scrying* targets. When they do so, the PCs may use a variety of methods, with the process taking the form of a skill challenge. This may occur simultaneously with or separately from the process of attempting to convince some of the bidders to withdraw their bids (see Encounter #11 - Dissuading the Bidders).

Each skill challenge to plant a *scrying* target on a specific faction's representative lasts only a single (1) turn and requires the PCs to achieve one (1) successful check in total to be completed successfully, following the guidelines below:

Primary Checks: Primary Checks grant one (1) success in a skill challenge for each use and include:

- Bluff (DC 20) - The PC suggests the individual dropped the *scrying* target or otherwise lies to convince them to take the item.
- Disguise (DC 20) - The PC attempts (before the skill challenge begins) take on the appearance of someone the NPC is likely to accept the *scrying* target from, such as a member of their entourage or one of Guinswai's servants.
- Sleight of Hand (DC 20) - The PC attempts to plant the *scrying* target on the NPC.

Secondary Checks: Secondary Checks do not grant successes in a skill challenge; instead, they grant a +2 bonus to the PCs' next check for each use. Secondary Checks are easier to successfully perform than Primary Checks and include:

- Diplomacy (DC 15) - The PC attempts to use flattery and kind words to distract or convince the NPC of something.
- Hide / Move Silently (DC 15) - The PC attempts to remain unnoticed amongst the crowd to make a later check easier to perform successfully.
- Listen / Sense Motive / Spot (DC 15) - The PC monitors the NPC carefully, alert for the most opportune moment to successfully perform another check.

DMs are encouraged to remind players that, as always, the PCs are free to attempt an Aid Another action (DC 10) to grant an ally (another PC in this case) a +2 bonus on a check of the same type. Also, as usual, DMs should consider granting a +2 bonus on any check for extremely good play (excellent roleplay, a well formulated argument, cunning tactics, etc.).

Development: Once the PCs have finished attempting to plant a *scrying* target on a representative for each faction, they are free to move on. If the PCs move on to attempting to convince some of the bidders to withdraw their bids, proceed to Encounter #11 - Dissuading the Bidders. If the PCs decide to attempt to steal the Keystone, go to Part 2B: Infiltrating the Compound. When it is time for the auction to begin, proceed to Part 3: The Midnight Auction

11) Dissuading the Bidders (Skill Challenge)

At the reception, the PCs will have the opportunity to meet with various leaders and groups, and attempt to convince them to withdraw their auction bid. The encounter will only last long enough for the PCs to

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attempt to convince two groups of bidders to withdraw their bids (i.e., perform a skill challenge) before the bell rings and it is time for the auction to begin.

When they do so, the PCs may use a variety of tactics to make their case, with the process taking the form of a skill challenge. The skill challenge lasts three (3) turns and requires the PCs to achieve five (5) successful checks in total to be completed successfully, following the guidelines below:

Primary Checks: Primary checks grant one (1) success in a skill challenge for each use and include:

- Bluff (DC 20) - The PC downplays the value of the NPC's proffered item or exaggerates the value of their own.
- Diplomacy (DC 20) - The PC uses flattery and kind words to suggest the NPC's faction should keep their bid item.
- Intimidate (DC 20) - Using threats of retaliation and fear of Qwith, the PC attempts to convince the NPC to withdraw their auction bid.

Secondary Checks: Secondary checks do not grant successes in a skill challenge; instead, they grant a +2 bonus to the PCs' next check for each use. Secondary Checks are easier to successfully perform than Primary Checks and include:

- Appraise (DC 18) - The PC makes an accurate assessment of the NPC's bid item, giving them more information with which to work.
- Disguise (DC 18) - The PC attempts (before the skill challenge begins) take on the appearance of a member of the NPC's faction in order to make their argument more convincing.
- Gather Information (DC 18) - The PC attempts to ask other groups of representatives about the NPC's bid item, to collect additional information about it.
- Knowledge - Various (DC 18) - The PC recalls additional information about the NPC's faction or their bid item.
- Sense Motive (DC 18) - The PC attempts to understand the NPC's true feelings and motivations concerning their faction's bid item in order to better inform their next argument.

DMs are encouraged to remind players that, as always, the PCs are free to attempt an Aid Another action (DC 10) to grant an ally (another PC in this case) a +2 bonus on a check of the same type. Also, as usual, DMs should consider granting a +2 bonus on any check for

extremely good play (excellent roleplay, a well formulated argument, cunning tactics, etc.).

Descendants of the Chosen

The Descendants representatives are Djelj, his enforcer/partner Sinker Kasgat, and six Descendants scholars. Djelj is a tall zhen with chiseled features, light curly blonde hair, and is missing his left arm below the elbow. He constantly exudes calm and confidence. Sinker Kasgat is a thin, sinewy zhen with sharp features and dark, slightly-wavy hair who is well known for having a bad temper. The scholars are all well built zhen in scholarly robes that are cut short to allow for ease of movement.

Determining the identity of the Descendants' bid item is easy, as they are quite open about its identity and in fact have it with them in a large, hovering *forcecage*.

The Descendants' bid is a capacitance crystal from the Gate, one of the many that were meant to store the planar energy that the Navel's researchers were

Why a Skill Challenge?

Introduced in the 4th Edition of Dungeons and Dragons, skill challenges are a concise and well-organized way to handle diverse and potentially complicated encounters. Designed to accommodate and streamline non-combat encounters, skill challenges are an excellent way to prevent a single "face" character from being the only PC who can or does interact with NPCs in a social encounter (they're also a great way to prevent overuse of 'read aloud' text boxes).

The addition of skill challenges (to any edition of Dungeons & Dragons) promotes the engagement of all players during a non-combat encounter, rather than those playing socially orientated characters, and prevents bottlenecks in an adventure's plot, should a particular character or character archetype be missing (no Bard during a social encounter, no Ranger while traversing the desert wastes, etc).

Skill challenges are meant to enhance gameplay, not replace thoughtful choices on the part of the players or the DM's judgment. Using a psionic attack power on a city-state's guard captain or a *command undead* spell on the obstinate undead guardian of a tomb may still be a brilliant or foolhardy choice during a skill challenge, and still requires the DM's adjudication, as it always has.

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attempting to collect for their research. The Navel's research was never successful, but this crystal is still theoretically capable of storing and releasing massive amounts of magical energy, if an appropriate power source could be made available.

Skill Challenge Notes:

- Any - all checks that contain an emotional appeal suffer a -2 penalty, as even though Rajaat's enchantments on them have long worn off, the Disciples still value facts over feelings.
- Knowledge (Arcana, Psionics, or The Planes) - Suggestions about what types of experiments they themselves might be able to use the Gate's capacitance crystal for may be used as primary skill checks when speaking with the Disciples.

The Defenders

The group of the Defenders are led by Ramlichavli, a fourteen foot-tall, hulking male ogre with tangled dreadlocks of sable hair, who carries himself with the confidence of a lifelong professional soldier. Accompanying him are a retinue of Defenders - four dwarves and two ogres - all of whom are tough and burley-looking, with expertly cared-for weapons and armor.

While already normally quite cautious and tight-lipped, the Defenders' representatives are especially on guard this evening, as they are within their mortal enemies' (the Champions' Daughters) territory and those same enemies are in fact serving as Guinswai's security. The Defenders' actions and body language (standing in closed ranks around their leader) freely communicate their state of mind to those observing them. Until the first successful Skill Check is made, the Defenders' leader Ramlichavli simply "harrumphs" when spoken to.

The Defenders' bid is the skull of a captain from the Cleansing Armies, etched with runes to keep his spirit (and perhaps his power) bound to it.

Skill Challenge Notes:

- Any - any checks that involve criticizing the Champions' Daughters or praising the Defenders' discipline and training gain a +2 bonus, as the Defenders are made to feel less like they stand among enemies.
- Any - any checks that suggest that the Defenders "should relax" or that involve speaking well of the Champions' Daughters suffer a -2 penalty, as they

increase the Defenders' feelings of isolation and danger.

- Sense Motive - checks to determine the Defenders' mood are DC 10.

The Tetrarchs

The Tetrarchs in attendance are Sagil, Siduri, and six of Rajaat's Fugitives. Sagil is a short older male with a wide-set face and sideburns (and is a gnome). Siduri is a matronly middle-aged female half-elf with large wide-set eyes and decorated braids. The accompanying Rajaat's Fugitives wear sandals over wrapped leggings, embroidered cotton tunics, and protective headscarves.

The Tetrarchs will be extremely forthcoming with what they plan on bidding, seeing it as a point of pride (indeed, the cultural heritage of Nagarovos is one of the sources of pride they still manage to cling to).

The Tetrarchs' bid is a series of secret chants which aided the psions and clerics of the Psionic Temple, blending and empowering their spells and powers.

Skill Challenge Notes:

- Any - all checks that contain an emotional appeal to the Tetrarchs' pride or sense of loss gain a +2 bonus, as they are reminded of how much they have lost and by whose hand they lost it.

Volldrager

Volldrager himself has attended the auction, accompanied by six of his guards - fairly well-rotted but loyal thinking zombies that he or his faithful have reanimated to serve as bodyguards and enforcers.

Volldrager's arrogant smugness is the first thing the PCs will notice about him. His is the weakest faction represented here, but Volldrager projects confidence like no one else at the reception. Volldrager's appearance is that of a stereotypical zhen - black, glistening skin, cool and smooth as glass, and eyes that burn a deep scarlet color.

Volldrager's bid is Qwith's journal, recently recovered from beneath the obsidian.

Skill Challenge Notes:

- Any - all checks that involve directly asking Volldrager about his bid item suffer a -2 penalty, as Volldrager is very confident and coy about his bid item.

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- Any - all checks that either suggest that either Volldrager's bid item must be special indeed or that his item cannot possibly be as good as he seems to think it is gain a +2 bonus, as Volldrager's guards either gush with pride over the find or seek to defend its value.
- Intimidate - any threats involving Qwith's vengeance automatically fail, but also cause Volldrager or a member of his entourage to reveal their bid item, responding with *"I'm not afraid of*

Qwith! I know all that crone's secrets, because I've got her journal!" or something similar.

Development: Once the PCs have attempted to convince two of the groups of participants to withdraw their bids from the auction (thereby completing two of the skill challenges) or given up, a bell rings, indicating that it is time for the auction to begin. Proceed to Part 3: The Midnight Auction.

Part 3: The Midnight Auction

Regardless of the PCs' actions beforehand, eventually the time will come for the auction: at midnight, a bell sounds.

A) The Auction

At midnight, a servant sounds the bell calling all the bidders into the villa's grand entry hall.

Bidding for the Prize

When the time comes for the auction, Guinswai will call an end to the reception and summon everyone into the entry hall for the auction.

At midnight, a bell sounds and Guinswai steps forward: *"Please everyone, it is time for our auction to begin."* Servants enter the room and begin to usher everyone into the grand entry hall you passed through on your way in.

Now the hall seems to be laid out differently, with two tables standing in the middle of the room: one holds a large object hidden underneath a sheet of leather and the other holds five empty slabs of obsidian and a plain clay jar roughly the size of a human head. Opposite these stands a podium, with a stone gavel atop it.

Once everyone is situated around the hall, Guinswai takes the podium and speaks: *"Good evening and welcome, my illustrious guests. As promised, tonight I have for your bidding pleasure quite a remarkable find."* He gestures and four of his servants move in unison, lifting up the leather cover to reveal a large ball of polished crystal. Once uncovered, an image within

the crystal ball flickers and then is projected out into the middle of the hall, revealing a remarkable sight:

A pyramid nearly the size of a man's chest hangs in the air. It seems to be made of some kind of rare white stone and it is bracketed and inlaid with gold designs unlike anything you've ever seen before.

With the revelation of this pyramid the entire hall falls into silence. Guinswai speaks again: "I present to you all... the Keystone. Viewing such a truly one of a kind object, it is easy to understand why the priests and psions of the old Psionic Temple felt so empowered as to attempt rewriting their own relationships with death itself.

"To begin proceedings, I ask each bidding delegation to draw a lot from the clay jar. This will determine the non-negotiable order of bidding."

A servant walks up and collects the clay jar and starts walking over to the Defenders delegation. Guinswai says: *"Let us begin."*

The servant will approach each of the delegations in turn and the presentation order (and the numbers they drew) for the other groups will fall as: 2 - Defenders, 3 - Tetrarchs, 5 - Descendants, 6 - Volldrager. To determine when they will make their presentation, the PCs should roll 1d6. In case of a tie, there is a 50/50 chance (roll d10 or flip a coin) for the PCs to win the tie.

Each delegation's presentation is listed below; for any who have been convinced to withdraw their bid, read or paraphrase: *"Regretfully, we have decided to withdraw our bid."*

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The Defenders

"We present the skull of Captain Heozxun from the Cleansing Army. He and his bodyguards were buried with us when G'dranav collapsed the ground of the Arkolak. Etched with runes to bind his spirit to it, the skull still drips with his power and military brilliance."

The Tetrarchs

"We present the hymns of the Psionic Temple. These chants grew from the common ground discovered between the manifesters and the priests, and were used to blend and enhance their spells and powers."

The Descendants

"We present a capacitance crystal from the Gate. The experiments of the Navel were focused on learning to draw power from the Elemental and Paraelemental planes and make that power usable by wizards. To that end, we created capacitance crystals to draw power from the Gate. While our research was not strictly successful, this crystal was somehow thrown from the Gate when it was breached, and is still quite capable of collecting and releasing great amounts of power."

Volldrager

"I present Qwith's diary." A chorus of shocked responses erupts from the crowd. "The secrets and thoughts of the Duchess herself, through the many centuries of her lifetime. Quite an interesting read, I must say..."

The PCs (Qwith)

When it is their turn, it will be up to the PCs (and the players) to present Qwith's bid - a spellbook from the Pristine Tower, certified by Qwith to have been penned by Rajaat himself.

For groups that prefer a more mechanical approach, a DM might consider allowing the PCs to make a Diplomacy check (DC 22) to make their sales pitch.

Decisions, Decisions

The success of the PCs' bid is dictated by their salesmanship and which (if any) groups they have convinced to withdraw their bids. Below are bid value scores, as ranked by Guinswai, for the items offered in the auction. Based on the PCs' roleplayed sales pitch, the DM should add between +1 and +5 to the PCs' bid

value score. If the PCs made no effort to sell their bid at all, add 0; if the PCs instead made a Diplomacy check (DC 22), add +3.

Volldrager = 18

Descendants = 13

Defenders = 11

PCs (by default) = 10

Tetrarchs = 7

If the PCs convinced Volldrager to withdraw his bid and either dissuaded the Descendants from bidding or did an excellent job of selling their bid (achieving a +4 or +5 bonus to their bid value score), they will win the auction.

Once all bids have been placed, Guinswai will pace around the table for a time, examining all the bids without touching anything. Most of the delegations will begin talking amongst themselves. After a few moments, Guinswai will select the winning bid from the table and hold it high in the air: "We have a winning bid!" he says. A chorus of groans and applause explodes from the participants (as appropriate).

And the Winners Are...

Once the winning bid has been selected, Guinswai thanks the other participants for their offers and his servants begin to usher them out of the villa.

With the winning bid selected, Guinswai steps back to the podium: "That concludes our evening. My esteemed guests, I thank you all for your generous offers, I hope we can do business again soon." Servants enter the room and begin to escort all but the winners out of the villa.

If the PCs won the auction, read:

With your bid in hand, Guinswai walks over to you and says: "Congratulations again on your winning bid. I'm sure the duchess will be most pleased."

If the PCs lost the auction, they can still overhear Guinswai's conversation with the winners by faking an excuse to linger in the entry hall a bit longer, simply not attracting attention to themselves, or through careful listening (Bluff, Hide, or Listen check, DC 25). If they do so successfully, read:

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Winning bid in hand, Guinswai walks over to the winners and says: *“Congratulations again on your winning bid. You must be very pleased.”*

If the PCs won the auction or managed to listen in on Guinswai’s conversation with the winners, read:

“Now, let us discuss how you will take possession of your prize. Follow me to the vault.” Guinswai says. He gestures to the chamber in which the reception was held and begins walking in that direction.

Development: If the PCs lost the auction, they catch one last glimpse of Guinswai leading the winners back into the bedroom with the secret door. If the PCs decide to ambush the winners as they exit the villa in an attempt to acquire the Keystone anyway, proceed to Part 3C - Sore Losers.

If the PCs won the auction, Guinswai will lead them back into the bedroom with the secret door and then down to the vault.

Opening the Vault

Guinswai leads the PCs back down to the vault to retrieve their prize, or so they think.

Guinswai leads you back through the secret door, down the stairs and back to the vault. The vault lies in a wide dedicated chamber, 20 ft by 30 ft across. From where you stand, you can see that the floor and walls of the chamber bear a number of scorch marks.

Guinswai steps forward first and with a whispered word from him, you hear a series of clicks and soft sighs. *“There, the chamber’s traps are now deactivated.”* he says.

Guinswai moves to the vault door, withdraws an iron key on a thong from around his neck, and unlocks the vault door. *“There, the vault is unlocked and safe for you to open. Within is the first step in retrieving the Keystone.”*

When the PCs step forward to inspect the vault, read:

Approaching closer, you can see that the vault itself is a reclaimed bronze plate mounted into a granite block in the far wall. Many evenly spaced small holes pepper the wall beneath the vault and the floor there seems to be permanently marked with gore stains.

Finally looking within the vault, you see a small chamber - more like a closet really - bare except for a short pedestal. Upon the pedestal rest only a small silver knife and a brass key.

Questioning Guinswai

- If the PCs accuse him of deception, Guinswai laughs it off: “No, no deception. This is your prize - the means to claim the Keystone.”
- If asked where the Keystone is: “For security, as well as ‘other’ reasons, the Keystone was never going to be stored here. It must be retrieved. It lies far beneath the city; only I know where.”
- If the PCs ask for or demand the Keystone: “Of course. I stand ready, here and now, to guide you to the Keystone and help you retrieve it.”
- If the PCs ask where **exactly** the Keystone is right now, or where they must go to get it: “It lies in the far northern extent of the city, deep beneath the obsidian and the earth itself. We’ll need that key to get in.”

Development: Once the PCs are satisfied with Guinswai’s answers, he will have them retrieve the knife and key and then accompany him back upstairs. Once in the reception room again, Guinswai will offer to guide the PCs to the Keystone immediately.

12) Sore Losers (EL 6 or 12)

Volldrager’s Guards (CR 6) 2x - see Appendix 1

or

Volldrager’s Guards (CR 6) 8x - see Appendix 1

If the PCs didn’t win the auction, they might attempt to wait outside the villa and ambush the winners after the auction. If the PCs did win the auction, Volldrager instead waits outside with his guards to attack the PCs, incensed that he was outbid. Either way, it will be a tough fight, though Volldrager himself will avoid participating in any battle that occurs.

Guinswai will accompany whomever won the auction (whether it’s the PCs or Volldrager) to the tomb, but will not engage in any combat, preferring to let bidding parties resolve the situation themselves (i.e., he’ll let the groups fight or negotiate as they will, and show the winners to the Keystone’s hiding place).

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If the PCs won the auction, read:

Stepping out of the villa alongside Guinswai, you don't make it more than a block before your group is confronted in the street by thugs with weapons drawn.

A familiar voice calls out: *"The Keystone was by rights mine; pawns of Qwith don't deserve it."*

Volldrager steps out of the shadows and continues: *"Give it to me now, and I'll let you leave with your unives."*

If another group won the auction and the PCs plan to ambush the winners, read or paraphrase the following:

You and your group crouch in the shadows, waiting to ambush the auction winners and take the Keystone for yourselves. Soon enough, you see Guinswai escorting Volldrager and his guards down the street.

When your group steps out to confront him, Volldrager calls out: *"The Keystone is mine; pawns of Qwith don't deserve it. Leave now, and I won't have to have my guards kill you - again."*

Tactics: Volldrager is willing to let his guards kill the PCs to get (or keep) the Keystone, but will neither engage in combat with the PCs himself, nor order his guards to attack Guinswai. Volldrager's guards are unobtrusive opponents, wading directly into melee range with the PCs. At the lower encounter level, Volldrager, confident that his guards can defeat the PCs, holds back most of the guards to ensure he has plenty of bodyguards on the trip back to his headquarters and orders them to withdraw when reduced to half hit points. At the higher encounter level, Volldrager throws caution to the wind and sends all of his current guards into the battle, ordering them to fight to the death.

If Volldrager himself is successfully attacked or all of his guards are defeated, he will order a withdrawal and leave the PCs to their prize, tossing the knife and key to the ground if he has them.

Development: If the PCs successfully run off Volldrager and his guards, Guinswai takes it all in stride, explaining that he really doesn't care who gets the Keystone, as long as he got paid (and he already has). Guinswai will then explain the situation with the keystone (per Opening the Vault, above).

If the PCs are confused about seeing Volldrager (perhaps because he did not win the auction) and ask about it, Guinswai will shrug and explain that that Volldrager *"came to an understanding"* of some type with the winners and was going to take receipt of the Keystone.

Once the PCs have dealt with Volldrager and his guards, proceed to Part 3B - The Route to the Transformation Vault.

B) The Route to the Transformation Vault

With the auction over, the PCs will need to make their way from the villa to the Keystone's location - the Transformation Vault.

If Guinswai is not accompanying the party (because they stole the knife and key from his vault), proceed to Encounter #13a - Manhunt, below.

If Guinswai is accompanying the party (whether it is because they won the auction or because they defeated Volldrager's group), he will take the PCs to the Vault and explain the situation to them. Proceed to Guinswai the Guide, below.

13a) Manhunt (Skill Challenge)

If the PCs stole the knife and key from Guinswai's vault, he does not discover the theft until after the auction and is outraged when he learns he was robbed. Collecting one of the Champions' Daughters (they were supposed to be providing security for the auction, after all), Volldrager, and his guards (assuming Volldrager won the auction, but see Encounter #12 - Sore Losers for more information), Guinswai begins scouring the city for the PCs.

The PCs must evade Guinswai and Volldrager's forces until they can figure out what to do with the knife and key; this evasion takes the form of a skill challenge.

The skill challenge lasts three (3) turns and requires the PCs to achieve five (5) successful checks in total to be completed successfully, following the guidelines below:

Primary Checks: Primary Checks grant one (1) success in a skill challenge for each use and include:

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- Bluff (DC 20) - The PC, though noticed by Volldrager's forces, attempts to suggest it is a case of mistaken identity (i.e., "We're not the undead you're looking for...").
- Climb / Jump (DC 20) - The PC attempts to scale a building, wall, or other structure to stay ahead of or lose Volldrager's forces.
- Disguise (DC 20) - The PC attempts to disguise their or another PC's appearance to avoid detection by Volldrager's forces.
- Hide / Move Silently (DC 20) - The PC attempts to remain unnoticed by Volldrager's forces.

Secondary Checks: Secondary Checks do not grant successes in a skill challenge; instead, they grant a +2 bonus to the PCs' next check for each use. Secondary Checks are easier to successfully perform than Primary Checks and include:

- Balance/Tumble (DC 15) - The PC attempts to use unsteady surfaces or difficult terrain to their advantage, making it difficult for Volldrager's forces to follow them.
- Diplomacy (DC 15) - The PC attempts to use flattery and kind words to distract or convince a NPC to aid them (either a member of Volldrager's forces or a local of the City of a Thousand Dead).
- Intimidate (DC 15) - The PC attempts to cow a NPC (either a member of Volldrager's forces or a local of the City of a Thousand Dead).
- Listen / Sense Motive / Spot (DC 15) - The PC monitors Volldrager's forces or the locals of the City of a Thousand Dead carefully, keeping track of those hunting for the PCs or those locals who might betray the PCs to Volldrager's forces.

DMs are encouraged to remind players that, as always, the PCs are free to attempt an Aid Another action (DC 10) to grant an ally (another PC in this case) a +2 bonus on a check of the same type. Also, as usual, DMs should consider granting a +2 bonus on any check for extremely good play (excellent roleplay, a well formulated argument, cunning tactics, etc.).

Development: If the PCs manage to elude Guinswai, Volldrager, and their guards, proceed to Encounter #14 - Mother Dearest. If they do not, proceed to Encounter # 13b - Manhunt.

13b) Manhunt (EL 6 or 13)

Volldrager's Guards (CR 6) 2x - see Appendix 1

or

Champion's Daughters Recruit (CR 10) 1x - see Appendix 1

Volldrager's Guards (CR 6) 8x - see Appendix 1

If the PCs do not manage to successfully elude Volldrager and Guinswai's forces, read:

Try as you might, you fail to give your pursuers the slip. As they close in, you hear: "*The Keystone is mine; you thieves don't deserve it.*"

Volldrager steps out of the shadows along with Guinswai. "*How DARE you steal from ME!! Kill them Volldrager, and take your prize.*" Guinswai says.

Tactics: Volldrager is willing to let his guards kill the PCs to get (or keep) the Keystone, but will neither engage in combat with the PCs himself, nor order his guards to attack Guinswai. Volldrager's guards are unobvious opponents, wading directly into melee range with the PCs. At the lower encounter level, Volldrager, confident that his guards can defeat the PCs, holds back most of the guards to ensure he has plenty of bodyguards on the trip back to his headquarters and orders them to withdraw when reduced to half hit points. At the higher level, Volldrager throws caution to the wind and sends all of his current guards into the battle, ordering them to fight to the death.

If Volldrager himself is successfully attacked or all of the guards he sends against the PCs are defeated, he will order a withdrawal and leave the PCs to their prize, tossing the knife and key to the ground if he has them.

If the Champion's Daughter recruit is with the group, at the lower encounter level, Guinswai will order her not to engage the PCs, as he sees this as Volldrager's fight. At the higher encounter level, Guinswai has decided that the PCs must pay for their treachery and sends her into battle as well. The Champion's Daughter will use her mobility to her advantage, staying out of melee range as much as possible and rushing in to attack casters and manifesters when possible. Once mired in melee combat, the Daughter will happily wade in, striking with maximum effect with her fists, bites, and shield slams. The Champion's Daughters recruit will fight to the death.

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Development: If the PCs manage to escape Guinswai, Volldrager, and their guards, proceed to Encounter #14 - Mother Dearest.

If the PCs instead fought and defeated Volldrager and his guards, Guinswai begrudgingly joins forces with them and accompanies the PCs to the Transformation Vault. Proceed to Guinswai the Guide.

Guinswai the Guide

If Guinswai is accompanying the party (whether it is because they won the auction or because they defeated Volldrager's group), he will take the PCs to the vault and explain the situation to them.

"That was, of course, not really my residence: my domain changes to wherever better suits whatever part of the City's past I am recovering from beneath the obsidian. My latest discovery, the Keystone - which is now rightfully yours, was involved in some... fascinating moments in the city's tragic history, especially from its final days. I wished to see this for myself."

Guinswai has read the Chaplain's Journal (although he won't reveal this is one of his sources unless the PCs mention information from it themselves). Depending on what the PCs wish to know, he can tell the PCs the following:

- Divinations and clairsentient powers indicate that the Keystone is someplace called "the Transformation Vault".
- Guinswai's recent excavations unearthed the entrance to this Transformation Vault in the deep catacombs in the northern quarter of the City. He has not yet been inside.
- The villa where Guinswai held the auction once belonged to a now deceased Descendant of the Chosen who had focused his research on the Psionic Temple. Before he perished, he had discovered the existence of the Transformation Vault, its general location, and that the Keystone was inside it (he had discovered the journal and verified its information).
- The villa's former resident had also discovered the existence of two items related to the Transformation Vault: the very key and knife the PCs now possess. Guinswai used that information to locate and procure the items.
- All the information Guinswai has found regarding the Transformation Vault suggests it was a last-ditch project that was rushed to counter Rajaat's

Champions during the Siege of Nagarvos. Obviously it failed, but no one knows just how catastrophic its failure really was as the vault was sealed afterwards.

- If true, such knowledge could be well-worth the price of the Keystone.
- Guinswai knows a magical prodigy by the name of Rubza'if volunteered to be the subject of the experiment, and is very likely still sealed in the vault. He has no other information on Rubza'if other than his mother worked at the psionic temple and was involved in the project in some way.
- Guinswai is sure that someone must have escaped the experiment in the Transformation Vault - the discovery outside the Vault of the knife used in the ritual is proof of that - but he has not learned anything further about who else was involved or what occurred within the Transformation Vault.

Development: Once the PCs have learned all that Guinswai knows, continue on to Encounter #14 - Mother Dearest.

14) Mother Dearest (EL - or 18)

Nafrai (CR 18) 1x - see Appendix 1

Nafrai spends much of her time haunting the northern Catacombs, searching for individuals to lead to Rubza'if-in-Pain's Transformation Vault. As luck would have it, Nafrai runs across the party not long after they leave Guinswai's compound. She quickly senses/recognizes the knife and key, and attempts to lead the PCs to the Transformation Vault.

As you travel through the catacombs beneath the City of a Thousand Dead, you happen across a ghostly spirit wandering listlessly through the passageways. The spectral woman looks deeply depressed and bitter - her hair floats around her in frayed tangles, her face looks to be streaked with tears, and she occasionally bursts out in wracking sobs.

Suddenly, her head snaps up as if she has only just noticed you. Her pained look transforms into first a thoughtful expression and then her head tilts to the side as if in recognition.

"Quickly, you must come with me if we are to save my son!"

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If the PCs seem hesitant or unwilling to follow her, read:

"I know what you seek and can show you where it is, but we must hurry!"

Sensing them, Nafrai recognizes the knife and key that the PCs carry and suspects they seek the Transformation Vault or something within it (though she neither knows or cares what, as long as someone - either the PCs or Rubza'if - eventually dies). If questioned, Nafrai is vague and only reiterates what she has already said.

Tactics: If the PCs decide to attack Nafrai, rather than parley with her, she gladly spends several rounds attacking them, gleefully taking the opportunity to cause them pain. Before the PCs take enough of a beating to withdraw, however, Nafrai will begin to retreat, staying just out of attack range or occasionally striking out at the PCs as necessary to get them to follow her to the Transformation Vault.

Development: Once the PCs are following Nafrai, continue on to Encounter #15 - The Way In.

Part 4: The Transformation Vault

Once the PCs have met Nafrai, she stops at nothing to lead them to her son's Transformation Vault and, incidentally, the Keystone.

15) The Way In (EL -)

One way or the other, Nafrai leads the PCs down to the entrance to her son's Transformation Vault.

You follow the ghostly woman down through the maze of buried buildings and winding passageways for some time. Though she proceeds you by several paces, she looks back from time to time to ensure you still follow her, passing far below what must once have been the old city's street-level.

Eventually you come to an unassuming blank doorway in a bare stone wall. Bare stone fills the doorway, as if it were simply carved as a decorative feature, but Nafrai heads straight through the doorway, passing incorporeally through the debris with only a parting glance in your direction.

Before she disappears, you think you hear her say "The key..."

Though neither the wall nor the key radiate magic or psionics, the key can be used to bypass the wall, activating a subtle and latent *passwall*-like effect on the stone in the doorway when it comes into contact with any portion of the wall.

Development: If Guinswai is with the party, he will instruct them to use the key to bypass the stone in the doorway so that they can enter the Transformation

Vault. He will hang back as they enter, being last through the vault door and letting them do all the work.

If Guinswai is not accompanying the PCs, Nafrai will poke her head back through the wall and will hint at, taunt them about, or explain the function of the key to the PCs as appropriate to get to follow her into the Transformation Vault.

16) Rubza'if-in-Pain (EL - or 21+)

Rubza'if-in-Pain (CR 21) 1x - see Appendix 1

As the party steps out of the wall, they step into the midst of one of Rubza'if's "episodes", as he blindly lashes out at everything around him in an attempt to master the pain that is his constant companion.

As you step out from the wall, you are immediately assaulted by a flurry of limbs and claws. Accompanying the flailing assault is a deep, rumbling, mournful howl.

Each PCs is subject to an attack: +10 to hit, 1d6+3 damage, 50/50 chance for bludgeoning or slashing damage.

PCs who strike back face two such attacks the next round. Continuing to strike back at the assailant will draw further attacks each round. PCs who push their attacker away or take some kind of defensive posture (DM's judgment) are ignored on subsequent rounds.

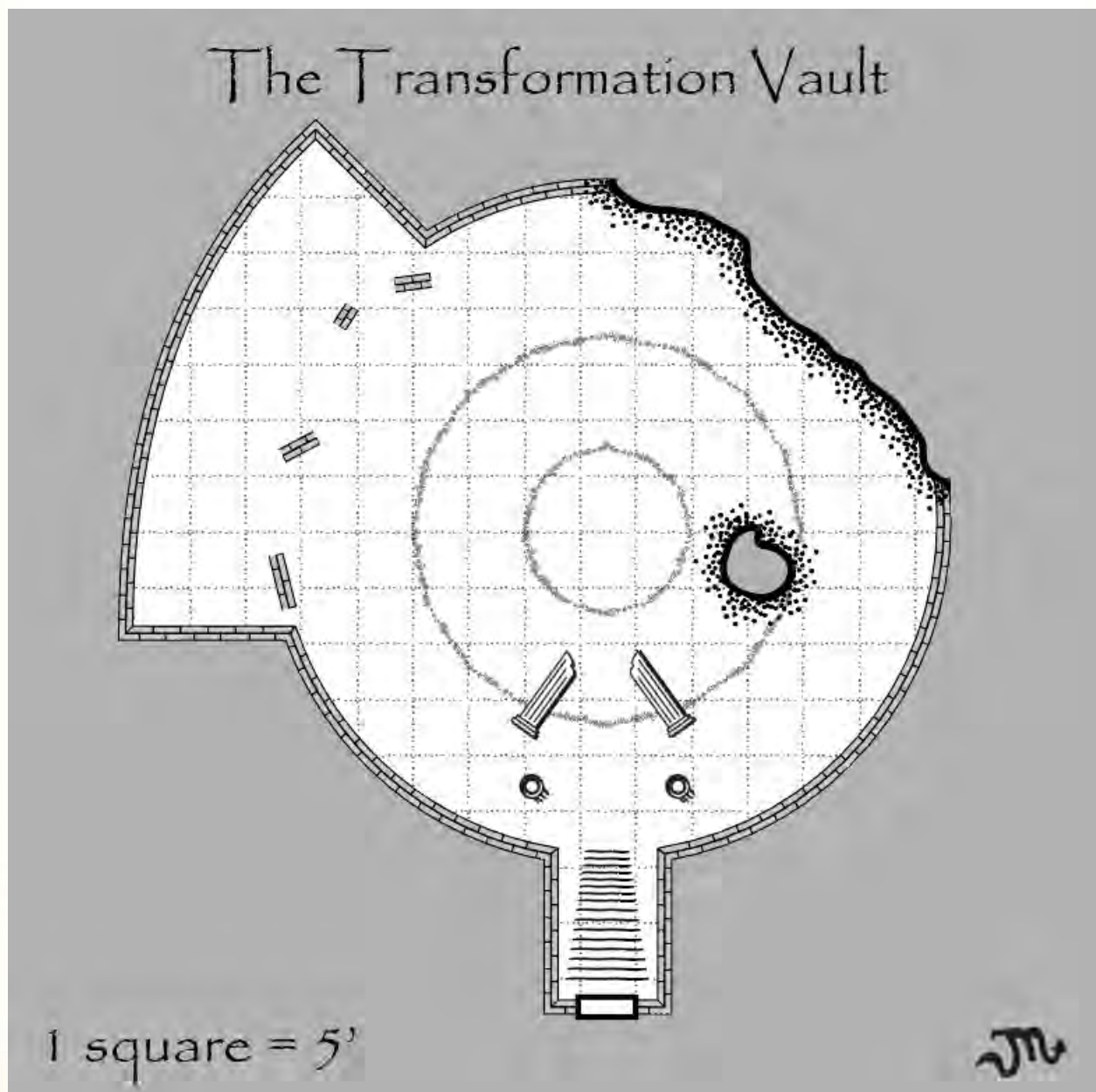
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A Wisdom check (DC 15) reveals that the first wave of attacks seemed unfocused and less directed at the party themselves than at the general area. A Spot check (DC 20) is necessary to see past the flashing claws and swinging limbs to the creature beyond. If one of the PCs does so, read:

The creature assaulting you seems to be a hideous monstrosity, easily 20 feet tall. It is a reptilian creature with a thick gray hide, wide mouth filled with fangs, large black eyes, and heavily muscled arms that end in wicked claws. Its legs are also muscled, with wide clawed feet.

After a round of this, Rubza'if will move to flail at a different section of the Vault, leaving the PCs alone. Once he does so, read: Now that the clawed beast has moved past you, blindly assaulting a different section of wall, you can better examine your surroundings.

The chamber appears to be a circular dome, sixty feet across and forty feet tall in the center. Burnt and peeling strips of silver material sag from the surface of the dome. Along one wall is inset a strange type of mirror - though largely shattered and coated in a smoky haze, it was seemingly made from some type



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of colorless glass, rather than the obsidian mirrors you're accustomed to. Following the clawed beast, speaking to it in a soothing tone of voice, is a diminutive three-foot tall creature with dark stony skin, a massive head, a large, sharp nose, and pointed ears. It is dressed in ancient-looking blue and gray robes and, when it glances over at you, its eyes glow slightly red, with a strangely mixed look of compassion and malice.

"AAAAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAaaaa...I...know...that knife. Where did you find that? What are you doing here? Who are you?"

What happens next depends on the PCs' actions.

Using the Knife on Rubza'if

If the PCs think to threaten or stab Rubza'if-in-Pain with the knife, he will recognize the knife - a surgical tool from his metamorphosis ritual, and will say:

The PCs Communicate with Duk'kneg

The short creature is Duk'kneg, an undead goblin, Rubza'if's caretaker and his only constant companion. If the PCs cannot make Rubza'if lucid enough to have a conversation, they can attempt to speak to Duk'kneg.

What the PCs ask/offer	Rubza'if's response	Duk'kneg's response
What do you want?	<i>"EEEEEEEndlessness... something... changing.. ANYTHING... to take away... from this ENDLESSNESS!!!"</i>	He will impatiently gesture to the vault itself. <i>"You can't be serious! If you have something to help, now would be the time to offer it!"</i>
Can we help change you back?	<i>"THAAAAAAAAAAAAaaaat depends... ARE YOU all-powerful?"</i>	Duk'kneg won't even dignify this comment with a response, instead contemptuously shaking his head at the PCs.
What if we kill you/put you out of your misery?	<i>"SWEEEEEEEEEEEEt release... don't offer it UNLESS... you mean it..."</i> If the PCs do try to fight Rubza'if, they will quickly learn he is far too powerful for them.	Duk'kneg will stop for a moment, look over the party to size them up, then snort derisively and go back to trying to calm down Rubza'if. Duk'kneg will only attack to defend himself. If Rubza'if is attacked, he will neither protect him nor help the PCs.
Can we set you free?	Rubza'if responds by moving to the entrance and violently slamming his massive body multiple times against the much smaller doorway. The structure of the vault is undamaged, but he shouts back at the PCs <i>"NOOO!"</i>	Duk'kneg impatiently gestures to the small vault door, then to Rubza'if's massive body, and then stares at the PCs as if to ask if they are stupid.
If the PCs talk to, distract, or entertain Rubza'if (anything will work: telling a story, singing, dancing, etc.)	Rubza'if stops in his tracks, surprised at first and then paying rapt attention with a look of sad longing on his face.	Duk'kneg breathes a sigh of relief, and in an uncharacteristically patient tone, says <i>"Okay. What brings you here?"</i>

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The problem with this strategy, however, will become evident very quickly – Duk'kneg's attention is divided between the PCs and Rubza'if's rampage. Each round of communication the speaking PC needs to make a Charisma check, with a cumulative -2 penalty for each round after the first. Upon the first failure, Duk'kneg is too distracted to continue and the conversation is over.

Anything which distracts or restrains Rubza'if without harming him will buy time while the PCs are attempting to talk to Duk'kneg. Each such distraction grants the PCs another round where they can attempt to speak with Duk'kneg.

If the PCs can successfully initiate a conversation with Duk'kneg (with or without distractions), proceed to The Negotiation below.

The Negotiation

Neither Rubza'if nor Duk'kneg particularly care about the Keystone and they know there is no reversing Rubza'if's transformation, but they're not going to part with the Keystone without getting something in return, so the PCs must get creative.

Regardless of whether they talk to Rubza'if or Duk'kneg, the PCs will have only a short amount of time to make their case before the novelty wears thin and Rubza'if's pain and rage derail the conversation. Each question and answer exchange takes 1 round.

If the PCs manage to either entertain or converse with Rubza'if, then both Rubza'if and Duk'kneg will be happy to let the PCs leave with the Keystone. If the PCs attack or attempt to kill Rubza'if, their attacks will cause damage but have very little real effect; after a round or two, however, such attacks begin to frustrate Rubza'if, causing his rage to once again overtake him.

Development: If the PCs manage to calm Rubza'if and Guinswai is with them, Guinswai is quite pleased. After physically and magically examining the Keystone in its socket within the floor of the Transformation Vault, he will remove the Keystone and hold it out to the PCs, saying: *"I'll trade you the Keystone for the knife and key."* If the PCs complain or otherwise refuse the trade, Guinswai will explain *"The auction was for the Keystone - the knife and key were the means to obtain it."* When the PCs acquiesce, G replies: *"Good. A deal is a deal; nice doing business with you."* Key in hand, Guinswai will then escort the party out of the Transformation Vault whenever they are ready.

17) Last Chance (EL 7 or 13)

Volldrager's Guards (CR 6) 2x - see Appendix 1

or

Champion's Daughters Recruit (CR 10) 1x - see Appendix 1

Volldrager's Guards (CR 6) 8x - see Appendix 1

If the PCs previously managed to elude them (see Part 3B - The Route to the Transformation Vault), Guinswai, Volldrager, and his guards are waiting for the party when they exit the Transformation Vault. If the PCs previously defeated Volldrager and Guinswai's group (see Encounter #13 - Manhunt), skip this encounter and proceed to Concluding the Adventure.

As you step back out from the stone wall, a familiar voice calls out: *"The Keystone is mine; you thieves don't deserve it."*

Volldrager steps out of the shadows along with Guinswai. *"How DARE you steal from ME!! Kill them Volldrager, and take your prize."* Guinswai says.

Tactics: Volldrager is willing to let his guards kill the PCs to get (or keep) the Keystone, but will neither engage in combat with the PCs himself, nor order his guards to attack Guinswai. Volldrager's guards are unobtrusive opponents, wading directly into melee range with the PCs. At the lower encounter level, Volldrager, confident that his guards can defeat the PCs, holds back most of the guards to ensure he has plenty of bodyguards on the trip back to his headquarters and orders them to withdraw when reduced to half hit points. At the higher level, Volldrager throws caution to the wind and sends all of his current guards into the battle, ordering them to fight to the death.

If Volldrager himself is successfully attacked or all of his guards are defeated, he will order a withdrawal and leave with Guinswai, with both swearing an eternal vendetta against the PCs.

If the Champions' Daughter recruit is with the group, at the lower encounter level, Guinswai will order her not to engage the PCs, as he sees this as Volldrager's fight. At the higher encounter level, Guinswai has decided that the PCs must pay for their treachery and sends her into battle as well. The Champions' Daughter will use her mobility to her advantage,

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staying out of melee range as much as possible and rushing in to attack casters and manifesters when possible. Once mired in melee combat, the Daughter will happily wade in, striking with maximum effect with her fists, bites, and shield slams. The Champion's Daughters recruit will fight to the death.

Development: Once combat with Volldrager and Guinswai's forces ends, the adventure is over (one way or another). Proceed to Concluding the Adventure.

Concluding the Adventure

Once the PCs obtain the Keystone (no matter the means), they need only leave the City of a Thousand Dead and make their way back to Deshentu to be rewarded. Depending on how the party came to possess their prize, this trip might be a triumphant march free of complications or a hurried and fearful flight back to the safety of the capital city of Deshentarum; DMs are encouraged to detail this return trip as they feel appropriate.

congratulate the PCs and reward them for a job well done.

Pleased with the success of their mission, Rhokhan grants the PCs a total of 28,000cp to be divided equally amongst themselves.

Outcome and Monetary Rewards

Regardless of the outcome, the PCs will most likely be returning to Rhokhan - her reaction will depend on what occurred. Upon completion of their mission, Rhokhan will likely reward the PCs for their efforts with new or upgraded equipment.

Partial Success

If the PCs retrieved the Keystone but did not manage to successfully plant the *scrying* targets on the various faction members, Rhokhan will be only moderately disappointed in their performance, calling the mission a partial success. She will not punish the PCs, however, as the PCs performed their primary mission adequately and she is eager to avoid a conflict with Qwith.

As always, the PCs will have access to the full spellcasting services of both the Temple of the Vizier and the Necrologium itself. Each PC can also request the issuing or construction of custom equipment (mundane or magical/psionic). Such items will likely require at least several days to procure as per the standard item creation rules in the DMG. Feel free to assume a week for most things, including delays and shortages. The items will, however, arrive before any further missions that Rhokhan has for the PCs would begin.

Dismayed with the results of their mission, but still pleased at what they did manage to accomplish, Rhokhan grants the PCs a total of 14,000cp to be divided equally amongst themselves.

Success

If the PCs retrieved the Keystone and managed to successfully plant the *scrying* targets at the auction reception, Rhokhan is extremely satisfied with their performance, calling the mission a success. She will

Failure

If the PCs did not manage to retrieve the Keystone, whether or not they successfully planted the *scrying* targets at the auction reception, Rhokhan will be dismayed - the placement of the *scrying* targets could aid the Necrologium's espionage efforts greatly, but without the Keystone to placate her, Qwith will be out for blood. Rhokhan will call the mission a failure, but will not threaten to send the PCs to the Reanimation center. Rather, desperate for scapegoats to deflect Qwith's rage from Necrologium and the Necrologium, Rhokhan will offer the PCs themselves up to Qwith.

Once Qwith has the party in her clutches, she will have them mercilessly tortured and interrogated, but will stop short of having them destroyed. While decadent, Qwith is rarely wasteful, and she will soon make use of the PCs as her newest covert agents.

DM's Option - Agents of Gretch

If the PCs return with the Keystone for Gretch, Rhokhan will declare their mission a failure, but Anzatias will privately congratulate the PCs on their success on behalf of per secret patron Gretch. Though Rhokhan will wash her hands of the PCs and move to turn them over to Qwith, Anzatias will spirit them away at last moment, secretly sending them to take refuge with Gretch.

Gretch will be pleased with the success of the PCs' mission, resulting in the PCs being rewarded with a total of 75,000cp to be divided equally amongst themselves. He might even make future use of the PCs as his newest covert agents.

Experience Point Awards

Experience Point (XP) rewards for certain actions are listed below. The final XP total is the amount the party receives and should be divided between the PCs equally.

XP Rewards

- For each combat encounter the PCs experience = 100% CR value of encounter
- For each group of Champion's Daughters Recruits avoided or negotiated with = 50% CR value of encounters
- For each of the *screaming* targets planted = 1,200 XP
- For each bidding faction that withdraws = 1,200 XP

- If the PCs win the auction = 1800 XP
- If the PCs manage to elude Volldrager and Guinswai's forces in Encounter #13a - Manhunt = XP value of Encounter #13b - Manhunt.
- For surviving Rubza'if-in-Pain's assault = 1,800 XP
- If the PCs successfully return with the Keystone = 3,600 XP

Further Adventures

Depending on how successful the PCs were on their mission to the City of a Thousand Dead and to whom they returned the Keystone, many subsequent adventures might follow.

If the PCs' mission to the City of a Thousand Dead was a success, Rhokhan declares them her most promising new agents. With the *screaming* targets in place, intel on the factions present at the auction quickly begins pouring in, presenting numerous opportunities for missions - both in support of and in opposition to the City's factions

Whether the PCs' mission was completely successful or only a partial success, Qwith is mollified by the delivery of the Keystone. Rhokhan eventually uses this new relationship with the Duchess to begin running joint missions with Shadowmourn against Qwith's enemies. Shadowmourn and Deshentu have many foes in common, and the PCs will not lack for future missions against neighboring nations.

If the PCs delivered the Keystone to Gretch, he will quickly move to utilize them as his newest covert agents, using them to act on intelligence obtained from Anzatias and possibly even acting against the Necrologium's newest crop of agents - the PCs' replacements.





Appendix 1: Monsters & NPCs

Champion's Daughters Recruit CR 10

Female Human Zhen Fighter 8

LE Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Human, Psionic)

Init: +6; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft., Low-Light Vision; Listen +8, Spot +14

Aura: -

Languages: Goltish, Ulyanese

AC: 28; touch 12, flat-footed 26**; Dodge, Mobility (+2 Dex, +10 Nat, +4 armor, +2 shield)

hp 68 (8 HD; 8d12+16); **Fast Healing:** 3

Damage Reduction: 5/magic

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects

Saves: Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +4

Speed: 30+10 ft.; Obsidian Climb

Melee: Slam +14 (1d8+6) or **Bite** +14 (1d4+6) or Longsword +13 (1d8+5; 19-20/x2)

Full Melee: Slam +12/+7 (1d8+6) and Shield Bash +12 (1d4+3) and **Bite** +12 (1d4+3)

Ranged: Longbow +10 (1d8; 20/x3)

Full Ranged: Longbow +10/5 (1d8; 20/x3)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +8/+3; **Grapple:** +14

Combat Options: Cleave, Power Attack, **Putrefying Touch** (DC 16), Spring Attack

Combat Gear: Chitin Armor, Chitin Longsword, Heavy Chitin Shield, Longbow, Obsidian Arrows x20.

Psi-Like Abilities (Psi): At will—aura sight*, body adjustment*, body equilibrium, catfall*, control light, elfsight**, false sensory input*, psionic charm*, psionic daze*, psionic suggestion*, ubiquitous vision**. ML 8th. The save DCs are Charisma-based.

Abilities: Str 22, Dex 15, Con --, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 15
SQ: Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60 ft., Fast Healing, **Gray Toughness 2**, Low-Light Vision, Obsidian Climb, Rebuke Undead (CL 8th, 5/day),

Skills, Undead traits, Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects.

Feats: Cleave, Dodge, Improved Initiative ^B, Improved Shield Bash ^B, Mobility ^B, Power Attack ^B, Speed of Thought, Spring Attack ^B, Two-Weapon Fighting.

Skills: Climb +9, Concentration +11, Intimidate +14, Jump +9, Knowledge (Warcraft) +12, Listen +8, Search +13, Sense Motive +8, Spot +14.

Possessions: none (-1 CR).

Putrefying Touch (Su): A touch from the undead causes flesh to develop boils and sores that ooze sickly yellow-colored pus. Creatures struck by the undead's natural attacks must make a Fortitude save. Creatures that fail receive a -4 penalty to Dexterity and a -4 penalty on interaction checks (such as Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate, and Sense Motive). The wounds last 1d8 days or until cured by a remove disease or heal spell.

Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects (Ex): The undead, unlike most others of its type, is susceptible to mind-affecting effects, which affect the undead as though its type were the same as that of a living version of the creature (or as a humanoid, if it has no living analog).



Duk'kneq CR 18

Male Goblin Zhen Wizard 9 / Necromant 8

NE Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Goblinoid, Psionic)

Init: +3; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft., Low-Light Vision; Listen +8, Search +20, Spot +14

Aura: -

Languages: Classic Halfling, Goblin, Ulyanese, Ulyanese Giant

AC: 28; touch 18, flat-footed 25** (+1 size, +3 Dex, +10 Nat, +4 Def)

hp 110 (17 HD; 17d12+17); **Fast Healing:** 3

Damage Reduction: 5/magic

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Immune: Fear, Turning, Undead Traits; **Weakness:**

Bound to Area, Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects, **Vulnerability to Sunlight**

Saves: Fort +10, Ref +13, Will +19

Speed: 40 ft.; Obsidian Climb

Melee: Slam +11 (1d8+2) or Touch +11 (by spell)

Ranged: Ranged Touch +12 (by spell)

Space: 5 ft.; Reach: 5 ft.

Base Attack: +8/+3; **Grapple:** +6

Combat Options: **Blinding Touch (DC 19)**, **Guilt Gaze (DC 19)**

Combat Gear: -

Spell-Like Abilities (Sp): At will – animate dead, command undead; CL 17th.

Psi-Like Abilities (Psi): At will—aura sight*, body adjustment*, body equilibrium, catfall*, control light, elfsight**, false sensory input*, psionic charm*, psionic daze*, psionic suggestion*, ubiquitous vision**. ML 20th. The save DCs are Charisma-based.

Wizard Spells (CL 17th (+4 vs. SR), DC 18 + spell level):

9th: Foresight

8th: Binding, *enlarged* project image, Trap the Soul

7th: greater arcane sight, *heightened* fireball, *maximized* ice storm, Prismatic Spray

6th: antimagic field, *enlarged* wall of force, *maximized* lightning bolt, greater dispel magic, **Shroud of Darkness**

5th: baleful polymorph, cone of cold, dominate person, mage's faithful hound, mindfog

4th: dimension door, fire shield, greater invisibility, *maximized* Magic Missile, minor creation, resilient sphere

3rd: displacement, dispel magic, halt undead, lightning bolt, major image, slow

2nd: Arcane Lock, Blur, detect thoughts, minor image, resist energy, web.

1st: alarm, magic missile x3, reduce person, shield

0th: light, detect magic, disrupt undead, read magic

Spellbook (leather scrolls)

Abilities: Str 14, Dex 16, Con --, Int 26, Wis 14, Cha 12

SQ: **Bound to Area (transformation vault)**, Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60 ft., Dread Lord, Fast Healing, Fear Immunity, Gravespeaker, Gray Casting, Gray Toughness, **Immunity to Turning**, Low-Light Vision, Obsidian Climb, Rebuke Undead (CL 17, 4/day), Skills, Undead traits,

Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects,

Vulnerability to Sunlight.

Feats: Craft Rod, Enlarge Spell, Forge Ring, Greater Spell Penetration, Heighten Spell ^B, Iron Will, Maximize Spell, Scribe Scroll ^B, Silent Spell, Spell Penetration.

Skills: Bluff +23, Concentration +21 Knowledge (Arcana) +28, Knowledge (Religion) +28, Knowledge (The Planes) +24, Listen +8, Move Silently +7, Ride +7, Search +20, Sense Motive +8, Spellcraft +30, Spot +14.

Possessions: 100,000cp or Combat Gear plus: Boots of Skating, Cloak of Resistance +5, Headband of Intellect +6, Ring of Protection +4.

Blinding Touch (Su): The undead can make a touch attack as a standard action that doesn't provoke an attack of opportunity. The touch causes blindness in the victim for 2d4 rounds. A Fortitude save negates the effect.

Bound to Area (Su): The undead cannot leave a particular area without weakening its connection to the Gray. The area may range from one room to several square miles. Each day the undead is away, it gains a negative level. When its negative levels equal its HD, the undead is destroyed. If it returns, it recovers 1 negative level per day.

Guilt Gaze (Su): The undead's gaze attack causes grief to intelligent creatures within 30 ft. Unless a victim makes a Will save, its most painful memories surface, wracking the victim with guilt over small incidents that happened years ago in its life. The guilt nauseates a creature for 1d4 rounds.

Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects (Ex): The undead, unlike most others of its type, is susceptible to mind-affecting effects, which affect the undead as though its type were the same as that of a living version of the creature (or as a humanoid, if it has no living analog).

Vulnerability to Sunlight (Ex): Direct sunlight deals the undead 1d6 points of damage each round.



Nafrai CR 18

Female Human Racked Spirit Cleric (Silt) 15

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NE Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Human, Incorporeal, Psionic)

Init: +2; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft.; Listen +14, Search +8, Spot +14

Aura: -

Languages: Remaan, Terran, Ulyanese

AC: 18; touch 18, flat-footed 16*; Incorporeal (+2 Dex, +4+2 Def)

hp 127 (15 HD; 15d12+30)

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects, Vulnerability to Raise Dead

Saves: Fort +11, Ref +9, Will +18

Speed: Fly 50 ft. (Perfect)

Melee: Touch +13 (1d6 plus Energy Drain)

Ranged: Touch +13 (by spell)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +11/+6/+1; **Grapple:** --

Combat Options: Death Cry (2/day, DC 21), Energy Drain (DC 21), Insanity (DC 21)

Combat Gear: -

Psi-Like Abilities: (ML = 15th. DC Charisma-based):

At will—aura sight*, empathy*, mindlink*, psionic dominate*; 3/day—recall agony*, telekinetic force*. *Power can be augmented.

Cleric Spells (CL 15th; DC 18 + spell level):

8th — Gray Rift (d), Mass Inflict Critical Wounds, Unholy Aura

7th — Destruction (d), Greater Scrying, Mass Cure Serious Wounds x2

6th — Disintegrate (d), Greater Dispel Magic, Harm, Undeath to Death, Word of Recall

5th — Cleansing flame, Elemental strike, Greater Command, Scrying, Unhallow, Sands of Time (d)

4th — Divination, Extended Magic Vestment, Freedom of Movement, Spell Immunity, Summon Monster IV, Tongues, Vampiric Touch (d)

3rd — Bestow curse x2, Contagion (d), Dispel magic, Locate Object, Searing Light, Speak With Dead

2nd — darkness, death knell, desecrate, Resist Elements, Return to the Earth, Rusting Grasp (d), Silence,

1st — Command, Curse Element, Deathwatch, Endure elements, Hide from undead, Return to the Earth (d), shield of faith

0 — Create Element, Detect Element, Detect Magic, Guidance, Resistance, Read Magic.

Abilities: Str --, Dex 14, Con --, Int 15, Wis 26, Cha 18

SQ: Darkvision 60 ft., Distractible (love/friendship/compassion), Gray Toughness 2, Rebuke Undead (CL 15th, 7/day), Skills, Undead Traits, Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects, Vulnerability to *Raise Dead*.

Feats: Brew Potion, Craft Wondrous Item, Elemental Cleansing, Extend Spell, Greater Spell Penetration, Skill Focus (Diplomacy), Spell Penetration.

Skills: Concentration +22, Diplomacy +25, Heal +8, Knowledge (Arcana) +20, Knowledge (Religion) +20, Knowledge (The Planes) +11, Listen +14, Search +8, Sense Motive +14, Spot +15, Spellcraft +11.

Possessions: 59,000cp or Combat Gear plus: Cloak of Charisma +2, Eyes of Expanded Vision*, Gloves of Dexterity +2, Periapt of Wisdom +6, Ring of Protection +2, Vest of Resistance +2.

Clerical Domains:

- **Dead Heart** - Class Skill: Intimidate; Granted Power: When dealing with undead, You get a +4 bonus on interaction checks (such as Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate, and Sense Motive). You also gain a +4 bonus on turn or rebuke attempts against undead.
- **Decaying Touch** - Class Skill: Knowledge (dungeoneering); Granted Power: You may use a death touch once per day. Your death touch is a supernatural ability that produces a death effect. You must succeed on a melee touch attack against a living creature (using the rules for touch spells). When you touch, roll 1d6 per cleric level you possess. If the total at least equals the creature's current hit points, it dies (no save).

Death Cry (Su): The sound of the undead's voice is enough to kill lesser creatures. Twice per day as a standard action, the undead can scream and wail. This unholy scream slays a total number of HD equal to half the undead's HD, affecting a 30-ft. radius and killing creatures with the least HD first unless they make a Fortitude save. Deaf creatures are immune to this power.

Distractible (Ex): The undead is easily distracted by a creature, object, or action that aggravates it to the point of rage. In combat, the undead rids itself of the distraction, eliminating the source even before dealing with prominent threats.

Energy Drain (Su): Living creatures hit by a racked spirit's incorporeal touch attack gain one negative level. For each negative level bestowed, the racked

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spirit gains 5 temporary hit points. A racked spirit can use its energy drain ability once per round. The DC for the Fortitude save to remove the negative level after 24 hours is 10 + 1/2 racked spirit's HD + racked spirit's Cha modifier.

Insanity (Su): The undead's natural attacks afflict its victim with temporary insanity. If the creature fails a Will save, it is confused for 2d10 minutes. The victim has no sense of right or wrong and behaves unpredictably.

Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects (Ex): The undead, unlike most others of its type, is susceptible to mind-affecting effects, which affect the undead as though its type were the same as that of a living version of the creature (or as a humanoid, if it has no living analog).

Vulnerability to Raise Dead (Ex): A spellcaster can target a racked spirit with a raise dead spell, destroying the creature with a successful touch attack unless the racked spirit makes a Will save. On a successful save, the racked spirit still takes 6d6 points of damage.



Rubza'if-in-Pain CR 21

Male Unique Rampager

NE Large Magical Beast (Human, Psionic)

Init: +2; **Senses:** Darkvision 60ft., Low-Light Vision, Scent; Listen +11, Search +7, Spot +21

Aura: Fear (30ft, DC 24)

Languages: Classic Dwarven, Classic Elven, Ulyanese, Ulyanese Giant

AC: 23; touch 11, flat-footed 21

(-1 size, +2 Dex, +12 Nat)

hp 448 (28 HD; 14d10+14d4+226)

Saves: Fort +23, Ref +19, Will +16

Speed: 50 ft.

Melee: Claw +24 (1d6+5) or Bite +24 (2d6+2 plus Poison) or Touch +24 (by spell)

Full Melee: 2x Claw +24 (1d6+5) and Bite +19 (2d6+2 plus Poison) or Touch +24 (by spell)

Ranged: Ranged Touch +21 (by spell)

Space: 10 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +20/+15/+10/+5; Grapple: +28

Combat Options: Acid (DC 29), Armor Damage (4d6+4), Awesome Blow, Great Cleave, Improved

Bull Rush, Poison (DC 29), Power Attack, Psionic Meditation (Move action)

Combat Gear: -

Psion (Kineticist) Powers (CL 11th, PP: 106+55, DC 20 + power level):

- +2 6th: Breath of the Black Dragon, Energy Current
- +4 5th: Adapty Body, Psionic Major Creation, Psionic True Seeing, Psychic Crush
- +4 4th: Death Urge, Empathic Feedback, Energy Adaptation, Psionic Freedom of Movement
- +4 3rd: Body Adjustment, Body Purification, Energy Bolt, Eradicate Invisibility
- +4 2nd: Recall Agony, Forced Sense Link, Sustenance, Thought Shield
- +5 1st: Control Flames, Control Light, Entangling Ectoplasm, Matter Agitation, Mind Thrust

Wizard Spells (CL 17th; DC 20 + spell level):

12th: *maximized* meteor swarm

11th: *maximized* polar ray

10th: *maximized* delayed blast fireball, *maximized* mage's sword

9th: Crushing Hand, Wish

8th: Antipathy, Greater Prying Eyes, *maximized* cone of cold

7th: Grasping Hand, Limited Wish, *maximized* wall of fire, spell turning

6th: chain lightning, disintegrate, Flesh to Stone, Forceful hand, Guards and Wards, *maximized* lightning bolt

5th: baleful polymorph, Mage's Private Sanctum, Mage's Faithful Hound, *maximized* scorching ray, Nightmare, Symbol of Pain,

4th: Arcane eye, black tentacles, fire shield, fire trap, greater invisibility, *maximized* magic missile

3rd: Arcane sight, blink, dispel magic, displacement, Gentle Repose, Lightning Bolt

2nd: blur, command undead, invisibility x2, magic mouth, shatter, web.

1st: alarm, burning hands, comprehend languages, magic missile x3, shield

0th: detect magic, disrupt undead, mage hand, message.

Rubza'if-in-pain's spellbook (leather scrolls) is the Death Mage Controller Saboteur List (See Spell Lists in Appendix).

Abilities: Str 20, Dex 15, Con 27, Int 30, Wis 15, Cha 10

SQ: Darkvision 60 ft., Gray Casting, Low-Light Vision, Scent.

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Feats: Alertness, Awesome Blow, Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Spell Capacity (10, 11, 12th), Maximize spell, Power Attack, Psionic Meditation, Quicken Power ^B, Scribe Scroll ^B.

Skills: Concentration +31, Knowledge (Arcana) +10+15+(16/2), Intimidate +0+12, Knowledge (Psionics) +10+15+(4/2), Knowledge (Religion) +10+0, Listen +11, Psicraft +33, Spellcraft +33, Spot +21.

Possessions: 220,000cp or Combat Gear plus: Amulet of Health +6, Dark Blue Rhomboid Ioun Stone (Alertness), Headband of Intellect +6, Tome of Clear Thought +5 (already read).

Acid (Ex): The acid that coats a rampager's claws not only deals extra damage on successful attacks, it also dissolves an opponent's armor and clothing, making those items useless in 1 round unless the wearer succeeds at a Reflex save (DC ½ HD + Con modifier). Success indicates that the affected equipment can be saved by washing it within 1 minute. Washing requires a full-round action and at least 1 pint of water.

Armor Damage (Ex): If a rampager hits with its bite attack, it tears at any armor worn by its foe, dealing 4d6+4 points of damage to the opponent's armor. Creatures not wearing armor are unaffected by this special attack. Armor reduced to 0 hit points is destroyed. Damaged armor may be repaired with a successful Craft (armorsmithing) check.

Fear Aura (Ex): Each creature that is the target of a rampager's attack or is within 30 feet of such a target must succeed at a Will saving throw (DC ½ HD + Cha modifier) or become shaken. A shaken creature that is still within 30 feet of the rampager on its next turn must make a second Will saving throw to avoid becoming frightened (same penalties as shaken; must flee until beyond the 30-foot radius of the effect).

Poison (Ex): A rampager's acidic saliva acts as a weak poison (Fortitude DC ½ HD + Con modifier) with each successful bite attack. The initial damage is 1 point of Strength damage, and the secondary damage is 1d4 points of Strength damage.

Scent (Ex): A rampager can detect approaching enemies, sniff out hidden foes, and track by sense of smell.



Volldräger's Guards CR 6

Male Human Thinking Zombie Fighter 5

Neutral Evil Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Human)

Init: +6; **Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft; Listen +9, Spot +9

Languages: Classic Dwarven, Orcish, Ulyanese

AC: 21, touch 13, flat-footed 19

(+2 Dex, +4 Nat, +3 armor, +1 shield, +1 Def)

hp 37 (5d12+5);

Damage Reduction: 5/magic; **Resistances:** Cold, Electricity 10

Immune: Undead Traits; **Weakness:** Vulnerability to Blessed Elements

Saves: Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +2

Speed: 30 ft (6 squares)

Melee: Heavy Mace +12 (1d8+8; 20/x2) or Claw +10 (1d4+5; 20/x2) or Bite +10 (1d6+5; 20/x2)

Space: 5 ft.; **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Attack: +5; **Grapple:** +10

Combat Options: Curse (DC 13), Disease (DC 13), Great Cleave, Power Attack

Combat Gear: MW Chitin Light Shield, Heavy Mace +1, MW Studded Leather Armor,

Abilities: Str 20, Dex 14, Con --, Int 15, Wis 12, Cha 12

SQ: Damage Reduction, Darkvision 60 ft., Gray Toughness 1, Resistances, Skills, Vulnerability to Blessed Elements

Feats: Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Initiative, Power Attack ^B, Weapon Focus (Heavy Mace)^B, Weapon Specialization (Heavy Mace)^B.

Skills: Climb +5+8, Jump +5+8, Listen +1+(8/2)+4, Search +2+(8/2)+4, Sense Motive +1+0+4, Spot +1+(8/2)+4.

Possessions: 4300 cp or Combat Gear plus: Ring of Protection +1.

Curse (Su): The undead can curse an individual when it is destroyed. As the final blow is made that kills the creature, the undead can curse its destroyer, as the bestow curse spell.

Resistances (Ex): A thinking zombie resists cold and electricity attacks.

Vulnerability to Blessed Elements (Ex): A thinking zombie takes half again as much (+50%) damage as normal from blessed elements.

Appendix 2: Traps

Acid Arrow Trap: CR 8; magic device; visual trigger (true seeing); automatic reset; multiple traps (two simultaneous *acid arrow* traps); Atk +9 ranged touch and +9 ranged touch; spell effect (*acid arrow*, 18th-level wizard, 2d4 acid damage for 7 rounds); Search DC 27; Disable Device DC 27. Cost: 83,500 gp, 4,680 XP. Note: This trap is really two CR 6 *acid arrow* traps that fire simultaneously, using the same trigger and reset.

Alarm Trap: CR 1; magic device; proximity trigger (*alarm*); automatic reset; spell effect (*alarm*, audible alarm); Search DC 26; Disable Device DC 26. Cost: 500 cp, 40 XP.

Fusillade of Spears Trap: CR 6; mechanical; proximity trigger; repair reset; Atk +21 ranged (1d8, spear);

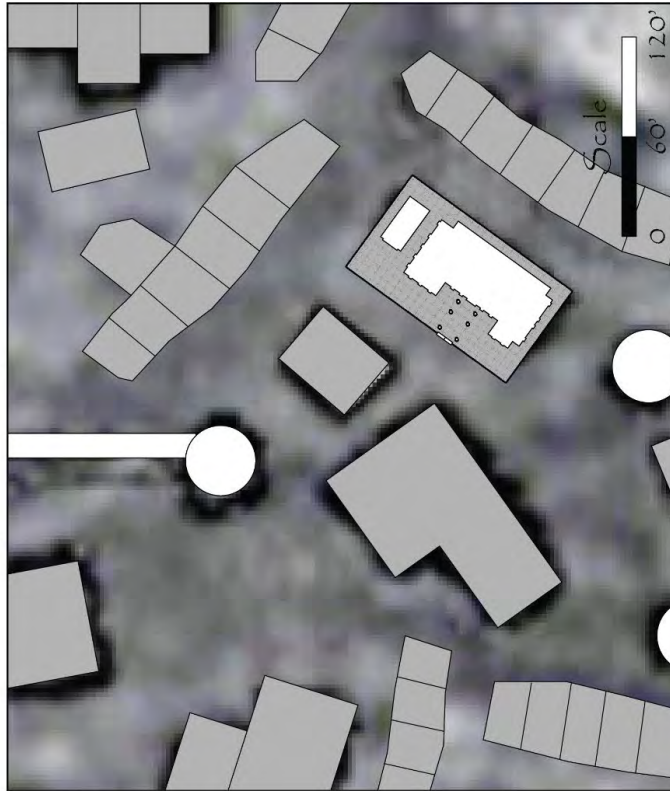
multiple targets (1d6 spears per target in a 10 ft.-by-10-ft. area); Search DC 26; Disable Device DC 20. Market Price: 31,200 gp.

Incendiary Cloud Trap: CR 9; magic device; proximity trigger (*alarm*); automatic reset; spell effect (*incendiary cloud*, 15th-level wizard, 4d6/round for 15 rounds, DC 22 Reflex Save half damage); Search DC 33; Disable Device DC 33. Cost: 60,000 gp, 4,800 XP.

Forcecage Trap: CR 8; magic device; proximity trigger (*alarm*); automatic reset; spell effect (*forcecage*, 13th-level wizard); Search DC 32; Disable Device DC 32. Cost: 120,500 gp, 3,640 XP.

Appendix 3: Maps

REGION AND NEIGHBORHOOD MAPS - GUINSWAY'S VILLAG



Group 5 – General
Appendices for
Adventures



Appendix A: Adventuring in the Dead Lands

Languages in the Dead Lands

The languages most commonly-used in the Dead Lands are ancient or “extinct” languages - that is to say, almost no living beings speak these languages

anymore. Communication between the modern and ancient languages is possible, but it can be awkward.

- If any outsiders speak modern Common, they can make an Intelligence check DC 15 to understand 20-80% (2d4 x 10%) of spoken or written Ulyanese. Speakers of modern city-state dialects such as Tyrian would have a similar chance of understanding their ancient ancestor languages, such as Remaan.
- For Classic Elven, Classic Dwarvish, and the Ulyanese Giant dialect, the percentage is 70-100% (1d4+6 x 100%), as these languages have evolved much more slowly over millennia. The Decipher Script skill and *comprehend languages, tongues*, or similar spells or abilities would also work.

Hazards of the Dead Lands

Dehydration

As PCs adventure, one overriding consideration will almost certainly be the supply of water. Of course, how much water a character needs depends upon their level of activity and race. An active character (walking, riding, or performing some other hard exertion) needs 1 gallon of water per day. An inactive character

Dehydration Effects Table

Amount of Water Consumed	Nonlethal Damage
Full requirement	none
Half or more of requirement	1d3
Less than half of requirement	1d6

(sitting, resting, or sleeping), needs ½ gallon of water per day. Further, if the character is in the shade during the entire day, they only need half the amount of water dictated by their amount of activity. By the same token, a character wearing metal armor requires twice as much water each day to avoid dehydration.

Certain races have different requirements for fluid consumption. Half-giants must consume twice the quantity of water (that is, two gallons of water per day when active or one gallon when inactive) as humans to avoid dehydration. Characters may supplement their water intake with the many common beverages available, including wine, beer, ale, and fruit juices. The fluid requirements per day remain the same. In times of desperation, players may suggest more outlandish liquids to stave off dehydration: honey, tree sap, even the blood of fallen monsters. Generally, none of these are suitable substitutes.

Under normal circumstances, (per the 3rd edition revised core rules) a character can survive without water for 24 hours plus a number of hours equal to their constitution score. At the end of this time, the character must attempt a Constitution check each hour (DC 10, +1 for each previous check). On a failure, the character suffers 1d6 points of nonlethal damage that cannot be recovered, even by magic or psionics, until

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the character consumes water. On Athas, it may not always be possible to obtain a full day's ration of water. Consumption of a partial day's water requirement allows a character to take a commensurate amount of nonlethal damage, as indicated by the table.

Dark Sun Races and Water Requirements

Some DMs might prefer the water requirement rules from previous editions of the game. The following water consumption rules reflect those from 2nd edition, but may disrupt game balance between races.

- Thri-kreen can go for one week on the amount of water it takes to sustain a human for one day. Thus, thri kreen characters only roll for dehydration once per every week that they go without water.
- Pterrans need only half as much water as humans.

Other Hazards

The Dead Lands can be quite an inhospitable place for living beings. The following hazards must be taken into account when adventuring on the blackglass:

Arcane Magic: The Dead Lands are essentially a Dead Magic zone for defilers and preservers, as there is no plant life from which to draw upon for spellcasting. Unless they have access to an alternate source of spell energy, all preserver and defiler wizards will not be able to cast spells. Particularly intelligent PCs, or those with some experience with the Gray, may observe the native undead casting arcane spells and discover the source of their power as the Gray. Whether or not such PCs can mimic this "graycasting" method is entirely up to the DM.

If PCs have experience before with regions devoid of plantlife, they may be aware of items which can store life energy for casting, and may actually have such an item on them.

Broken Obsidian: Characters or creatures falling upon broken obsidian, as a result of combat or clumsiness, have a 25% chance of taking 1d4 points of damage from the jagged edges.

Sleep Deprivation: The blackglass is unyielding and characters sleeping upon the obsidian will do so uncomfortably. The effect is similar to that of sleeping in armor, causing the character to be fatigued the next day (-2 Str, -2 Dex, can't charge or run).

Scorching Terrain: The surface of the obsidian under the daytime sun climbs to scorching temperatures. Flesh exposed to these extremes, such as feet in soleless shoes, scalds at the rate of 1d3 points of nonlethal damage per round.

Thirst and Heat: In the Dead Lands, the obsidian reflects the heat of the sun even more intensely than usual and all characters must increase their water intake by 50% to avoid dehydration.

Death and Undeath

Let it be said that no death is final in the Dead Land. Every being killed will rise again, sometimes mere seconds after death occurs, affected by the negative energy still lingering in the obsidian. Living creatures which die in the Dead Lands arise 24 hours later as an appropriate type of undead (depending on who or what killed them, or what unfinished business they have - i.e., at the DM's option). Characters reanimated in this way may also be bound to the Dead Lands as a Special Undead Weakness (see *Terrors of the Dead Lands*).

Appendix B: Rules Updates

Prestige Class Updates

Cornac

The Cornac prestige class that appears in the *Prestige Class Appendix II* had an incorrect class table. Below is the corrected version.

"Under all that armored flesh and bone, there is a mind..."
—Ome, mekillot handler

Animal merchants, caravan masters, gladiatorial managers and cities' templarates are always in need of animal handlers able to control the most unruly of beasts of burden — such as inixes, mekillots, and korinths — which sometimes turn on their trained handlers.

Anyone that already has an affinity for sensing the emotions of others can become a cornac, be they experts, psionicists, or any other class. Considered the lowest of psionic practitioners by the academies and schools of the Way, they still receive more respect and better wages than other civil workers. Few other races besides humans and dwarves use massive animals to accomplish tasks and as such do not train cornacs.

NPC cornacs have made their skills with animals a profession, which they practice on a daily basis, on all hours of the day, often accompanying caravans or armies for long trips.

Hit Die: d6

Becoming a Cornac

To qualify to become a cornac, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Entry Requirements

Base Attack Bonus: +2

Skills: Handle Animal 5 ranks, Sense Motive 2 ranks.

Psionics: Manifest level 3rd and able to manifest *empathy* and *telepathic projection*.

Class Features

Weapon and Armor Proficiencies: The cornac is proficient in the use of all simple weapons and with light armor but not shields.

Manifesting: At every level indicated on the table, you gain additional power points per day and access to new powers as if you had also gained a level in whatever manifesting class you belonged to before you added the prestige class. You do not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained (bonus feats, metapsionic or item creation feats, psicrystal special abilities, and so on). This essentially means that you add the level of cornac to the level of whatever manifesting class you have, then determines power points per day, powers known, and manifest level accordingly. If you have more than one manifesting class before you became a cornac, you must decide to which class you add the new level of cornac for the purpose of determining power points per day, powers known, and manifest level.

Empathic (Su): Beginning at 1st level, every time you manifest *empathy* or *telepathic projection*, you can apply the bonuses or penalties to Handle Animal checks as well.

Telepathic: By the 3rd level, whenever you use *telepathic projection* on an animal or magical beast creature, you alter the creature's attitude towards you by two steps in a positive direction, instead of one.

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Additionally, you gain an augmentation option unavailable to other manifesters of this power.

Augment: If you spend 2 additional power points, this power's maximum duration increases to 1 hour/level.

Dominating (Ex): At 5th level, you add *psionic dominate* to your powers known (if you don't already know it)

and can affect an animal or magical beast at no additional power point cost. Additionally, you can manifest *psionic dominate* at a reduced power point cost once per day. The cost of *psionic dominate* is reduced by your *cornac* level, to a minimum of 1 power point. The effect of this power is still restricted by your *manifester* level.

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spellcasting/Manifesting
1st	+0	+0	+0	+2	Empathic	+1 level of existing manifesting class
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+3	-	+1 level of existing manifesting class
3rd	+2	+1	+1	+3	Telepathic	+1 level of existing manifesting class
4th	+3	+1	+1	+4	-	+1 level of existing manifesting class
5th	+3	+1	+1	+4	Dominating	+1 level of existing manifesting class

Class Skills (2 + Int modifier per level): Handle Animal, Heal, Intimidate, Knowledge (nature), Profession, Ride, Survival, Use Rope.

Appendix C: Playing as the Unbound

Creating an Unbound Character

General Considerations When Making an Undead Character

There are several standard rules for turning an existing character into undead, all listed in various sources. To simplify the character creation process, they have been compiled here into one single location.

Undead Character Restrictions

As stated in *Terrors of the Dead Lands* (pg 7), Dark Sun characters of certain classes face restrictions when they are undead:

- Clerics: A cleric who is undead can only use their spells and class features if they worship a paraelemental force (magma, rain, silt, or sun). An undead cleric cannot have the ability to turn undead, only being allowed to rebuke undead.
- Druids: A druid who is undead can not use their spells and class features (except for proficiencies). For this reason, it is not advisable to run low level undead druid characters (but see the Blighter prestige class in *Faces of the Dead Lands*).
- Rangers: A ranger who is undead loses access to their spells and certain class features: animal companion, camouflage, hide in plain sight, wild empathy, and woodland stride (but see the Blighted Ranger feat in *Faces of the Dead Lands*).

Common Special Qualities to all Undead

All undead normally have the following traits:

- Immune to sleep, charm, hold, and mind-affecting effects (note immunity to mind-affecting effects is lost with the Unbound template).
- Undead have no Constitution Score
- All undead use d12 for their hit dice.

Undead Special Qualities

It is not advisable to add Undead Special Abilities (see *Terrors of the Dead Lands*, pg 13) to newly created Unbound PCs; each ability affects the character's Level Adjustment (LA) and can disrupt game balance. At higher levels, such abilities could be added to PCs as rewards from their patrons or in lieu of gaining another class level.

The one exception might be the Graycasting special quality, which will be necessary for low level wizards to operate in the Dead Lands.

Unbound (template) CR +2, LA +1 (+3 outside the Deadlands)

The Unbound is the name given to a rare type of corporeal undead only seen in the Dead Lands. What most sets them apart is the fact they are naturally uncontrollable through the common necromantic means used by the Dead Thrones and other faction leaders, and thus they are the free agents of the Deadlands.

The reactions of Dead Lands undead to them varies – some believe them to be only a rumor, while others resent them or see them as defective for their unwillingness to follow orders like other newly created undead. Most of the powerful and enterprising undead leaders, however, see the utility in such wild cards and tolerate their erratic behavior so long as they remain useful.

An unbound's body is generally in good condition, and an intensity and awareness rarely seen in the

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undead burns in its eyes. An unbound usually closely resembles the type of undead it was expected to have animated as (unbound found trapped under the obsidian usually resemble the zhen they were found with, etc). The unbound's unliving nature can be easily

determined, as the wounds it suffered in death do not heal (even after the unbound has been restored to full hit points), and the gaping wounds can be seen unless hidden by clothes. An unbound that moves about during the day will quickly begin to decay. Most unbound therefore prefer the night.

DM's Note: The unbound are specifically meant to allow for low-level adventures to be run in the Deadlands with native undead PCs, and are balanced against threats and challenges they might find there. Should the characters leave the Deadlands, add an additional +2 Level Adjustment to the characters. (The Gray energy of the obsidian amplifies the intelligence and power of all resident undead, and leaving that behind renders the undead diminished until they return.)

Applying the Unbound Template

"Unbound" is an acquired template that can be added to any humanoid, monstrous humanoid or giant (referred to hereafter as the base creature). An unbound has all the character's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Appearance: At character creation, the appearance of the Unbound is set based upon the undead type from which it is derived. This could be Dwarven Banshee, Fallen, Kaisharga, Thinking Zombie, T'liz, or Zhen. The Unbound will not share any other special abilities or weaknesses with the original stock other than its appearance.

Once this appearance is set, it cannot be changed.

Size and Type: The creature's type changes to undead. Do not recalculate its base attack bonus, saves, or skill points. Size is unchanged.

Hit Dice: Increase all current and future Hit Dice to d12s.

Armor Class: An unbound has a +4 natural armor or the base creature's natural armor bonus, whichever is better.

Attack: Unbound have slam attacks. If the base creature does not have this attack form, use the appropriate damage value from the table below

according to the unbound's size. Creatures that have other kinds of natural weapons retain their old damage values or use the appropriate value from the table below, whichever is better.

Full Attack: An unbound fighting without weapons uses either its slam attack (see table on right) or its natural weapons (if it has any). If armed with a weapon, it usually uses the weapon as its primary attack along with a slam or other natural weapon as a natural secondary attack.

Size	Slam
Fine	1
Diminutive	1d2
Tiny	1d3
Small	1d4
Medium	1d6
Large	1d8
Huge	2d6
Gargantuan	2d8
Colossal	4d6

Special Qualities

An unbound retains all the base creature's special qualities and gains those described below.

Immunity to Turning (Ex): The unbound react differently to displays of negative or positive energy than most undead. Unbound cannot be turned or rebuked.

Sunlight Weakness (Ex): The flesh of an unbound quickly begins to deteriorate in the heat of the cruel Athasian sun. Each hour the unbound spends unprotected in direct sunlight, it must make a Fortitude save (DC 5, +1 for each previous check) or take a cumulative -1 penalty to Charisma. An unbound whose Charisma drops to 0 withdraws into a catatonic, coma-like torpor and is Helpless.

This damage will heal 1 point per day.

Rapid Revivification (Ex): Due to some quirk in their animation process, unbound that have been destroyed can be returned to unlife more readily than other undead creatures. The spell Create Undead affects an Unbound as a Raise Dead spell would affect a living creature, and Create Greater Undead would affect it as Resurrection. The spell Animate Dead followed by application of Unliving Identity can also fully restore an unbound (rather than becoming a Thinking Zombie).

Unholy Toughness (Ex): An unbound has an especially strong link to the Gray. It gains a bonus to

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its hit points equal to its Charisma modifier × its Hit Dice. For player characters, this effectively means that their Charisma modifier replaces their Constitution modifier for calculating hit points.

Vulnerability to Mind-Affecting Effects (Ex): Unbound, unlike most other undead, are susceptible to mind affecting effects, which affect the undead as though its type were the same as that of a living version of itself.

Abilities: Increase from the base creature as follows: Str +4, Int +2, Cha +2. Being undead, an unbound has no Constitution score.

Skills: Unbound receive a +4 racial bonus on Listen, Search, Sense Motive, and Spot checks.

Environment: the Deadlands

Organization: Solitary or party (3-7)

Challenge Rating: Same as character +2

Treasure: Standard.

Alignment: Tends toward evil, but can be any non-good alignment.

Advancement: By character class.

Level Adjustment: Same as the base creature +1 (+3 outside the Deadlands)



Appendix D: Additional Adventure Seeds

The Secret of Osseous Stadium

Curiously, chariot racing still exists as a sport in Deshentarum. Is it just for The Vizier's pleasure, a way of conditioning and training new chariot riders to fight the Cholites, or is there a secret purpose to this incredible stadium seemingly made of countless discarded bones?

The Vizier has not been shy about building the best for himself. He has single-handedly resurrected the sport of chariot racing in the Dead Lands, using it as a method of determining survival of the fittest for his soldiers and captured soldiers from other lands. Or so it appears.

Constructed on a framework of obsidian but clad and detailed in bone, Osseous Stadium is an ostentatious display of wealth and power in a land where flesh and bone are the only true commodities. But rumor has it that the Vizir has actually been assembling the bones to create a massive bone golem juggernaut with which to finally decimate his rival Dead Lords in Harkor and Shadowmourn.

The PCs somehow discover proof of this and must decide what to do with the information. Discovering how to gain control of such a creature would likely be quite the feat, but once they do, the real difficulties begin.

Passing control of this monster over to a foreign power (or taking it for themselves) would badly damage Deshentu, and make them hunted by The Vizier.

Disabling the monster would irritate the Vizier but preserve the status quo.

Revealing the existence of the monster to the other Dead Lords - and letting them keep The Vizier from activating it - might be another non-violent way of disabling it.

Stirring the Heart

Volldrager has somehow managed to steal the Heart of Negchar from under the noses of the Descendants of the Chosen. With its removal from its secure den under the city, earthquakes have begun to wrack the City of a Thousand Dead, and residents have begun to disappear, only to be discovered later, mysteriously trapped beneath the obsidian. Unbeknownst to the residents, the Great One has been drawn to the City and begun to stir.

Now, someone must retrieve the Heart of Negchar and return it to (the catacombs) beneath the City before the City is destroyed and the Great One truly awakens....

The Claw of the Forgotten

The PCs have (somehow) gained possession of the Claw of the Dead Lands. During an encounter with a regiment of Deshenten giant skeletons, the skeletons refuse to fight them. If the PCs question them, the skeletal giants speak (a rarity), telling of how this claw is a holy talisman of their ancient shaman, and how an ancient prophecy told of a day of Ancestral Reconciliation when the ancient shaman is reunited with his lost talisman.

The undead giants insist on escorting the PCs to find their ancient shaman, and to bring this claw to him. Eventually they and the PCs discover that this shaman is none other than the Nameless Shaman himself, and from him they learn of the terrible tragedy which befell the ancient giants in the hills of Ulyan so many millennia ago, and what the Claw really means to him and his estranged people. Will the PCs find a way to set things right or will they become the next victims of the Nameless Shaman's eternal war against the smaller races?

The Lost of Ghash-Naarg

The PCs discover Ghash-Naarg, where they are captured by the Chosen of Shabnas and are brought before Shabnas himself. But rather than killing them, he presses them for knowledge of his people - the orcs - and of Celik, and then asks them to go to Celik and search to discover what happened to the refugees from the allied orc tribes.

Can the PCs discover the fate of orcish refugees from the beginning of the Cleansing Wars, or is the quest really as hopeless as it seems? And if so, how will they tell Shabnas?

Or do the ruins of Celik hide a shocking secret? And if orcs still exist somewhere on Athas, what might Abalach-re do about it?

Gretch's Charnelhouse

The Charnelhouse is a huge complex located twenty miles north-west of Gretch's tower, comprised of three large stone buildings and a number of smaller, auxiliary buildings. The compound was created to process the tremendously large number of dead expected from the Battle of the Tforkatch River and the Siege of Nargavos, which Gretch had hoped to animate and offer to Rajaan as his own personal Cleansing Army. Rajaan, however, rebuffed and denounced Gretch's plans to reanimate those that fell during the Siege. Although Gretch's agents did manage to steal and reanimate a great many corpses from the ruins of Nargavos, with order the majority of the bodies incinerated to prepare for the construction of the Navel, and so the Charnelhouse was never used at even a fraction of its full capacity.

Each of the larger buildings held two spheres of polished obsidian, measuring ten feet in diameter and constantly emitted an eerie reddish-brown light. The spheres were used to store an incredible amount of energy drawn from the Gray, which Gretch had collected during his early experiments into undeath. This Gray energy is what was used to create Gretch's forces at the Charnelhouse, and had barely been tapped. When the Obsidian Tide struck, Gretch's

reanimators had already abandoned the Charnelhouse for the safety of the Gray Tower, but they left behind an untold number of preserved corpses. Afterwards, Gretch deemed the complex unnecessary, as the power of the Obsidian Tide reanimated whole nations of undead for Gretch to command and the process of graycasting had been greatly refined.

Today, the Charnelhouse still lies buried beneath the obsidian, located somewhere east of Gretch's Obsidian Tower, near where Shansanar's realm meets the Forbidden Mountains. The corpses stored there have long-since been reanimated by the inherent power of the Dead Lands, and the resulting undead have tunneled beneath the obsidian to reconnect the complex's various buildings. These trapped undead exist in a strange sort of unending war, banding together into temporary alliances and brutally cutting other groups down, only to be reanimated soon after by the Gray energy leaking from the obsidian orbs.

The PCs have been quietly recruited by Las-ufar, Gretch's chief ambassador. Among the legions discarded and ruined bodies left in the Charnelhouse, Las-ufar believes an artifact of Nargavos can be found - one long lost in the Battle of Tforkatch River. Only Las-ufar knows about the artifact, as he was present when it was lost, and he believes he can have the PCs to acquire it without Gretch finding out.

Once the PCs venture underground, they will discover there is far more contained within the Charnelhouse than even Las-ufar or Gretch recall, including undead monstrosities the likes of which even the Dead Lands have never seen before.

Open Heart Surgery

Negchar - former member of the Descendants of the Chosen and leader of the Custodians of the Dark - has been missing for some time. Negchar disappeared after one of his subordinates, Ac'nac'wo, attempted to assassinate him and take possession of the artifact they had created - the Heart of Negchar. Rumors have long abounded regarding Negchar's fate: most accounts agree that he was not killed, but instead vanished to escape across the blackglass. The most widely-credited rumors claim that he was killed in a battle with the bugdead, that he rules a canyon-valley in the Forbidden Mountains, or that he has established a hidden realm deep beneath the Obsidian Plain. But the question remains: where is Negchar and what is he doing?

Adventures in the Dead Lands

The leaders of the City of a Thousand Dead fear they know exactly what he is doing: realizing the power that the Heart is rumored to have - granting control over all undead on the blackglass. Rumors emerge that Negchar, long absent from the City of a Thousand Dead, has recently been reaching out to old contacts and has begun his final preparations to seize ultimate power over the Dead Lands. The faction leaders of the City of a Thousand Dead approach the PCs, seeking capable agents to find and, if necessary, stop Negchar from achieving his goals.

For King's Ages, Negchar has been hiding right under the nose of the Dead Lord who most covets the powers of the Heart of Negchar: Gretch. Stealing necromantic and planar lore directly from the Manipulator's personal library, Negchar has been looking for a way to tie his actual unliving heart to the artifact and directly tap into its abilities, infusing himself with immense necromantic energy and controlling the Heart from afar. Such incredible amounts of Gray energy being channeled through the obsidian cannot help but draw the attention of the Great One, however. As the powerful obsidian quasi-elemental and undead spirit of the land begins to stir, who can say what will befall the residents of the Obsidian Plain?

commander from the Cleansing Wars. He and his troops recently escaped from the Beardpit Mines and fled the Dead Lands to seek out news of his former master Gallard.

When the PCs return to Nibenay with Dodam's head, the Shadow King himself takes possession of it, only to return soon after and demand the PCs travel to the Dead Lands to retrieve a specific object contained within an ancient silver lockbox. Dodam Linass' men had carried it with them into the Beardpit Mines, and it surely remains there.

Unfortunately, a newly established faction of powerful undead now controls the blackglass surrounding the still open Beardpit Mines. Calling themselves the Cairn-Born, these undead lords control a significant force of Disciples slaves and are engaged in a 3-way conflict with both a massive horde of bugdead and the sorely besieged gnomes of Arludas.

Should the PCs win their way past these groups (either diplomatically or by force), they will discover the coffer contains nothing but a simple locket bearing an inscription to someone named "Gallard" - what could make such an item so valuable, and what use could it be to Nibenay?"

Rejoining Gallard

"Nibenese templars reach out to the PCs with an offer of employment. A number of caravans carrying important goods to Nibenay have been destroyed recently by a new group of raiders in the southern Tablelands. The Shadow King wishes the PCs to dispose of the raiders and bring him the head of their leader.

When the PCs head south, they learn these raiders not only attacked the caravans, but also every living soul passing through the area - every traveler, settlement, and desert tribe - and they have never taken prisoners. The PCs also learn that this is no ordinary group of raiders. Indeed, the raiders are actually a small band of ravenous undead, ravaging everything in their path and adding those who fall against them to their number.

If the PCs manage to overcome the undead raiders and interrogate their leader before taking his head, they learn that his name is Dodam Linass, a former

Qwith and the Lens

The PCs' receive an urgent message from an informant in Shadowmourn, indicating that Qwith has assembled a substantial number of troops and begun a march towards the southern Tablelands, intent on recovering the Dark Lens. Investigation reveals that Qwith's army is marching on a course that leads straight to the southwestern shore of the Sea of Silt, and it would seem that Qwith is determined to head for the heart of the Cerulean Storm and recover the Dark Lens.

The sorcerer-monarchs have also learned of Qwith's march, and it appears that Nibenay and Lalali-Puy both intend to stop her, with each sending a massive army from their respective city-state to intercept Qwith at the halfway point, just west of the Crimson Monolith. If the three armies are allowed to meet, incredible carnage will ensue, with the losses destabilizing both of the city-states and Shadowmourn for decades - if not centuries - to come, and possibly even threatening the fragile peace that currently exists between Nibenay and Glug.

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Adventures in the Dead Lands

By the Pristine Tower Development Group

A giant black spot on every map, the Dead Lands have long been known as the most forbidding place any living being can visit. To go there is suicide.

Or is it?

Those few powerful and foolish enough to visit the Dead Lands and survive the journey tell stories of complex power struggles, desperate escapes, and encounters that could change the face of Athas itself.

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Based on the original DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson and on the new edition of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game designed by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Rich Baker, and Peter Adkison.

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