



EPIC

21-30

BETRAYAL AT MONADHAN

By David Noonan

An adventure for 21st-level characters

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“Betrayal is the only truth that sticks.”

—Arthur Miller

“Betrayal at Monadhan” is an adventure for five 21st-level characters. By the end of the adventure, the PCs should be midway through 22nd level. This adventure is the sequel to “Tyranny of Souls” in the Scales of War adventure path, and it leads directly to the next adventure: “Grasp of the Mantled Citadel.” It also plays well as a standalone and can be adapted for use in your ongoing campaign.

In “Betrayal at Monadhan,” the PCs travel to Monadhan, a domain where those who’ve betrayed their family, friends, god, or nation suffer supernatural imprisonment. While seeking a portal to an even darker realm, the PCs must contend with a grief-mad, undead dragon, its cambion and death giant allies, and the best-known betrayer of all: Kas, whose sword cut off the hand of his god.

BACKGROUND

Tiamat's black exarch, Mornujhar, has hidden away a ritualist of immense knowledge. The ritualist is in a dark realm, working on a ritual that will bring about Bahamut's doom. The only way to reach the exarch and the ritualist is to travel to Monadhan, the Domain of Betrayal, and pass through a portal there.

*Not only does a dark lord—
an undead dragon named
Arantor—guard the portal, but
the denizens of Monadhan
cannot leave voluntarily unless
they possess the key.*

The key would allow passage either back to the world or to Mornujhar's demesne, and it is always the object of greatest betrayal in Monadhan.

Right now, the key and object of great betrayal is the *Sword of Kas*, which is also part of Arantor's hoard. Kas himself has come to Monadhan in search of it, gathering around him a crew of ritually enhanced vampires.

Into this volatile mix step the PCs, who are trying to keep both Kas and Arantor at bay while they journey through Monadhan and use the *Sword of Kas* to get to Mornujhar. In more than one way, the price of success may be high. The PCs may be forced into betrayals of their own to escape Monadhan, and such betrayals might play into the hands of Vecna himself, who pulls the puppet strings in very subtle ways.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

The PCs begin the adventure under the Coalition's protection in Sayre, where they meet an angel of secrets who calls herself Rachaela. Rachaela tells them the tale of Mornujhar and impresses upon them the importance of finding out what the ritualist is up to and stopping it. Rachaela pays the PCs to travel to Monadhan, use the portal leading to the shadowed demiplane of Vaerotherim, and confront the ritualist once and for all.

The PCs' trip to Monadhan is complicated by the difficulty of willingly leaving Monadhan, a supernatural prison for traitors and betrayers. To use the portal, the PCs must find Monadhan's key: whatever object in the realm is the most potent symbol of betrayal. They must also defeat Arantor, the dark lord of Monadhan—an undead dragon which guards the portal itself.

THE QUESTS

The climax of the PCs' major quest, *Defeating Irfe-lujhar*, occurs in the next adventure, "Grasp of the Mantled Citadel." But a minor quest in this adventure is the first step to completing that one.

Minor Quest—Betray the Betrayer

The PCs double-cross Kas the Betrayer, accepting his aid but then using the *Sword of Kas* themselves rather than letting it fall into Kas's hands.

Reward: 3,200 XP.

Once in Monadhan, the PCs travel through the jungle and reach the shantytown where most of Monadhan's denizens—a sorry mix of betrayers from all realms and times—live their lives in squalor. The PCs speak to a seer named Sarissa, who reveals that the current key to Monadhan is the *Sword of Kas*, the artifact that cut off the hand of the god Vecna. The PCs' inquiries put them into conflict with vampires skulking around the shantytown. After several battles, the PCs learn that the vampires are working for Kas himself.

Kas confronts the PCs and offers them a bargain: he will tell the PCs how to defeat the dark lord that guards the portal if the PCs recover the *Sword of Kas* and turn it over to him. The PCs realize that Kas doesn't know that the sword is also the ticket out of the domain of Monadhan. Kas keeps his part of the bargain and tells the PCs how Arantor's grief and shame over his own horrible crime—the slaughter of a village and the murder of his daughter centuries ago—takes tangible form in the lower cavern of Arantor's lair. Making Arantor's victims come to life will distract and weaken the dark lord enough that the PCs can win the day, recover the sword, and use the portal.

After fighting their way through magical caverns that rearrange themselves, the heroes reach a final showdown with Arantor. They'll need to use their tactical acumen, the power they've acquired thus far, and Kas's advice to defeat the dark lord. Then they must decide whether to betray Kas and keep the sword for themselves so they can use the portal to reach the demiplane of Vaerotherim.

The PCs don't know it (yet), but their success is mitigated by the fact that "Rachaela" is actually Niuria, an angel of secrets who serves Vecna. The God of Secrets will be pleased beyond measure if the PCs can betray Kas, giving him a taste of his own medicine and keeping the sword out of his grasp.

SETTING

Other than an introductory skill challenge, this adventure takes place entirely within the Shad-owrealm of Monadhan, the Domain of Betrayal. Arantor, the dark lord of Monadhan, inadvertently created the domain centuries ago when, during a war, he slaughtered an entire town of civilians, then murdered his own daughter in an effort to keep his crime a secret. Since Arantor's first betrayal, Monadhan's population has slowly grown as traitors, turncoats, and double-crossers of all stripes have found themselves surrounded by an inexorable mist, then deposited in Monadhan with little chance for escape.

Monadhan appears as a dismal, twisted reflection of the jungle valley where Arantor's original crime took place. Impenetrable mist surrounds the valley on all sides at a distance of a few miles from the valley's edges (impenetrable unless you possess the key of Monadhan, of course). Near the center of the valley is a small rise with a ruined keep atop it and a shantytown at its base. Underneath that keep are the magical caverns where the PCs will ultimately go—caverns that are home to Arantor, the Sword of Kas, and the portal to Vaerothim.

TREASURE

As with previous installments of the Scales of War campaign, "Betrayal at Monadhan" makes use of the parcel system of treasure rewards as described in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. The characters should accumulate thirteen treasure parcels by the end of the adventure. You can supply these treasures in whatever way you wish, but the following list presents the most likely encounters to bear treasure. During your preparation, assign parcels from those that follow to the encounters in the spaces provided.

Use the players' wish lists to come up with magic items for the first six parcels. Consider saving at least one or two of the highest-level magic items for the end of the adventure, Arantor's dragon hoard. If any PC has fallen behind gear-wise, you can correct that disparity by putting an item or even two items from that wish list in parcels A, B, and C.

Parcel A: _____, S1 (payment advance from "Rachaela").

Parcel B: _____, S1 (payment advance from "Rachaela").

Parcel C: _____, S1 (payment advance from "Rachaela").

Parcel D: _____, T1 (within the seer's hut).

Parcel E: _____, T4 (in the unearthed coffin).

Parcel F: _____, T4 (in the unearthed coffin).

Parcel G: Two *masks of familiar betrayal* worth 65,000 gp each, C5 (hanging next to the rack).

Parcel H: _____, C5 (carried by the huecuva).

Parcel I: tapestries collectively worth 125,000 gp, C6 (on the walls).

Parcel J: _____, C8 (carried by Bahlik Gur).

Parcel K: _____, C8 (carried by Bahlik Gur).

Parcel L: _____, C9 (Arantor's lair).

Parcel M: _____, C9 (Arantor's lair).

Parcel N: _____, C9 (Arantor's lair).

Parcel O: _____, C9 (Arantor's lair).

Based on the guidelines in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, the following parcels can go in the areas above. Consult the wish lists your players gave you for the first eight parcels, making the items appear to be of githyanki manufacture where appropriate.

Parcel 1: Magic item, level 25.

Parcel 2: Magic item, level 25.

Parcel 3: Magic item, level 24.

Parcel 4: Magic item, level 23.

Parcel 5: Magic item, level 23.

Parcel 6: Magic item, level 22.

Parcel 7: 1,000 pp and four articulated dragon models with sapphire scales (worth 15,000 gp each)

Parcel 8: 1,100 pp.

Parcel 9: 700 pp and a pouch with 5,000 gp worth of residuum.

Parcel 10: 500 pp and a *potion of recovery*.

Parcel 11: Three golden monkey statuettes (worth 10,000 gp each), one 5,000 gp ruby, and three *potions of vitality*.

Parcel 12: Seven 5,000 gp jacinths.

Parcel 13: Three platinum rings with inset diamonds (worth 7,500 gp each) and 2,500 gp.

PREPARING FOR ADVENTURE

This may be your D&D group's first foray into epic-tier play. For you, the shift from 20th to 21st level should be a smooth one. You'll find that the monsters are no more complex than the ones you're accustomed to. You'll do a little more mental arithmetic simply because the numbers are bigger, but otherwise, the transition to epic tier doesn't change what's going on behind your DM screen very much.

While it's a small step for you, it's more of a leap for your players, who have new powers and a whole new epic destiny to deal with. At first, they may need help from the arbiter at the table and an expert at D&D: you. (Yes, if you're running this adventure, you can call yourself a D&D expert. Congratulations!) Take a look at the PCs' new powers and abilities so you can adjudicate them efficiently and quickly at the table. Because you see everything that's going on, you often have a good vantage point to spot those "teachable moments."

You have an ulterior motive for checking out those new abilities, of course: All that new complexity the players get at epic tier is eventually going to get focused on the monsters and machinations you set up for the rest of Scales of War, and perhaps beyond. Knowing what the heroes are capable of with their rituals, magic items, powers, and abilities prepares you to keep them challenged and to keep the action moving. (Challenging the characters is different from thwarting them, of course.)

The most important thing you can do before each session is to spend a few minutes reviewing each encounter that the players are likely to reach during that session.

WHAT YOU NEED TO PLAY

This adventure contains everything you need to play, including background information, setup, encounters and maps. You might wish to review any appropriate DUNGEONS & DRAGONS 4th Edition rules before play begins.

The most important thing you can do before each session is to spend a few minutes reviewing each encounter that the players are likely to reach during that session. That should re-familiarize you with monster abilities and tactics and a sense of what other rules (typically those related to skills or terrain) will come into play. Don't try to commit the monsters to memory in the minutes leading up to the session's start. You're just planting the seed in your brain so that when you see the encounter later, you say to yourself, "I remember *these* guys."

WHAT IS AN ADVENTURE PATH?

An adventure path is a connected series of adventures that comprises an entire D&D campaign, from the heroes' humble beginnings at 1st level to their epic triumphs at the pinnacle of level 30. These adventures cover all three tiers of play: heroic, paragon, and epic. Each tier is covered by roughly six adventures, meaning that the entire adventure path consists of eighteen adventures. Each adventure covers from one to three levels, but you can also have the PCs undertake side quests to supplement their XP. This assures that the PCs are the correct level to tackle each adventure.

"Betrayal at Monadhan" is the first adventure in the epic tier, so it starts revealing to the PCs the enormity of Tiamat's evil. The heroes will spend this adventure and its sequel, "Grasp of the Mantled Citadel," beyond the Coalition's call. That 30th-level climax is looming closer and closer. A classic villain from D&D history, Kas the Betrayer, makes an appearance here, and the PCs may very well finish this adventure with a full-fledged artifact, the Sword of Kas, within their (literal) grasp.

ADAPTING THE ADVENTURE

“Betrayal at Monadhan” is designed with five PCs in mind. You can adapt the adventure for larger groups by adding additional treasure parcels and monsters using the guidelines presented in the *Dungeon Master’s Guide*. When adapting the scenario for larger groups, bear in mind that the second half of the adventure takes place in caverns—expansive caverns, but caverns nonetheless. Make sure any monsters you add will fit inside the caverns while giving PCs and monsters alike enough room to move around.

You don’t need to increase the number of monsters. You can instead increase the levels of those creatures using the guidelines on page 174 of the *Dungeon Master’s Guide*. Because the upper caverns rearrange themselves anyway, you can certainly make the caverns larger without worrying that they’ll encroach on other chambers.

This adventure is designed for characters starting at 21st level, but a larger group of lower-level characters should have no problem with these challenges. The party can tackle the challenges of Monadhan at their own pace. Your only concern should be that the heroes are unlikely to want to fight Kas after encounter T4 (which follows on the heels of at least two and maybe as many as four tough encounters), and that the PCs aren’t running on fumes when they reach the climax at encounter C9. If you’re worried about the level disparity, Monadhan has plenty of opportunities for leveling up. The wilderness trek to the shantytown can have more than two encounters (and who knows what ancient mysteries are in that jungle, cast into the Shadowfell by Arantor’s great betrayal?)



MASK OF FAMILIAR BETRAYAL

Exquisitely crafted from nearly paper-thin marble and bound in delicate golden frames, these masks are minor magic items that have almost no game effect. When worn, the wearer can choose an adjacent creature. Until the wearer ends the effect or moves away from the creature, he or she can choose to appear as an exact likeness of the target creature’s great love or a close family member.

Because the mask works only when adjacent to the target and only for that target, the mask of familiar betrayal has limited use for espionage and other subterfuge. The mask is commonly employed by torturers to break the spirit of their victims by making it seem as if someone they love is hurting them, by prostitutes offering the simulation of a lost love, or by bored nobles with money to burn who seek entertainment in the deception of their fellows.

The masks have little value as magic items for an adventurer, but they are also always made of incredible and expensive materials. A typical mask (including the masks found in this adventure) is worth 65,000 gp.

PART 1: ONWARD FROM SAYRE

Part 1 of this adventure is a short skill challenge to provide some exposition and set the PCs in motion. It also introduces an NPC that will appear in later installments in the Scales of War adventure path

ONWARD FROM SAYRE ENCOUNTERS

Before the PCs do anything else, make sure that they're rested, they've done any shopping, and that they're in a state of general readiness. They'll have opportunities to engage in commerce, research, and rituals at other points in the adventure, but there's no point in setting up the adventure, then having the players respond with, "OK, but let's go shopping first."

SI: ON THE SIDE OF THE ANGELS

This encounter starts with a Coalition man-at-arms approaching the PCs and inviting them to a conference chamber "at their earliest convenience." If pressed, every other word out of the man-at-arms's mouth is that he's only the messenger, etc., but that there's a Rachaela—"some sort of diplomat, I think, and an *angel*"—that wants to speak to them.

Skill Challenge: On the Side of the Angels (page 18).



MONADHAN

Monadhan, once a simple jungle valley whose location in the world is lost to history, is now the name of the Domain of Betrayal within the Shadowfell. The sigil sequence to travel there with Planar Portal is esoteric (Arcana DC 30) to discover through research, but it's not secret per se. It's that no one goes there via Planar Portal and similar rituals because they can't bring you back out again. More information on Monadhan can be found in the "[Domains of Dread: Monadhan](#)" article from *Dragon* #378.

The vast majority of Monadhan's residents didn't use any ritual to get there. They betrayed someone—perhaps a spouse, parent, superior officer, priest, or liege. Some got away with their betrayals, and some didn't. But afterward (sometimes days or weeks afterward), the betrayer wound up ensnared in fog that seemed to arise from nowhere. The fog grew thicker and thicker, then a warm breeze blew it away...leaving the betrayer on the edge of Monadhan with impenetrable fog behind and a teeming jungle in front.

The unearthly fog, impenetrable to the eye, suddenly parts, and you find yourself standing atop a fog-capped hill. Similar hills surround a jungle valley that stretches before you. To the north, a massive waterfall feeds a river winding a serpentine path across the valley floor.

In the middle of the valley is a low rise, more a barren hump than an actual hill. You can just make out the straight edges of defensive walls near the top. Tendrils of smoke rise from what must be chimneys or campfires nearby.

Closer to you, what looks like a thin, tenuous footpath winds its way along the low ridge, just inside the fog line. A wider path heads downhill, into the jungle and in the approximate direction of that hump near the center of the valley.

The characters' first thought may be to just turn around and walk back through the fog to wherever they came from. Unless they have the Sword of Kas, this won't work. Instead, they stumble through the fog for several minutes, then emerge at another random spot on the rim of the Monadhan foothills, almost indistinguishable from where they first arrived.

MONADHAN'S PROPERTIES

With no day or night to speak of, time takes on an indeterminate quality in Monadhan, and no one seems to age. That doesn't necessarily mean that the domain somehow suspends the aging process. Few Monadhan residents would grow to a ripe old age in a community where everyone has already betrayed someone and is suffering supernatural punishment for it. Occasionally a Monadhan resident will die suddenly during exertion or even sleep—"it was as if his own heart betrayed him," the old ladies cluck as they rifle through the corpse's pockets.

Monadhan's other properties are better understood by residents of the domain. Because hardly

anyone ever escapes Monadhan, academic records on the following phenomena are scant (Arcana DC 35 to know either, and even then the documentation is fragmentary).

The Sting of Betrayal: Because the domain of Monadhan is suffused with betrayal, the domain itself rewards those willing to hurt their friends. If a creature makes an attack that damages an ally—a friendly fire incident, in other words—two things immediately happen.

First, the ally takes ongoing 10 damage (save ends) in addition to whatever damage the attack itself dealt.

Second, the creature who made the attack gets its choice of either regeneration 5 or a +1 bonus on attacks. Either effect lasts until the ally makes its saving throw.

A creature can benefit from the sting of betrayal only once per round, so an area attack that damages multiple allies earns the attacker only one regeneration 5 or one +1 bonus on attacks.

For the sting of betrayal to function, the creature making the attack and the ally must begin the battle as allies by any reasonable definition, not merely neutral parties who find common cause against a foe or other allies of convenience.

The Blurred Confession: Monadhan's longer-term residents are traitors who have spent years scabbling for their very existence in an environment full of other desperate traitors. Accordingly, many have internalized their betrayals and buried them deep within their psyches. At the moment of death or great trauma, many blurt out a final confession—often admitting the betrayal that consigned them to their fate in Monadhan.



When a monster dies during this adventure, have it deliver a sentence or two of confession referencing some act of betrayal. Such a confession might be:

- ◆ Military: “I left Olaf to die;” “We burned our tunics, then joined the refugees;” “We told the prisoners we’d guard them, but then we got so hungry...”
- ◆ Political: “I poisoned the Count so I could marry the Countess;” “I swore that Morrin was pilfering from the treasury alone, but really it was both of us...”
- ◆ Religious: “I swore I’d bury him near the chapel, but they wanted too much recompense;” “When they asked if I’d convert, of course I said yes...”
- ◆ Familial: “Jorrek isn’t really the father;” “Uncle was going to split the farmland, but then Laria leaned too far over the well...”
- ◆ Romantic: “Of course I told her I loved her;” “No one knew about the maiden in the tower...”
- ◆ Innocuous: “It was I who took the master’s monocle;” “I sometimes caught seven fish, rather than the six we were allowed...”
- ◆ Cryptic: “I told her to go first;” “There were three torches after all;” “The fingernails are underneath the rug...”

If you have some committed actors at your table, encourage them to blurt out a confession of some sort if they’re knocked unconscious, stunned, or take a lot of damage from a single attack. The blurted confession can be a good way for a player to get across a character’s shady past, old regrets, or other aspects of a personal backstory that otherwise wouldn’t have the opportunity to surface.

THE JUNGLE

It takes two days of walking through winding jungle paths to reach Monadhan’s shantytown and the second part of the adventure. If the PCs want to use overland flight or other means to short-circuit the journey, let them. They’re missing out on two basic combat encounters and the chance to take their epic powers on a test run, but there aren’t any major plot implications for doing so.

W1: THE EIGHT OF US SAY WELCOME

A hydra arises from the shallow pool where it’s been sleeping to menace the PCs.

Tactical Encounter: The Eight of Us Say Welcome (page 20).

W2: THE DEATH GIANT’S PET

The PCs find a more direct path to the Monadhan shantytown, only to meet a death giant and his pet chuul patrolling it.

It’s possible that the PCs will try to capture the death giant rather than killing him outright. If they succeed, you have two choices: run an impromptu skill challenge to cover the interrogation, or have the death giant “betray” the PCs and tell them all he knows only to switch back to Arantor’s side when it’s most inconvenient for the PCs or dramatic for the story.

From a captured death giant, the PCs can learn that Arantor lives in the lowermost of “magic caves” beneath the ruined keep, and he never leaves his lair. He’s served by many death giants along with some cambions and a few rakshasas. The death giant is in the dark about Arantor’s history, his weaknesses, or his ultimate aims. Even among the death giants, this particular fellow is ill-informed because he’s always out in the jungle with his pet chuul, not in the caves or the shantytown with the other death giants.

Tactical Encounter: The Death Giant’s Pet (page 21).

PART 2: SHANTYTOWN

The PCs reach the shantytown at the center of Monadhan without too much trouble. Once there, they must interact with the Shantytown residents in an effort to learn where the portal onward is.

This part of the adventure is intentionally free-form. Some D&D groups will relish the opportunity to investigate a community where everyone has a darkly fascinating, betrayal-laden past. Others will want to make a quick Streetwise check or two and keep all that conversation abstract. Either approach is

fine; it's just a matter of knowing the preference of the players at your table.

The simplest way to proceed is for PCs to make DC 22 Streetwise checks. The first success reveals the Sarissa clue below, and the second success reveals the Rolain clue below.

If you want to expand the investigation, here are some factors to consider:

- ◆ The PCs are epic tier, and the vast majority of the shantytown residents aren't. Other than Kas's crew (described in encounters T1-T3) and the death giant patrols that occasionally

come through the shantytown (use the giants in encounter C7 if you like), no one is capable of even scratching the characters' armor, much less offering an actual challenge in battle.

- ◆ No one gets to Monadhan without first committing a betrayal so cruel that it garnered supernatural imprisonment as a response. Most of the shantytown's residents are damaged goods: insane, depressed, paranoid, or habitually blaming everyone but themselves for their fate. Some are wracked with guilt while others deny that they did anything to deserve their fate. Either way, few are pleasant to be around.

Whether you play out a detailed investigation or not, all this effort should get the PCs two valuable pieces of information:

- ◆ Sarissa the seer knows about the portal. She lives in a hut on the edge of the shantytown.
- ◆ A mysterious figure named Rolain can supposedly go into Arantor's lair and emerge alive. (It's actually Kas, not Rolain, that can do this, but the denizens of the shantytown don't know that.) Rolain can be found at midnight at the shantytown's graveyard.

With these two clues in hand, it's likely that the PCs will visit Sarissa first, because they can do so at any time (Rolain appears at only midnight). While the PCs are learning all of this, Kas's crew of vampires is learning about them, which leads into the encounters that follow.



T1: SEER'S HUT

Compared to most of the shantytown's residents, Sarissa is relatively pleasant. She says that she'll answer questions for a hundred gold coins each, an amount that should be a pittance for the heroes at this point but is a fortune for her.

Sarissa explains that Arantor, the dark lord who rules Monadhan, hasn't been seen in years. She doesn't know how to reach his lair. She knows that Arantor guards a dark portal that leads onward from Monadhan, but she doesn't know where it goes. She volunteers that whether the PCs want to depart Monadhan through the mists or through the portal, they'll need the key of Monadhan: whatever object within the domain is most representative of betrayal. Those who depart take the key with them, so the exact nature of the key changes. After staring into her fire for a moment, Sarissa says that the current key to Monadhan is the Sword of Kas.

If the PCs have never heard of Kas, Sarissa can provide some basic exposition: Kas was once a trusted lieutenant of Vecna's, but Kas betrayed Vecna and cut off Vecna's hand, then escaped. Both Vecna's dismembered hand and the Sword of Kas are now artifacts, and Vecna is still chasing after Kas, eager for revenge.

As soon as Sarissa tells the PCs about the key to Monadhan, the vampires attack.

Tactical Encounter: Seer's Hut (page 23).

T2: SHANTYTOWN

A figure that flees from the seer's hut at the end of that fight draws the characters back into the heart of the shantytown. (The callophage vampire is the best choice, but a spy minion of Kas will do just as

well.) There they meet more of Kas's crew, including Gwenth, a powerful vampire.

Tactical Encounter: T2: Shantytown (page 25).

T3: GRAVEYARD

The PCs seek out the mysterious Rolain, only to learn (probably as they're fighting him) that he too works for Kas.

Tactical Encounter: Graveyard (page 27).

T4: DESECRATED GRAVEYARD

When the PCs defeat Rolain, the graveyard itself comes alive and attacks. Sometimes the PCs never get an even break.

Tactical Encounter: Desecrated Graveyard (page 29).

TALKING TO KAS

Kas himself arrives at the graveyard after encounter T4. He doesn't want to fight; he's looking to make a deal.

Kas's offer is simple: He will reveal the dragon lord's weakness if the adventurers retrieve his sword and return it to him. Kas might—*might*—be able to beat Arantor, but he can't fight while dealing with the magic of the lower cavern (the skill challenge, in other words). The PCs, on the other hand, can do both simultaneously.

The characters are probably in no condition to fight Kas immediately after their encounters with Rolain and the denizens of the graveyard. If they do, he'll happily trade blows with them; his stat block is on page 55. But Kas is not interested in killing them, at least not yet, and he's still amenable to a deal when the PCs realize that a level 26 solo soldier is a tough nut to crack.

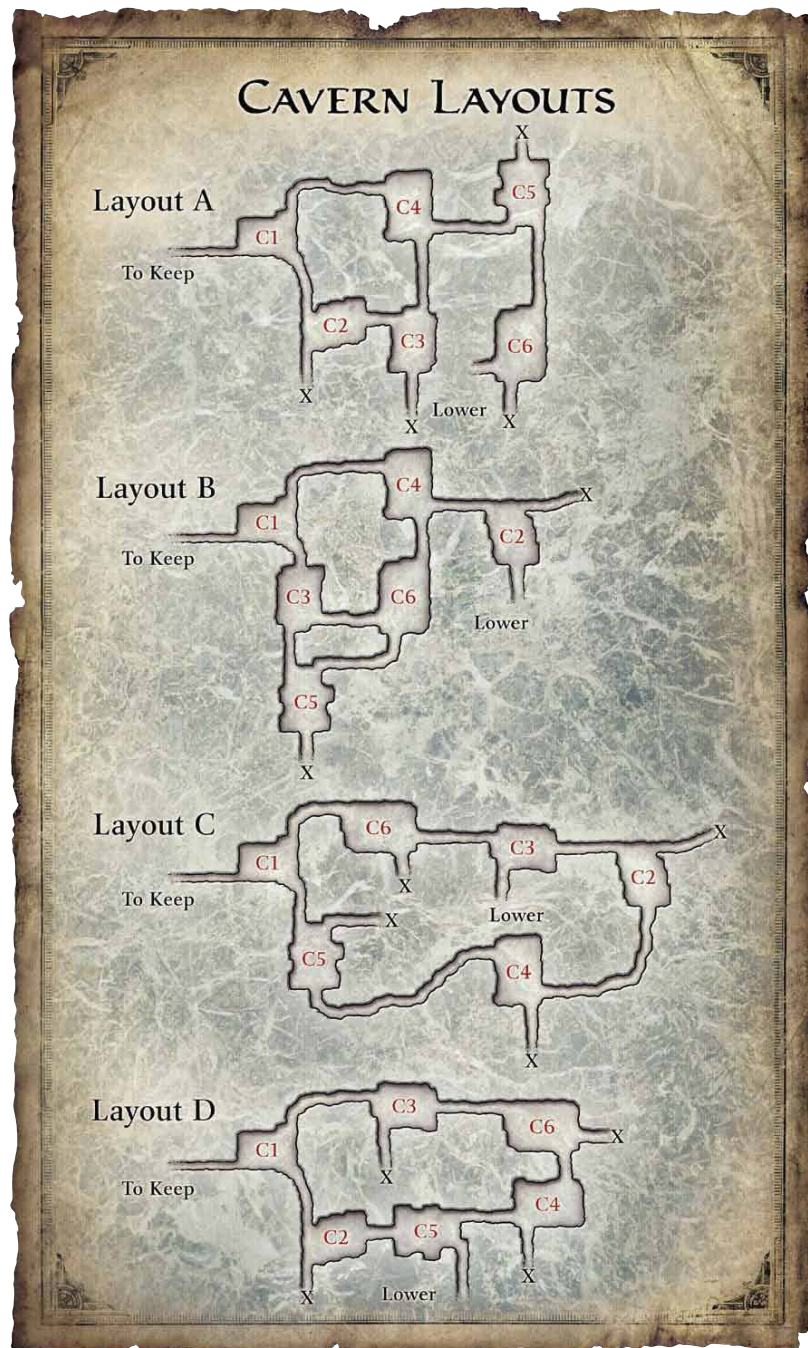
Once the PCs agree to Kas's offer, or at least engage in sincere negotiation, Kas tells an abbreviated version of Arantor's story:

Arantor was a silver dragon who fought bravely in the war between the dragonborn and the tieflings, many centuries ago. He attacked the town of Monadhan, not realizing it was full of civilians. Mad with grief and shame, he tried to cover up his crime, but his own daughter confronted him. Arantor murdered his daughter to protect his guilt, and thus the Domain of Betrayal was born.

Now Arantor spends all his time in the lowest depths of the caves beneath the shantytown. His betrayal was so heinous that parts of his past come to life periodically in the lair...just to torment Arantor, I think. If you find a way to insinuate yourself into those illusions of the past, Arantor's grief and shame will weaken him. Use the word "Imrissa"—that was the name of Arantor's daughter.

But beware! Death giants and undead guardians stand watch in the upper chambers. Simply becoming lost down there is a constant danger. The walls themselves can betray you...

What Kas doesn't know (but the PCs should) is that the sword itself is the key, making it the only way anyone can get out of Monadhan. At this point, the seed of betrayal has been planted. For the PCs to complete their mission, they must break their deal and betray Kas the Betrayer.



PART 3: CAVERNS

Now the PCs have reached the meat of the adventure: a series of linked caves with the dark lord Arantor at the bottom. They'll fight through the death giants, cambions, and other followers of Arantor as they descend further and further. The shifting nature of the caves makes retreat more difficult, and unlike the vampires in the shantytown, these monsters have had years to hone their tactics against intruders.

Eventually, the PCs reach the lowest cavern, where Arantor himself makes his lair. If they can slay the undead dragon—a task involving a simultaneous skill challenge and a to-the-death combat—they can win the sword of Kas for themselves and earn their ticket out of Monadhan and onward to Vaerothim.

THE SHIFTING CAVES

The six chambers that comprise the upper part of the chamber are near the heart of Arantor's domain, and thus they express betrayal in an unusual way: The winding passages that connect the six chambers change every few hours. In other words, the map itself will betray the characters after a few encounters.

At first, the six chambers are arranged in layout A, with winding, 20-foot-wide tunnels connecting them. The tunnels curve and descend enough that PCs can never see more than 20 squares in front or behind them. Each tunnel is about a quarter mile long. Each X in the layout is a dead end—a 10-square by 10-square chamber devoid of monsters or treasure.

Whenever the PCs take an extended rest or reach a dead end, the layout of the caves shifts to one of the three alternatives. Either roll randomly or choose the layout that delivers the best drama. The PCs don't notice the shift when it happens, but a DC 25 Dungeoneering check should tell them that any tunnel they've recently walked down is subtly different now. PCs can identify the direction of the Chamber of Rivers (C1) from any adjacent chamber with a DC 30 Perception check to hear the running water.



The shifting caves aren't intended to be a head-scratching puzzle. There are only four possible configurations after all, and nobody at the table is having fun if the PCs wander through empty cave after empty cave. You want to use the shifting configuration of the caves for two reasons. First, you want it to shake the PCs up a bit and remind them that in Monadhan, they can't take anything for granted. Second, it's an opportunity to make sure that PCs experience most if not all of the upper caverns while still giving them the freedom of choice that they so cherish. At the point where the shifting caves become an impediment to gameplay, dispense with the shifting and get the PCs down to the lower cavern.

The shifting caves also contribute to the likelihood that the PCs will occasionally backtrack. When they do, spring encounter C7, then C8 on them. You can delay those encounters according to your sense of pacing, but make sure that the PCs have had both death giant encounters by the time they reach the lower cavern.

The denizens of the caves have to deal with their shifting nature as well (everyone but Arantor does), but they're used to it by now—"Of course the walls betray us ... doesn't everything?" they say. As a practical matter, few of them leave their chambers. The death giants trying to visit Arantor just accept that they'll have to wander around for a while before

finding the tunnel that leads to the lower cavern, and after they've visited a few rooms, they know which layout they're dealing with.

RESTING IN THE CAVES

It's likely that PCs will need to take an extended rest during their exploration of the upper caves, and the shifting caves may make them reluctant to ascend all the way to the surface. They can camp in the dead ends or in a chamber they've already cleared. If they do, a death giant patrol (first C7, then C8) arrives 1d4 hours after they start resting.

C1: CAVERN OF RIVERS

This chamber—always the one closest to the surface—is where the PCs think they're fighting a dark naga and some cambions. Then they are surprised by a fell troll that surfaces from underneath the waterfall.

Tactical Encounter: Cavern of Rivers (page 31).

C2: CAVERN OF CLIFFS

Flight is at a premium when PCs contend with flying devils in a room with many plateaus—and lots of sheer cliffs to push one's foes from. The devils were caught in a double-cross between archdevils and found themselves in Monadhan for their betrayal. They believe that their sentence will be over soon and that they'll somehow be restored back to the Nine Hells. In the meantime, they've sold their services to Arantor in a feudal arrangement—protection in exchange for service.

Tactical Encounter: Cavern of Cliffs (page 34).

C3: CAVERN OF SULFUR

This encounter features undead that Arantor ritually created shortly after awaking in Monadhan.

The undead are oblivious to the chamber's greatest danger: toxic fumes that erupt from geysers in the floor and poison the living.

Tactical Encounter: Cavern of Sulfur (page 37).

C4: CAVERN OF AIR

The rest of Arantor's undead minions call this chamber, full of floating rock platforms, their home. Like encounter C2, it rewards PCs who can fly and punishes those who aren't quick enough to get from platform to platform before they break apart.

Tactical Encounter: Cavern of Air (page 39).

C5: CAVERN OF TRUTH

Rakshasa mercenaries with a history of double-crossing their employers live in this chamber and torture the "informants" that the death giants occasionally drag down from the shantytown. Arantor pays them well, and they're a little reluctant to double-cross him—yet.

If you need to introduce a new PC to the adventure (either because you have a new player or because a PC died and wasn't raised), the jail cells in this chamber are a good place to do so. The existing heroes can "rescue" the new PC, and the new PC should quickly realize that the other PCs are the best way out of Monadhan. Have the new character figure out what betrayal resulted in a one-way trip to Monadhan. If the player is reluctant to play someone known for betrayal, you can posit some arcane experiment gone awry to explain the new PCs' presence—or suggest an NPC that, when viewed through the players' eyes, *deserved* betrayal.

This cavern also has an NPC, Macaeus, whom the PCs can rescue. Macaeus is just a frightened resident of the shantytown now, and he was once a

castellan of the exchequer who appropriated his lord's funds to his lord's rivals. Macaeus is a "last chance exposition" NPC. If the PCs have somehow missed key information (like the basics of Arantor's history or the fact that you need an object of great betrayal to leave Monadhan), Macaeus can provide it. He's a noncombatant, but that doesn't mean he doesn't possess useful information. And if your table favors a number of social encounters, you can make the information exchange with Macaeus into a full-blown skill challenge.

Tactical Encounter: Cavern of Truth (page 42).

C6: CAVERN OF STATUES

This chamber is the only one of the upper chambers that Arantor regularly visits—and he comes here only once every few months. More cambions stand guard here, and the PCs may find some clues of use in the next adventure: "Grasp of the Mantled Citadel."

Tactical Encounter: Cavern of Statues (page 45).

C7: DEATH GIANT REINFORCEMENTS

This encounter isn't tied to a specific location—it's a patrol of the death giants that Arantor trusts to handle the day-to-day rulership of the shantytown and the jungles of Monadhan. The encounter doesn't depend on the specific terrain in the chamber—though the giants know the caverns well enough to use whatever advantage they can get—so you can spring this on the PCs whenever you like.

Tactical Encounter: Death Giant Reinforcements (page 48).

C8: DEATH GIANT BOSS

Once the PCs rest or backtrack again after dealing with encounter C7, you can use this encounter. Now

the heroes have roused the ire of the death giant boss, Bahlik Gur, and his retinue. Like the previous death giant encounter, this one isn't tied to any specific location—use it whenever the PCs *think* they're going someplace safe, such as an already-cleared chamber or a dead end.

Tactical Encounter: Death Giant Boss (page 50).

C9: LOWER CAVERN

This encounter, the climax of "Betrayal at Monadhan," pits the PCs against Arantor himself. Arantor is a level 25 solo, but if the PCs can somehow simultaneously fight Arantor and perform a skill challenge to get the ghosts of Arantor's past to haunt him anew, the fight becomes easier. You can deliver a satisfying conclusion to the adventure if you apply enough pressure that the players feel like they're being stretched thin—not quite enough characters for the fight and not quite enough for the skill challenge.

When this encounter is over, the PCs will negotiate with Kas as described in the Aftermath section (page 17), or possibly fight him, if they provoke him enough, before heading through the portal to Vaerothim.

Tactical Encounter: Lower Cavern (page 52).

AFTERMATH

Once Arantor falls and the PCs obtain the Sword of Kas, it's time for them to head through the portal and on to the next adventure: "Grasp of the Mantled Citadel." First, though, they'll "betray" Kas the Betrayer himself.

CONFRONTATION WITH KAS

As mentioned in encounter C9, Kas appears at the entrance to the lower cavern shortly after one of the

PCs takes the Sword of Kas from Arantor's hoard. Time Kas's appearance so that the PCs are closer to the portal than Kas is. It's not entirely fair to put a level 26 solo between the PCs and safety—especially after they just fought a level 25 solo.

Kas isn't exactly a creature of subtlety. He wants his sword, he wants it now, and no wet-behind-the-ears mortal interlopers are going to keep it from him.

"We have our bargain, mortals!" Kas says. "Surrender my sword to me now, and I may ... may ... let you ascend to the surface."

In the likely event the PCs don't immediately hand over the sword, Kas gets angrier. His desire to be reunited with his sword is clouding his judgment, so he's being neither diplomatic nor particularly clever in his handling of the situation.

"Fools! You are mere worms; I could take that sword from you, then bathe it in your blood. You cannot betray me! That's .. unthinkable folly!"

Then Kas jumps down from the ledge and starts walking toward the PCs, but he does so slowly. All the while, he talks about the dark things he and his sword will accomplish if reunited. Improvise here, but watch that Kas doesn't slip into Gollumesque "my precious" parody.

"Give me my sword, for I have dark designs that extend beyond this dreary prison. All that you've seen so far is prologue. Give it to me, and I'll let you live long enough to see my triumph!"

Make sure that the PCs have ample time to gather Arantor's treasure and any fallen comrades. If they move toward the portal, that's good—Kas certainly makes no move to stop them. He's focused totally on obtaining the sword and doesn't realize that he's practically goading the characters to abscond with it. Only when the first PC disappears through the portal will Kas realize what's happened.

"No! You cannot leave with my sword! The betrayer cannot be betrayed! Come back, you fools!"

IF THINGS GO OFF TRACK

The most likely course of events is that the PCs banter a bit with Kas, then head through the portal and on to the next adventure. But players are delightfully unpredictable—and that's a good thing.

The PCs Fight Kas: If this looks inevitable, roll initiative and get on with it. The PCs have had a short rest, but a battle with Kas comes on the heels of the battle with Arantor. Maneuver Kas so that the PCs can change their minds and flee through the portal if they're overmatched, but otherwise don't pull punches with Kas. He's a soldier, so he's durable but less likely to deal high spikes of damage.

If the PCs win, they can go through the portal at their leisure. If they're losing, they'll probably retreat through the portal. If they're being particularly clueless (it happens to every table once in a while), you can have a shadowy figure on the other side of the portal beckon toward them. If things go off the rails and the PCs get wiped out by Kas, they deserve what they get ... which is a new unlife as Kas's vampires. But even then, the adventure path isn't over. Kas isn't part of the Bahamut/Tiamat struggle, but he becomes intensely curious about it and sends vampire versions

of the PCs to Vaerothim to find out what's going on. The game is still afoot, but the PCs have a new wrinkle in that they need a cure for vampirism and a way to break free of Kas in addition to everything else on their plates.

The PCs Give Kas the Sword: It's possible that particularly hidebound PCs will honor a bargain with a guy whose sobriquet is "the betrayer." Right before they do so, have Kas lay it on thick: *"Ah, think of the wondrous terrors my sword and I will bring into being!"* If they really, truly give Kas the sword, then he either fights the PCs (if you think the PCs have any fight left in them) or insults them as he heads through the portal.

Now Monadhan essentially resets itself. The PCs see faint stirrings near Arantor's corpse. He returns to unlife in 24 hours. And there's a new object of great betrayal somewhere in Monadhan. The PCs can visit the seer (if alive) or use ritual means to discover what it is. Then they must attain it (probably after a short adventure you create) and then face Arantor once more.

SI: ON THE SIDE OF THE ANGELS

Encounter Level 21 (16,000 XP)

SETUP

Angel of secrets (A)

This is a negotiation, pure and simple. The PCs will strike a deal with Rachaela and learn more about what to expect in Monadhan.

When the PCs enter the chamber, read:

You enter the room to find an angel with a stern countenance floating at the far end of a long table. She wears a white tabard with a red gauntlet design along the edge. The angel bows and motions for you to sit. Wine goblets appear out of nowhere at each seat.

“I am Rachaela, and I bear news of your wider efforts,” she says. “Despite your recent successes and the Coalition’s victories, Tiamat’s plotting continues unabated. Even as we speak, one of her exarchs is guarding a ritualist of unparalleled potency. We do not know exactly what ritual they are working on, but if Tiamat is placing such importance on the ritual, we cannot afford to let it come to fruition. We want you to stop the exarch, Mornujhar, and capture or kill the ritualist.

“But it won’t be easy. You’ll need to pass through part of the Shadowfell known as Monadhan, the Domain of Betrayal, just to reach a portal that connects to Mornujhar’s fortress. Will you aid us one more time?”

On the Side of Angels Skill Challenge

Level 21
XP 3,200

Complexity: 1 (requires 4 successes before 3 failures).

Primary Skills: Diplomacy, Insight, Religion.

Diplomacy (DC 22, standard action)

The character impresses Rachaela with his forthright demeanor and ability. This earns the heroes one success. It’s also a chance for Rachaela to provide additional detail in her reply.

“Once you get to Monadhan, you won’t be able to simply use a teleportation ritual to get back here. You must find a portal—probably guarded by Arantor, the dark lord of the domain—and use it to move onward toward the black exarch.”

Insight (DC 27, standard action)

A successful Insight check not only earns the characters a success, but it suggests that Rachaela is holding something back. If pressed, she’ll say she’s hiding who her superiors are.

“There is some risk you’ll be captured, and I am sending you to the Domain of Betrayal, after all. I trust you, but I worry about the supernatural power of betrayal in such a place. Best to be circumspect.”

Religion (DC 14, standard action)

You can garner only one success with this skill. In addition to earning a success, the PC learns that the red gauntlet motif on Rachaela’s tabard resembles iconography used by priests of Kord several centuries ago. If asked about Kord directly, Rachaela smiles and says, *“Suffice it to say that I admire Kord’s strength.”*

Secondary Skills: Intimidate, Religion.

Intimidate (DC 27, standard action)

Having a tough demeanor, if skillfully done, can impress Rachaela. This doesn’t earn any successes directly but provides a +2 bonus on the next check made by a primary skill.

Religion (DC 25/30/25, standard action)

A PC can make a monster knowledge check during the skill challenge. This doesn’t earn any successes, but it does give the PCs some idea of what they’re dealing with. A 25 or higher on the Religion check reveals that Rachaela is an angel of secrets, an immortal humanoid with the angel subtype (obviously). A 30 or higher also reveals the basics of its *memory blade*, *mind lash*, *roaring revelation*, and *foresight* powers. A 35 or higher reveals it has resist 10 radiant and is immune to disease and fear.

Success: Rachaela agrees to give the PCs treasure parcels A, B, and C before they leave for Monadhan, and the extra rewards mentioned in “Grasp of the Mantled Citadel” when they return victorious. She will perform the Planar Portal ritual to send the PCs to Monadhan or provide the sigil sequence so the PCs can do so themselves.

Failure: Rachaela gives the PCs their choice of treasure parcels A, B, or C (but not all three) and just the normal award at the end of the next adventure. She’ll perform the Planar Portal ritual for the PCs.

This angel has a genuine mission for the PCs, and she truly wants them to succeed. But she also has a few secrets of her own: her real name is Niuria, and she serves Vecna. She won't reveal this under any circumstances and carefully chose her clothing to suggest that she serves Kord.

Begin the skill challenge once Rachaela has laid out the mission in broad terms—something along the lines of the readaloud text above.

This is more than an ordinary skill challenge, because the negotiations with Rachaela serve two purposes. First, they are indeed a challenge for the PCs. Second, it's a chance for you to provide key exposition that sets up the rest of the adventure, whether or not the characters overcome this challenge.

| Angel of Secrets (A) | | Level 22 Elite Controller |
|---|---------------------|----------------------------------|
| Large immortal humanoid (angel) | | XP 8,300 |
| Initiative +20 Senses Perception +23; darkvision | | |
| Angelic Presence Attacks against the angel of secrets take a -2 penalty until the angel is bloodied; once bloodied, the penalty increases to -4. | | |
| HP 408; Bloodied 204 | | |
| AC 36; Fortitude 34, Reflex 34, Will 36 | | |
| Immune disease, fear; Resist 10 radiant | | |
| Saving Throws +2 | | |
| Speed 6, fly 8 (hover) | | |
| Action Points 1 | | |
| ⊕ Memory Blade (Standard, at-will) ◆ Psychic | | |
| Reach 2; +27 vs. AC; 3d6 + 8 psychic damage, and the target can't use encounter powers or daily powers until the end of the angel's next turn. | | |
| ↗ Mind Lash (Standard, at-will) ◆ Psychic | | |
| Ranged 10; +25 vs. Will; 2d10 + 8 psychic damage, and the target is dazed until the end of the angel's next turn. | | |
| ↶ Roaring Revelation (Standard, encounter and when reduced to 0 hit points) ◆ Psychic, Thunder | | |
| Close burst 5; targets enemies; +23 vs. Fortitude; 2d10 + 8 psychic and thunder damage, and the target is stunned until the end of the angel's next turn. | | |
| Foresight (Immediate Interrupt, when attacked, recharge ☞ ☞) | | |
| ◆ Teleportation | | |
| The angel of secrets teleports 4 squares and makes a <i>memory blade</i> attack. | | |
| Alignment Unaligned | | Languages All |
| Skills Arcana +22, History +22, Stealth +20 | | |
| Str 22 (+17) | Dex 18 (+15) | Wis 23 (+17) |
| Con 20 (+16) | Int 23 (+17) | Cha 27 (+19) |
| Equipment memory sword, cloak of angels, chainmail. | | |

WI: THE EIGHT OF US SAY WELCOME

Encounter Level 20 (14,000 XP)

SETUP

1 heroslayer hydra (H)

The PCs' first task is to get to the Shantytown, Monadhan's sole settlement. To do so, they have a lot of jungle to cross, and along the way, they'll encounter a hydra.

When the adventurers get within about 10 squares of the pool, read:

You've been working your way away from the mists and into the forest, and now you've reached a clearing with a pool of murky water in the center of it. Before you even have a chance to approach, a five-headed reptile erupts from underwater. It bellows as, one by one, each head turns to regard you.

Then it lurches forward, five jaws opening wide.

TACTICS

This is a straightforward battle, a sort of "shakedown cruise" for players still getting used to their epic-level abilities. The hydra doesn't have any connection to the ongoing plot; sometimes a monster is just a monster. Your goal in this battle isn't to play the monster optimally. You'll have plenty of time for that later. Instead, try to give the players a warm-up fight that lets them flex their epic muscles before the more difficult encounters ahead.

From the players' perspective, the hydra is a very well-behaved beast. Because it wants to take advantage of its *heroslayer* bonus, it almost always accedes to the marked condition and attacks the party defender. Watch for critical hits from the PCs—they recharge

the rampage attack. When not rampaging, have the hydra concentrate its attacks on the defender, because doing so gets you a certain +2 attack and +5 damage, plus the possibility of another 10 damage if you hit with two bite attacks.

Don't be shy about moving, even if it provokes opportunity attacks. The hydra has almost 800 hit points, after all, and damage just makes it grow more heads. You want as many PCs as possible nearby, both for the *rampage* and more importantly for *threatening reach*. Because the hydra is huge, it can move through PC squares as long as it doesn't end its turn on top of a PC. (PCs can also move through the hydra's squares, provoking opportunity attacks as usual.)

FEATURES OF THE AREA:

Illumination: Monadhan never gets brighter than an overcast day, but its skies never go completely dark, either.

Water: Near the center of the encounter area, mark a 4 x 4 square as deep water, then surround that with roughly three squares of shallow water, making an asymmetrical pond. The hydra starts submerged in the deep water.

The squares marked as shallow water are difficult terrain. The deep water is about 10 feet deep. That's difficult terrain for the hydra, and large or smaller creatures trying to fight in deep water suffer the penalties and restrictions of aquatic combat (described on page 45 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*).

Vegetation: The exact location of bushes and trees doesn't matter. Just scatter contiguous squares of vegetation as you see fit. The vegetation is obscuring terrain that provides concealment and is difficult terrain.

Tree Trunks: In the middle of some vegetation squares, leave a square (or even a 2 x 2 space) as blocking terrain—the trunk of the banyanlike trees

that make up much of Monadhan's jungle. Climbing a tree requires a DC 15 Athletics check. Ascending 20 feet grants concealment from obscuring leaves. The top of the jungle canopy is 50 feet above ground.

| Heroslayer Hydra (H) | Level 20 Solo Brute |
|---|---|
| Huge natural beast (reptile) | XP 14,000 |
| Initiative +14 | Senses Perception +19; all-around vision |
| HP 776; Bloodied 388 | |
| AC 32; Fortitude 34, Reflex 30, Will 30 | |
| Saving Throws +5 | |
| Speed 6 | |
| Action Points 2 | |
| ⊕ Bite (Standard, at-will) | |
| Reach 3; +23 vs. AC; 1d10 + 8 damage. | |
| ⊕ Hydra Fury (Standard, at-will) | |
| The heroslayer hydra makes five bite attacks, plus an additional attack for each head it has grown (see <i>regenerating heads</i>). A target hit by more than one bite attack in a round takes 10 extra damage. | |
| ⊕ Rampage (Standard, recharges when a critical hit is scored against the heroslayer hydra) | |
| The hydra makes one bite attack against each enemy within reach. On a hit, the target takes ongoing 10 damage (save ends). | |
| Heroslayer | |
| While a heroslayer hydra is marked, it gains a +2 bonus to attack rolls and a +5 bonus to damage rolls against the creature that marked it. | |
| Many-Headed | |
| Each time a heroslayer hydra would become dazed or stunned, it instead loses one attack while using <i>hydra fury</i> during its next turn. The hydra can be dazed or stunned multiple times. | |
| Regenerating Heads | |
| When a heroslayer hydra first reaches 582, 388, and 194 hit points, a head is destroyed. At the start of the hydra's next turn after a head is destroyed, two heads grow in the lost head's place, and the hydra gains an additional bite attack with <i>hydra fury</i> . | |
| Threatening Reach | |
| A heroslayer hydra can make opportunity attacks against all enemies within its reach (3 squares). | |
| Alignment Chaotic evil | Languages – |
| Str 23 (+16) | Dex 19 (+14) Wis 18 (+14) |
| Con 26 (+18) | Int 2 (+6) Cha 9 (+9) |

W2: THE DEATH GIANT'S PET

Encounter Level 21 (14,350 XP)

SETUP

1 chuul juggernaut (C)

1 death giant soulcatcher (D)

Most of the death giants in Arantor's employ use steel predators as guardians and pets. This giant is experimenting with an alternative. After much trial and error, he's trained one of the chuuls that inhabit Monadhan's jungles. The chuul fears the caves, however, so the death giant is stuck patrolling far from base with its pet.

As the characters work their way through the jungle, read:

You're making faster progress now, because you've found a relatively straight path through the jungle. It looks as if someone—or someones, more likely—cut their way through the vegetation with a machete.

Perception Check

DC 10: *Whatever made this path was dragging something massive—maybe its own tail.*

DC 20: *A large creature wearing boots accompanied the dragging creature.*

Nature Check

DC 30: *The cut-back vegetation bears the mark of something with pincers or mandibles—perhaps a chuul or umber hulk.*

| Chuul Juggernaut (C) | Level 23 Elite Soldier |
|--|--|
| Huge aberrant magical beast (aquatic) | XP 10,200 |
| Initiative +17 | Senses Perception +17; darkvision |
| Psychic Moan (Psychic) aura 1; a chuul juggernaut exudes a constant hum of psychic energy. Enemies in the aura take a -2 penalty to Will defense and gain vulnerable 5 psychic. | |
| HP 434; Bloodied 217 | |
| AC 39; Fortitude 37, Reflex 31, Will 33 | |
| Saving Throws +2 | |
| Speed 7, swim 7 | |
| Action Points 1 | |
| ⊕ Claw (Standard, at-will) | |
| Reach 3; +30 vs. AC; 2d8 + 8 damage, or 5d8 + 8 damage against an immobilized creature. | |
| ⊕ Double Attack (Standard, at-will) ⊕ Poison | |
| The chuul juggernaut makes two claw attacks. If both claw attacks hit a single target, the chuul juggernaut makes a secondary attack against the same target with its tentacles. | |
| <i>Secondary Attack</i> +28 vs. Fortitude; the target is immobilized (save ends). | |
| ⌘ Psychic Lure (Standard, at-will) ⊕ Psychic | |
| Ranged 10; +29 vs. Will; 2d10 + 3 psychic damage, and the target is pulled 5 squares. | |
| Tentacle Net ⊕ Poison | |
| A creature hit by a chuul juggernaut's opportunity attack is immobilized until the end of the juggernaut's next turn. | |
| Alignment Unaligned | Languages Deep Speech |
| Str 27 (+19) | Dex 19 (+15) Wis 22 (+17) |
| Con 25 (+18) | Int 4 (+8) Cha 16 (+14) |

The encounter is a meeting engagement; the death giant and chuul are using their trail from yesterday's patrol to start today's patrol, so they're heading away from the shantytown just as the PCs are heading toward it.

| Death Giant Soulcatcher (D) | Level 22 Controller |
|--|--|
| Large shadow humanoid (giant) | XP 4,150 |
| Initiative +16 | Senses Perception +19; darkvision |
| Soulcatcher aura 10; a creature that dies within the aura bestows one soul shard to the soulcatcher (see <i>soul shroud</i>). | |
| HP 209; Bloodied 104 | |
| AC 36; Fortitude 35, Reflex 32, Will 35 | |
| Resist 15 necrotic | |
| Speed 8 | |
| ⊕ Soul Dagger (standard; at-will) ⊕ Weapon | |
| Reach 2; + 27 vs. AC; 2d6 + 8 damage and the target is immobilized until the end of the soulcatcher's next turn. | |
| ⌘ Soul Shrive (standard; at-will) ⊕ Necrotic | |
| Ranged 10; + 26 vs. Fortitude; the target is stunned and loses 1 healing surge at the start of its turn (save ends both). A target without healing surges takes damage equal to one quarter its total hit points. Each time the target loses a healing surge or takes damage from <i>soul shrive</i> , the soulcatcher gains a soul shard. | |
| ⌘ Soulfury Detonation (standard; must expend 3 soul shards; at-will) ⊕ Necrotic | |
| Burst 2 within 10; +26 vs. Fortitude; 2d12 + 6 necrotic damage, and the target is dazed (save ends). | |
| Consume Soul Shard (minor; at-will) ⊕ Healing | |
| The soulcatcher expends one soul shard and regains 20 hit points. | |
| Soul Shroud | |
| The soul shroud contains soul shards that swirl around the soulcatcher to protect and empower it. At the beginning of an encounter, the soul shroud contains four soul shards. While the soul shroud is depleted of soul shards, the soulcatcher takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls. | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Giant |
| Skills Intimidate + 18 | |
| Str 28 (+20) | Dex 20 (+16) Wis 22 (+17) |
| Con 25 (+18) | Int 12 (+12) Cha 15 (+13) |
| Equipment leather armor, dagger | |

TACTICS

This is the first contact the PCs have with someone actually loyal to Arantor; a lone death giant scout that patrols the jungle.

Chuul: The chuul juggernaut makes a double attack whenever it can, hoping to also make the immobilizing secondary attack. If it can't reach the PCs with a single move, it uses *psychic lure* to bring a PC closer.

Remember that because the chuul is huge, it can move through PCs' squares as long as it doesn't end its movement there (and the PCs can do likewise).

Death Giant Soulcatcher: The soulcatcher stays a square or two behind the chuul and uses *soul shrive* until it's built up four soul shards: enough for a *soul-fury detonation* with a soul shard left over to avoid the -2 attack penalty. Remind players hit by *soul shrive* that they've lost their healing surges only temporarily. They'll get the healing surges back when they make the saving throw.

The chuul juggernaut fights until slain, but the death giant will try to flee if reduced below 30 hit points. Such a retreat is unlikely to be successful if the PCs are still in fighting trim.

FEATURES OF THE AREA:

Illumination: Monadhan never gets brighter than an overcast day, but its skies never go completely dark, either.

Vegetation: The exact location of the bushes and trees doesn't matter. Just scatter contiguous squares of vegetation as you see fit. The vegetation is obscuring terrain that provides concealment and is difficult terrain.

Tree Trunks: In the middle of some vegetation squares, leave a square (or even a 2 x 2 space) as blocking terrain—the trunk of the banyanlike trees that make up much of Monadhan's jungle. Climbing a tree requires a DC 15 Athletics check. Ascending 20 feet grants concealment from obscuring leaves. The top of the jungle canopy is 50 feet above ground.



T1: SEER'S HUT

Encounter Level 22 (17,900 XP)

SETUP

- 1 cambion soulthief (S)
- 1 callophage vampire (C)
- 3 disfigured vampires (N)

The PCs' investigation leads them to Monadhan's seer, but she's not alone. Kas's agents try to capture or kill the PCs before they can learn more about the nature of the domain they're in.

When the PCs reach a suitably dramatic point in their discussion with the Seer of Monadhan, read:

A woman in tattered robes calls out from the street, "Sarissa! Oh, seer! I trust I'm not interrupting anything. Ah, I see you have guests. . . ."

Perception Check

DC 25: *The woman on the street is standing at the edge of a puddle in the road, but you don't see her reflection in the puddle.*

The "woman" is a callophage vampire created by a ritual known to her master, Kas the Betrayer. Kas is in Monadhan seeking his sword, so he's told his agents here to be on the lookout for powerful visitors. When strangers come to Monadhan, Kas's agents are under orders to kill or capture them. As long as at least one newcomer survives, Kas figures he can learn what he needs to know through interrogation. If all the newcomers happen to die, there's always the Speak with Dead ritual.

TACTICS

Kas's crew is out to kill the PCs, but they're also trying to learn why the PCs have come to the Shantytown in the first place. During the battle, they'll converse with the PCs and try to get information from them. They aren't interested in negotiation or parley, however; they'll fight fiercely throughout any conversation.

Cambion Soulthief: The soulthief is circling overhead invisibly at the start of the fight but lands with a move action during its first turn and makes a longsword attack or a double lunge, dealing the extra damage from combat advantage. It tries to shift away and use *soul grasp* in the following round. Ideally, it makes a *soul grasp* attack, then turns invisible and teleports with *soul fuel* (if the *soul grasp* hits) or flies to a spot with cover or concealment (if the *soul grasp* misses).

Disfigured Vampire: The disfigured vampires come out of the shanties at the start of their turn and engage the nearest PCs in melee. They're straightforward combatants, resorting to *blood drain* only if they need hit points and are flanking a PC or are within range of a PC in the callophage's clutches. Don't forget to use their gaze attacks twice: when bloodied and when they die.

Callophage Vampire: The callophage vampire wades into the middle of the PCs immediately, trying to hit as many as possible with its *alluring visage*. Then it claws a PC, following with a *disfiguring bite*. Once the callophage has disfigured an enemy, it makes a *stolen beauty* attack against a character who's trying to stay out of the fray, such as a wizard or other ranged controller.

The soulthiefs and disfigured vampires fight until slain, but if the callophage vampire is below 50 hit points and it looks as if the monsters are losing, she'll

polymorph into mist form and flee into the heart of the Monadhan shantytown. Whether the PCs give chase right away or after a short rest, they are led into encounter T2.

Sarissa: Sarissa is a noncombatant. She doesn't need to survive this encounter. One of Kas's crew can slay her with a single attack.

| Cambion Soulthief (S) | | Level 22 Lurker |
|---|--|---------------------|
| Medium immortal humanoid (devil) | | XP 4,150 |
| Initiative +22 | Senses Perception +18; darkvision | |
| HP 156; Bloodied 78 | | |
| AC 36; Fortitude 33, Reflex 35, Will 30 | | |
| Resist 15 fire | | |
| Speed 10, Fly 8 (clumsy) | | |
| ⬇ Longsword (standard, at-will) ⬆ Weapon | | |
| +27 vs. AC; 2d6 + 8 damage. | | |
| ⊗ Soul Grasp (standard; recharges when no enemy is affected by this power) ⬆ Necrotic | | |
| Ranged 10; +27 vs. Will; 1d10 + 8 necrotic damage, and the target takes ongoing 5 necrotic damage and is slowed (save ends both). <i>First Failed Save:</i> The target is immobilized instead of slowed (save ends). <i>Second Failed Save:</i> The target is stunned instead of immobilized (save ends). | | |
| ⬇ Double Lunge (standard; must be invisible; at-will) ⬆ Weapon | | |
| The cambion soulthief makes a <i>longsword</i> attack against two targets. | | |
| Combat Advantage | | |
| The cambion soulthief deals 1d6 extra damage on melee attacks against any target granting combat advantage to it. | | |
| Invisibility (standard, at-will) ⬆ Illusion | | |
| The cambion soulthief becomes invisible until it attacks. | | |
| Soul Fuel (minor; a creature must be immobilized or stunned by this soulthief's <i>soul grasp</i> ; at-will) | | |
| The cambion soulthief turns invisible until it attacks and teleports 10. The creature affected by <i>soul grasp</i> loses a healing surge and automatically saves against the effect of <i>soul grasp</i> . | | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Common, Supernal | |
| Skills Stealth +23 | | |
| Str 23 (+17) | Dex 25 (+18) | Wis 14 (+13) |
| Con 18 (+15) | Int 13 (+12) | Cha 17 (+14) |
| Equipment longsword, iron gauntlet | | |

Callophage Vampire (C) **Level 22 Controller**
 Medium natural humanoid (undead) XP 4,150

Initiative +16 **Senses Perception** +19; darkvision
HP 203; **Bloodied** 101

Regeneration 10 (regeneration does not function while the callophage vampire is exposed to direct sunlight)

AC 36; **Fortitude** 33, **Reflex** 34, **Will** 35

Immune disease, poison; **Resist** 15 necrotic; **Vulnerable** 10 radiant

Speed 6

⊕ **Claw** (Standard; at-will) ♦ **Necrotic**
 +28 vs. AC; 2d8 + 6 damage, and the target is grabbed.

⊕ **Blood Drain** (Standard; must have combat advantage; recharges when an adjacent creature becomes bloodied) ♦ **Healing**
 +24 vs. Fortitude; 2d12 + 15 damage, and the target is weakened (save ends), and the callophage vampire regains 50 hit points.

⊕ **Disfiguring Bite** (Standard; at-will) ♦ **Psychic**
 Targets a creature grabbed by the callophage vampire; +26 vs. Fortitude; 3d8 + 5 damage, and the target takes ongoing 10 psychic damage and is dazed (save ends both).

✂ **Stolen Beauty** (Standard; cannot be used until a disfiguring bite hits; recharges after each successful *disfiguring bite*) ♦ **Charm, Psychic**
 Ranged 10; +26 vs. Will; 3d10 + 3 psychic damage, and the target cannot use encounter attack powers, daily attack powers, or utility powers (save ends). *Aftersave*: The target cannot willingly move closer to the callophage vampire (save ends).

✂ **Alluring Visage** (standard; recharges when bloodied) ♦ **Charm**
 Close burst 10; +26 vs. Will; the target is pulled 3 squares and immobilized (save ends). *Sustain Minor*: Each creature that has not yet saved against the effect is pulled 3 squares and immobilized (save ends).

Mist Form (standard; encounter) ♦ **Polymorph**
 The callophage vampire becomes insubstantial and gains a fly speed of 12, but cannot make attacks. The callophage vampire can remain in mist form for up to 1 hour or end the effect as a minor action.

Alignment Evil **Languages** Common
Skills Diplomacy +21, Streetwise +21
Str 18 (+15) **Dex** 20 (+16) **Wis** 17 (+14)
Con 19 (+15) **Int** 20 (+16) **Cha** 21 (+16)

3 Disfigured Vampires (N) **Level 21 Brute**
 Medium natural humanoid (undead) XP 3,200

Initiative +12 **Senses Perception** +16; darkvision
HP 245; **Bloodied** 122

Regeneration 10 (regeneration does not function while the disfigured vampire is exposed to direct sunlight)

AC 33; **Fortitude** 34, **Reflex** 30, **Will** 31

Immune disease, poison; **Resist** 15 necrotic; **Vulnerable** 15 radiant

Speed 6

⊕ **Vampiric Claw** (Standard, at-will) ♦ **Necrotic**
 +24 vs. AC; 2d6 + 6 damage, and 10 ongoing necrotic damage (save ends).

⊕ **Gaze Upon My Hideous Ruin** (immediate reaction, when first bloodied and again when reduced to 0 hit points; at-will) ♦ **Fear, Psychic**
 Close burst 2; +22 vs. Will; 2d8 + 7 psychic damage, and the disfigured vampire pushes the target 5 squares.

⊕ **Blood Drain** (Standard; requires combat advantage; recharges when an adjacent creature becomes bloodied) ♦ **Healing**
 +23 vs. Fortitude; 2d12 + 13 damage, and the target is weakened (save ends), and the disfigured vampire regains 61 hit points.

Alignment Evil **Languages** Common
Str 23 (+16) **Dex** 15 (+12) **Wis** 13 (+11)
Con 25 (+17) **Int** 7 (+8) **Cha** 17 (+13)

FEATURES OF THE AREA:

Illumination: What passes for ambient light in Monadhan is the sources of light here. The vampires' regeneration functions normally.

Walls: The shanty walls provide cover, but they're flimsy. Any attack that hits a wall, even an unarmed attack from a weak PC, creates a hole roughly 1 foot in diameter. Once there's a hole, a creature can attack creatures on the other side of the wall and gain the benefit of superior cover (incoming attacks suffer a -5 penalty). A second hit in the same section of shanty wall makes the hole big enough to function as a doorway.

Wrecked Shanty: The debris from collapsed shanty walls is difficult terrain.

Vegetation: The thick bushes and vine-festooned trees offer concealment and are difficult terrain.



Fence: Jumping or vaulting across the fence at full speed requires a DC 20 Athletics or Acrobatics check. Those who fail the check get over the fence but end their movement in the square just beyond it. Creatures can also put holes in the fences the same as in the shanty walls.

Sarissa's Hut: Among Sarissa's scant personal effects is treasure parcel D. If she survives the battle, she gives the treasure to the PCs in gratitude (but she keeps the gold they paid her). If Sarissa dies, the PCs find the treasure parcel near her corpse.

T2: SHANTYTOWN

Encounter Level 22 (17,550 XP)

SETUP

Gwenth (G)

1 callophage vampire (C)

1 disfigured vampire (N)

The PCs chase the mysterious figure fleeing from the battle at the seer's hut only to find more of Kas's agents ready to ambush them.

When the characters approach the pool in the middle of the map, read:

You see a pale woman in leather armor glide gracefully over the footbridge, drawing two short swords as she does so. Another vampire in tattered robes stands atop the wreckage of a shanty to the east.

Perception Check

DC 22: *Something big is rustling on the other side of the porous shanty walls to the west.*

Another disfigured vampire is hiding in the shanty just west of the PCs, plus the callophage to the east and Gwenth coming from the north.

TACTICS

Kas's crew makes its first serious effort to kill or capture the PCs at this point. The vampire Gwenth is one of Kas's most trusted lieutenants, and she's eager to curry favor with Kas (and make Rolain look less effective by comparison).

| | |
|---|--|
| Gwenth, Vampire (G) | Level 23 Elite Skirmisher |
| Medium shadow humanoid (undead) | XP 10,200 |
| Initiative +21 | Senses Perception +20; darkvision |
| HP 434; Bloodied 217 | |
| Regeneration 15 (regeneration does not function while Gwenth is exposed to direct sunlight) | |
| AC 37; Fortitude 35, Reflex 36, Will 34 | |
| Immune disease, poison; Resist 15 necrotic; Vulnerable 10 radiant (if Gwenth is exposed to direct sunlight, her regeneration does not function on her next turn) | |
| Saving Throws +2 | |
| Speed 8, climb 4 (spider climb) | |
| Action Points 1 | |
| ⊕ Bloodletter (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| +28 vs. AC; 2d6 + 3 damage, and ongoing 10 damage (save ends). | |
| ↓ Slashing Roll (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| Gwenth shifts 4 squares and makes two <i>bloodletter</i> attacks at any point in the movement. | |
| ↓ Blood Drain (standard; must have combat advantage; recharge when an adjacent creature becomes bloodied) ♦ Healing | |
| +26 vs. Fortitude; 2d12 + 6 damage, and the target is weakened (save ends), and Gwenth heals 108 hit points. | |
| ↓ Eviscerate (standard; recharge ☞ ☞) ♦ Weapon | |
| +28 vs. AC; one or two targets; 5d6 + 8 damage, and the target is dazed (save ends). | |
| ✱ Betraying Gaze (standard; encounter) ♦ Charm, Gaze | |
| Area burst 3 within 10; +26 vs. Will; the target makes an at-will attack against a target of Gwenth's choice and is immobilized (save ends). | |
| Combat Advantage | |
| Gwenth deals an extra 4d6 damage with her attacks against any target she has combat advantage against. | |
| Mist Step (move; encounter) ♦ Teleport | |
| Gwenth teleports up to 6 squares and becomes insubstantial until the end of her next turn. | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Common |
| Skills Bluff +22, Insight +20, Stealth +24 | |
| Str 24 (+18) | Dex 27 (+19) Wis 18 (+15) |
| Con 25 (+18) | Int 16 (+14) Cha 22 (+17) |
| Equipment leather armor, 2 short swords | |

| | |
|---|--|
| Callophage Vampire (C) | Level 22 Controller |
| Medium natural humanoid (undead) | XP 4,150 |
| Initiative +16 | Senses Perception +19; darkvision |
| HP 203; Bloodied 101 | |
| Regeneration 10 (regeneration does not function while the callophage vampire is exposed to direct sunlight) | |
| AC 36; Fortitude 33, Reflex 34, Will 35 | |
| Immune disease, poison; Resist 15 necrotic; Vulnerable 10 radiant | |
| Speed 6 | |
| ⊕ Claw (Standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic | |
| +28 vs. AC; 2d8 + 6 damage, and the target is grabbed. | |
| ↓ Blood Drain (Standard; must have combat advantage; recharges when an adjacent creature becomes bloodied) ♦ Healing | |
| +24 vs. Fortitude; 2d12 + 15 damage, and the target is weakened (save ends), and the callophage vampire regains 50 hit points. | |
| ↓ Disfiguring Bite (Standard; at-will) ♦ Psychic | |
| Targets a creature grabbed by the callophage vampire; +26 vs. Fortitude; 3d8 + 5 damage, and the target takes ongoing 10 psychic damage and is dazed (save ends both). | |
| ✶ Stolen Beauty (Standard; cannot be used until a disfiguring bite hits; recharges after each successful <i>disfiguring bite</i>) ♦ Charm, Psychic | |
| Ranged 10; +26 vs. Will; 3d10 + 3 psychic damage, and the target cannot use encounter attack powers, daily attack powers, or utility powers (save ends). <i>Aftereffect:</i> The target cannot willingly move closer to the callophage vampire (save ends). | |
| ✶ Alluring Visage (standard; recharges when bloodied) ♦ Charm | |
| Close burst 10; +26 vs. Will; the target is pulled 3 squares and immobilized (save ends). <i>Sustain Minor:</i> Each creature that has not yet saved against the effect is pulled 3 squares and immobilized (save ends). | |
| Mist Form (standard; encounter) ♦ Polymorph | |
| The callophage vampire becomes insubstantial and gains a fly speed of 12, but cannot make attacks. The callophage vampire can remain in mist form for up to 1 hour or end the effect as a minor action. | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Common |
| Skills Diplomacy +21, Streetwise +21 | |
| Str 18 (+15) | Dex 20 (+16) Wis 17 (+14) |
| Con 19 (+15) | Int 20 (+16) Cha 21 (+16) |

| | | |
|---|--|-----------------------|
| Disfigured Vampire (N) | | Level 21 Brute |
| Medium natural humanoid (undead) | | XP 3,200 |
| Initiative +12 | Senses Perception +16; darkvision | |
| HP 245; Bloodied 122 | | |
| Regeneration 10 (regeneration does not function while the disfigured vampire is exposed to direct sunlight) | | |
| AC 33; Fortitude 34, Reflex 30, Will 31 | | |
| Immune disease, poison; Resist 15 necrotic; Vulnerable 15 radiant | | |
| Speed 6 | | |
| ⊕ Vampiric Claw (Standard, at-will) ⊕ Necrotic +24 vs. AC; 2d6 + 6 damage, and 10 ongoing necrotic damage (save ends). | | |
| ↶ Gaze Upon My Hideous Ruin (immediate reaction, when first bloodied and again when reduced to 0 hit points; at-will) ⊕ Fear, Psychic Close burst 2; +22 vs. Will; 2d8 + 7 psychic damage, and the disfigured vampire pushes the target 5 squares. | | |
| ⊕ Blood Drain (Standard; requires combat advantage; recharges when an adjacent creature becomes bloodied) ⊕ Healing +23 vs. Fortitude; 2d12 + 13 damage, and the target is weakened (save ends), and the disfigured vampire regains 61 hit points. | | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Common | |
| Str 23 (+16) | Dex 15 (+12) | Wis 13 (+11) |
| Con 25 (+17) | Int 7 (+8) | Cha 17 (+13) |

Disfigured Vampire: The disfigured bursts through the shanty wall and attacks whichever PC is standing nearest to it at the time. It uses *blood drain* only when Gwenth or the callophage vampire daze a PC (and thus grant it combat advantage).

Callophage Vampire: The callophage crosses the water at the southern footbridge, then uses the same tactics as the callophage in encounter T1: *alluring visage*, then a claw attack to set up *disfiguring bite*, then *stolen beauty* used against a PC who could be badly hampered if limited to at-will powers.

Gwenth: Gwenth uses *betraying gaze* in the first round if possible. Note that this is likely to result in a friendly fire incident. Then she uses *slashing roll* to lure the PCs into the maze of shanties in the western

part of the map. With elite hit points, regeneration, and an attack that deals ongoing damage, she can afford to be patient. As soon as she's down 100 hit points, she'll use *eviscerate*, then *blood drain* to heal herself and weaken a PC. Thereafter, she'll use *eviscerate* whenever it's recharged, because she deals more damage when attacking a dazed enemy.

The disfigured and callophage fight until slain, but Gwenth will flee (probably via *mist step*) if reduced below 50 hit points. If she escapes, she returns to Kas's cave, where she remains until the end of the adventure (unless returning her to the fray at some point would be suitably dramatic).

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: The bonfires marked on the map, plus Monadhan's ambient light, are the sources of light here. Even in the middle of the day, it's not considered direct sunlight that would suppress the vampires' regeneration.

Walls: The shanty walls provide cover, but they're flimsy. Any attack that hits a wall, even an unarmed attack from a weak PC, creates a hole roughly 1 foot in diameter. Once there's a hole, a creature can attack creatures on the other side of the wall and gain the benefit of superior cover (incoming attacks suffer a -5 penalty). A second hit in the same section of shanty wall makes the hole big enough to function as a doorway.

Wrecked Shanty: The debris from collapsed shanty walls is difficult terrain.

Low Wall: The low wall provides cover. A DC 20 Athletics or Acrobatics check is needed to jump or vault it at full speed. Those who fail the check get over the wall but end their movement in the square



just beyond it. Creatures can also put holes in the low walls as if they were shanty walls.

Shallow Water: The squares marked as shallow water are difficult terrain.

Bonfire: The bonfires, which are used by the shantytown denizens to stave off a little of the domain's pervasive gloom, deal 10 fire damage and 5 ongoing fire damage (save ends) to any creature that starts its turn in the same square as the bonfire.

T3: GRAVEYARD

Encounter Level 22 (17,550 XP)

SETUP

Rolain (R)

1 callophage vampire (C)

1 disfigured vampire (N)

The PCs meet the mysterious “Rolain” they’ve heard about and learn that Rolain is in league with Kas.

When the PCs follow their quarry into the graveyard, read:

You’ve been walking along a path that winds through the graveyard, seeing stone mausoleums interspersed among headstones and graveyard statuary. A cloaked figure wearing a longsword and shield steps from behind one of the tombs ahead of you, arms folded across his chest. “I am Rolain,” he says.

Perception Check

DC 22: Besides Rolain, you glimpse a bulky outline on the far side of the mausoleum to the east.

DC 26: A third, slim figure hides behind a statue in the second row of graves to the west.

Rolain is under orders to learn all he can about the PCs, so he’ll talk to them and say nearly anything as long as he can keep them talking. When the characters stop sharing anything useful or the conversation turns into nothing but threats, Rolain’s sword comes out. Once Rolain decides that the time for talking has passed, the PCs cannot convince him otherwise. He figures he’ll get the rest of the story from a captured PC or a ritually compelled corpse.

TACTICS

Rolain and the other vampires fight until the PCs or the vampires are dead.

Rolain: Rolain is a tough nut to crack, with elite soldier defenses, more than 400 hit points, and regeneration. He can afford to be patient. He uses his mark chiefly to inconvenience enemies (with the attack penalty that accompanies the condition) rather than to trigger *lethal guard*; he doesn’t mind moving the mark from character to character. He uses *dominating gaze* and *irrefutable challenge* every chance he gets. *Dominating gaze* sets up the possibility of a friendly fire incident, and even after the dominated PC saves, it sets up Rolain’s *blood drain* because the aftereffect is dazed. *Irrefutable challenge* keeps plenty of PCs within stabbing range

Disfigured Vampire: The disfigured fights like the disfigureds in encounters T1 and T2, except that it will do everything it can to push one or more enemies into a pit with its gaze attack. Because this maneuver is a triggered immediate action, some anticipation and planning on your part are needed to pull it off. The payoff, both in drama and tactical effectiveness, makes the effort worthwhile.

Callophage Vampire: The callophage’s *alluring visage* is another good way to pull the PCs into a pit. Because it’s sustained, the callophage can continue to tug at a PC who made the saving throw for hindering terrain (and thus may be prone at the pit’s edge). This callophage is more cautious than her previous counterparts. Once she’s charged up her *stolen beauty* attack, she’ll retreat a bit and take cover behind a headstone before unleashing it.

| Rolain, Vampire (R) | Level 23 Elite Soldier | |
|---|---|---------------------|
| Medium shadow humanoid (undead) | XP 10,200 | |
| Initiative + 20 | Senses Perception +20; darkvision | |
| HP 434; Bloodied 217 | Regeneration 15 (regeneration does not function while Rolain is exposed to direct sunlight) | |
| AC 41; Fortitude 38, Reflex 37, Will 36 | Immune disease, poison; Resist 15 necrotic; Vulnerable 10 radiant (if Rolain is exposed to direct sunlight, his regeneration does not function on his next turn) | |
| Saving Throws +2 | Speed 7, climb 3 (spider climb) | |
| Action Points 1 | <p>⊕ Longsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon + 30 vs. AC; 2d8 + 7 damage, and the target is marked until the end of Rolain’s next turn.</p> <p>‡ Lethal Guard (opportunity, when an adjacent creature marked by Rolain makes an attack that does not include him or shifts; at-will) Rolain makes a <i>longsword</i> attack against the triggering creature.</p> <p>‡ Blood Drain (standard, encounter; recharges when an adjacent creature becomes bloodied) ♦ Healing Requires combat advantage. +28 vs. Fortitude; 2d12 + 6 damage, and the target is weakened (save ends), and Rolain heals 108 hit points.</p> <p>‡ Shield Slam (minor; recharge ☞☞☞) ♦ Weapon +28 vs. Fortitude; the target is stunned until the end of Rolain’s next turn.</p> <p>‡ Dominating Gaze (minor; recharge ☞☞) ♦ Charm, Gaze Ranged 5; + 27 vs. Will; the target is dominated (save ends, with a -2 penalty on the saving throw). <i>Aftereffect:</i> The target is dazed (save ends). Rolain can dominate only one creature at a time.</p> <p>⚡ Irrefutable Challenge (standard; recharge ☞☞☞☞☞) ♦ Weapon Close burst 4; targets enemies; no attack roll; pull the target within the burst 3 squares to a square adjacent to Rolain. A target that cannot end adjacent does not move. Then Rolain makes a <i>longsword</i> attack against each adjacent enemy.</p> <p>Mist Step (move; encounter) ♦ Teleport Rolain teleports up to 6 squares and becomes insubstantial until the end of his next turn.</p> | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Common | |
| Skills Insight +20, Intimidate +19 | | |
| Str 27 (+19) | Dex 24 (+18) | Wis 18 (+15) |
| Con 25 (+18) | Int 16 (+14) | Cha 22 (+17) |
| Equipment leather armor, longsword, heavy shield | | |

Callophage Vampire (C) Level 22 Controller
 Medium natural humanoid (undead) XP 4,150

Initiative +16 **Senses Perception** +19; darkvision
HP 203; **Bloodied** 101

Regeneration 10 (regeneration does not function while the callophage vampire is exposed to direct sunlight)

AC 36; **Fortitude** 33, **Reflex** 34, **Will** 35

Immune disease, poison; **Resist** 15 necrotic; **Vulnerable** 10 radiant

Speed 6

⊕ **Claw** (Standard; at-will) ♦ **Necrotic**
 +28 vs. AC; 2d8 + 6 damage, and the target is grabbed.

⊖ **Blood Drain** (Standard; must have combat advantage; recharges when an adjacent creature becomes bloodied) ♦ **Healing**
 +24 vs. Fortitude; 2d12 + 15 damage, and the target is weakened (save ends), and the callophage vampire regains 50 hit points.

⊖ **Disfiguring Bite** (Standard; at-will) ♦ **Psychic**
 Targets a creature grabbed by the callophage vampire; +26 vs. Fortitude; 3d8 + 5 damage, and the target takes ongoing 10 psychic damage and is dazed (save ends both).

✂ **Stolen Beauty** (Standard; cannot be used until a disfiguring bite hits; recharges after each successful *disfiguring bite*) ♦ **Charm, Psychic**
 Ranged 10; +26 vs. Will; 3d10 + 3 psychic damage, and the target cannot use encounter attack powers, daily attack powers, or utility powers (save ends). *Aftersave effect:* The target cannot willingly move closer to the callophage vampire (save ends).

✧ **Alluring Visage** (standard; recharges when bloodied) ♦ **Charm**
 Close burst 10; +26 vs. Will; the target is pulled 3 squares and immobilized (save ends). *Sustain Minor:* Each creature that has not yet saved against the effect is pulled 3 squares and immobilized (save ends).

Mist Form (standard; encounter) ♦ **Polymorph**
 The callophage vampire becomes insubstantial and gains a fly speed of 12, but cannot make attacks. The callophage vampire can remain in mist form for up to 1 hour or end the effect as a minor action.

Alignment Evil **Languages** Common
Skills Diplomacy +21, Streetwise +21
Str 18 (+15) **Dex** 20 (+16) **Wis** 17 (+14)
Con 19 (+15) **Int** 20 (+16) **Cha** 21 (+16)

Disfigured Vampire (N) Level 21 Brute
 Medium natural humanoid (undead) XP 3,200

Initiative +12 **Senses Perception** +16; darkvision
HP 245; **Bloodied** 122

Regeneration 10 (regeneration does not function while the disfigured vampire is exposed to direct sunlight)

AC 33; **Fortitude** 34, **Reflex** 30, **Will** 31

Immune disease, poison; **Resist** 15 necrotic; **Vulnerable** 15 radiant

Speed 6

⊕ **Vampiric Claw** (Standard; at-will) ♦ **Necrotic**
 +24 vs. AC; 2d6 + 6 damage, and 10 ongoing necrotic damage (save ends).

⚡ **Gaze Upon My Hideous Ruin** (immediate reaction, when first bloodied and again when reduced to 0 hit points; at-will) ♦ **Fear, Psychic**
 Close burst 2; +22 vs. Will; 2d8 + 7 psychic damage, and the disfigured vampire pushes the target 5 squares.

⊖ **Blood Drain** (Standard; requires combat advantage; recharges when an adjacent creature becomes bloodied) ♦ **Healing**
 +23 vs. Fortitude; 2d12 + 13 damage, and the target is weakened (save ends), and the disfigured vampire regains 61 hit points.

Alignment Evil **Languages** Common
Str 23 (+16) **Dex** 15 (+12) **Wis** 13 (+11)
Con 25 (+17) **Int** 7 (+8) **Cha** 17 (+13)

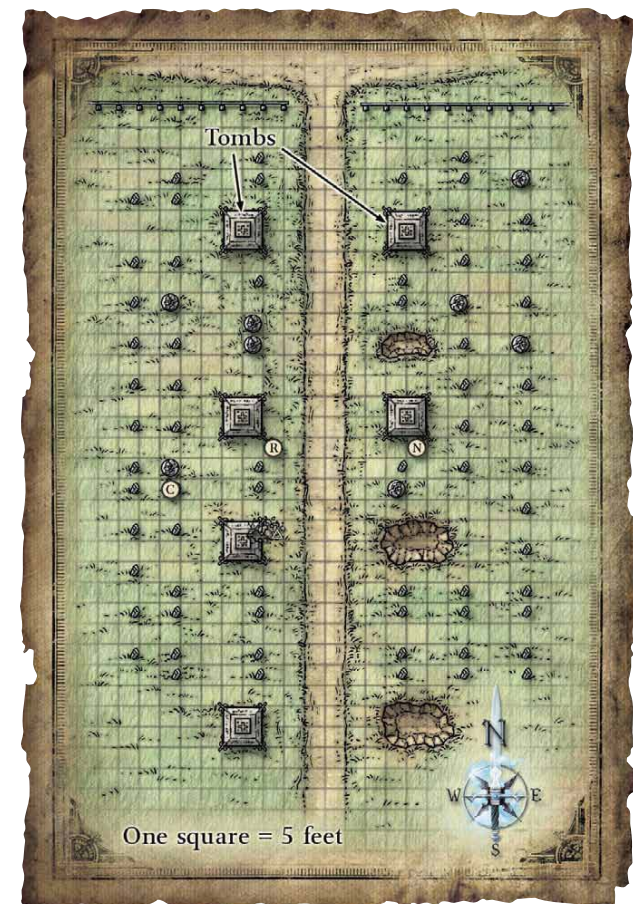
FEATURES OF THE AREA:

Illumination: The ambient light of Monadhan's sky provides somewhat gloomy illumination. The vampires regenerate normally.

Iron Fence: Unlike the fences in encounter T1, these wrought iron fences block movement but don't provide cover. A DC 10 Climb check is needed to scale the fence, which is 10 feet high.

Headstones: Creatures in the same square as a headstone gain cover.

Stone Tombs: These small mausoleums are blocking terrain. Most have been broken into and looted. Those few that remain undisturbed have been entirely sealed with mortar.



Statues: Most of these statues resemble elaborate versions of the headstones. They are difficult terrain and provide cover.

Pit: The pits are 15 feet deep, so falling into one presents little danger to any of the combatants. The walls, however, are mucky, slick, and unstable (DC 30 Athletics check to climb). They tend to collapse when a climber puts weight on a hand- or foothold, so that any failure on the Athletics check results in the climber sliding back to the bottom. The mud and debris at the bottom of each pit is difficult terrain.

T4: DESECRATED GRAVEYARD

Encounter Level 23 (25,500 XP)

SETUP

1 desecration (D)

The battle with Rolain attracted the attention of a desecration—the animate force behind a graveyard full of traitors, turncoats, and other betrayers. It could not resist being drawn to the violence from the previous encounter.

When the PCs have had a short rest after encounter T3, read:

The ground starts to rumble. And in the gloom in front of you, the grave-earth and headstones start to take on an immense—and moving—shape.

Like the wilderness encounters, this encounter doesn't have much impact on the larger story. The desecration doesn't care about the PCs, Kas, Arantor, or the struggle between Tiamat and Bahamut. It was roused by violence and wants only to spread more of the same. This as an opportunity to demonstrate that not everything revolves around the campaign's central plot. Sometimes, bad things just happen.

TACTICS

The desecration fights in straightforward fashion. It prefers to make *mouth of darkness* attacks, then move over a pit and drop the grabbed character into one. (Because the desecration is gargantuan, it treats the pits as difficult terrain.) If a PC is marking it, it will preferentially make *unholy smite* attacks if that PC isn't already taking ongoing necrotic damage. Remember that because it's gargantuan, the desecration can move through squares occupied by the characters and they can move through its squares, too.

The desecration fights until slain, but it won't leave the graveyard; if the adventurers choose to flee, it won't pursue them.

When the battle is over, Kas appears and tries to talk to the PCs (as described in the Shantytown section, page 13).

FEATURES OF THE AREA:

Illumination: The ambient light of Monadhan's sky provides somewhat gloomy illumination.

Iron Fence: Unlike the fences in encounter T1, these wrought iron fences block movement but don't provide cover. A DC 10 Climb check is needed to scale the fence, which is 10 feet high.

Headstones: Creatures in the same square as a headstone gain cover.

Stone Tombs: These small mausoleums are blocking terrain. Most have been broken into and looted. Those few that remain undisturbed have been entirely sealed with mortar.

Statues: Most of these statues resemble elaborate versions of the headstones. They are difficult terrain and provide cover.

Pit: The pits are 15 feet deep, so falling into one presents little danger to any of the combatants. The walls, however, are mucky, slick, and unstable (DC 30 Athletics check to climb). They tend to collapse when a climber puts weight on a hand- or foothold, so that any failure on the Athletics check results in the climber sliding back to the bottom. The mud and debris at the bottom of each pit is difficult terrain.

Newly Discovered Grave: If the heroes defeat the desecration, they notice that the turmoil churned a particularly old coffin to the surface. It's neither locked nor trapped. If the characters search it, they find a moldering skeleton and treasure parcels E, F, and G inside.

Desecration (D) Level 23 Solo Controller

Gargantuan natural animate (earth, undead) XP 25,500

Initiative +14 **Senses** Perception +14; darkvision

Aura of Malevolence (Fear) aura 10; any enemy within the aura that attacks with a radiant power takes a -2 penalty to the attack roll.

HP 1,075; **Bloodied** 537

AC 39; **Fortitude** 38, **Reflex** 33, **Will** 37

Immune disease, poison; **Resist** 10 necrotic; **Vulnerable** 10 radiant

Saving Throws +5

Speed 8

Action Points 2

 ⊕ **Unholy Smite** (Standard, at-will) ◆ **Necrotic**

Reach 4; +28 vs. AC; 3d6 + 15 necrotic damage, and ongoing 15 necrotic damage (save ends).

 † **Double Attack** (Standard, at-will) ◆ **Necrotic**

 The desecration makes two *unholy smite* attacks; +27 vs. AC; 3d6 + 8 damage.

 † **Mouth of Darkness** (Standard, at-will) ◆ **Necrotic**

Reach 4; +26 vs. Reflex; 2d12 + 15 necrotic damage, and the target is grabbed.

 ⚡ **Dark Plague** (when first bloodied and again when the desecration is reduced to 0 hit points) ◆ **Necrotic**

 Close burst 20; targets enemies; +24 vs. Fortitude; the target is weakened (save ends). In addition, the target loses a healing surge. **Miss:** Half damage, and the target is weakened until the end of its next turn. The target does not lose a healing surge.

Rejuvenation

 A desecration rises at full hit points one day after it has been destroyed. Only a quest destroys the creature completely, preventing it from using the *rejuvenation* power.

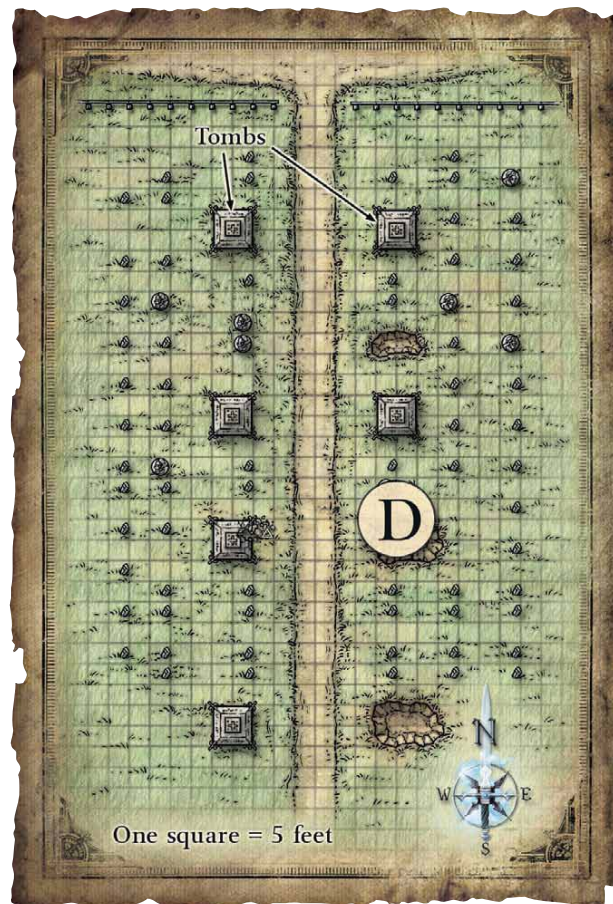
Second Wind (Standard, encounter) ◆ **Healing**

The desecration spends a healing surge and regains 269 hit points. The desecration gains a +2 bonus to all defenses until the start of its next turn.

Alignment Chaotic evil

Languages –

Str 26 (+19) **Dex** 16 (+14) **Wis** 16 (+14)

Con 23 (+17) **Int** 10 (+11) **Cha** 24 (+18)


CI: CAVERN OF RIVERS

Encounter Level 22 (16,800 XP)

SETUP

1 fell troll (F)

1 dark naga (D)

2 cambion impalers (I)

No matter what the configuration of caverns (see the Shifting Caverns section), the Cavern of Rivers always lies closest to the surface and the keep. The cavern is home to a dark naga, some of Arantor's cambion guards, and a fell troll that the naga has trained.

When the PCs reach the northern entrance, read:

To your left, almost around a corner, is a waterfall cascading into a dark pool that runs through the center of the room. The foam from the waterfall is moving rapidly southward—there's a fast current running through the water. Smaller rivulets of water run down the sides of the cavern, splashing across the cavern floor to join the water in the center. Both the waterfall and the smaller streams of water pulse at irregular intervals; occasionally the roar of water falling on stone almost disappears for a second. Tiny droplets of water cover the smooth rock at your feet, making it quite slippery.

The water flows toward the southern wall, which is carved flat and covered with a black-on-white mosaic. Perhaps it's supposed to be veins or tree branches—many stones are missing, so it's hard to tell.

Some water flows into passages in the southeast and southwest corners of the room. The southwest corner has some exposed rock as far as you can see, but the southeast passage is covered in water. It could be only a foot of water, or it could be quite deep indeed. The water is so murky that it's impossible to judge depth by sight.

A massive snake with a human woman's head stirs from its coils on a rock outcropping to the southeast. Peering around a corner to the southwest is a humanoid head and an arm holding an iron spear.

Perception Check

DC 24: *The bubbles coming from the waterfall seem to be swerving around something in the middle of the water, just south of the waterfall. Either the water is shallower there, or there's some sort of mass just underwater.*

That "mass" under the water is the fell troll, which will emerge in the second or third round of the battle.

| | | |
|--|---|---------------------|
| Dark Naga (D) | Level 21 Elite Controller | |
| Large immortal magical beast (reptile) | XP 6,400 | |
| Initiative +14 | Senses Perception +21; darkvision | |
| HP 404; Bloodied 202 | | |
| AC 36; Fortitude 34, Reflex 33, Will 36 | | |
| Saving Throws +2 | | |
| Speed 8 | | |
| Action Points 1 | | |
| ⊕ Tail Sting (Standard, at-will) ♦ Poison | | |
| Reach 2; +24 vs. AC; 2d6 + 8 poison damage (3d6 + 8 damage against a dazed target), and the target is slowed (save ends). | | |
| ↵ Lure (Minor, at-will) ♦ Charm | | |
| Close burst 5; targets enemies; +25 vs. Will; the target is pulled 1 square and dazed (save ends). | | |
| ↵ Psychic Miasma (Standard, recharge ☞ ☞) ♦ Psychic | | |
| Close burst 3; +26 vs. Will; 3d6 + 10 psychic damage, and the target is dazed (save ends). First Failed Save: The target is stunned (save ends). | | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Common, Draconic, Supernal | |
| Skills History +22, Insight +21, Stealth +19 | | |
| Str 26 (+18) | Dex 18 (+14) | Wis 22 (+16) |
| Con 26 (+18) | Int 24 (+17) | Cha 30 (+20) |

| | |
|--|--|
| 2 Cambion Impalers (I) | Level 19 Skirmisher |
| Medium immortal humanoid (devil) | XP 2,400 |
| Initiative +18 | Senses Perception +24; darkvision |
| HP 179; Bloodied 89 | |
| AC 33; Fortitude 31, Reflex 32, Will 30 | |
| Resist 10 fire | |
| Speed 6, fly 10 (clumsy) | |
| ⊕ Spear (Standard, at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| +24 vs. AC; 3d6+8 damage. | |
| ⊕ Swooping Charge (Standard, encounter) ♦ Weapon | |
| The cambion impaler charges and makes the following attack in place of a melee basic attack: +25 vs. AC; 3d6 + 8 damage, and either slide the target 3 squares and immobilize the target until the end of the impaler's next turn or deal 10 ongoing damage. The impaler is not considered a clumsy flyer when making this attack. | |
| ✱ Soulscorch (Standard, recharge ⓧ) ♦ Fire | |
| Area burst 1 within 10; +20 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 4 fire damage, and ongoing 10 fire damage. | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Common, Supernal |
| Skills Athletics +20, Bluff +19, Diplomacy +19 | |
| Str 22 (+15) | Dex 25 (+16) Wis 20 (+14) |
| Con 19 (+13) | Int 17 (+12) Cha 21 (+14) |
| Equipment robes, spear | |

| | |
|---|---|
| Fell Troll (F) | Level 20 Elite Brute |
| Huge natural humanoid | XP 5,600 |
| Initiative +10 | Senses Perception +16 |
| HP 360; Bloodied 180 | |
| Regeneration 15 (if the fell troll takes acid or fire damage, regeneration does not function until the end of its next turn) | |
| AC 32; Fortitude 38, Reflex 30, Will 31 | |
| Saving Throws +2 | |
| Speed 10 | |
| Action Points 1 | |
| ⊕ Claw (Standard, at-will) | |
| Reach 3; +23 vs. AC; 2d10 + 7 damage. | |
| ⊕ Backhand Slam (Standard, at-will) | |
| Reach 3; +21 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 7 damage, and the target is pushed 4 squares and knocked prone. | |
| Blood Frenzy | |
| The fell troll gains a +1 bonus to attack rolls and a +2 bonus to damage rolls against bloodied enemies. | |
| Troll Healing ♦ Healing | |
| If the fell troll is reduced to 0 hit points or fewer by an attack that does not deal acid or fire damage, it rises on its next turn (as a move action) with 20 hit points. | |
| Alignment Chaotic evil | Languages Giant |
| Skills Athletics +22, Endurance +23 | |
| Str 24 (+17) | Dex 10 (+10) Wis 13 (+11) |
| Con 27 (+18) | Int 5 (+7) Cha 7 (+8) |

TACTICS

At first, this seems like a straightforward fight against some guards, but you're setting up the players for an "Aha!" moment when the fell troll rises out of the water. Let your own sense of timing and dramatic flair determine when the troll springs forth on your table. You also want the PCs to struggle a bit with the slippery floors and the water, so try to draw the PCs into the middle of the room, even if that means leaving a monster or two isolated and vulnerable.

Dark Naga: Maneuver the naga so it's at the heart of the battle and close to as many PCs as possible. It can slow, daze, and stun nearby PCs, and you want it to sow as much frustration as possible. If the PCs are slowed, dazed, and stunned in the current, so much the better. Don't be shy about moving the dark naga into the south-central part of the pool and daring the PCs to "come and get it." The dark naga can take some punishment and makes good bait.

Cambion Impalers: If the impalers can attack a PC right away by flying in for a melee attack, they will. If possible, save a *swooping charge* attack to give a three-square slide to a PC who is (wisely) refusing to get near the dark naga. If some or all of the PCs hang back and avoid melee completely, one or both of the impalers can counter with a *soulscorch* attack. The impalers will use *soulscorch* even if the fell troll is in the burst (which, if it hits, will knock out the troll's regeneration for a round and count as a "friendly fire" incident as described under The Sting of Betrayal on page 10.

The cambion impalers don't worry much about the difficult and challenging terrain, but they aren't completely immune to it because they're clumsy fliers – while airborne, they must move at least 2 squares per turn or crash (as described on p. 48 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*). Furthermore, they suffer a -4 penalty to attacks and damage while flying (except for their *swooping charge*), so they prefer to fly to an advantageous square and then land before attacking.

Fell Troll: The fell troll is a simple but effective monster. Don't forget to regenerate at the start of every turn unless it took fire or acid damage last turn. Use *backhand slam* if the attack will push the target close enough to the dark naga for its *psychic miasma* and *lure* attacks to work.

FEATURES OF THE AREA:

Illumination: This cavern has only the illumination the PCs bring with them.

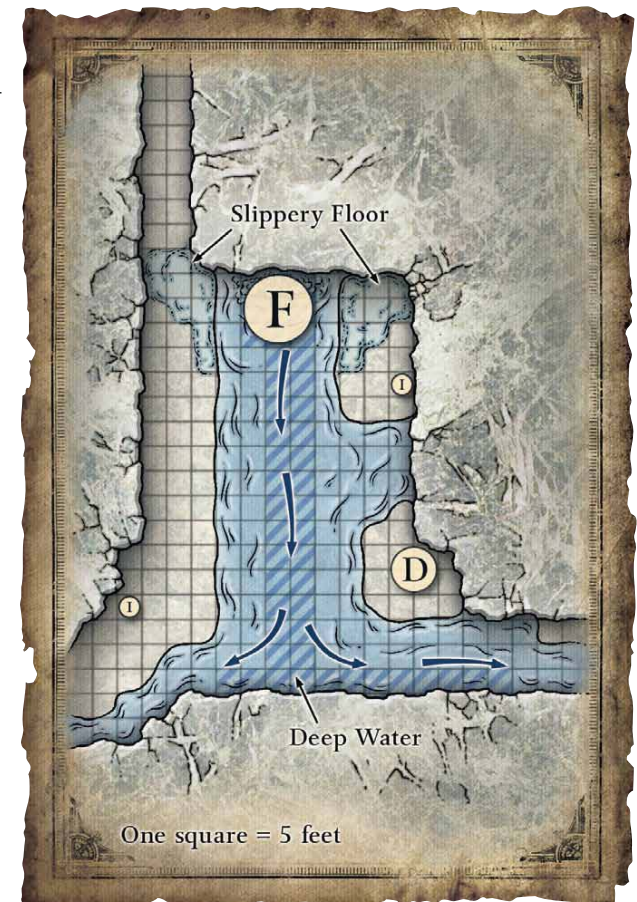
Ceiling: The ceiling of the cavern is 20 feet high.

Slippery Rock: The squares marked as slippery are challenging terrain, requiring a DC 14 Acrobatics check to negotiate. Characters who fail the Acrobatics check fall prone and end their move action in the first slippery square they enter. The dark naga and the cambion impalers are acrobatic enough that they automatically succeed on the Acrobatics check, but the fell troll might slip if it's unlucky.

Shallow Water: The squares marked as shallow water are difficult terrain.

Deep Water: This water is between 5 and 6 feet deep. It's considered difficult terrain, and creatures trying to fight in a deep water square suffer the penalties and restrictions of aquatic combat (described on p. 45 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*). Characters who can keep their heads above water (all but dwarves, halflings, and similar creatures) can walk on the bottom of the pool rather than swimming with the Athletics skill, if they wish.

Current: The map squares marked with arrows have a strong current, as described on p. 45 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. At the start of each player's turn, the current slides the character 2 squares in the direction of the arrow. A creature can choose to fight the current by spending two squares of movement (to slide only 1 square) or four squares of movement (to negate the slide). A creature need not take a move action right away, but when it takes a move action later in its turn, it moves either 2 or 4 squares less. A creature that wants to travel in the current's direction need do nothing, of course—the slide 2 at the beginning of the turn is essentially free movement.



C2: CAVERN OF CLIFFS

Encounter Level 21 (15,250 XP)

SETUP

1 war devil (W)

1 storm devil (S)

3 barbed devils (B)

The Cavern of Cliffs is home to devils betrayed into long-term servitude to Arantor. They order around the cambions when something needs to be done on the surface, but mostly they remain in this chamber and bemoan the treachery of fate.

When the PCs can see clearly into the chamber, read:

This room has a high, vaulted ceiling, and luminous lichen in the upper reaches illuminate crystalline stalactites, some more than five feet in diameter, hanging from the ceiling. The stalactites seem to catch and hold the light, glowing from within.

Before you and to the left is a cliff that rises about 30 feet along the left wall and 60 feet straight ahead of you. To the right is the lip of a cliff top. From your vantage point at the entrance, you can't see how far down it goes.

Perception Check

DC 25: *You see the head of a barbed devil peeking over the edge of the center cliff, some 60 feet above you. It darts back beyond the edge after a moment.*

Dungeoneering Check

DC 24: *The stalactites are incredibly rare locracite crystal formations, renowned both for their beauty and their fragility. Their grip on the ceiling is far more tenuous than a standard stalactite.*

When the barbed devils spot the heroes, they motion to the war devil and storm devil, who creep closer to the edge and prepare for battle.

TACTICS

Because they can all fly or teleport, the devils have the advantage in this terrain. Yet because the war devil and storm devil are clumsy flyers (thus taking a -4 penalty on attacks and damage while airborne), it's not as big of an advantage as it seems.

Storm Devil: The storm devil has little reason to engage in melee—not when it can use *lightning fork* and *infernal thunderclap* from a safe distance. The push from *infernal thunderclap* can send a PC over a cliff edge. A character who succeeds at a saving throw doesn't go over the cliff and instead is prone at the cliff edge.

Barbed Devils: The barbed devils are a little over-matched compared to the PCs statistically, but they're versatile combatants. Make sure they're doing what the PCs don't want them to. In general, they should be in melee, where they can use their *barbed aura* and their minor-action shift 3. If the PCs prefer to trade attacks from a distance, the barbed devils can reply with *hurl flame* (subject to recharge, of course). Don't forget that the barbed devils can teleport around the chamber and once per fight deal damage when they do so.

War Devil: The ideal position for the war devil is at the edge of a cliff, because then it can send PCs plummeting off the edge (subject to a saving throw) with each trident attack. That leaves the war devil vulnerable in return to push and slide attacks from the PCs, but that's good drama at the table, and the war devil can rejoin the fray after a fall without too much trouble.

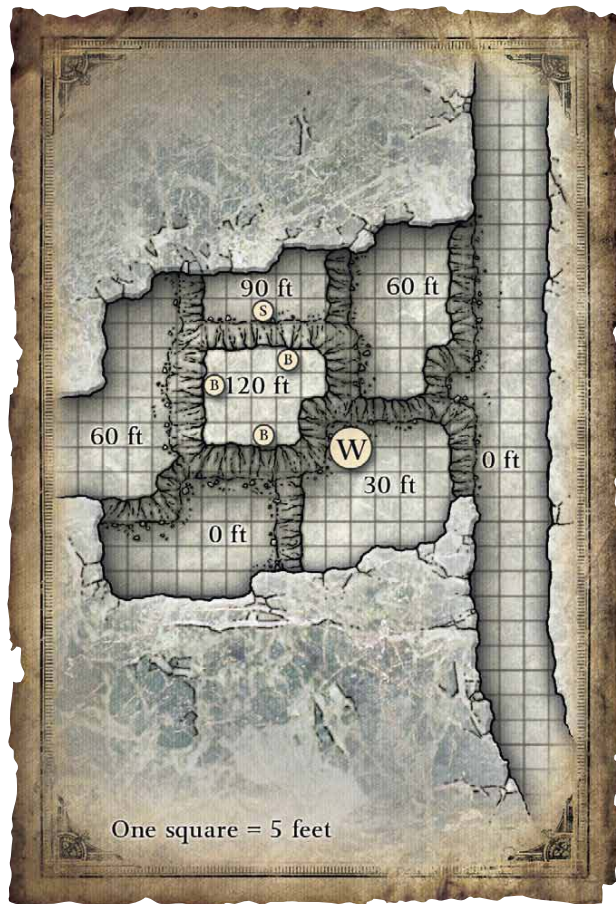
At the start of each war devil turn, consider what you'll do with your minor action: use *besiege foe* to mark a PC (preferably one far away and beset by barbed devils) or *fiendish tactics* if it's recharged (to grant extra attacks to other devils). Also, ask yourself whether there's a tricky way that the war devil can use *devilish transposition*, such as if the PCs have the storm devil or one of the barbed devils surrounded. Powers like this give the monsters an "action advantage:" they use only one action to accomplish two things (in this case, moving the war devil into a target-rich environment while rescuing a more vulnerable monster).

Don't forget to make recharge rolls. All three monsters have recharging powers, and the war devil has two.

| | | | |
|---|---------------------------|--|--|
| Storm Devil (S) | | Level 23 Artillery | |
| Medium immortal humanoid (devil) | | XP 5,100 | |
| Initiative +18 | | Senses Perception +17; darkvision | |
| HP 169; Bloodied 84 | | | |
| AC 37; Fortitude 35, Reflex 34, Will 33 | | | |
| Resist 20 fire, 20 lightning, 20 thunder | | | |
| Speed 7, fly 7 (clumsy) | | | |
| ⊕ Trident (Standard, at-will) ♦ Lightning, Weapon | | | |
| +26 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 8 damage, and ongoing 10 lightning damage, and the target is dazed (save ends both). | | | |
| ↗ Lightning Fork (Standard, at-will) ♦ Lightning | | | |
| Requires trident; ranged 20; +28 vs. Reflex; 3d6 + 8 lightning damage. | | | |
| ⚡ Infernal Thunderclap (Standard, recharge ⚡ ⚡) ♦ Lightning | | | |
| Area burst 2 within 20; +26 vs. Fortitude; 2d10 + 6 lightning and thunder damage, and the target is pushed 3 squares from the origin square and dazed until the end of its next turn. | | | |
| Cyclone (Free, when first bloodied, encounter) | | | |
| The storm devil shifts 3 squares, and any Medium or smaller enemy adjacent to the storm devil at the start of the move is knocked prone. | | | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Supernal | | |
| Skills Stealth +23 | | | |
| Str 20 (+16) | Dex 25 (+18) | Wis 22 (+17) | |
| Con 25 (+18) | Int 16 (+14) | Cha 17 (+14) | |
| Equipment trident | | | |

| | | | |
|--|---------------------------|--|--|
| 3 Barbed Devils (B) | | Level 18 Skirmisher | |
| Medium immortal humanoid (devil) | | XP 2,000 each | |
| Initiative +17 | | Senses Perception +11; darkvision | |
| Threatening Barbs aura 1; any creature in the aura that makes a melee attack or a close attack with the weapon keyword against the barbed devil takes 5 damage. | | | |
| HP 170; Bloodied 85 | | | |
| AC 33; Fortitude 31, Reflex 30, Will 29 | | | |
| Resist 20 fire | | | |
| Speed 7, teleport 7 | | | |
| ⊕ Claw (Standard, at-will) | | | |
| +23 vs. AC; 1d8 + 7 damage. | | | |
| ⚡ Double Attack (Standard, at-will) | | | |
| The barbed devil makes two claw attacks. | | | |
| ↗ Hurl Flame (Standard, recharge ⚡ ⚡) ♦ Fire | | | |
| Ranged 5; +21 vs. Reflex; 1d10 + 6 fire damage, and ongoing 5 fire damage, and the target is dazed (save ends both). | | | |
| ↶ Barbed Teleport (Standard, encounter) ♦ Teleportation | | | |
| Close burst 1; +23 vs. AC; 1d8 + 7 damage, and the barbed devil teleports 7 squares. | | | |
| Infernal Bound (Minor, at-will) | | | |
| The barbed devil shifts 3 squares. | | | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Supernal | | |
| Skills Athletics +21, Intimidate +19 | | | |
| Str 25 (+16) | Dex 23 (+15) | Wis 15 (+11) | |
| Con 18 (+13) | Int 12 (+10) | Cha 20 (+14) | |

| | | | |
|---|---------------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| War Devil (Malebranche) (W) | | Level 22 Brute (Leader) | |
| Large immortal humanoid (devil) | | XP 4150 | |
| Initiative +17 | | Senses Perception +15 | |
| HP 255; Bloodied 127 | | | |
| AC 35; Fortitude 34, Reflex 32, Will 30 | | | |
| Resist 30 fire | | | |
| Speed 8, fly 8 (clumsy) | | | |
| ⊕ Claw (Standard, at-will) | | | |
| +26 vs. AC; 1d6 + 8 damage. | | | |
| ⚡ Trident (Standard, recharge ⚡ ⚡ ⚡) ♦ Weapon | | | |
| Reach 2; +26 vs. AC; 4d8 + 8 damage and ongoing 5 damage (save ends), and the target slides into any square adjacent to the war devil and is knocked prone. | | | |
| ↗ Besieged Foe (Minor, at-will) | | | |
| Ranged sight; the war devil marks an enemy; allies of the war devil gain a +2 bonus to attack rolls made against the target until the encounter ends or the war devil marks a new target. | | | |
| ↗ Devilish Transposition (Move, at-will) ♦ Teleportation | | | |
| Ranged 20; the war devil and an allied devil within range swap positions. | | | |
| ↗ Fiendish Tactics (Minor, recharge ⚡ ⚡ ⚡) | | | |
| Ranged 10; affects up to 2 allied devils of the war devil's level or lower; each target can take a move action or make a basic attack. | | | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Supernal | | |
| Skills Intimidate +20 | | | |
| Str 27 (+19) | Dex 23 (+17) | Wis 19 (+15) | |
| Con 25 (+18) | Int 15 (+13) | Cha 18 (+15) | |
| Equipment trident | | | |



FEATURES OF THE AREA:

Illumination: If the PCs bring any light source into the room, the entire chamber is brightly lit. The locracite stalactites transmit the light throughout the chamber and even seem to magnify its intensity.

Ceiling: The ceiling of the cavern is 90 feet above the ledge where the PCs start, which means it's 30 feet from the highest elevation in the chamber.

Cliffs: It takes a DC 15 Athletics check to ascend these cliffs at half speed, granting combat advantage during the climb, as described on p. 182 of the *Player's Handbook*. Creatures that take damage while climbing must immediately make a DC 15 Athletics check (DC 20 if the damage made the climber bloodied) or fall. Creatures about to fall—usually because they failed an Athletics check—can, as an immediate action, attempt a DC 20 Athletics check (with an additional +1 DC per point of damage) to make a last-ditch grab at the cliff face. Failing this second Athletics check sends the character tumbling down the cliff.

Stalactites: The locracite formations on the ceiling catch and magnify the light, but they're dangerous as well as beautiful. Any attack with the thunder keyword that deals at least 10 damage causes some of the stalactites to burst. Everyone in the chamber immediately hears the crystalline stalactites shattering like glass. At the start of the next round, jagged shards rain down on everyone in the chamber, making a +28 attack against Reflex that deals 2d10 + 10 damage. This may count as a "friendly fire" incident as described under *The Sting of Betrayal* on page 10.

Any intentional attack (such as someone aiming an arrow at a stalactite) automatically hits. If the attack deals at least 10 damage, then shards rain down at the start of the next round. There are enough locracite formations on the ceiling to sustain four such attacks.

C3: CAVERN OF SULFUR

Encounter Level 22 (18,600 XP)

SETUP

1 abhorrent reaper (A)

2 betrayer wights (B)

Sulfur trap

This chamber is home to some of Arantor's loyal (for this place, anyway) undead. They claim this chamber as their own because the toxic fumes make it uninhabitable for anyone not immune to poison.

When the PCs reach the entrance to the chamber, read:

You've been smelling something foul and rotten as you approached this chamber, and now you have some idea why. There's a cone-shaped formation—like a volcano, only about 5 feet tall—in the center of a pool in this cavern. Scattered around the periphery are smaller volcano-like cones, each only 2 or 3 feet high and surrounded by chunks of rock.

Along the right wall are two clawed undead, their eyes glowing with hate as they shamble toward you. To the left near the back of the cavern is a black-cloaked figure wielding a scythe and floating several feet off the cavern floor.

Perception Check

DC 29: *The room smells strongly of sulfur.*

DC 33: *You can make out a light haze near one of the nearer cones.*

Dungeoneering Check

DC 29: *Concentrations of sulfur are frequently poisonous, but the poison dissipates rather quickly in a large cavern like this.*

At the start of every turn, the geyser cone in the middle of the room spouts scalding water. But the real danger in the room—other than the undead, of course—are the poison-spewing sulfur cones.

TACTICS

Beyond dealing with the sulfur cones, the PCs must deal with a cohesive trio of monsters that have every reason to stick together and focus their efforts. Ideally, this battle resolves into a slugfest right next to one of the sulfur cones. If that's the case, the monsters can exact a grim toll from the PCs for passage through this chamber.

Betrayer Wights: These are simple brutes, but it's worth paying close attention to the weakened condition on the claw attack—that's where this monster gets its oomph. Track which PCs are weakened, and remember to give the betrayer wight 15 more hit points if the PC decides to get rid of the weakened condition by spending a healing surge. Spending a healing surge is an expensive way to purge a condition that you're likely to reapply the next round anyway. A party can quickly deplete its resources if it's not willing to spend at least some time weakened during this battle. Don't forget the *death wail*. It gives the other monsters an extra basic attack, which might impose the weakened condition.

Before each betrayer wight attack, check whether the abhorrent reaper is within 5 squares, because if it is, the attack deals an extra 1d6 necrotic damage.

Abhorrent Reaper: The abhorrent reaper also gets extra basic attacks with its *bloodthirst* power, and thus more chances to weaken the PCs and consume their healing surges. The reaper is quite mobile—it's fast, flies well, and has a decent charge attack—but the best place for it is right between the two betrayer wights. *Umbral phantasm* is an important (and frustrating) part of the reaper's damage mitigation, so use it whenever you can and remember to check for its recharge at the start of every turn.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: This cavern has only the illumination the PCs bring with them.

Ceiling: The ceiling of the cavern is 60 feet high and covered in cracks—vents that allow the sulfur in this room to percolate up to the surface, so diffused that it's barely noticeable when it reaches open air.

Geyser Cone: At the start of every turn, the geyser cone spews steam and scalding droplets of water. Make an area burst attack (+28 vs. Fortitude) against each creature in a 3-square burst from the cone; any creature hit takes 2d10 fire damage. Squares adjacent to the geyser cone are lightly obscured (as described on p. 61 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*) because of the steam.

Sulfur Cone: Every round, two of the six sulfur cones will erupt, spewing poison within 2 squares (see the trap description below). The abhorrent reaper and betrayer wights are immune to poison and blithely ignore the sulfur, but they're smart enough to lure the PCs close to a sulfur cone if they can.

Debris: The debris around each sulfur cone is difficult terrain.

Shallow Water: The water is difficult terrain. It's uncomfortably hot but not actually damaging.

It's also poisonous; a creature that drinks the water takes 2d10 + 5 poison damage and ongoing 10 poison damage (save ends, probably when the incautious PC retches the water back up).

Abhorrent Reaper (A) Level 23 Elite Soldier (Leader)

Large shadow humanoid (undead) XP 10,200

Initiative +18 **Senses** Perception +14; darkvision

Aura of Ruin aura 5; any ally within the aura deals 1d6 extra necrotic damage with melee attacks.

HP 424; **Bloodied** 212

AC 40; **Fortitude** 37, **Reflex** 34, **Will** 36

Immune disease, fear, poison; **Resist** 10 necrotic; **Vulnerable** 10 radiant

Saving Throws +2

Speed 8, fly 12 (hover)

Action Points 1

⊕ **Abhorrent Sickle** (Standard, at-will) ♦ **Necrotic, Weapon**
Reach 2; +30 vs. AC; 3d6 + 8 necrotic damage.

⊥ **Hateful Charge** (Standard; usable only when charging, at-will) ♦ **Necrotic, Weapon**

Requires sickle; +30 vs. AC; 3d6 + 8 necrotic damage, and the target is knocked prone and is immobilized until the end of the abhorrent reaper's next turn.

↖ **Hate's Cleave** (Standard, at-will) ♦ **Necrotic, Weapon**

Requires sickle; +28 vs. AC; 6d6 + 8 necrotic damage.

Bloodthirst

When an abhorrent reaper bloodies an enemy, one of the abhorrent reaper's allies can make a melee basic attack against the bloodied creature as a free action.

Umbral Phantasm (Immediate Interrupt, when the abhorrent reaper would take damage, recharge ☞☞☞)

The abhorrent reaper becomes insubstantial until it attacks or until the end of its next turn.

Alignment Evil **Languages** Common

Skills Intimidate +23

Str 27 (+19) **Dex** 21 (+16) **Wis** 16 (+14)

Con 20 (+16) **Int** 18 (+15) **Cha** 24 (+18)

Equipment robes, sickle

2 Betrayer Wights (B) Level 21 Brute

Medium shadow humanoid (undead) XP 3,200 each

Initiative +16 **Senses** Perception +5; darkvision

HP 244; **Bloodied** 122

AC 33; **Fortitude** 36, **Reflex** 33, **Will** 32

Immune disease, poison; **Resist** 20 necrotic; **Vulnerable** 10 radiant

Speed 7

⊕ **Claw** (Standard, at-will) ♦ **Healing, Necrotic**

+24 vs. AC; 2d8 + 9 necrotic damage, and the target is weakened. To end the weakened condition, the target must spend a healing surge (a free action). If the target does so, the wight regains 15 hit points.

↖ **Death Wail** (when reduced to 0 hit points) ♦ **Necrotic**

Close burst 5; targets enemies; +21 vs. Fortitude; 2d6 + 7 necrotic damage. Undead allies in the burst can make a basic attack as a free action.

Alignment Chaotic evil **Languages** Common

Str 28 (+19) **Dex** 22 (+16) **Wis** 6 (+8)

Con 24 (+17) **Int** 8 (+9) **Cha** 20 (+15)

Sulfur Spewers Level 18 Blaster

Hazard XP 2,000

Hazard: This cavern is close to a sulfur vent deep underground, and the cinder cones marked on the map periodically emit poisonous clouds of sulfur

Perception:

♦ DC 29: The room smells strongly of sulfur.

♦ DC 33: A lingering haze near the cinder cones marks where the sulfur is strongest.

Additional Skill: Dungeoneering

♦ DC 29: Concentrations of sulfur are frequently poisonous, but the poison dissipates rather quickly in a large cavern such as this.

Trigger: At the start of each turn, roll 1d6 twice. The indicated cinder cones emit a cloud of poisonous sulfur.

Attack

Standard Action Close burst 2

Target: All living creatures within the area

Attack: +21 vs. Fortitude

Hit: 2d10 + 5 poison damage and ongoing 10 poison (save ends)

Miss: Half damage.



C4: CAVERN OF AIR

Encounter Level 22 (18,400 XP)

SETUP

- 1 void lich (V)
- 2 callers in darkness (C)
- 1 tormenting ghost (T)

This chamber is another chance for the PCs to employ their flying and Athletics skills as they battle a quartet of undead on floating platforms of stone.

When the PCs reach the cavern entrance, read:

Safe passage through this cavern ends almost as soon as you set foot inside, for the passageway opens into a cavern from high on one of the cavern walls. You can see another platform about 50 feet southeast of you on the far wall with two passages exiting the cavern. Between you and that other platform is empty, dark space. Floating like islands in that dark space are rock platforms, each several feet thick.

As you watch, the islands creep from side to side, slowly enough that you can jump from one to another but rapidly enough that in a few minutes, the platforms will be thoroughly shuffled.

A ghost in tattered finery hovers directly above one of the larger islands, beckoning you closer.

Characters can see at least 100 feet from their own light source:

Automatic: *The rocky stone floor is about 100 feet below you.*

Perception Check

DC 23: *There are two dark clouds hovering near the ceiling, one over each of the largest islands.*

The dark clouds are callers in darkness. A void lich waits around the corner. It will appear the round after it hears sounds of battle.

TACTICS

The beckoning on the part of the tormenting ghost is just a ruse to draw the PCs onto the floating islands, where the terrain is more advantageous to the monsters (and more interesting for the DM).

Tormenting Ghost: Use the *burst of terror* attack to force PCs off the islands and *ghostly possession* against PCs with effective ranged attacks. Use *spectral shift* whenever an adventurer misses with an attack. *Ghostly terrain*, while effective, probably distracts from the fun of this encounter, so use it only when you see a truly great opportunity.

Callers In Darkness: Use *advantage of fear* and *steal essence* as often as possible, resorting to *spirit bites* only when you can't reach the marked character. Keep track of which caller has which character marked, and make sure you apply the conditions for failed saving throws.

Void Lich: The void lich arrives in the second round of the fight, alights on an unoccupied island, then attacks with *void tendrils* every round. Eventually this will attract a hero's attention. If engaged in melee, the void lich uses *frightful gaze* (especially if its enemy isn't flying and might get pushed off the island) or *hideous laughter*. *Fade to dusk* and *phase step* should be sufficient to get the void lich out of harm's way.

| Tormenting Ghost (T) | | Level 21 Controller |
|---|-----------------------------------|---------------------|
| Medium shadow humanoid (undead) | | XP 3,200 |
| Initiative +19 | Senses Perception +17; darkvision | |
| HP 152; Bloodied 76 | | |
| AC 32; Fortitude 30, Reflex 34, Will 32 | | |
| Immune disease, poison; Resist insubstantial | | |
| Speed fly 6 (hover); phasing | | |
| ⊕ Spirit Touch (Standard, at-will) ♦ Necrotic | | |
| +24 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 9 necrotic damage. | | |
| ↓ Ghostly Possession (Standard, recharge Ⓜ Ⓜ) ♦ Charm | | |
| Target must be a living humanoid; +24 vs. Will; the tormenting ghost enters the target's space and is removed from play, and the target is dominated (save ends). The tormenting ghost can use this power against only one creature at a time. When the target is no longer dominated, or when the tormenting ghost chooses to end its <i>ghostly possession</i> (a free action), the ghost reappears in a square adjacent to the target. | | |
| ↩ Burst of Terror (Standard, recharge Ⓜ Ⓜ) ♦ Fear, Necrotic | | |
| Close burst 5; targets enemies; +24 vs. Will; 1d8 + 9 necrotic damage, the target is pushed 5 squares, and the target is dazed and immobilized (save ends both). | | |
| ✱ Ghostly Terrain (Standard, at-will) ♦ Necrotic | | |
| Area burst 1 within 10; the area is suddenly filled with ghostly lights, wisps of necrotic mist, and the faint whispers of the dead. The area becomes difficult terrain and lightly obscured. Any creature that enters or ends its turn in the area is immobilized (save ends). The ghostly terrain remains in place for 5 minutes before fading away. | | |
| Spectral Shift (immediate reaction, when missed by a melee attack, at-will) | | |
| The tormenting ghost shifts 3 squares. | | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Common | |
| Skills Stealth +24 | | |
| Str 11 (+10) | Dex 28 (+19) | Wis 14 (+12) |
| Con 20 (+15) | Int 12 (+11) | Cha 25 (+17) |

FEATURES OF THE AREA:

Illumination: The chamber's upper reaches, where most of the action takes place, are unlit. Phosphorescent lichen near the cavern floor makes it obvious to the characters that it's a long way down. Within 5 squares of the void lich, bright light becomes dim light and dim light becomes darkness.

Ceiling: The ceiling of the cavern is 150 feet high (20 feet higher than the floating islands).

Floating Islands: The islands marked on the map float laterally at the start of each turn. Roll 1d8 for each island; 1 means it drifts 1 square north, 2 means 1 square northeast, 3 is east, and so on. The islands don't change altitude.

Besides drifting, the islands are fragile. Sufficient force (a powerful attack or a collision with another island) is enough to break them apart. If two islands bump together (occupy adjacent squares), a few pebbles fall ominously to the cavern floor. If a floating island rolls movement that would make any part of it overlap with another island, then it breaks into two pieces. Let your sense of creative verve decide where the break happens, either splitting up combatants or keeping them together as you see fit. Roll 1d8 a second time for movement for one of the two "daughter" islands—it doesn't matter which—to get some separation between the two daughters (continue rolling until a result causes the second piece to move away from the first). Likewise, if a close or area attack deals at least 20 damage and covers at least half of an island, break the island apart. Judge

| | |
|---|--|
| Void Lich (V) Medium aberrant humanoid (undead) XP 5,600 | Level 20 Elite Lurker XP 5,600 |
| Initiative +13 Senses Perception +18; darkvision | |
| Shroud of Night aura 5; bright light within the aura is reduced to dim light, and dim light within the aura is reduced to darkness (if the void lich takes radiant damage, the aura is negated until the end of the void lich's next turn). | |
| HP 296; Bloodied 148 | |
| AC 34; Fortitude 31, Reflex 32, Will 34 | |
| Immune disease, poison, fear; Resist 10 necrotic | |
| Saving Throws +2 | |
| Speed 4, fly 8 (hover) | |
| Action Points 1 | |
| ⊕ Life Trap (Standard, at-will) ♦ Healing Necrotic +23 vs. Fortitude; 2d6 + 7 necrotic damage, and the void lich regains 15 hit points. | |
| ☞ Void Tendrils (Standard, at-will) ♦ Necrotic Ranged 10; +23 vs. Will; 2d6 + 7 necrotic damage, and the target is knocked prone and dazed (save ends). | |
| ↖ Frightful Gaze (Minor, at-will) ♦ Fear, Gaze Close blast 3; +21 vs. Will; the target is pushed 5 squares and takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls (save ends). <i>First Failed Saving Throw:</i> The target is dazed, immobilized, and takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls (save ends all). | |
| ↖ HIDEOUS LAUGHTER (Minor, recharges when the void lich bloodies an enemy) ♦ Fear, Psychic Close blast 3; +21 vs. Will; 2d8 + 7 psychic damage, and the target takes a -5 penalty to all defenses until the end of the void lich's next turn. | |
| Fade to Dusk (Minor, recharge ☞ ☞) The void lich becomes insubstantial and invisible until it attacks or until the end of its next turn. | |
| Phase Step (Minor, at-will) The void lich teleports up to 2 squares. | |
| Indestructible When a void lich is reduced to 0 hit points, its body and possessions dissipate into wisps of darkness, but it is not destroyed. It reappears (along with its possessions) in 1d10 days within 1 square of its phylactery, unless the phylactery is also found and destroyed. | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Common, Deep Speech, telepathy 10 |
| Skills Arcana +22, Intimidate +20 | |
| Str 16 (+13) | Dex 17 (+13) |
| Con 22 (+16) | Wis 26 (+18) |
| | Cha 20 (+15) |

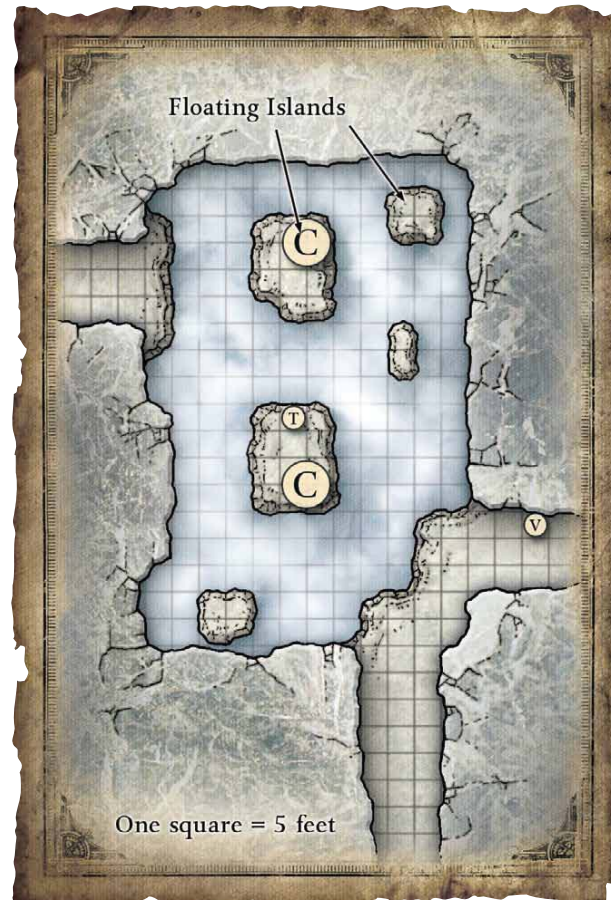
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|--|--|
| 2 Callers in Darkness (C) Large shadow animate (undead) XP 4,800 each | Level 19 Elite Soldier XP 4,800 each |
| Initiative +13 Senses Perception +16; darkvision | |
| HP 253; Bloodied 126 | |
| AC 33; Fortitude 33, Reflex 28, Will 33 | |
| Immune disease, poison; Resist insubstantial | |
| Saving Throws +2 | |
| Speed fly 8 (hover); phasing | |
| Action Points 1 | |
| ⊕ Spirit Bite (Standard, at-will) ♦ Necrotic, Psychic Reach 2; +23 vs. AC; 1d10 + 7 necrotic damage, and ongoing 10 psychic damage (save ends). | |
| ⊕ Double Bite (Standard, at-will) ♦ Necrotic, Psychic The caller in darkness makes two <i>spirit bite</i> attacks. | |
| ⊕ Steal Essence (Standard, at-will) ♦ Necrotic, Psychic Reach 2; targets a creature marked by the caller in darkness; +22 vs. Fortitude; 1d10 + 9 necrotic damage, and ongoing 5 psychic damage (save ends). <i>First Failed Saving Throw:</i> The target takes ongoing 5 psychic damage and is weakened (save ends both). <i>Second Failed Saving Throw:</i> The target takes ongoing 10 psychic damage and is stunned instead of weakened (save ends both). | |
| ↖ Advantage of Fear (Minor 1/round, at-will) ♦ Fear Close burst 10; targets one creature; the target is marked and grants combat advantage to the caller in darkness (save ends both); see also <i>steal essence</i> . | |
| ↖ Soulstorm (Free, when first bloodied, encounter) ♦ Necrotic, Psychic Close burst 2; +22 vs. Reflex; 1d10 + 9 psychic damage plus 1d10 + 9 necrotic damage. In addition, a target that grants combat advantage to the caller in darkness takes ongoing 5 psychic damage and ongoing 5 necrotic damage (save ends both). | |
| Alignment Chaotic evil | Languages Common |
| Str 24 (+16) | Dex 18 (+13) |
| Con 21 (+14) | Wis 24 (+16) |
| | Cha 25 (+16) |

for yourself whether a particular attack is unlikely to damage the stones: a close attack with thrown daggers, for example, probably could be ignored in this case. Collisions with the cavern walls usually don't make the islands break apart, but if nothing has cracked in half for several turns or you're really itching to stir things up, then either assign a chance for a wall collision to damage a platform or just declare that one breaks.

Cavern Floor: From the floating islands to the cavern floor is a fall of 130 feet onto a pile of rubble—chunks of rock that abraded off the floating islands in the past. The floor is difficult terrain throughout. The only feature of interest down there is the bound island (described below).

Bound Island: Floating a few feet above the cavern floor is a 3-square by 3-square island, moored to the ground with a rope. A creature with no other way to rejoin the fray can untie the rope, and the island will rise at the start of the next turn into any available space at the same altitude as the other islands.

The players are unlikely to learn this, but over time, the rubble on the cavern floor coheres into new floating islands that ascend to take the place of those that have been ground apart through collisions. It's a natural (though rare) process in this domain, but Noorikhan the void lich has been experimenting with it. The bound island is one of his trials.



C5: CAVERN OF TRUTH

Encounter Level 22 (19,200 XP)

SETUP

1 rakshasa noble huecuva (H)

3 rakshasa destroyers (D)

1 gray render (G)

This cavern exists to punish those who've angered Arantor, coerce betrayal from pawns in Arantor's schemes, and to provide a measure of cruel amusement during Arantor's long periods of melancholy.

When the PCs reach the cavern entrance, read:

The purpose of this cavern is clear: imprisonment, torture, and execution. Along the side walls are prison cages fashioned from unnaturally smooth stalagmites. Three are empty, and the fourth one, in the southeastern corner, has a grayish giant within it. A guillotine stands in the center of the room with its blade raised, iron maidens are immediately to your left and right, and wooden stretching racks are arrayed on the far end of the chamber. Two passages exit the far end of the room.

A groove has been cut in the floor, connecting the iron maidens, the guillotine, and the center of the southern wall, which bears a fresco of eladrin lords and ladies gazing out upon a pastoral lake.

Two bipedal tiger-creatures are fiddling with the guillotine mechanism. A third such creature stands near the rack in the southwest part of the room.

Perception Check

DC 25: *The floor of the room is slightly sloped. The iron maidens are at the higher end and the fresco on the south wall is lower.*

DC 30: *It looks as if there's someone on the southwest rack. It could be human but it's hard to tell at this distance.*

There is indeed a human on the rack, a denizen of the shantytown named Macaeus. The creature "imprisoned" in the southeast cage is a gray render that the rakshasas captured from the surrounding jungle and domesticated through pitiless torture.

TACTICS

This battle will be more fun for everyone involved if it spreads out a bit. That will let the PCs feel the frustration of being marked (for a change) and give the gray render room to work.

Rakshasa Noble Huecuva: The huecuva hangs back and uses its three potent ranged attacks (*mind twist*, *phantom lure*, and *frightful phantom*) to either damage the PCs directly or act as a puppet master, spreading the PCs out and moving them into disadvantageous positions. If confronted in melee, the huecuva uses *unholy claw* and then *phantom image*. *Unholy claw* deals damage to all adjacent living creatures, possibly including the rakshasa destroyers and the gray render. The huecuva won't hesitate to use *unholy claw* anyway, which may trigger a friendly fire incident as described in *The Sting of Betrayal* (page 10).

| | | |
|---|--|---------------------|
| Rakshasa Noble Huecuva (H) Level 19 Elite Controller | | |
| Medium natural humanoid | | XP 4,800 |
| Initiative +14 | Senses Perception +19; low-light vision | |
| HP 356; Bloodied 178 | | |
| Regeneration 5 (damage from silver weapons negates regeneration until the end of the rakshasa noble huecuva's next turn) | | |
| AC 33; Fortitude 31, Reflex 33, Will 34 | | |
| Saving Throws +2 | | |
| Speed 7 Action Points 1 | | |
| ⊕ Unholy Claw (Standard, at-will) | | |
| +24 vs. AC; 1d6 + 3 damage, and the target takes ongoing 10 necrotic damage (save ends). When the target takes ongoing necrotic damage from this power, all adjacent living creatures take 5 necrotic damage. | | |
| ✂ Mind Twist (Standard, at-will) ♦ Psychic | | |
| Ranged 20; +23 vs. Will; 3d6 + 7 psychic damage, and the target is dazed (save ends). | | |
| ✂ Phantom Lure (Standard, at-will) ♦ Charm | | |
| Ranged 10; +22 vs. Will; the target slides 5 squares. | | |
| ✂ Frightful Phantom (Standard, recharge ☞ ☞) ♦ Fear | | |
| Ranged 5; +23 vs. Will; 4d8 + 7 psychic damage, the target is pushed 5 squares, and the target is stunned (save ends). | | |
| Deceptive Veil (Minor, at-will) ♦ Illusion | | |
| The rakshasa noble huecuva can disguise itself to appear as any Medium humanoid. A successful Insight check (opposed by the rakshasa's Bluff check) pierces the disguise. | | |
| Phantom Image (Minor, recharge ☞ ☞) ♦ Illusion | | |
| Until the end of the rakshasa noble huecuva's next turn, any creature that attacks the rakshasa's AC or Reflex defense must roll twice and use the lower attack roll result. If either result is a critical hit, use that result instead. | | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Common | |
| Skills Arcana +20, Athletics +17, Bluff +21, Diplomacy +21, History +20, Insight +19, Intimidate +21 | | |
| Str 16 (+12) | Dex 20 (+14) | Wis 20 (+14) |
| Con 18 (+13) | Int 22 (+15) | Cha 24 (+16) |

Rakshasa Destroyers: At the start of the fight, one of the destroyers moves to the stalagmite cage holding the gray render, then uses a minor action to pull the lever and cause the stalagmites to drop into the floor. The destroyers make *triple attacks* as often as they can (with *longsword*, that means six attack rolls). They mark different opponents and try to draw them apart. Use *knight's move* occasionally to make a marked PC chase the destroyer around the battlefield.

Gray Render: The gray render joins the battle the round after one of the rakshasas releases it from its cage. It makes *claw* attacks, trying to always have a character grabbed. While it has a PC grabbed, it uses *body swap* whenever possible and *dismembering bite* on its own turn. If the gray render is bloodied and opponents are proving adept at escaping its grab, it switches tactics to doing double attacks every round, knocking PCs prone and dealing ongoing damage each time.

| 3 Rakshasa Destroyers (D) | Level 21 Soldier |
|--|--|
| Medium natural humanoid | XP 3,200 each |
| Initiative +16 | Senses Perception +20; low-light vision |
| HP 196; Bloodied 98 | |
| AC 37; Fortitude 37, Reflex 34, Will 35 | |
| Speed 6 | |
| ⊕ Longsword (Standard, at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| The rakshasa destroyer makes two attack rolls and keeps the better result; +26 vs. AC; 1d8 + 6 damage, and the target is marked until the end of the rakshasa's next turn. | |
| ⊕ Claw (Standard, at-will) | |
| +26 vs. AC; 1d8 + 6 damage. | |
| ‡ Triple Attack (Standard, at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| The rakshasa destroyer makes three melee basic attacks. If two or more attacks hit the same target, that target is dazed (save ends). | |
| Deceptive Veil (Minor, at-will) ♦ Illusion | |
| The rakshasa destroyer can disguise itself to appear as any Medium humanoid. A successful Insight check (opposed by the rakshasa's Bluff check) pierces the disguise. | |
| Knight's Move (Move, recharge ☞ ☞) | |
| The rakshasa destroyer can fly up to 6 squares. It must land at the end of this move or else it crashes. | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Common |
| Skills Athletics +22, Bluff +19, Insight +20, Intimidate +19 | |
| Str 25 (+17) | Dex 19 (+14) Wis 21 (+15) |
| Con 20 (+15) | Int 15 (+12) Cha 18 (+14) |
| Equipment heavy shield, longsword, scale armor | |

| Gray Render (G) | Level 19 Elite Brute |
|---|---|
| Large natural humanoid | XP 4,800 |
| Initiative +10 | Senses Perception +15; blindsight 10 |
| HP 452; Bloodied 226 | |
| AC 31; Fortitude 34, Reflex 27, Will 28 | |
| Saving Throws +2 | |
| Speed 8 | |
| Action Points 1 | |
| ⊕ Claw (Standard, at-will) | |
| Reach 2; +22 vs. AC; 1d12 + 8 damage, and the target is grabbed. | |
| ‡ Double Attack (Standard, at-will) | |
| The gray render makes two <i>claw</i> attacks. If both attacks hit the same target, the target takes ongoing 10 damage (save ends). | |
| ‡ Body Swap (Immediate Reaction, when the gray render is hit by an enemy's melee attack while the gray render has a creature grabbed; requires a grabbed creature, at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| The gray render uses the grabbed creature as a weapon; targets the triggering enemy; +20 vs. Reflex; 2d12 + 8 damage, and the gray render pushes the target 4 squares. The grabbed creature takes half the damage dealt by this attack. | |
| ‡ Dismembering Bite (Standard, encounter) | |
| Targets a creature grabbed by the gray render; +20 vs. Fortitude; 3d12 + 8 damage, and the target is dazed (save ends). | |
| Rampage (while bloodied) | |
| The gray render's <i>claw</i> attack also knocks a target prone. | |
| Alignment Chaotic evil | Languages – |
| Skills Athletics +23 | |
| Str 27 (+17) | Dex 13 (+10) Wis 15 (+11) |
| Con 26 (+17) | Int 2 (+5) Cha 10 (+9) |

FEATURES OF THE AREA:

Illumination: Everburning torches in wall sconces provide bright illumination throughout this room.

Ceiling: The ceiling of the cavern is 20 feet high.

Stalagmite Cages: These “cages” are formed from obviously unnatural stalagmites that rise nearly to the ceiling. The gaps between them are small: an inch or two near the bottom, approximately a foot near the ceiling. Just outside the ring forming the cage is a foot-tall stalagmite that functions as a lever. When someone pulls the lever, the other stalagmites retract into the cave floor.

Three of the stalagmite cages are unoccupied. The southeastern one has a trained gray render in it.

Iron Maidens: These are typical torture equipment.

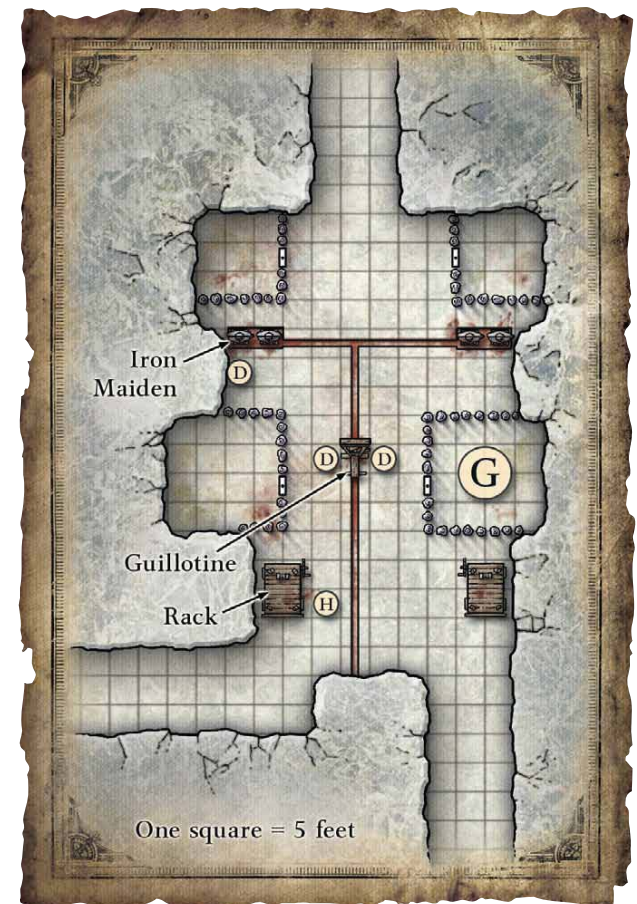
Guillotine: The guillotine is in the “up” position and held by a thin cord. Of course, it will fall if someone moves (or is slid, pulled, or pushed) through the guillotine opening (+28 vs. Reflex; 8d8 + 20 damage). Winching the guillotine blade back into the “up” position takes eight turns, so hit or miss, this trick is likely to work only once.

Rack: The rack is typical medieval torture fare, but it’s notable for two reasons. First, it’s occupied by a villager named Macaeus (described on page 16). Second, two Masks of the Beloved (described in the treasure section) hang on pegs on the rack’s frame.

Blood Channels: The channels cut into the floor are designed to keep the floor of this torture chamber clean—and they do their job almost too well. Each time a creature on or adjacent to a blood channel takes damage from an attack that draws blood (most weapon attacks, for example), everyone in the chamber will see the blood flow into the channel of its own volition. Once blood is in the channel, it spreads along the channel toward the south wall at the rate of 1 square per turn (at initiative count 1). Use tokens to mark which squares have blood in them. Creatures adjacent to a token at the start of their turn take 5 damage but score critical hits on 19-20 (unless their critical chance is already better than that) until the start of their next turn.

South Wall Mosaic: If blood in the channel reaches the south wall, the eladrins in the picture transform into tieflings and the landscape in the mosaic transforms into a charred wasteland with a magma lake. Note that if blood has flowed into the channel then it will reach the wall before long unless characters specifically take action to stop it.

Macaebus: See page 16.



C6: CAVERN OF STATUES

Encounter Level 22 (16,300 XP)

SETUP

1 cambion soul conflagrant (C)

2 cambion legionnaires (L)

2 nothic mindblights (N)

One of only two upper chambers that Arantor regularly visits (the Cavern of Truth is the other), the Cavern of Statues is a gallery containing certain antiquities that remind Arantor of life before coming to Monadhan. Although most of Arantor's hoard lies in the lower cavern, some of the items here are bulky but valuable indeed.

When the PCs reach the cavern entrance, read:

This room is home to seven large statues, all larger than life. Between them hang tattered tapestries that show maps in sable, snow-cotton, and golden wool. A brazier near the center statue—that of a dragon in a rampant pose—casts everything in a reddish light.

Standing near the dragon statue are three cambions, one with an iron-shod quarterstaff and two with short swords and shields.

Two passages exit the room at the northeast corner.

Perception Check

DC 29: *You hear flapping footsteps—not boots, but skin on stone—coming from one of the northern passageways.*

The silver dragon statue depicts Arantor as he existed in life, and the other statues are figures important to him (some of whom will figure in later *Scales of War* adventures). The map tapestries likewise have information useful in the PCs' future endeavors.

TACTICS

Unlike battles that spread the PCs out (such as C4 and C5), this encounter should develop into a big, confusing scrum because of the short ranges and dominated PCs. This is also the battle most likely to have friendly fire incidents which trigger Monadhan's blessing.

Cambion Soul Conflagrant: The leader of the cambions that serve Arantor, the soul conflagrant wants nothing to do with melee. Instead, it hangs back as far as it can. Each round it uses one of its three ranged attacks, in order of priority: *purge the soul*, *soulscorch*, *hellfire ray*. *Soulscorch* might hurt the other cambions (who have resist fire 15); if it does, the soul conflagrant gains the benefits of a "friendly fire" incident, as described in *The Sting of Betrayal* on page 10. Like most cambions, the soul conflagrant is a clumsy flyer and would rather land each turn than suffer the -4 penalty to attacks and damage for attacking while airborne.

| | | |
|---|--|---------------------------|
| Cambion Soul Conflagrant (C) | | Level 23 Artillery |
| Medium immortal humanoid (devil) | | XP 5,100 |
| Initiative +16 | Senses Perception +15; darkvision | |
| HP 166; Bloodied 83 | | |
| AC 35 (38 against ranged attacks); Fortitude 34, Reflex 34 (38 against ranged attacks), Will 36 | | |
| Resist 15 fire | | |
| Speed 6, fly 8 (clumsy) | | |
| ⊕ Staff (Standard, at-will) ♦ Weapon | | |
| +28 vs. AC; 2d8 + 6 damage. | | |
| ✂ Hellfire Ray (Standard, at-will) ♦ Fire | | |
| Ranged 20; +28 vs. Reflex; 3d6 + 8 fire damage, and the target is knocked prone. | | |
| ✂ Purge the Soul (Standard, recharges when any enemy within sight is reduced to 0 hit points or fewer) ♦ Necrotic | | |
| Ranged 20; +28 vs. Reflex; 4d6 + 8 necrotic damage, and the target is weakened (save ends). | | |
| ✂ Soulscorch (Standard, recharge ☞ ☞) ♦ Fire | | |
| Area burst 1 within 10; +28 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 8 fire damage, and ongoing 10 fire damage. | | |
| Soul Mantle | | |
| A mantle of soul energy protects the cambion soul conflagrant, giving it a +4 bonus to AC and Reflex defense against ranged attacks (already included in its statistics). | | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Common, Supernal | |
| Skills Arcana +22, Bluff +24, Diplomacy +24 | | |
| Str 14 (+13) | Dex 20 (+16) | Wis 19 (+15) |
| Con 22 (+17) | Int 22 (+17) | Cha 27 (+19) |
| Equipment robes, quarterstaff | | |

Cambion Legionnaire: The two legionnaires stay close to each other (to benefit from the *legion's mantle* power) and try to establish a front line that keeps enemy melee combatants away from the cambion soul conflagrant. They prefer to make *gladius* attacks; keep track of how many hit, because those hits charge up the push function of the *shield rush*. The legionnaires save their *immolate* attacks for moments when they can get at least two and preferably three figures within the area. Cambions have only resist 15 to fire, so it's possible that the legionnaires will damage each other with their *immolate* attacks. That constitutes a "friendly fire" incident, as described in The Sting of Betrayal section on page 10.

Nothic Mindblights: The nothics hop into the fray, appearing at one of the northern passages at the start of round 2. They use their *eye of insanity* attacks until they have a PC dominated, then use *necrotic eye* or *mesmerizing visage* until the character shakes off the domination. That recharges the *eye of insanity*, so the nothic starts the sequence all over again. Because it's a save-ends effect that includes a saving throw penalty, you'll need to keep close track of how each character is responding to *mesmerizing visage*. Like the other monsters in this encounter, the mindblights have an attack (*necrotic eye*) that might cause a "friendly fire" incident.

| 2 Cambion Legionnaires (L) | Level 21 Soldier |
|---|--|
| Medium immortal humanoid (devil) | XP 3,200 each |
| Initiative +18 | Senses Perception +20; darkvision |
| HP 198; Bloodied 99 | |
| AC 37; Fortitude 34, Reflex 31, Will 31 (35 if another cambion is within 3 squares) | |
| Resist 15 fire | |
| Speed 6, fly 8 (clumsy) | |
| ⊕ Gladius (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| +28 vs. AC; 3d6 + 8 damage. Effect: The target is marked until the end of the legionnaire's next turn. | |
| ↓ Shield Bash (minor; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| +28 vs. AC; the cambion legionnaire pushes the target 1 square and can shift into the square the target vacates. | |
| ↖ Immolate (standard; recharge ☒) ♦ Fire | |
| Close burst 2; +28 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 5 fire damage, and ongoing 10 fire damage. | |
| Legion's Mantle | |
| While the legionnaire is within 3 squares of another cambion, it gains a +4 bonus to Will defense (already included in its statistics) and a +2 bonus on saving throws. | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Common, Supernal |
| Skills Arcana +22, Bluff +24, Diplomacy +24 | |
| Str 14 (+13) | Dex 20 (+16) Wis 19 (+15) |
| Con 22 (+17) | Int 22 (+17) Cha 27 (+19) |
| Equipment short sword, light shield | |

| 2 Nothic Mindblights (N) | Level 19 Controller |
|--|--|
| Medium aberrant humanoid | XP 2,400 each |
| Initiative +14 | Senses Perception +11; darkvision, truesight 10 |
| HP 180; Bloodied 90 | |
| AC 32; Fortitude 32, Reflex 32, Will 29 | |
| Speed 6 | |
| ⊕ Claw (Standard, at-will) ♦ Necrotic | |
| +24 vs. AC; 2d6 + 3 damage, and ongoing 5 necrotic damage (save ends). | |
| ↗ Eye of Insanity (Standard, recharges when no creature is dominated by the nothic mindblight) ♦ Fear | |
| Ranged 5; +23 vs. Will; the target is dominated (save ends). <i>Aftereffect:</i> The target is dazed until the end of its next turn. | |
| ↖ Necrotic Eye (Standard, at-will) ♦ Necrotic | |
| Close blast 5; +23 vs. Fortitude; the target takes ongoing 10 necrotic damage (save ends). | |
| ✱ Mesmerizing Visage (Standard, recharge ☒ ☒) ♦ Charm, Psychic | |
| Area burst 2 within 10; targets enemies; +23 vs. Will; 2d8 + 6 psychic damage, and the target takes a -1 penalty to saving throws (save ends). <i>First Failed Saving Throw:</i> The target takes a -3 penalty to saving throws instead of -1 (save ends). | |
| Alignment Unaligned | Languages Deep Speech |
| Skills Stealth +19 | |
| Str 21 (+14) | Dex 20 (+14) Wis 15 (+11) |
| Con 20 (+14) | Int 10 (+9) Cha 12 (+10) |

FEATURES OF THE AREA:

Illumination: The brazier provides bright, reddish light throughout the chamber.

Ceiling: The ceiling of the cavern is 20 feet high.

Center Statue: This statue depicts Arantor as he once was: a proud silver dragon, ferocious in battle. Treasure parcels G and H are at the base of the statue.

Northeast Statue: This statue depicts a skeleton wearing finely embroidered robes and gaudy jewelry. The word “Irfelujhar” is carved into the base.

Southeast Statue: This statue depicts a dragon-born wearing heavy armor and wielding a falchion. The word “Mornujhar” is carved into the base.

South Statue: This is a statue of a sleek black dragon. The word “Mornujhar” is also carved into the base. This is likely to be confusing to the PCs, or make them think that when they finally meet Mornujhar (in “Grasp of the Mantled Citadel”), that he will be a black dragon in disguise. This statue is merely meant to give him honor as Tiamat’s black exarch.

Southwest Statue: This statue of an old woman has crumbled into several pieces and is lying in a heap atop the pedestal. The word “Sarissa” is carved into the base. PCs who make even a token effort to put the pieces back together realize that this statue is a perfect likeness of the seer Sarissa, whom they met in Encounter T1, Seer’s Hut.

West Statue: This statue depicts a female angel of secrets—one that bears a striking resemblance to the angel the heroes met in Encounter S1. The word “Niuria” is carved into the base (not Rachaela, which is the name she gave previously).

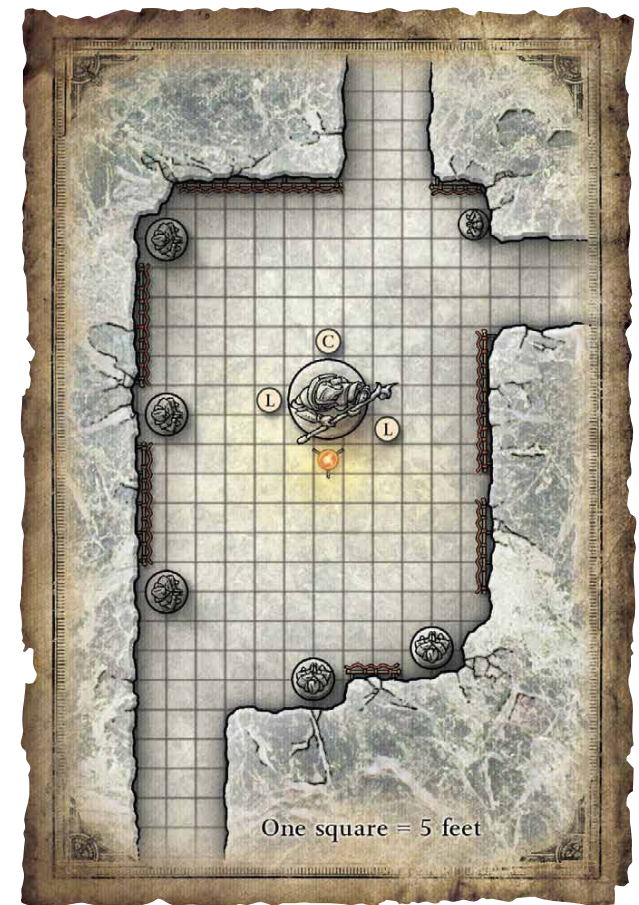
North Tapestry: This tapestry is a map of an ancient empire, with roads connecting cities, major coastlines, mountain ranges, etc. A DC 24 History check reveals that the map, while more artistic and less cartographically accurate, is of the ancient empire of Arkhosia shortly before its war with Bael Turath. The tapestries collectively constitute treasure parcel I. Even rolled up, each tapestry is a very bulky 100 pounds.

Northeast Tapestry: This tapestry map requires a DC 29 History check; it’s an artistic representation of the ancient eladrin Realm of the Twin Queens.

Eastern Tapestries: This tapestry seems to be an illustrative depiction of a strange and disturbing forest. According to the caption woven into the bottom of the tapestry, it is the Forest of Twisted Souls.

South Tapestry: Another tapestry map; a DC 24 History check reveals that it represents Bael Turath.

Western Tapestry: This tapestry map requires a DC 24 History check; it’s an artistic representation of the ancient human empire of Nerath.



C7: DEATH GIANT REINFORCEMENTS

Encounter Level 23 (22,200 XP)

SETUP

2 death giant dreadguards

2 death giant soulcatchers

1 steel predator

This is the first encounter to use when the PCs backtrack through a chamber they've already cleared or when they camp for an extended rest. Accordingly, it's not tied to a specific location. You can run this battle using the map for any of encounters C1-C6 or at the empty chambers at each dead end in the ever-shifting upper caverns.

When the PCs see the death giants, read:

Four dark-skinned giants are running toward you, their armor jingling and rattling as they unsheathe their weapons. Two of them have plate armor, mace, and shield, while two others are in leathers and wielding massive quarterstaffs. Behind them lopes a metallic creature shaped like a leopard but bigger than a horse.

Perception Check

DC 26: *Four flickering, crystalline shards orbit each of the giants at a distance of a few feet.*

TACTICS

Three of the five monsters in this fight are able to mark the PCs. This is a prime opportunity to split the adventurers into several small groups that have a hard time supporting one another. Strive to create at least one mismatch in the monsters' advantage so that a few of the characters need rescuing while under fire before disaster falls.

Death Giant Dreadguard: The dreadguards stay close to each other and mark different PCs. Use positioning to lure the marked PCs into attacking the "wrong" dreadguard (and thus triggering *death guardian*); the death giants' reach 2 should help. They use *soul shield* whenever it can make the difference between an attack hitting or missing.

Keep careful track of each dreadguard's supply of soul shards. Add a soul shard whenever a creature (including another death giant) dies within 5 squares, and subtract a shard whenever the dreadguard uses its *soul shield* power or heals 20 hit points. Don't spend the last soul shard until the dreadguard is likely to die in the next round anyway, because a dreadguard with no soul shards suffers a -2 attack penalty.

Death Giant Soulcatchers: The soulcatchers stay behind the dreadguards and use *soul shrive* as often as they can. Each soulcatcher's aim is to accumulate seven soul shards, which will let it use *soulfury detonation* twice in a row and still have one soul shard left over (to avoid the -2 attack penalty). Soulcatchers preferentially target lightly armored PCs in the belief that they tend to have lower Fortitude defenses. *Soulfury detonation* is likely to damage any dreadguards caught in its area, which constitutes a friendly fire incident as described in *The Sting of Betrayal* on page 10.

The soulcatchers have two ways to earn soul shards, but they tend to spend them fast. Remind players hit with *soul shrive* that they've lost their healing surges only temporarily—they'll get the healing surges back when they make the saving throw.

Steel Predator: Like the dreadguards, the steel predator can mark PCs. As a fast elite, it can make a vicious pounce to the enemy's back ranks, then make a *bite* attack in the next round to mark a PC who's ill-suited for melee (such as a wizard or invoker), even if that means taking some opportunity attacks on the way. Thereafter, use *resonating roar* if it's available and can hit at least three targets. Otherwise, make a *bite* attack if only one PC is adjacent or *snap jaw* if there are two. When making a *snap jaw* attack, decide which PC to mark for next turn and attack that character first. This makes it more likely that the character will be right in front of the steel predator again next round, ready to be bitten.

If the steel predator focuses on PCs who are averse to melee, it's likely that they'll try to shift away during their turn. Remember that the steel predator can use *shifting steel* to keep them running around the battlefield.

2 Death Giant Dreadguards (D) Level 22 Soldier
 Large shadow humanoid (giant) XP 4,150 each

Initiative +18 **Senses** Perception +19; darkvision
Soulcatcher aura 5; a creature that dies within the aura bestows one soul shard to the dreadguard (see *soul shroud*).
HP 209; **Bloodied** 104
AC 38; **Fortitude** 37, **Reflex** 33, **Will** 31
Resist 15 necrotic
Speed 7

⊕ **Mace** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
 Reach 2; +29 vs. AC; 2d8 + 6 damage and the target is marked until the end of the dreadguard's next turn.

Death Guardian (immediate interrupt, when an enemy marked by the dreadguard makes an attack that does not include the dreadguard; at-will)
 The dreadguard makes a *mace* attack against the triggering enemy.

Soul Shield (free, when an ally within 5 squares is hit by an attack; at-will)
 The dreadguard expends one soul shard and the ally gains a +4 bonus to defenses against the attack.

Consume Soul Shard (minor; at-will) ♦ **Healing**
 The dreadguard expends one soul shard and regains 20 hit points.

Soul Shroud
 The soul shroud contains soul shards that swirl around the dreadguard to protect and empower it. At the beginning of an encounter, the soul shroud contains four soul shards. While the soul shroud is depleted of soul shards, the dreadguard takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls.

Alignment Evil **Languages** Giant
Skills Intimidate + 18
Str 28 (+20) **Dex** 20 (+16) **Wis** 16 (+14)
Con 25 (+18) **Int** 12 (+12) **Cha** 15 (+13)

Equipment plate armor, heavy shield, mace

2 Death Giant Soulcatchers (S) Level 22 Controller
 Large shadow humanoid (giant) XP 4,150 each

Initiative +16 **Senses** Perception +19; darkvision
Soulcatcher aura 10; a creature that dies within the aura bestows one soul shard to the soulcatcher (see *soul shroud*).
HP 209; **Bloodied** 104
AC 36; **Fortitude** 35, **Reflex** 32, **Will** 35
Resist 15 necrotic
Speed 8

⊕ **Soul Dagger** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
 Reach 2; + 27 vs. AC; 2d6 + 8 damage and the target is immobilized until the end of the soulcatcher's next turn.

☞ **Soul Shrive** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Necrotic**
 Ranged 10; + 26 vs. Fortitude; the target is stunned and loses 1 healing surge at the start of its turn (save ends both). A target without healing surges takes damage equal to one quarter its total hit points. Each time the target loses a healing surge or takes damage from *soul shrive*, the soulcatcher gains a soul shard.

✱ **Soulfury Detonation** (standard; must expend 3 soul shards; at-will) ♦ **Necrotic**
 Burst 2 within 10; +26 vs. Fortitude; 2d12 + 6 necrotic damage, and the target is dazed (save ends).

Consume Soul Shard (minor; at-will) ♦ **Healing**
 The soulcatcher expends one soul shard and regains 20 hit points.

Soul Shroud
 The soul shroud contains soul shards that swirl around the soulcatcher to protect and empower it. At the beginning of an encounter, the soul shroud contains four soul shards. While the soul shroud is depleted of soul shards, the soulcatcher takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls.

Alignment Evil **Languages** Giant
Skills Intimidate + 18
Str 28 (+20) **Dex** 20 (+16) **Wis** 22 (+17)
Con 25 (+18) **Int** 12 (+12) **Cha** 15 (+13)

Equipment leather armor, dagger

Steel Predator (P) Level 20 Elite Soldier
 Large immortal animate (living construct) XP 5,600

Initiative +18 **Senses** Perception +16; darkvision
HP 388; **Bloodied** 194
AC 36; **Fortitude** 34, **Reflex** 32, **Will** 30
Saving Throws +2 (+4 against ongoing damage)
Speed 8
Action Points 1

⊕ **Bite** (Standard, at-will)
 Reach 2; +27 vs. AC; 4d6 + 4 damage, and the target is marked until the end of the steel predator's next turn.

⊕ **Snap Jaw** (Standard, at-will)
 The steel predator makes a *bite* attack. On a hit, the target is also knocked prone, and the predator makes another *bite* attack against a different target.

⊕ **Vicious Pounce** (Standard, at-will)
 The steel predator charges and makes the following attack in place of a *bite* attack; +25 vs. Fortitude; 2d12 + 5 damage, and the target is pushed 1 square and knocked prone. The predator moves into the space vacated by the target.

⊕ **Resonating Roar** (Standard, recharge ☞☞ or when the steel predator takes thunder or lightning damage) ♦ **Thunder**
 Close burst 3; +25 vs. Fortitude; 4d8 + 7 thunder damage, and the target is deafened and dazed (save ends both).

Shifting Steel (immediate reaction, when a creature adjacent to the steel predator shifts, at-will)
 The predator shifts into the space vacated by the triggering creature.

Alignment Evil **Languages** Supernal
Skills Acrobatics +21, Athletics +21, Endurance +23, Stealth +21
Str 22 (+16) **Dex** 23 (+16) **Wis** 23 (+16)
Con 26 (+18) **Int** 15 (+12) **Cha** 12 (+11)

C8: DEATH GIANT BOSS

Encounter Level 23 (24,100 XP)

SETUP

Bahlik Gur

2 death giant dreadguards

1 steel predator

This is the second encounter that can occur in a previously cleared room or as a wandering monster encounter at a dead end or in any corridor. This encounter features Bahlik Gur, Arantor's second-in-command. Bahlik Gur handles the day-to-day affairs of the upper caverns and assists with Arantor's limited interactions with the rest of the Monadhan domain. Run it only after encounter C7.

When the PCs see the death giants, read:

"Death to the interlopers!" shouts the lead giant as three of the dark-skinned brutes lumber toward you. Next to them is another of the metallic panther creatures you faced when you last fought these giants.

Perception Check

DC 26: *Four flickering, crystalline shards orbit each of the giants at a distance of a few feet.*

TACTICS

These monsters use similar tactics to the death giants in C7: mark different PCs and lure the party into separating its force. All four of the monsters can mark: use that to their advantage. The death giant dreadguards and the steel predator behave as they did in encounter C7. Bahlik Gur makes double attacks as often as he can (which doubles his chances of marking a PC) and will use *press the attack* rather than moving himself. He would much rather spend his four shards on *soul shield* than consume a shard for 20 hit points, which is less than 5 percent of his total.

Bahlik Gur is more aware of Monadhan's blessing than most monsters. If either of the dreadguards are almost dead, Bahlik Gur tries to deliver the killing blow himself. If he succeeds in killing the dreadguard, he gains a soul shard and the blessing of Monadhan from a friendly fire incident.

| | | |
|--|--|---------------------|
| Bahlik Gur (B) | Level 23 Elite Soldier | |
| Large shadow humanoid (giant) | XP 10,200 | |
| Initiative +18 | Senses Perception +19; darkvision | |
| Soulcatcher aura 5; a creature that dies within the aura bestows one soul shard to bahlik gur (see <i>soul shroud</i>). | | |
| HP 434; Bloodied 217 | | |
| AC 42; Fortitude 39, Reflex 33, Will 33 | | |
| Resist 20 necrotic | | |
| Saving Throws + 2 | | |
| Speed 7 | | |
| Action Points 1 | | |
| ⚔ Mace (standard; at-will) ⚔ Weapon | | |
| Reach 2; +29 vs. AC; 2d8 + 6 damage, and the target is marked. | | |
| ⚔ Double Attack (standard; at-will) ⚔ Weapon | | |
| Bahlik Gur makes two mace attacks. If he hits two targets with them, he gains a +2 bonus to his next attack roll. | | |
| ↩ Press the Attack (move; at-will) | | |
| Close burst 10; targets 1 ally; the target can take a move action as a free action. | | |
| Battle Fervor | | |
| Bahlik Gur scores critical hits on attack rolls of 19 or 20. | | |
| Death Guardian (immediate interrupt, when an enemy marked by Bahlik Gur makes an attack that does not include Bahlik Gur) | | |
| Bahlik Gur makes a <i>mace</i> attack against the enemy. | | |
| Soul Shield (free, when an ally within 5 squares is targeted by an attack) | | |
| Bahlik Gur expends one soul shard and the ally gains a +4 bonus to all defenses against the attack. | | |
| Consume Soul Shard (minor; at-will) ⚔ Healing | | |
| Bahlik Gur expends one soul shard and regains 20 hit points. | | |
| Soul Shroud | | |
| The soul shroud contains soul shards that swirl around Bahlik Gur to protect and empower it. At the beginning of an encounter, the soul shroud contains four soul shards. While the soul shroud is depleted of soul shards, Bahlik Gur takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls. | | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Giant | |
| Skills Intimidate + 18 | | |
| Str 28 (+20) | Dex 20 (+16) | Wis 16 (+14) |
| Con 25 (+18) | Int 12 (+12) | Cha 15 (+13) |
| Equipment plate armor, heavy shield, mace, treasure parcels J and K | | |

2 Death Giant Dreadguards (D) Level 22 Soldier
 Large shadow humanoid (giant) XP 4,150 each

Initiative +18 **Senses Perception** +19; darkvision
Soulcatcher aura 5; a creature that dies within the aura bestows one soul shard to the dreadguard (see *soul shroud*).
HP 209; **Bloodied** 104
AC 38; **Fortitude** 37, **Reflex** 33, **Will** 31
Resist 15 necrotic
Speed 7

⊕ **Mace** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
 Reach 2; +29 vs. AC; 2d8 + 6 damage and the target is marked until the end of the dreadguard's next turn.

Death Guardian (immediate interrupt, when an enemy marked by the dreadguard makes an attack that does not include the dreadguard; at-will)
 The dreadguard makes a *mace* attack against the triggering enemy.

Soul Shield (free, when an ally within 5 squares is hit by an attack; at-will)
 The dreadguard expends one soul shard and the ally gains a +4 bonus to defenses against the attack.

Consume Soul Shard (minor; at-will) ♦ **Healing**
 The dreadguard expends one soul shard and regains 20 hit points.

Soul Shroud
 The soul shroud contains soul shards that swirl around the dreadguard to protect and empower it. At the beginning of an encounter, the soul shroud contains four soul shards. While the soul shroud is depleted of soul shards, the dreadguard takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls.

Alignment Evil **Languages** Giant
Skills Intimidate + 18
Str 28 (+20) **Dex** 20 (+16) **Wis** 16 (+14)
Con 25 (+18) **Int** 12 (+12) **Cha** 15 (+13)

Equipment plate armor, heavy shield, mace

Steel Predator (P) Level 20 Elite Soldier
 Large immortal animate (living construct) XP 5,600

Initiative +18 **Senses Perception** +16; darkvision
HP 388; **Bloodied** 194
AC 36; **Fortitude** 34, **Reflex** 32, **Will** 30
Saving Throws +2 (+4 against ongoing damage)
Speed 8
Action Points 1

⊕ **Bite** (Standard, at-will)
 Reach 2; +27 vs. AC; 4d6 + 4 damage, and the target is marked until the end of the steel predator's next turn.

⊕ **Snap Jaw** (Standard, at-will)
 The steel predator makes a *bite* attack. On a hit, the target is also knocked prone, and the predator makes another *bite* attack against a different target.

⊕ **Vicious Pounce** (Standard, at-will)
 The steel predator charges and makes the following attack in place of a *bite* attack; +25 vs. Fortitude; 2d12 + 5 damage, and the target is pushed 1 square and knocked prone. The predator moves into the space vacated by the target.

⚡ **Resonating Roar** (Standard, recharge ☞☞☞ or when the steel predator takes thunder or lightning damage) ♦ **Thunder**
 Close burst 3; +25 vs. Fortitude; 4d8 + 7 thunder damage, and the target is deafened and dazed (save ends both).

Shifting Steel (immediate reaction, when a creature adjacent to the steel predator shifts, at-will)
 The predator shifts into the space vacated by the triggering creature.

Alignment Evil **Languages** Supernal
Skills Acrobatics +21, Athletics +21, Endurance +23, Stealth +21
Str 22 (+16) **Dex** 23 (+16) **Wis** 23 (+16)
Con 26 (+18) **Int** 15 (+12) **Cha** 12 (+11)

C9: LOWER CAVERN

Encounter Level 25 (35,000 XP)

SETUP

Arantor (A)

This encounter is the climax of the adventure. The PCs must simultaneously manage a skill challenge and a fight with a dual-acting solo dragon, all while Kas waits in the wings.

When the PCs reach the precipice that affords a view of the lower cavern, read:

Below you paces a huge skeletal dragon, shaking its head from side to side and muttering “Oh, no...oh, no...” The dragon is within a chamber more than a hundred feet long, with alcoves and crevices along the periphery. Stalagmites and stone pillars dot the landscape, and gray mist coheres in low spots on the cavern floor.

Along the western wall is a circular portal limned with lightning. You can see shimmering movement within the dark circle, but from this vantage point, you can’t make out what lies beyond.

Arcana or Religion Check

DC 26: *The areas of strange mist scattered around the cavern are laden with memories tied to the dark lord, Arantor. Perhaps what is contained within them could prove useful in vanquishing him.*

Dungeoneering Check

DC 23: *The hero notices that the subterranean stream has weakened the rock in the marked squares to the point where a sudden blow might shatter it.*

TACTICS

This encounter works best when some players are working on the skill challenge while others are fighting Arantor directly. A dual-acting, 25th-level solo dragon helps to enforce that split. Be ruthless if the PCs all rush headlong into battle and equally ruthless if they spread out and head into the mist. After a few rounds, the battle will settle into a rhythm, and the players will be constantly assessing whether their characters are more useful in the actual battle or in the skill challenge.

Two simple things will help to give the skill challenge its moment in the sun. First, whenever the characters achieve a success, be explicit about the exact penalty that Arantor is suffering because of that success. Such details make the player feel good about the decision to forego combat for a skill check and emphasize the importance of the skill challenge. Second, the success or failure of each skill check is a chance for both you and your players to ham it up a bit and really act like victims/perpetrators of the ancient massacre at Monadhan. Arantor will react with histrionics whenever confronted with evidence of his crime. Watch the interest level around the rest of the table, of course, and don’t engage in long soliloquies. Give each skill challenge a bit of dialogue and a dollop of drama, then proceed with the action.

In general, Arantor will fight those PCs who fight him. If a specific PC succeeds twice in a row on the skill challenge, consider sending Arantor after that PC specifically. On an instinctive level, Arantor knows how crippling multiple successes can be, especially if they’re easy for the character to accomplish. Sending an adventurer who’s been dominated with *influential whispers* after one of his or her allies who’s

doing well at the skill challenge is another way to counter successful skill checks.

As dragons go, Arantor is more capable making melee attacks than fighting from a distance. He gets to use his breath weapon only twice: once before being bloodied and once at the moment he’s bloodied. Make those attacks count. Watch Arantor’s hit point total once it drops below 500. He needs to be in perfect position when he becomes bloodied. You will know when that’s about to happen, but the players won’t.

Imrissa’s choices are straightforward but no less potent. *Influential whispers* might be the best attack Arantor/Imrissa has, because dominated is the second-best condition a monster can impose on a PC (second only to the “dead” condition). Keep the dominated figure near one of its allies so the domination can “jump” to another character with the aftereffect. Use *betraying breath* when it can hit three or more figures; it doesn’t do much damage, but it eats up the characters’ actions twice: first through the dazed condition, and then with an attack that’s (probably) aimed at another PC and not at Arantor. The dragon is a powerful tool in robbing players of actions, which are the fundamental currency of the game. Always consider whether more PC actions will be lost with *influential whispers* or with *betraying breath*. And don’t forget to teleport—there’s nothing wrong with free movement.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: The cavern is dimly illuminated by phosphorescent fungus, glimmering insects, and the flickering balefire emanating from Arantor.

Stalagmites and Pillars: The large stalagmites and pillars are blocking terrain, while the areas of smaller stalagmites are difficult terrain and provide cover to those behind them.

Shadowed Crevices: The crevices marked (C) seem to extend farther than they should and rapidly fill with strange mist and shadows. A character that enters one of these crevices must spend one entire turn navigating the oddly shadowed passage before emerging, at the start of their second turn after entering, from a different, randomly determined crevice. A DC 26 Arcana or Dungeoneering check made during the turn spent in transit allows the player to randomly select two crevices as possible emergence points and then choose the one they prefer.

Subterranean River: An underground stream runs just beneath the surface of the cavern in the indicated squares. It flows to the southeast at a rate of 4 squares per turn; move anything in the water 4 squares in the direction of the flow at the start of its turn. A series of stalactites plunge into the river as it exits the cavern; any character not actively attempting to dive below them is automatically stopped from continuing downstream. Crawling out of the stream and onto an adjacent square of rock counts as moving through difficult terrain but is otherwise unimpeded.

Thin Stone: The stone over the subterranean stream is quite thin, barely capable of sustaining the weight of creatures standing upon it. Any melee or ranged attack can target a square of the thin stone instead of a creature. Bursts and blasts automatically target all the squares in their area, treating them as a

single target. The stone has AC and Fortitude defense of 20, with other defenses at 15. An attack that deals more than 15 damage destroys the stone square(s) it targeted. Anyone standing entirely on destroyed squares of flooring drops into the stream automatically. Anyone standing partially on destroyed squares of flooring is allowed a saving throw to avoid falling into the stream.

Mists: Anyone standing in the mist-filled squares can access the skill challenge. See SC1 below.

Ceiling: The ceiling of the cavern is 50 feet above the floor.

Western Wall: Along the western wall is a vertical circle with short forks of lightning emerging

from the circumference. This is the portal to the lich's stronghold and "Grasp of the Mantled Citadel." Creatures within 5 squares of the portal can see a shimmering image of the Forest of Twisted Souls in Vaerothim (PCs who saw the tapestry in the Cavern of Statues can make a DC 25 Perception check to make the connection), but the portal doesn't work without the key of betrayal, which is the Sword of Kas.

Southern Alcove: This disused alcove appears to hold no more than rocky debris, but when Imrissa dies, an illusion fades away and Arantor's hoard is revealed. Treasure parcels L, M, N, and O are here, along with the Sword of Kas (described below). When the illusion drops, Kas appears near the cavern



entrance. The characters are closer to the sword and closer to the portal, but Kas certainly has words for his erstwhile partners. Give the players a moment to check out the treasure, then describe Kas's arrival and deal with the adventure's final resolution in the Aftermath section on page 17.

The Weight of Remorse **Level 23**
Skill Challenge XP 0*

Arantor's past is a bloody one, full of carnage and slaughtered innocents. Taking the faces of his victims and calling on his remorse, you seek to distract, disable, or even turn his rage against himself.

The PCs hope to call upon Arantor's conscience and sense of remorse to help them defeat the dark lord and the Imrissa.

Complexity
3 (requires 8 successes before 3 failures).

Primary Skills
Bluff, Diplomacy, History, Insight.
Bluff (DC 22 standard action)

The PC spins stories about the lives of Arantor's victims, playing up their innocence and the tragedy of their undeserved slaughter.

Diplomacy (DC 22 standard action)
The PC begs and pleads with Arantor for mercy while playing the role of the victim he or she resembles or attempts to call upon Arantor's decency and honor.

History (DC 27 standard action)
The PC recites a litany of the places and peoples ravaged by Arantor in his time, allowing his or her allies to better tailor their stories.

A successful History check also grants a +2 bonus to the next Bluff or Diplomacy check.

Insight (DC 22 standard action)
The PC appeals to Arantor's conscience and feelings of remorse, slowly homing in on the correct path to take.
A successful check also reveals that a failed Intimidate check enrages Arantor. A check result of 27 or higher grants a +2 bonus to the next check in the skill challenge.

Secondary Skills
Arcana or Religion, Intimidate.
Arcana or Religion (DC 14 0 successes, minor action)
The PC uses their extensive knowledge of the flow of magic or the undead to discern the effects each check has had and steer their allies accordingly.
Using these skills doesn't count as a success or failure for the challenge. Instead, the result grants a +2 bonus or -2 penalty to the next character's check.

Intimidate (DC 22 1 success, standard action)
The PC uses their assumed faces to threaten Arantor with divine judgment or to demand to know why they were attacked.
A failed check enrages Arantor, providing him with a +2 bonus to attack rolls and a +6 bonus to damage rolls until the end of the PC's next turn.

Special
A character who has discovered Imrissa's name and uses it during this skill challenge gains a +2 bonus to all checks. If Imrissa's spirit is present, all PCs gain a +5 bonus to their checks. These bonuses do not stack.

Success
Arantor guards himself against the influence of the Imrissa and does not act on Imrissa's turn until he uses *shattered prison*. Each success has additional consequences as follows:
1st Success: The character deals 4d10 psychic damage to Arantor.
2nd: Arantor takes a -1 penalty to attack rolls and all defenses until the end of the encounter.

| Arantor (A) Huge natural magical beast (dragon, undead) | Level 25 Solo Brute XP 35,000 |
|---|---|
| Initiative +19; see also two souls Senses Perception +19; darkvision | ✧ Influential Whispers (standard; must be Imrissa's turn; at-will) ✧ Charm, Psychic Ranged 10; +28 vs. Will; 2d10 + 4 psychic damage, and the target is dominated (save ends). <i>Aftereffect:</i> The nearest ally within 3 squares of the target is dominated (save ends). This attack does not provoke opportunity attacks. |
| HP 819; Bloodied 409; see also <i>bloodied breath and shattered prison</i> | |
| AC 38; Fortitude 39, Reflex 36, Will 36 | Dead Dragon's Stride (move; must be Imrissa's turn; at-will) ✧ Teleportation Arantor teleports 10 squares. |
| Immune disease, poison; Resist 25 cold, 15 necrotic; Vulnerable 15 radiant | |
| Saving Throws +5 | Two Souls Arantor acts twice each round, once on initiative result 30 and once on initiative result 20. The first is Arantor's turn, and the second is Imrissa's turn, which determines which powers Arantor can use on each turn. On Imrissa's turn, Arantor can only move by using <i>dead dragon's stride</i> . |
| Speed 8, fly 8 (hover) | |
| Action Points 2 | Shattered Prison (when Arantor drops to 0 or fewer hit points) Arantor's corpse cracks open and releases Imrissa, who continues to fight. She is large instead of huge, has 234 hit points, does not benefit from <i>two souls</i> , can move normally, and only uses powers that can be used on Imrissa's turn. |
| ⬇ Bite (standard; at-will) ✧ Necrotic Reach 2; +30 vs. AC; 2d8 + 6 damage plus 2d8 necrotic damage. | |
| ⬇ Claw (standard; at-will) Reach 2; +30 vs. AC; 2d8 + 8 damage. | Alignment Chaotic evil Languages Common, Draconic |
| ⬆ Furious Onslaught (standard; must be Arantor's turn; at-will) Arantor makes a claw attack against each enemy in reach, and one bite attack. | |
| ⬅ Remnant Breath (standard; must be Arantor's turn; encounter) ✧ Cold, Necrotic Close blast 5; +28 vs. Reflex; 3d10 + 5 necrotic damage, and the target takes 15 ongoing cold damage (save ends). | Skills Athletics +27, Insight +19 Str 31 (+22) Dex 25 (+19) Wis 14 (+14) Con 26 (+20) Int 14 (+14) Cha 23 (+18) |
| ⬅ Bloodied Breath (when Arantor first becomes bloodied; encounter) ✧ Cold, Necrotic Arantor recharges <i>remnant breath</i> and uses it immediately. | |
| ⬅ Betraying Breath (standard action; must be Imrissa's turn; recharge ☒☒) ✧ Charm, Psychic Close blast 5; targets enemies; +28 vs. Will; 2d10 + 4 psychic damage and the target is dazed until it damages one of its allies. | |

3rd: The character deals 4d10 psychic damage to Arantor.

4th: Arantor takes a -1 penalty to attack rolls and all defenses until the end of the encounter, and *betraying breath* recharges only on a 6 until Arantor uses *shattered prison*.

5th: The character deals 4d10 psychic damage to Arantor.

6th: Arantor takes a -1 penalty to attack rolls and all defenses until the end of the encounter.

7th: The character deals 4d10 psychic damage to Arantor.

8th: Arantor takes a -1 penalty to attack rolls and all defenses until the end of the encounter, and Arantor does not act on Imrissa's turn until he uses *shattered prison*.

Failure

Imrissa retains some of its hold on Arantor despite the appeals to his conscience. The effects already accrued remain, but the skill challenge can no longer be accessed during this encounter.

***Note** that PCs receive no experience for completing the skill challenge; they receive the relevant experience by defeating Arantor (which is now easier).

Sword of Kas* Epic Level

The Sword of Kas was created by Vecna for his lieutenant. Kas rewarded his former master by using it to cut off Vecna's hand and gouge out his eye. The Sword offers great power to any who grasp it, but wielders end up betraying what they love most.

The Sword of Kas is a +5 vicious short sword with the following properties and powers.

Weapon: short sword

Enhancement: +5 attack rolls and damage rolls

Critical: +5d12 damage.

Property: The Sword of Kas deals 2d10 extra damage against allies and former allies.

Property: Whenever an attack with the Sword of Kas reduces a target to 0 hit points or fewer, you gain concealment until the end of your next turn.

Property: If you attack Vecna, a servant of Vecna, a cultist of Vecna, or any other creature working directly to serve Vecna's ends, you deal 5 extra damage on a hit.

Property: When you take the total defense action or use your second wind, you gain a +5 item bonus to all defenses until the start of your next turn.

Kas of Monadhan

Medium natural humanoid (undead)

Level 26 Solo Soldier

XP 45,000

Initiative +20 **Senses** Perception +22; darkvision

HP 952; **Bloodied** 476

Regeneration 20 (regeneration doesn't function while Kas is exposed to direct sunlight)

AC 40; **Fortitude** 41, **Reflex** 39, **Will** 41

Immune disease, poison; **Resist** 15 fire, 15 necrotic;

Vulnerable 10 radiant

Saving Throws +5

Speed 7, climb 3 (spider climb)

Action Points 2

⊕ **Bastard Sword** (Standard, at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

+31 vs. AC; 2d10 + 10 damage.

↓ **Blood Drain** (standard; requires combat advantage against the target; encounter) ♦ **Healing**

+29 vs. Fortitude; 2d12 + 14 damage, and the target is weakened (save ends), and Kas regains 59 hit points.

↓ **Betrayer's Whirlwind** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

Targets up to three creatures; +31 vs. AC; 2d10 + 10 damage, and Kas slides the target 3 squares.

↘ **Dominating Gaze** (minor, recharge 4 5 6) ♦ **Charm, Gaze**

Ranged 5; +29 vs. Will; the target is dominated (save ends). *Afterspell:* The target is dazed (save ends).

↘ **Kas's Challenge** (Minor 1/round; at-will) ♦ **Necrotic**

Close burst 5; targets one enemy; no attack roll; the target is marked until the end of Kas's next turn. If the target makes an attack that doesn't include Kas as a target while marked by this power, it takes ongoing 10 necrotic damage (save ends).

Kas's Recovery (when Kas becomes bloodied)

All adverse effects affecting Kas end, then Kas takes a standard action after the triggering action is resolved.

Mist Form (standard; encounter) ♦ **Polymorph**

Kas becomes insubstantial and gains fly (hover) 12 until the end of his next turn. Kas cannot attack while in this form and can sustain this form for up to 1 hour.

Misty Assault (immediate reaction, when hit by an attack; at-will) ♦ **Necrotic**

Kas flies 6 squares and is insubstantial while he flies. He can make a *bastard sword* attack before or after he flies.

Alignment Evil **Languages** Common

Skills Arcana +25, Insight +22, Intimidate +27, Religion +25, Stealth +21

Str 26 (+21) **Dex** 20 (+18) **Wis** 19 (+17)

Con 22 (+19) **Int** 24 (+20) **Cha** 28 (+22)

Equipment plate armor, bastard sword

Property: The Sword of Kas is initially invisible to everyone but the creature possessing it. You gain combat advantage against melee targets when using it until you successfully hit, at which point the weapon becomes visible to everyone. The Sword of Kas turns invisible again after being sheathed for a short rest (or for 5 minutes).

Power (Encounter): Free Action. When you would pull or push a target, you slide the target the same distance instead.

Power (Daily - Poison, Radiant): Free Action. When you hit with the Sword of Kas, the target takes ongoing 15 poison damage (save ends). If the attack is made against an undead creature, it instead takes ongoing 15 radiant damage (save ends). Saving throws made to end this effect take a -2 penalty.

*The Sword of Kas is fully described in *Open Grave*, page 44.

About the Author

David Noonan has an extensive list of RPG credits, including *Martial Power*™, *Scepter Tower of Spellgard*™, and contributions to the 4th Edition core rules. He lives in Washington state with his wife and two children.

NEW MONSTERS

Cambion Impaler Level 19 Skirmisher

Medium immortal humanoid (devil) XP 2,400

Initiative +18 **Senses** Perception +24; darkvision

HP 179; **Bloodied** 89

AC 33; **Fortitude** 31, **Reflex** 32, **Will** 30

Resist 10 fire

Speed 6, fly 10 (clumsy)

⊕ **Spear** (Standard, at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
+24 vs. AC; 3d6+8 damage.

‡ **Swooping Charge** (Standard, encounter) ♦ **Weapon**

The cambion impaler charges and makes the following attack in place of a melee basic attack: +25 vs. AC; 3d6 + 8 damage, and either slide the target 3 squares and immobilize the target until the end of the impaler's next turn or deal 10 ongoing damage. The impaler is not considered a clumsy flyer when making this attack.

✱ **Soulscorch** (Standard, recharge ⓧ) ♦ **Fire**

Area burst 1 within 10; +20 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 4 fire damage, and ongoing 10 fire damage.

Alignment Evil **Languages** Common, Supernal

Skills Athletics +20, Bluff +19, Diplomacy +19

Str 22 (+15) **Dex** 25 (+16) **Wis** 20 (+14)

Con 19 (+13) **Int** 17 (+12) **Cha** 21 (+14)

Equipment robes, spear



Cambion Legionnaire Level 21 Soldier

Medium immortal humanoid (devil) XP 3,200

Initiative +18 **Senses** Perception +20; darkvision

HP 198; **Bloodied** 99

AC 37; **Fortitude** 34, **Reflex** 31, **Will** 31 (35 if another cambion is within 3 squares)

Resist 15 fire

Speed 6, fly 8 (clumsy)

⊕ **Gladius** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
+28 vs. AC; 3d6 + 8 damage. Effect: The target is marked until the end of the legionnaire's next turn.

‡ **Shield Bash** (minor; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

+28 vs. AC; the cambion legionnaire pushes the target 1 square and can shift into the square the target vacates.

↵ **Immolate** (standard; recharge ⓧ) ♦ **Fire**

Close burst 2; +28 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 5 fire damage, and ongoing 10 fire damage.

Legion's Mantle

While the legionnaire is within 3 squares of another cambion, it gains a +4 bonus to Will defense (already included in its statistics) and a +2 bonus on saving throws.

Alignment Evil **Languages** Common, Supernal

Skills Arcana +22, Bluff +24, Diplomacy +24

Str 14 (+13) **Dex** 20 (+16) **Wis** 19 (+15)

Con 22 (+17) **Int** 22 (+17) **Cha** 27 (+19)

Equipment short sword, light shield

| Cambion Soulthief | | Level 22 Lurker | |
|--|-----------------------------------|---------------------|--|
| Medium immortal humanoid (devil) | | XP 4,150 | |
| Initiative +22 Senses Perception +18; darkvision | | | |
| HP 156; Bloodied 78 | | | |
| AC 36; Fortitude 33, Reflex 35, Will 30 | | | |
| Resist 15 fire | | | |
| Speed 10, Fly 8 (clumsy) | | | |
| ⚔ Longsword (standard, at-will) ♦ Weapon +27 vs. AC; 2d6 + 8 damage. | | | |
| ☞ Soul Grasp (standard; recharges when no enemy is affected by this power) ♦ Necrotic Ranged 10; +27 vs. Will; 1d10 + 8 necrotic damage, and the target takes ongoing 5 necrotic damage and is slowed (save ends both). <i>First Failed Save:</i> The target is immobilized instead of slowed (save ends). <i>Second Failed Save:</i> The target is stunned instead of immobilized (save ends). | | | |
| ⚔ Double Lunge (standard; must be invisible; at-will) ♦ Weapon The cambion soulthief makes a <i>longsword</i> attack against two targets. | | | |
| Combat Advantage The cambion soulthief deals 1d6 extra damage on melee attacks against any target granting combat advantage to it. | | | |
| Invisibility (standard, at-will) ♦ Illusion The cambion soulthief becomes invisible until it attacks. | | | |
| Soul Fuel (minor; a creature must be immobilized or stunned by this soulthief's <i>soul grasp</i> ; at-will) The cambion soulthief turns invisible until it attacks and teleports 10. The creature affected by soul grasp loses a healing surge and automatically saves against the effect of <i>soul grasp</i> . | | | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Common, Supernal | | |
| Skills Stealth +23 | | | |
| Str 23 (+17) | Dex 25 (+18) | Wis 14 (+13) | |
| Con 18 (+15) | Int 13 (+12) | Cha 17 (+14) | |
| Equipment longsword, iron gauntlet | | | |

| Disfigured Vampire | | Level 21 Brute | |
|---|-------------------------|---------------------|--|
| Medium natural humanoid (undead) | | XP 3,200 | |
| Initiative +12 Senses Perception +16; darkvision | | | |
| HP 245; Bloodied 122 | | | |
| Regeneration 10 (regeneration does not function while the disfigured vampire is exposed to direct sunlight) | | | |
| AC 33; Fortitude 34, Reflex 30, Will 31 | | | |
| Immune disease, poison; Resist 15 necrotic; Vulnerable 15 radiant | | | |
| Speed 6 | | | |
| ⚔ Vampiric Claw (Standard, at-will) ♦ Necrotic +24 vs. AC; 2d6 + 6 damage, and 10 ongoing necrotic damage (save ends). | | | |
| ⚡ Gaze Upon My Hideous Ruin (immediate reaction, when first bloodied and again when reduced to 0 hit points; at-will) ♦ Fear, Psychic Close burst 2; +22 vs. Will; 2d8 + 7 psychic damage, and the disfigured vampire pushes the target 5 squares. | | | |
| ⚔ Blood Drain (Standard; requires combat advantage; recharges when an adjacent creature becomes bloodied) ♦ Healing +23 vs. Fortitude; 2d12 + 13 damage, and the target is weakened (save ends), and the disfigured vampire regains 61 hit points. | | | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Common | | |
| Str 23 (+16) | Dex 15 (+12) | Wis 13 (+11) | |
| Con 25 (+17) | Int 7 (+8) | Cha 17 (+13) | |

| Callophage Vampire | | Level 22 Controller | |
|--|-------------------------|---------------------|--|
| Medium natural humanoid (undead) | | XP 4,150 | |
| Initiative +16 Senses Perception +19; darkvision | | | |
| HP 203; Bloodied 101 | | | |
| Regeneration 10 (regeneration does not function while the callophage vampire is exposed to direct sunlight) | | | |
| AC 36; Fortitude 33, Reflex 34, Will 35 | | | |
| Immune disease, poison; Resist 15 necrotic; Vulnerable 10 radiant | | | |
| Speed 6 | | | |
| ⚔ Claw (Standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic +28 vs. AC; 2d8 + 6 damage, and the target is grabbed. | | | |
| ⚔ Blood Drain (Standard; must have combat advantage; recharges when an adjacent creature becomes bloodied) ♦ Healing +24 vs. Fortitude; 2d12 + 15 damage, and the target is weakened (save ends), and the callophage vampire regains 50 hit points. | | | |
| ⚔ Disfiguring Bite (Standard; at-will) ♦ Psychic Targets a creature grabbed by the callophage vampire; +26 vs. Fortitude; 3d8 + 5 damage, and the target takes ongoing 10 psychic damage and is dazed (save ends both). | | | |
| ☞ Stolen Beauty (Standard; cannot be used until a disfiguring bite hits; recharges after each successful <i>disfiguring bite</i>) ♦ Charm, Psychic Ranged 10; +26 vs. Will; 3d10 + 3 psychic damage, and the target cannot use encounter attack powers, daily attack powers, or utility powers (save ends). <i>Aftereffect:</i> The target cannot willingly move closer to the callophage vampire (save ends). | | | |
| ✦ Alluring Visage (standard; recharges when bloodied) ♦ Charm Close burst 10; +26 vs. Will; the target is pulled 3 squares and immobilized (save ends). <i>Sustain Minor:</i> Each creature that has not yet saved against the effect is pulled 3 squares and immobilized (save ends). | | | |
| Mist Form (standard; encounter) ♦ Polymorph The callophage vampire becomes insubstantial and gains a fly speed of 12, but cannot make attacks. The callophage vampire can remain in mist form for up to 1 hour or end the effect as a minor action. | | | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Common | | |
| Skills Diplomacy +21, Streetwise +21 | | | |
| Str 18 (+15) | Dex 20 (+16) | Wis 17 (+14) | |
| Con 19 (+15) | Int 20 (+16) | Cha 21 (+16) | |