



HEROIC

1-10

"The armies that today march across the fields and mountains of the world will tomorrow be forgotten, as will we all. But do not fear the progress of history, nor give up in today's fight, for our efforts are far from futile. Instead, prepare your sword and shield and stand against the tide that threatens to overwhelm our lands. For though you and I may be forgotten in the years to come, what we do today will echo through the ages and determine the fate of all those who follow in our footsteps."

by Rodney Thompson
illustrations by Jason A. Engle,
Rob Alexander and Steve Prescott
♦
cartography by Mike Schley



DEN OF THE DESTROYER

An adventure for 7th-level characters

“Den of the Destroyer” is an adventure for five 7th-level characters. By the end of the adventure, the characters should reach 9th level. You can run this adventure as the sequel to “The Lost Mines of Karak,” continuing the unfolding story of the Scales of War adventure path, or run it as part of a campaign of your own design.

In this adventure, the PCs are called back to Brindol by a surprising summons that sees them undertake a dangerous mission to an abandoned githzerai fortress. Along the way, they must deal with bounty hunters hired by an old enemy, and confront a vile gang of gnolls terrorizing Elsir Vale.

BACKGROUND

Some months ago, a mysterious figure calling himself only the Emissary contacted the hobgoblin chieftain Sinruth and spurred him into reviving the marauding horde known as the Red Hand of Doom. Unbeknownst to both Sinruth and the PCs, this Emissary was the shadar-kai arms dealer Sarshan. Simultaneously, Sarshan began sending messages to the leader of a band of gnoll mercenaries, a disciple of Yeenoghu named Fangren, in the hopes of inciting the gnolls in a similar fashion.

The gnolls were not so easily commanded, however, forcing Sarshan to take more drastic steps. While the goblins were content to raid Brindol thanks to little more than motivational letters, the gnoll mercenaries required something more. In order to secure their services, Sarshan arranged for the gnolls to receive several shipments of shadar-kai weapons from his storehouses in the Shadowfell. In exchange, Fangren agreed to lead his mercenaries

across Elsir Vale, pillaging, plundering, and seizing as many captives as possible.

Fangren and his mercenaries went about the agreed-upon task with gusto, carving a swath of destruction across the borders of Elsir Vale. Using an ancient githzerai monastery known as Fortress Graystone for their base of operations, the gnolls began kidnapping innocent inhabitants of the Vale for their own sinister pleasures. Most of their raids focused on outlying settlements, allowing them to wreak havoc without drawing the attention of more powerful parties.

As the gnolls found more and more success in their raids on the Vale, their leader grew even hungrier for power. Soon, Fangren came to believe that their success was not due to shadar-kai weaponry but by the favor of the demon lord Yeenoghu. Fangren quickly started to see himself not as merely the leader of a band of gnolls, but as a chosen one of Yeenoghu, with a destiny to become one of the demon lord’s exarchs.

While he sent his bands of mercenaries across the Vale, Fangren began gathering the components for the bloody ritual that would infuse him with the foul power of Yeenoghu. The gnoll shaman has completed the first phase of the ritual deep inside the githzerai fortress, opening an energy conduit to the Elemental Chaos in the hope of embracing the power of the Ruler of Ruin.

However, the creation of this conduit and the powerful magic of Fangren’s ritual have had an effect the gnoll shaman did not expect. Within the Hall of Great Valor in Brindol, magic long hidden within an ancient ceremonial sword has been awoken. A week past, the sword spoke, begging the aid of a group of heroes—and asking for the PCs by name.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

In the aftermath of “Rescue at Rivenroar,” the PCs recovered not only the kidnapped inhabitants of Brindol but also several relics of great historical value to the inhabitants of Elsir Vale. Among these was a ceremonial platinum longsword. Though the folk of the vale have no knowledge of the sword being magic (and though the PCs would have detected no magic within it), it contains a primal essence that has been reawakened by Fangren’s powerful rituals. (If the PCs did not recover the treasures of the Hall of Great Valor, the sword was recovered by a local patrol that mopped up at Rivenroar after the party left.)

The PCs are assumed to be in the city of Overlook when the adventure begins, most likely after returning and resting up from their adventures in “The Lost Mines of Karak.” The PCs hear that a messenger has recently arrived from Brindol, desperately seeking the party.

On further investigation, the PCs discover that this messenger has been captured by a band of Lost Ones, the powerful thieving guild the PCs faced off against in “Shadow Rift of Umbraforge.” After rescuing the messenger, the players are beseeched to return to Brindol.

Arriving in the town, the PCs head to the Hall of Great Valor and speak with the curator Sertanian, then with the sword itself. Identifying itself as Amyria, the sword charges the party with a mission: travel to an abandoned githzerai fortress now occupied by savage gnoll mercenaries, then perform a ritual to transform the sword into its true form. Even as the PCs weigh their next move, bounty hunters from Overlook attack the museum, wrecking the place as they target the party on behalf of an unknown patron.

With the sword in their possession, the PCs travel to the githzerai fortress. However, the arduous journey is made more dangerous by another bounty hunter—the elf Gilgathorn, who knows that Sarshan is the one who has put a price on the PCs' heads. The PCs arrive at the monastery and fight their way through its gnoll defenders, Gilgathorn waiting for an opportune moment to make his move.

In the end, the PCs find the ritual chamber and face off against Fangren. The energy conduit to the Elemental Chaos has been opened, the shaman channeling the power of Yeenoghu against the PCs. After defeating Fangren, the PCs perform the ritual that transforms the spirit of Amyria into its true form—a mysterious young woman who will come to play a central role in the events the PCs are caught up in.

THE QUESTS

“Den of the Destroyer” offers the opportunity for PCs to earn quest XP in two places. Provided here is a list of quests, and their rewards, in the adventure.

Major Quest—The Ritual of Amyria

The PCs must reach the ritual chamber in Fortress Graystone, then perform the ritual described to them by the spirit trapped within the platinum longsword.

Reward: 2,000 XP.

Minor Quest—The Captives' Fate

The PCs need to discover what happened to the citizens of Elsir Vale who have been kidnapped by the gnolls.

Reward: 350 XP.

PREPARING FOR ADVENTURE

“Den of the Destroyer” takes the PCs from the city of Overlook to Brindol, and then to a githzerai fortress hidden in the Giant's Shield mountains. As they seek to end the threat of the gnoll shaman Fangren and his followers, the PCs are pursued by bounty hunters who they eventually discover have been sent by the shadar-kai arms dealer Sarshan. One of those bounty hunters—the elf Gilgathorn—is an ongoing threat as the PCs take the fight to the gnolls in Fortress Graystone.

If you are anxious to start the adventure, read the introductory material (including the “Finding the Messenger” skill challenge) and the first two encounters (“Kidnappers” and “The Hall of Great Valor”). This will take the PCs up to the point where the sword asks for their aid, providing an exciting first adventure session.

The bulk of the combat encounters take place within the ancient githzerai monastery known as Fortress Graystone. Some of the encounters within the fortress can take place in different areas, so familiarize yourself with the citadel's overall layout.

WHAT YOU NEED TO PLAY

This adventure contains everything you need to play, including background information, setup, and encounters (including tactical maps). Reading through the *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS 4th Edition* rules is your first best step to understanding and preparing to run the adventure. As mentioned above, read through at least the opening sections and initial encounters before starting. This review enables you

to become familiar with the material and the style of presentation. The sections below describe the adventure format.

REVELATIONS

“Den of the Destroyer” leads directly into the climax of the heroic tier adventures in the Scales of War adventure path. Many of the disparate pieces of information the PCs have gathered over the course of their previous adventures begin to come together in this adventure. As such, you will want to emphasize the following points of revelation to the players.

- ◆ The gnolls of the Wicked Fang pack have been hired by the shadar-kai arms dealer Sarshan to do his bidding in Elsir Vale. He has given them specific instructions, including seizing (and holding) Fortress Graystone and kidnapping powerful individuals from across the Vale.
- ◆ A bounty has been placed on the PCs' heads by Sarshan himself.
- ◆ Fortress Graystone is more than an ancient ruin. The githzerai who built it did so to protect a long-dormant energy conduit that links the site to both the Elemental Chaos and the Astral Sea.
- ◆ Sinruth, from “Rescue at Rivenroar,” was also manipulated into doing Sarshan's bidding by the arms dealer's deception.
- ◆ The platinum sword from Brindol is in reality the alternate form of a divine being whose full identity and purpose are yet to be revealed.

USING TACTICAL ENCOUNTERS

Each encounter includes several common elements.

ENCOUNTER LEVEL

Each tactical encounter assumes a group of five player characters. An encounter of average difficulty is one where the encounter level is equal to the level of the party. Encounters that are 1 or 2 levels lower than the party are easy encounters, while encounters that are a higher level than the party are difficult encounters.

For overcoming an encounter, a group earns the XP value noted beside the encounter level. This amount should be divided by the number of group members, and an equal amount should be awarded to each character.

SETUP

This section of a tactical encounter provides you with the basic parameters of the encounter. First, it provides a key to the monsters in the encounter so you can locate them on the tactical map. Next, it provides context or background information for the encounter. The map of each encounter area indicates where the monsters are located when the encounter begins. The setup section also describes what the monsters are doing and how they react when the PCs arrive.

READ ALOUD TEXT

Read aloud text provides information detailing what the characters can see and are aware of. You do not have to read it word for word; feel free to paraphrase and use your own words when describing this information.

Use read aloud text wisely. It is written for the most common approach to a particular situation, but what your player characters do might require you to alter the information in any number of ways.

MONSTER STATISTICS

Encounters include stat blocks for each monster type present in the encounter. If more than one monster of a particular kind is present, the stat block indicates how many creatures can be found.

TACTICS

This entry describes special actions the monsters take to defeat the adventurers. Sometimes this means the monsters take advantage of special features of the area or make use of special powers or equipment.

MAP

Each encounter includes a map keyed with the initial locations of each monster. The map also indicates the location of any special features of the area.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

This section describes special features noted on the map. If the location has items or areas of interest with which the characters can interact, those features are described here. Look here to see if a door is out of the ordinary, if an altar has a secret compartment, or if the area includes treasure.

TREASURE PREPARATION

As with the previous installments of the Scales of War adventure path, this adventure makes use of the parcel system of treasure rewards described in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. The characters should accumulate fifteen parcels by the end of the adventure. You can supply these treasures in whatever way you wish, but the sidebar presents the most likely areas to feature treasure. During your preparation, assign parcels to the areas in the spaces provided.

TREASURE PARCELS

Parcel A: _____, Temple of Pelor.
Parcel B: _____, Hall of Great Valor.
Parcel C: _____, The Stairs.
Parcel D: _____, Githzerai Mind Trap.
Parcel E: _____, The Cells.
Parcel F: _____, Training Chamber.
Parcel G: _____, Meditation Chamber.

Parcel H: _____, Marshaling Point.
Parcel I: Parcel 14, Marshaling Point.
Parcel J: _____, Ritual Chamber.
Parcel K: _____, Ritual Chamber.
Parcel L: _____, Thorn's Attack.
Parcel M: Parcel 15, Thorn's Attack.
Parcel N: Parcel 16, Thorn's Attack.

Based on the guidelines in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, the following parcels can go in the spaces above. Rely on the wish lists your players gave you for the first four parcels.

Parcel 1: Magic item, level 11
Parcel 2: Magic item, level 11
Parcel 3: Magic item, level 9
Parcel 4: Magic item, level 8
Parcel 5: 1,500 gp art object + 400 gp
Parcel 6: Three 500 gp gems + 200 gp
Parcel 7: 500 gp gem + 800 gp
Parcel 8: 1,100 gp
Parcel 9: Eleven 100 gp gems

Parcel 10: Three 250 gp art objects + two *potions of healing*
Parcel 11: 600 gp
Parcel 12: Four 100 gp gems
Parcel 13: One 250 gp art object + 50 gp
Parcel 14: *Wicked Fang**
Parcel 15: *Figurine of wondrous power: elderwood falcon**
Parcel 16: *Figurine of wondrous power: ironwood hound**
 * See "Appendix II, New Items," page 96.

STARTING THE ADVENTURE

The adventure begins after the PCs return to Overlook following the events of “The Lost Mines of Karak.” Though a sense of urgency should prevail once things get underway, there is no set time frame for the messenger to arrive from Brindol. In particular, if the PCs are behind their expected XP totals (each character should be at about the midpoint of 7th level going into this adventure), feel free to run a side trek adventure to get them to where they need to be.

MESSAGE FROM BRINDOL

The adventure begins when a messenger from Brindol arrives in Overlook searching for the PCs. The messenger, a young human woman named Alys, arrived in Overlook a day before. Unfortunately, when she sought the PCs out through the city watch, her queries also reached the ears of the Lost Ones (see “Siege of Bordrin’s Watch,” page 15, and “Shadow Rift of Umbraforge,” page 9).

Alys’s arrival was unfortunately timed. Mere days ago, a bounty was placed on the PCs by Sarshan, the shadar-kai arms dealer the party dealt with in “The Shadow Rift of Umbraforge.” Sensing opportunity, the Lost Ones have kidnapped the messenger, hoping to glean information from her that might allow them to get the advantage over the PCs.

When the players are ready to begin, read the following.

The day is dreary, the sky threatening rain. Suddenly a voice calls out behind you, and you turn to see a familiar face.

While the PCs are out in the city, they run into either Kalad (the dwarf paladin from “Siege of Bordrin’s Watch” and “Lost Mines of Karak”) or Reniss (the half-elf ranger they met in “Shadow Rift of Umbraforge”). After initial greetings, the NPC passes on the following information.

“Word on the street is that someone’s looking for you. A messenger from Brindol. She was in the market, asking everyone in earshot if they knew you. She said her name was Alys, sounded desperate.”

SETTLING OLD SCORES

If the PCs tussled with the Lost Ones in “Siege of Bordrin’s Watch,” the kidnapping marks the party’s third encounter with the members of that underworld guild. Those previous encounters (and the drubbing the Lost Ones likely received at the PCs hands) have left them hungry for revenge. One of the guild’s underbosses, a human named Szagyn, assumes that Alys is a compatriot of the PCs, and hopes to use what she knows to gain the advantage.

If the PCs’ previous skirmishes with the Lost Ones were particularly memorable (and especially if you added additional run-ins between the party and the guild), feel free to play up this encounter as a kind of final showdown. If the PCs are unlucky in the skill challenge below, the Lost Ones gain unexpected allies—a group of mysterious killers targeting the PCs.

THE DEATH SQUAD

In “Siege of Bordrin’s Watch,” the PCs might have tussled with a murderous group featuring two doppelgangers. In the aftermath, they likely discovered a note with the names of a number of adventurers, including four of the party. These death squads are actually agents hired by Sarshan with a specific goal: hunting down and slaying professional adventurers that might interfere with his plans. Following his encounter with the PCs in the Shadowfell, Sarshan dispatched one of his most powerful death squads to hunt down and slay them. Thus far, the PCs have eluded them, but should the party fail the following skill challenge, they must face both the Lost Ones and the death squad simultaneously.

If the PCs do face the death squad in the temple of Pelor, they find another list among the doppelgangers’ belongings, this time with detailed descriptions of the PCs, sketches, and extensive notes on the party’s exploits. Though this does not tell them who hired the death squad, the note combined with the news of the bounty on their heads should be a strong indicator that someone is out to get them.

Finding the Messenger
Skill Challenge**Level 7**
XP 1,500

By a combination of investigation and stealth, you must track the kidnapped messenger across the city.

As the PCs attempt to find Alys, the messenger from Brindol, they discover that she has been kidnapped by agents of the Lost Ones.

Because the PCs do not immediately know that Alys has been kidnapped, this information is revealed after their first success in the skill challenge. Have an NPC the PCs are interacting with report the following:

“Alys you say? That girl from Brindol, said she was looking for them that put down the orc raid? She passed this way an hour ago, but I saw her go off with some of them Lost Ones. They seemed a little too happy to see her, if you know what I mean.”

Complexity

5 (requires 12 successes before 3 failures).

Primary Skills

Insight, Intimidate, Perception, Stealth, Streetwise, Thievery.

Other Skills

Bluff, Diplomacy

Victory

If the PCs achieve 12 successes before 3 failures, they discover that Alys is being held in an abandoned temple of Pelor in the Nine Bells district, and they are able to make their way there without drawing attention to themselves.

Defeat

If the PCs get 3 failures before 12 successes, they discover where Alys is being held, but their actions bring them to the attention of Sarshan’s death squad. In the “Kidnappers” encounter (page 71), the PCs face two separate groups and a much tougher challenge.

Special

Some of the skill checks below have specific requirements that must be met before a PC can make them. For example, the PCs must use Streetwise to track down a Lost Ones operative in order to use Intimidate. Making Intimidate checks against random people on the street yields no information.

Insight (DC 14)

The PC draws on his or her previous experiences fighting the Lost Ones to intuit the group’s revenge motive against the PCs, or to determine where in the city Lost Ones agents are most likely to be found.

Intimidate (DC 14)

After locating a Lost Ones operative or ally with a Streetwise check, the PC can seek answers by force.

Perception (DC 14)

The PC spots evidence of the Lost Ones’ passage along the route where Alys was taken—a scrap of parchment with the PCs’ names on it, reeking muddy bootprints that indicate the kidnapers have recently spent time in Nine Bells, and so on.

Stealth (DC 19)

The PC eavesdrops on merchants, beggars, and other denizens of the streets in order to pick up information that those afraid of the Lost Ones will not reveal directly.

Streetwise (DC 14)

The PC keeps his ear to the ground, picking up information from his contacts within the city. In addition, a successful Streetwise check is necessary before the party can make an Intimidate or Thievery check.

Thievery (DC 19)

After locating a Lost Ones’ meeting place with a successful Streetwise check, the PC uncovers details of the kidnapping.

Bluff or Diplomacy (DC 14)

By interacting with merchants, street urchins, or associates of the Lost Ones, the PC helps to narrow down the search. With a successful check, the PC gains a +2 bonus on his or her next Insight, Perception, or Streetwise check.

GILGATHORN’S WARNING

Before the PCs enter the temple of Pelor to deal with Szagyn and the other kidnapers, they encounter an elf by the name of Gilgathorn. This encounter can take place at any point during the skill challenge, as you see fit.

At a natural break in the action, read the following:

“I’d be careful if I were you,” calls a voice from above. Looking up, you see a heavily armed elf sitting casually on the slanted eaves above the door of a nearby building. The elf wears a patch across one eye, appraising you carefully with the other. “The Lost Ones aren’t going to be gentle when you find them. They’ve got reason enough to kill you, even if you didn’t have a bounty on your head.”

The elf introduces himself as Gilgathorn, “Thorn to my friends.” He calls himself a mercenary by trade, but in truth, he is a bounty hunter. Like the Lost Ones, he has discovered that the PCs have had a large bounty placed on their heads. However, knowing the party’s reputation, he has no intention of confronting them openly. Thorn shows up later in the adventure, first in Brindol, then in Fortress Graystone where he finally makes his move.

Though the PCs might be initially suspicious of Thorn, he is sincere in wanting to make sure the party survives the encounter with the Lost Ones (though only to prevent them from claiming the bounty themselves). Thorn confirms for the PCs that the Lost Ones are behind Alys’s disappearance, and that they seek revenge for their previous defeats at the party’s hands. Assuming her to be an accomplice of the PCs, the Lost Ones plan to interrogate her in order to obtain information on the party’s movements, then to set up an ambush.

Thorn tells the PCs that the bounty on their heads is the hefty sum of 1,000 gp, and that the identity of the person wanting them dead remains as yet unknown. However, while it is true that the Lost Ones have no idea who they work for, the canny Thorn has already connected the bounty with Sarshan.

If the PCs ask Thorn how he knows these things, he simply smiles and tells them he keeps his ear to the ground, like them. If they need further convincing, allow them to confirm what Thorn tells them with subsequent checks in the skill challenge.

Thorn intends to secretly follow the PCs to the Lost Ones’ hideout in Nine Bells, watching in order to size them up. However, if the PCs have trouble in that encounter (most likely because the failed skill challenge increases the odds against them), you can



have Thorn step in to aid them. Though his goal is to slay the PCs at a point when their resources have been depleted, he is too smart to do so within the city.

THE ABANDONED TEMPLE OF PELOR

The temple of Pelor is part of the Divine Knot, the cluster of nine temples that give the Nine Bells district its name. Abandoned for years, the temple has been taken over by the sacrilegious Lost Ones as a secret meeting place where they can avoid the attention of the city watch.

Tactical Encounter: “Kidnappers” (page 71).

RETURN TO BRINDOL

With the Lost Ones defeated and Alys rescued, the PCs learn the reason for the messenger’s search. Though she was beaten by the Lost Ones, Alys is strong, and she recovers herself quickly when she realizes who the PCs are. She explains that she has

been a messenger in Elsir Vale for many years, and has run into trouble more than once in her career.

Alys speaks with the measured countenance of someone reciting a memorized message. “Greetings from Sertanian, castellan of the Hall of Great Valor. I beseech you to return to Brindol with all haste, as your presence is needed here. The matter concerns one of the relics that you recovered while saving myself and our town’s other captives in Rivenroar, and is most urgent.”

Sertanian appeared in “Rescue at Rivenroar,” and the PCs should remember him well. If he did not survive that adventure, the message is from his apprentice Aeomon, who inherited responsibility for the Hall of Great Valor after his master’s death.

Alys knows nothing more than what she has been told, though she confides to the party that she has never seen old Sertanian as fearful as when he sent her forth. The PCs have time to tie up any loose ends in Overlook before they depart for Brindol with Alys as escort.

WARNING ON THE ROAD

The journey from Overlook to Brindol is relatively uneventful. However, as they approach the point where the Dwarf Road meets the Old North Road at the foot of Lake Restin, the PCs encounters a band of soldiers on patrol. They are stopped for questioning, their names quickly recognized if they give them.

The leader of the patrol identifies himself as Zoram Splintershield, a dwarf whose folk dwell in the foothills of the Giant’s Shield. He and his troop are patrolling the roads around the lake and the Blackfens. Zoram tells the PCs that in the past few weeks, there have been a number of unprovoked attacks and abductions in the north of Elsir Vale. Though patrols like his scour the roads in search of these bandits, they have so far come up empty.

Moreover, Zoram informs the PCs that the abductions seem to be perpetrated by gnolls, who have traditionally stayed well clear of the vale. The PCs have heard or seen no sign of gnolls during their time on the road. As such, Zoram bids them a safe journey to Brindol, but warns them to keep a wary eye out for any trouble.

ARRIVAL AT BRINDOL

The journey to Brindol takes a little over a week. Arriving late at night, the PCs find the Hall of Valor closed up tight, Alys telling them that Sertanian will likely already be in bed at his home outside of town. However, the party’s arrival is noted by a family member of one of the captives rescued from Rivenroar. The PCs are invited to dinner and offered comfortable lodging. While speaking with their hosts, they learn the following.

“Things have been quiet in Brindol since that awful business, all thanks to your brave efforts, again and always. Still, there’s families packing up and taking to the road, more and more each week. There’s talk of gnolls attacking settlements in the north, and word of the orcs rising up in the Stonehome. Dark days are coming, or so it seems.”

THE HALL OF GREAT VALOR

The next morning, the PCs make their way to the Hall of Great Valor to meet Sertanian. This adventure assumes that the PCs had the opportunity to see the hall at some point during “Rescue at Rivenroar.” If not, paraphrase the following.

The Hall of Great Valor is as you last saw it, its glass cases lining the walls with relics of Elsir Vale’s past. Three freestanding displays show off artifacts of the vanquished Red Hand of Doom, a large map of the surrounding lands updated with details of the Hand’s most recent forays against Elsir Vale and its people.

Where he dusts relics in a display case across the room, a familiar grey-haired figure rises. Sertanian smooths out his stained smock as he bows. “My friends,” he says. “Welcome back to Brindol.”

Sertanian thanks the PCs for their quick arrival, but any Insight check reveals the castellan’s unease. Only after locking the doors of the hall will he tell the party why he has summoned them here.

“You recall the platinum blade that was one of the treasures taken by Sinruth and his hobgoblin horde. Upon its return to the hall, it seemed none the worse for its ordeal. It is a relic of some worth and sentimental value, but holds no magic that I or any of my predecessors here have noted. But then a week ago, while working late at night, I heard a voice, calling

me. From its case, the sword spoke to me, beseeching me to summon heroes to its aid. It asked for all of you by name.”

Sertanian explains that after the sword began speaking, he removed it from its display case and hid it in the hall’s back room. He leads the PCs to a cluttered workspace, where the platinum longsword lies beneath a cloth on a table. When the cloth is removed, read the following.

Without warning, the small workroom is filled with a woman’s voice, weak. “You have come, my heroes, but my thanks must be brief. I am Amyria, and I have summoned you here from great need. I know it must seem strange to hear me speak, but I assure you that this form is only temporary. It is for that reason that I beseech you for your aid.

“Decades ago, a race of monastics born of the Elemental Chaos established a fortress in Elsir Vale. These were the githzerai, who lived secretly in their remote outpost before suddenly vanishing. Their Fortress of Graystone was well hidden, and remained uninhabited for long years.

“Some months ago, Fortress Graystone was invaded and claimed by a pack of gnoll mercenaries calling themselves the Wicked Fang. Their leader, a sadistic follower of the demon lord Yeenoghu, has begun to send his raiders out into Elsir Vale and beyond. In recent weeks, this gnoll chieftain Fangren has managed to open a conduit of power to Yeenoghu’s realm in the Elemental Chaos. He plans to claim some small fragment of the demon lord’s power, transforming himself into an exarch of the Beast of Butchery. It was the creation of this conduit that awoke me from my age-long slumber.

“If Fangren completes his ritual, demonic forces will have gained a foothold in the mortal realm. More importantly, that conduit to the Elemental Chaos can be

manipulated through a ritual that I will provide to you. This is the boon that I pray you grant me. Bring me to Fortress Graystone and free me from this prison.”

The sword explains that it can provide directions to Fortress Graystone, and that it will answer any questions as best it can.

What will the ritual you are giving us do? “The ritual will free me from my current form, restoring me to my rightful body. I can say no more than that. Though I am granted the power to speak to you, my memory has been fractured by long years of sleep.”

Why does the ritual have to be performed in Fortress Graystone? “In opening the conduit to the Elemental Chaos, Fangren unwittingly set the stage for my restoration. The ritual will alter the conduit such that it can channel energy from other planes to fuel my transformation.”

What about the gnolls? “The Wicked Fang tribe is not to be underestimated. They are strong and steeped in demon worship. While making your way to the fortress will almost certainly be dangerous, the threat to Elsir Vale and the wider world is great.”

What else do you know about Fortress Graystone? “The fortress is built into the side of a peak of the Giant’s Shield. No roads or trails travel to the fortress, so the journey will be arduous.”

Can you tell us what we will find at the fortress? “Alas, I cannot. When the rift was opened, Fangren’s thoughts and plans came to me as in a dream that woke my own mind. I have not seen him since, and

my spirit grows weaker with every hour that passes. Before long, I fear that my voice and thought will be lost once more.”

At a natural break in the exchange between Amyria and the PCs, trouble arrives in the form of bounty hunters intent on collecting the price on the PCs’ heads. The bounty hunter Thorn puts in an appearance, and is there to speak to the PCs in the aftermath.

Tactical Encounter: “The Hall of Great Valor” (page 73).

DEPARTING BRINDOL

The attack by the bounty hunters should reinforce the warning Thorn gave the PCs in Overlook. The elf tells the PCs that he is as surprised to find them there as they are to see him. He speaks of how he was passing through Brindol on his way to a job in Marthton when he saw the burning hall and came to lend what assistance he could. He also adds that before he left Overlook, he heard rumors of the PCs’ confrontation with the Lost Ones, and that the bounty on their heads had been doubled in the aftermath.

Thorn’s story is, of course, a lie. He followed the bounty hunters to Brindol in the hope that they would kill the PCs, after which he would slay them and take the credit for himself. At the very least, he expected the fight to weaken the PCs enough for him to take them on, but the party’s prowess in battle has proved even more formidable than he expected.

Having been eavesdropping outside the Hall of Great Valor, Thorn knows all that the PCs know of Amyria and her quest. His plan now is to get to Fortress Graystone ahead of the party, setting traps along the

way as a means of forcing them to expend resources. By chance, Thorn has been inside Fortress Graystone, and he knows a great deal about its defenses.

AMYRIA’S PLIGHT

When the sword spoke to the PCs in the Hall of Great Valor, they noted the weakness of its voice. If and when the PCs attempt to speak to Amyria en route to Fortress Graystone, the spirit within the sword reiterates that each time it talks, its waning life force is further diminished. If the PCs have specific questions that Amyria can answer, the sword makes the effort to speak. However, Amyria does not know any information regarding their journey beyond the general route to the fortress that she earlier described.

Travel to Fortress Graystone Skill Challenge

Level 7
XP 900

The journey to Fortress Graystone is well off the established trade roads and trails of Elsir Vale. You have many challenges ahead, and you have only yourselves to rely on as you make your way to the stronghold.

In addition to the natural challenges of the trip, the bounty hunter Thorn plans to wear the PCs down during their journey to the citadel, then to kill them there.

The PCs must navigate the hazardous wilderness of the Giant’s Shield as they seek Fortress Graystone. However, an unseen foe shadows their route, and is intent on making their journey much more dangerous.

Complexity

3 (requires 8 successes before 3 failures).

Primary Skills

Athletics, Endurance, History, Nature, Perception.

Other Skills

Perception.

Victory

If the PCs achieve 8 successes before 3 failures, they manage to safely reach Fortress Graystone without a significant loss of resources.

Defeat

If the PCs get 3 failures before 6 successes, they reach Fortress Graystone but their delays and setbacks leave them exhausted. Each PC loses 1 healing surge.

Special

This skill challenge features an enemy actively working against the PCs as they attempt to find their way to Fortress Graystone. The first time the PCs fail an Athletics or Nature check, or if a successful check beats the DC by 5 or more, they see evidence that whatever hazard or pitfall they attempted to avoid has been set up for them by agents unknown. Once the PCs realize that they are being shadowed, they can make secondary Perception checks to be on the lookout for signs of ambush or entrapment.

Athletics (DC 8)

The PC scales a tree or climbs a rock outcropping to spot signs of the path ahead, or to catch a glimpse of Fortress Graystone in the distance.

Endurance (DC 14)

The PCs sleep less, take longer watches, and scout increasingly farther ahead in an attempt to thwart the actions of whoever is stalking them. This check can be made only after the PCs realize that someone is actively seeking to hinder their progress (see “Special,” above).

This is a group check. One character acts as lead, while the others make checks to aid that character. Each ally that gets a result of 10 or higher provides a +2 bonus to the lead character’s check (which counts as the check to determine a success or a failure).

History (DC 14)

The PC attempts to recall lore regarding the history of Fortress Graystone, identifying major landmarks that help the party find a safe route.

Nature (DC 14)

The PC identifies natural hazards and potential dangers on the journey, finding a route that goes through easier terrain.

Perception (DC 19)

The PC is able to spot hazards and dangers that have been intentionally hidden or created by the unknown forces shadowing the party. A successful Perception check grants a single PC a +2 bonus to his or her next primary skill check made in the challenge.

FORTRESS GRAYSTONE

Fortress Graystone sits built into the side of a low peak of the Giant's Shield mountains. The structure is well hidden from the eyes of the inhabitants of Elsir Vale, as was the intention of its builders. A massive stone staircase leading into the side of the mountain is the only entrance.

Fortress Graystone was constructed by a band of githzerai monastics whose reasons for dwelling in the mortal realm have been lost to history. Later explorers found evidence that the citadel was built as a place of training and meditation for the githzerai, and assumed that its remote location had been chosen for its defensive value. However, what no one realized is

that Fortress Graystone was built to defend what lies hidden within it.

In their home in the Elemental Chaos, the githzerai discovered a thinning in the barrier between that plane and the world. Making their way to the world, they searched for and found this planar breach in the Giant's Shield mountains. There, they built a fortress around the point of planar instability, attempting to prevent the damage that might occur to both planes should the breach be fully opened.

Decades ago, the githzerai inhabiting Fortress Graystone vanished without a trace. Recently, Sarshan ordered the gnolls of the Wicked Fang pack to travel here and secure the fortress as part of their deal with the shadar-kai arms dealer. Little did

Sarshan know what Fangren would find there. Though he is hardly a scholar, the gnoll shaman obtained knowledge of planar magic that allowed him to tap into the power hidden within the fortress. Now, he seeks to use it for his own dark ends.

When the PCs approach the fortress, read the following.

For the last day, thick forest has been giving way to rolling foothills. Now, the hills rise to a sudden wall of rocky peaks rising high above the trees. A rough gravel path winds its way along the base of the mountains, the first sign of a true trail that you have seen since your departure from Brindol.

THE FORTRESS

Fortress Graystone reflects the aesthetic of the githzerai who built it, demonstrating balance between the chaos of their birthplace and the order they sought to impose upon their own lives.

The fortress takes its name from the distinctive gray stone found in this area of the Giant's Shield, colored that way by prevalent veins of platinum ore. The stone walls of the fortress are decorated with bas reliefs and carvings that have withstood the passage of years with little deterioration. However, the arrival of the Wicked Fang gnolls has changed that.

FEATURES OF THE FORTRESS

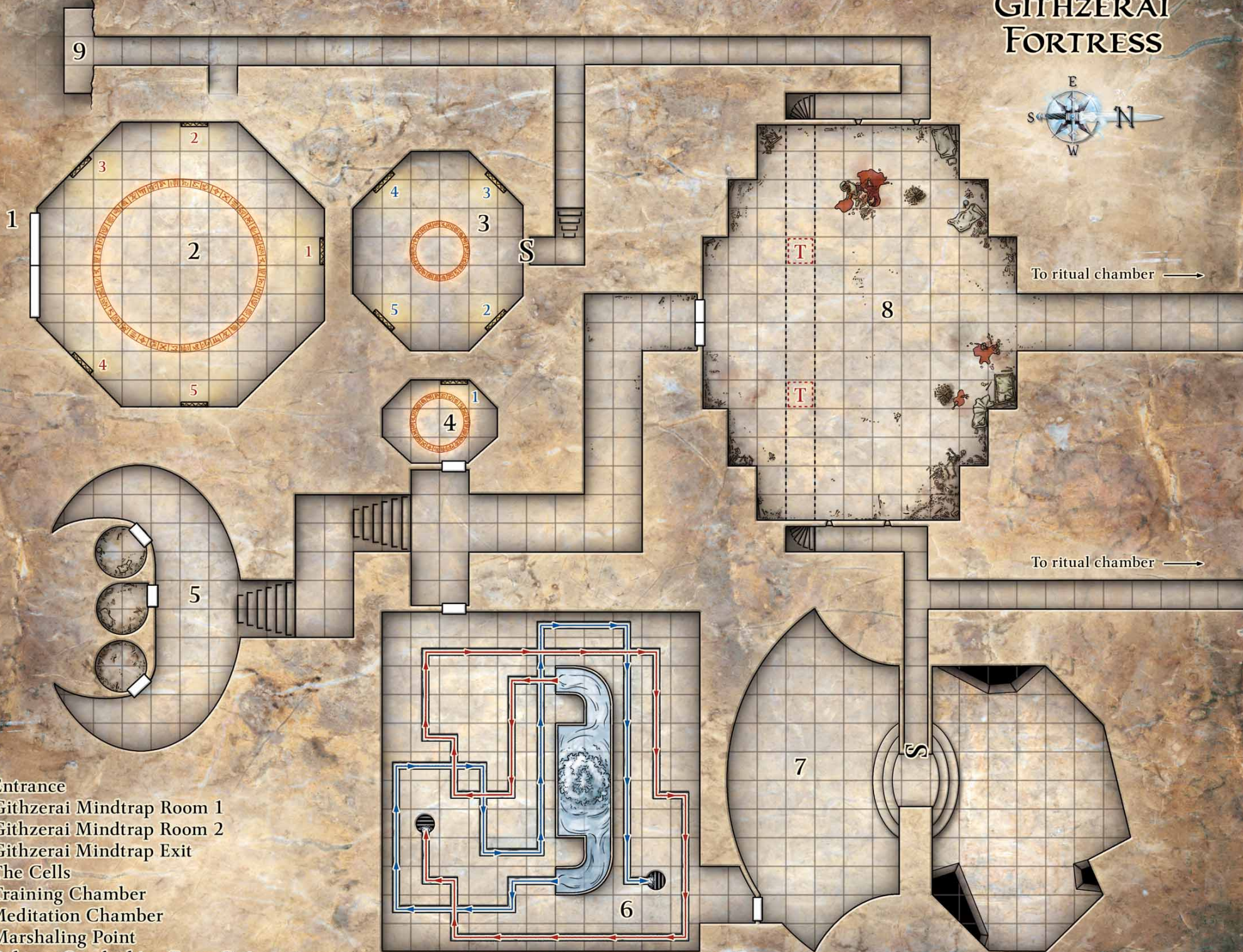
Different areas of Fortress Graystone share the following common features.

Illumination: All rooms within the fortress except the meditation chamber are brightly lit. The secret passages are dark, except for two small areas beneath the open trapdoors at the marshaling point.

Doors: The doors in Fortress Graystone are unlocked, with two exceptions. The door leading from



GITHZERAI FORTRESS



- 1. Entrance
- 2. Githzerai Mindtrap Room 1
- 3. Githzerai Mindtrap Room 2
- 4. Githzerai Mindtrap Exit
- 5. The Cells
- 6. Training Chamber
- 7. Meditation Chamber
- 8. Marshaling Point
- 9. Balcony Overlooking Entry Stairs

One square = 5 feet

the marshaling point to the ritual chamber requires a key (possessed only by Fangren) or a DC 14 Thievery check to open. Likewise, the door leading into the marshaling point requires a key (possessed only by the Wicked Fang warmaster and the ruin-touched beastcaller) or a DC 19 Thievery check to open. Doors open inward from the adjacent corridors.

Stairs: The rubble-strewn stairs within the fortress are difficult terrain.

Secret Passages: The githzerai built several secret passages within Fortress Graystone, with entrances in the githzerai mind trap, the meditation chamber, and at the marshaling point. Thorn knows of these passages, and uses them to avoid the effects of the fortress's traps as he reactivates them.

EXTENDED RESTS

Fortress Graystone provides few places where the PCs can take an extended rest without having the gnolls regroup to search for them. In the event that the party needs to restore itself, the PCs will need to retreat into the forest outside to do so.

Taking an extended rest allows any gnolls alerted to the PCs' presence to regroup and call for backup. Feel free to use an extended rest as an opportunity for Thorn to attack (see page 77), as well as a chance to set up reinforcement encounters within the citadel. Place these new encounters in areas the PCs have already cleared out, but make sure that such encounters don't overly tax the party's newly replenished resources.

With the PCs 7th or 8th level by now, most reinforcement encounters should be 4th or 5th level—enough to demonstrate the Wicked Fang's resources but not to be a significant drain on the party. (Minions are a great way to fill up a reinforcement encounter.)

When the PCs end their extended rest, let them see or hear reinforcements arriving and entering the citadel. Unless the party wants to deal with the new threat immediately (in which case, you can improvise an encounter outside the fortress entrance), give the PCs time to plan for these additional encounters once they go back inside.

1. THE ENTRANCE

The wide stairs rising up the mountainside climb toward a set of double doors flanked by four statues. The Wicked Fang gnolls have set up their first line of defense here.

Tactical Encounter: "The Stairs" (page 75).

2.-4. GITHZERAI MIND TRAP

The mind trap is a special chamber designed by the githzerai to guard the fortress against incursion. This trap consists of a series of linked teleportation portals that shift destinations rapidly, making it impossible to quickly move a large strike force into the fortress. Called a mind trap due to the mental discipline required to pass through it to the interior of the fortress, the portal system was deactivated by Fangren when the gnolls first arrived.

Unfortunately for the gnolls guarding this area, Thorn reactivated the trap before moving deeper into the building, leaving several gnolls stuck trying to find their way out when the PCs arrive.

Tactical Encounter: "Githzerai Mind Trap" (page 79).

5. THE CELLS

This oddly shaped chamber was once the living quarters of the githzerai. It currently serves as a makeshift prison within which the Wicked Fang pack keeps a

handful of prisoners. Fangren has been using these Elsir Vale captives in twisted experiments, transforming them into abyssal wretches.

Tactical Encounter: "The Cells" (page 81).

6. TRAINING CHAMBER

A waterfall flows into this room from above, driving a system of shallow aqueducts that allowed the githzerai of the fortress to simulate the chaos of battle in their combat training.

This chamber is currently occupied by several ruin-touched gnolls and their slaughterfang hyena mounts. Knowing that the ruin-touched gnolls had undergone horrific rituals to infuse them with demonic power, Fangren called upon them to aid his quest when he first devised his plan to ascend to the status of exarch of Yeenoghu.

Tactical Encounter: "Training Chamber" (page 83).

7. MEDITATION CHAMBER

The doors leading into this area are covered with scrawled warnings in Common and Abyssal to stay out. This room is divided into two distinct chambers. The smooth walls of the southern portion are designed to represent the peace of law, while the rough stone of the northern chamber represents the tumult of chaos. Githzerai warriors would meditate here at the boundary between chaos and order.

Spiritual echoes of the githzerai and manifestations of their inner chaos plague this chamber. The gnolls consider it a haunted place, and they will not enter.

Tactical Encounter: "Meditation Chamber" (page 85).

8. MARSHALING POINT

Once a gathering place for the githzerai, this area has been transformed into a training ground and living space for the gnolls. Debris and refuse litter the floor, while recruits train here under the watchful eye of their pack's warmaster and a shadar-kai agent sent from Sarshan. The doors are locked but the ruin-touched beastcaller (in the training chamber) has a key.

Present in the marshaling point is a shadar-kai weaponmaster by the name of Kyrion. One of Sarshan's most trusted agents, Kyrion has traveled

NO PRISONERS

If Kyrion is killed or flees before the PCs can interrogate him, any search of the chamber finds the following note among his belongings:

Kyrion,

Let me make my orders clear: you are there only to train the gnolls, not to fight for them. Watch yourself; they are a bloodthirsty and violent lot, and they may turn on you. You may need to remind them from time to time that I pay them well for their services, and that I can withdraw my support for their butchery at any time. Be careful of their leader, for he is far more cunning than others would give him credit for. I would not have even considered trying to trick them into service with that "Emissary" deception that riled up that fool Sinruth. These gnolls have the power of their foul god on their side. They are not to be trifled with.

— Sarshan

to the world to deliver the sword *Wicked Fang* to the gnolls and to train them in the use of shadar-kai weapons. Kyrion has no loyalty to the Wicked Fang tribe, and fights only to defend himself.

Tactical Encounter: "Marshaling Point" (page 87).

SARSHAN'S PLOTS

Whether Kyrion flees, is slain, or is captured alive, the PCs can discover his connection to the gnolls—and to the party's previous adventures. If he is captured and questioned, Kyrion offers up his story and a pledge to leave Elsir Vale in exchange for his freedom and a weapon to defend himself. Whether Kyrion is interrogated or not, see the skill challenge on the next page. If Kyrion is freed by the PCs, he stays true to his word to leave Elsir Vale.

Interrogating the Weaponmaster Skill Challenge

Level 8
XP 350

If he survives his encounter with the party, the shadar-kai weaponmaster Kyrion offers the PCs their best chance to uncover the full truth of the plots unfolding around them.

The shadar-kai knows the truth behind the gnolls' plots in Elsir Vale. Now the PCs just need to convince him to talk.

Complexity

1 (requires 4 successes before 3 failures).

Primary Skills

Bluff, Diplomacy, Heal, Insight, Intimidate.

Victory

The PCs learn that Kyrion was sent by Sarshan to train the gnolls in the use of shadar-kai weapons. They also learn that Sarshan is responsible for convincing the gnolls to seize Fortress Graystone and to go on a kidnapping spree across Elsir Vale. Finally, they learn that Sarshan was also responsible for provoking Sinruth into reviving the Red Hand of Doom.

In addition, the PCs learn that the sword wielded by the gnoll warmaster is a unique weapon, crafted specifically for the Wicked Fang pack on Sarshan's orders. According to Kyrion, *Wicked Fang*—so named in honor of Fangren's pack—is said to carry a curse and have a history steeped in blood.

Defeat

If the PCs fail the skill challenge, Kyrion still imparts the knowledge from the first paragraph above, but not the second paragraph, hoping the PCs will overlook the importance of the weapon.

Bluff (DC 14)

The PC attempts to trick Kyrion into thinking that Fangren has betrayed him, hoping that the shadar-kai will betray the gnolls in turn.

Diplomacy (DC 14)

The PC earns Kyrion's respect by praising the shadar-kai's battle prowess.

Heal (DC 8)

The PC binds Kyrion's wounds, earning his grudging gratitude by ensuring that he will live to fight again.

Insight (DC 19)

By listening to and watching the shadar-kai, the PC intuits some aspect of his true relationship with the gnolls.

Intimidate (DC 19)

The PC manages to break Kyrion's resolve with base threats of violence.

RITUAL CHAMBER

The ritual chamber was built around the planar rift discovered within the mountain by the githzerai. Using dark rituals stolen from his ruin-touched allies, Fangren has corrupted the energy of this place, creating a conduit to the Elemental Chaos and the power of the demon lord Yeenoghu.

SHADAR-KAI WEAPONS

Their shadar-kai weapons give the gnolls an advantage in their raids, but these blades require the special training Kyrion provides. The shadar-kai short sword is statistically identical to the katar (*PH* 218), while the shadar-kai greatsword is statistically identical to the fullblade (*Adventurer's Vault* 9). Though the weapons have a jagged and shadowy appearance, this provides no additional mechanical benefit.



Unlike with most planar portals, physical objects and creatures cannot pass through the conduit, which serves only to draw energy into the mortal realm. This planar energy is critical to Fangren's dream of ascending to exarch status, as well as to Amyria's ritual.

Tactical Encounter: "Ritual Chamber" (page 89).

AMYRIA'S RITUAL

With the conduit safely closed and the threat of Fangren and his allies ended, the platinum sword from Brindol begins to speak once more. The voice sounds even weaker, its life force all but spent as it

instructs the PCs to draw it and perform its ritual. If one of the PCs has the Ritual Caster feat, the sword directs its instructions to that character. Otherwise, any PC can perform the ritual under the sword's direction. The ritual takes 10 minutes.

A vortex of brilliant energy opens up in the air as the platinum sword is gently tugged from your hands. It rises to hover in the air before the newly formed conduit, tendrils of silver light reaching out to touch it. You are blinded by a brilliant flash, then an instant later, the ritual chamber falls silent.

Standing before you is a young human female of unearthly beauty and grace. Her silver hair hangs down her back, a band of chalk-white pigment stretching from one temple to the other across her eyes. She is garbed in armor made of slender, overlapping plates. In one hand, she holds a leather-bound tome; in the other, the platinum longsword.

"I am Amyria," she says. "Who are you, and why am I here?"

The ritual has transformed the spirit within the platinum longsword into Amyria, a being who is far more than she appears. However, much to her own consternation, Amyria is not fully certain why she has been brought here. She does not recognize the PCs or their names, and has no memory of her words to them while her spirit lingered within the sword.

"I remember that I am Amyria," she says softly, "and I have lived many lives. I was in the sword. I remember you freed me. The ritual you performed transformed the planar breach in this place, allowing it to channel the energy of the Astral Sea. Energy necessary for my transformation." She looks to you, eyes bright. "I have been reborn with purpose, even if that purpose is yet unclear to me."

Beyond her minimal recollections, Amyria is a clean slate—her transformation a literal rebirth. Though she is of an adult mindset, she knows nothing of her own past.

The leather-bound tome is a ritual book that Amyria gives to the party with her thanks. It contains a modified version of the ritual just performed, allowing them to stop the flow of energy that fuels a planar portal.

SEAL PORTAL

You close a portal between two locations safely, ensuring that nothing can come through it in the future.

Level: 8

Category: Binding

Time: 10 Minutes

Duration: Permanent

Component Cost: 100 gp

Market Price: 680 gp

Key Skill: Arcana

You sever the magical connections that bind one place to another by way of a portal. The completion of this ritual successfully shuts a currently active portal and seals it. No creature, object, or energy can pass through a sealed portal. The portal is not destroyed, though it becomes both invisible and intangible, meaning that it cannot be perceived or interacted with while sealed. If the portal would normally disappear after a certain amount of time, it does so.

At the completion of this ritual, make an Arcana check. A sealed portal can be reopened with the *linked portal*, *planar portal*, or *true portal* rituals, but the creature performing the ritual to reopen the portal must make an Arcana check that equals or exceeds the results of the Arcana check you made when performing this ritual. You can remove the seal on a portal you have sealed by performing this ritual on it again.

The magic of a sealed portal can be detected with the Arcana skill. The level of the magical phenomenon (the seal, not the portal itself) is equal to your level at the time you performed this ritual.

AMYRIA, SCION OF BAHAMUT

The following statistics for Amyria represent her current form. Though this concludes this adventure (and Amyria will be going her own way once the PCs reach Overlook), DMs can use these statistics as both a point of reference and an NPC statistics block in case a particular campaign calls for it.

Amyria	Level 10 Elite Skirmisher (Leader)	
Medium immortal humanoid	XP 1,000	
Initiative +11	Senses Perception +10	
Aura of Recovery aura 2; allies that start their turn in Amyria's aura gain a +1 bonus to all saves until the start of their next turn.		
HP 200; Bloodied 100		
AC 24; Fortitude 19, Reflex 22, Will 23		
Resist radiant 10		
Saving Throws +2		
Speed 6		
Action Points 1		
⚔ Longsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Radiant, Weapon +15 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage plus 1d6 radiant damage.		
⚔ Crusader's Assault (standard; at-will) ♦ Radiant, Weapon Requires longsword; +15 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage plus 1d6 radiant damage, and one of Amyria's allies within 10 squares makes a basic attack as a free action against the same target.		
↩ Radiant Rebuke (immediate interrupt; when targeted by a melee attack; at-will) Close burst 1; +13 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 5 radiant damage.		
Memory of A Thousand Lifetimes (free; encounter) Amyria adds 1d6 to a d20 roll she just made.		
Alignment Lawful good	Languages Common, Draconic, Supernal	
Skills Diplomacy +13, Religion +15		
Str 10 (+5)	Dex 12 (+6)	Wis 21 (+10)
Con 12 (+6)	Int 18 (+9)	Cha 16 (+8)

INSTRUCTIONS FROM SARSHAN

When the PCs search Fangren's body, they find a series of notes and missives from Sarshan to the gnoll chieftain. They relay orders to the Wicked Fang pack, including the following.

I cannot stress the importance of holding Fortress Graystone. Among the assignments I have given you, this should be your top priority. I have armed you well enough that you should be able to repel all invaders.

Do what you will with your prisoners, but continue taking them. Focus your efforts on those who seem to be of some importance; do not waste your time with farmers and commoners.

I am sending someone to train your recruits in the use of our weapons, at your request. However, I expect you to leave this one alone. The witch I sent to you was one of my personal advisors, and now she is ruined. Do not treat my people so callously as you do your own.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

Having rid Fortress Graystone of the Wicked Fang pack, performed the ritual to transform the platinum sword into Amyria, and sealed the conduit to the planes, the PCs have finished their mission and can depart at their leisure. As they exit the fortress, Amyria requests that they accompany her to Overlook, not back to Brindol, as she believes she has business there. Should the PCs resist, she will not put up a fight, though she will set off for the city without them should they choose to go elsewhere.

Eventually, however, the PCs need to return to Overlook. Not only is this the starting point of the

RETURN TO THE SHADOWFELL

At the conclusion of this adventure, the PCs have learned that Sarshan stands at the center of many of their recent adventures. It is understandable that the PCs might be inclined to head straight to the Shadowfell in order to deal with the shadar-kai. However, if you wish to allow such action, be aware that the PCs won't face the arms dealer directly until a later adventure.

When the PCs arrive at Umbraforge, they discover the tower's windows dark and the entire complex seemingly abandoned. The tent camps at the foot of Sarshan's tower remain intact and inhabited, but the only shadar-kai who remain were not in Sarshan's service. They can tell the PCs that, shortly after their departure, Sarshan and his entire organization departed from Umbraforge for parts unknown. With no knowledge of where Sarshan went, this should put the PCs off his trail, for a while at least.

next adventure, it is (as the PCs will soon discover) a critical location in a war that expands far beyond what they suspect. If the PCs accompany Amyria to Overlook, she bids them farewell once they reach the entrance to the city, slipping away into the crowd. If any of the party should attempt to follow her, she goes to the Temple of Ioun in the Nine Bells district. There, she immediately becomes lost in prayer, lingering indefinitely.

KIDNAPPERS

Encounter Level 9 (2,150 XP)

Encounter Level 11 (3,050 XP)*

SETUP

- 4 Lost One kidnappers (K)
- 2 ravenous attack dogs (R)
- Szagyn, Lost One underboss (U)
- 3 death squad assassins (A)*

* Only if the PCs failed the “Finding the Messenger” skill challenge.

After completing the skill challenge, the PCs make their way to the abandoned temple of Pelor where the messenger from Brindol is being held by the Lost Ones.

When the PCs approach the temple, read:

As you enter Nine Bells, the rain that has been threatening all day begins to fall. By the time you locate the temple of Pelor, the streets are all but empty, the inhabitants of the district fled to shelter. From the outside, the temple entrance is set above a short flight of stone stairs. The flare of lightning shows where relief carvings once adorned the temple’s outer walls, but these are unrecognizable after years of neglect and abuse.

When the PCs enter, read:

Water covers the cracked marble floor where broken freestanding frescoes block four doors in the far wall. Rain pours down through a square opening in the ceiling, shards of stained glass clinging to its edges. Beneath it, a

young woman in tattered traveling garb has been gagged, blindfolded, and bound to a wooden chair.

Perception Check

DC 14: Well-gnawed bones spread across the room and the reek of wet fur suggest the presence of dogs somewhere within the temple.

DC 19: A flash of lightning through the open ceiling reveals faint movement behind the frescoes, figures lurking there.

A sentry at the door alerted the Lost Ones to the PCs’ approach, giving them time to bind and gag Alys and get into position behind the frescoes.

4 Lost One Kidnappers (K)		Level 7 Soldier
Medium natural humanoid		XP 300
Initiative +6	Senses Perception +4	
HP 79; Bloodied 39		
AC 23; Fortitude 20, Reflex 18, Will 18		
Speed 6		
⚔ Longsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+14 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage		
⚡ Grab and Go (standard; at-will)		
+12 vs. Fortitude; 1d8 + 5 damage, and the Lost One kidnapper slides 2 squares, then slides the target 2 squares. The target must end its slide adjacent to the kidnapper’s new position.		
Kidnap (free; encounter)		
When the Lost One kidnapper hits a target with its Grab and Go ability, the distance both creatures slide is increased to 4 squares.		
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Common	
Skills Stealth +9		
Str 19 (+7)	Dex 13 (+4)	Wis 13 (+4)
Con 15 (+5)	Int 9 (+2)	Cha 12 (+4)
Equipment leather armor, long sword		

2 Ravenous Attack Dogs (R)		Level 7 Skirmisher
Small natural beast		XP 300
Initiative +7	Senses Perception +3	
HP 80; Bloodied 40		
AC 21; Fortitude 19, Reflex 18, Will 16		
Speed 6		
⚔ Bite (standard; at-will)		
+12 vs. AC; 1d4 + 7 damage		
⚡ Tripping Lunge (standard; recharge ☼ ☼)		
+10 vs. Reflex; 2d4 + 9 damage, and the target is knocked prone.		
⚡ Drag off Prey (immediate interrupt; when an adjacent opponent moves away; at-will)		
+10 vs. Fortitude; 1d4 + 3 damage, and the ravenous attack dog slides 1 square, then slides the target 1 square. The target must end its slide adjacent to the attack dog’s new position.		
Circle for the Kill (move; at-will)		
The ravenous attack dog shifts 2 squares.		
Alignment Unaligned	Languages –	
Skills Intimidate +6		
Str 13 (+4)	Dex 14 (+5)	Wis 10 (+3)
Con 16 (+6)	Int 2 (-1)	Cha 6 (+1)

Lost One Underboss (U)		Level 8 Controller (Leader)
Medium natural humanoid		XP 350
Initiative +9	Senses Perception +7	
Underboss’s Presence aura 2; at the start of each ally’s turn, if that ally is within the aura and the Lost One underboss’s line of sight, the ally gains 4 temporary hit points.		
HP 87; Bloodied 43		
AC 22; Fortitude 19, Reflex 21, Will 20		
Speed 6		
⚔ Dagger (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+13 vs. AC; 2d4 + 4 damage		
⚡ Storm of Daggers (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
Requires a number of daggers equal to number of enemies in burst; area burst 1 within 10; targets enemies the Lost One Underboss can see; +10 vs. Reflex; 2d4 + 4 damage.		
Get Into Position (minor 1/round; at-will)		
One ally within 10 squares shifts 1 square.		
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Dwarven	
Skills Bluff +12, Intimidate +12, Stealth +11		
Str 12 (+5)	Dex 14 (+6)	Wis 16 (+7)
Con 15 (+6)	Int 15 (+6)	Cha 17 (+7)
Equipment leather armor, 18 daggers		

3 Death Squad Assassins (A) Level 7 Lurker

Medium natural humanoid (shapechanger) XP 300

Initiative +11 Senses Perception +6

HP 61; Bloodied 30

AC 21; Fortitude 18, Reflex 20, Will 19

Speed 6

⊕ **Assassin's Longblade** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
+12 vs. AC; 1d6 + 6 damage.

⊕ **Shapeshifter Feint** (minor; at-will)
+10 vs. Reflex; the death squad assassin gains combat advantage against the target until the end of the death squad assassin's next turn.

⊕ **Assassin's Quarry** (standard; recharge [iii]) ♦ **Weapon**
+10 vs. Reflex; 3d6 + 8 damage, and ongoing 5 damage (save ends).

Change Shape (minor; at-will) ♦ **Polymorph**

A doppelganger can alter its physical form to take on the appearance of any Medium humanoid, including a unique individual (MM 280).

Combat Advantage

The death squad assassin deals an extra 2d6 damage against any target it has combat advantage against.

Alignment Unaligned **Languages** Common

Skills Bluff +10, Insight +11, Stealth +12

Str 10 (+3) **Dex** 19 (+7) **Wis** 16 (+6)

Con 13 (+4) **Int** 13 (+4) **Cha** 14 (+5)

Equipment dark robes, assassin's longblade

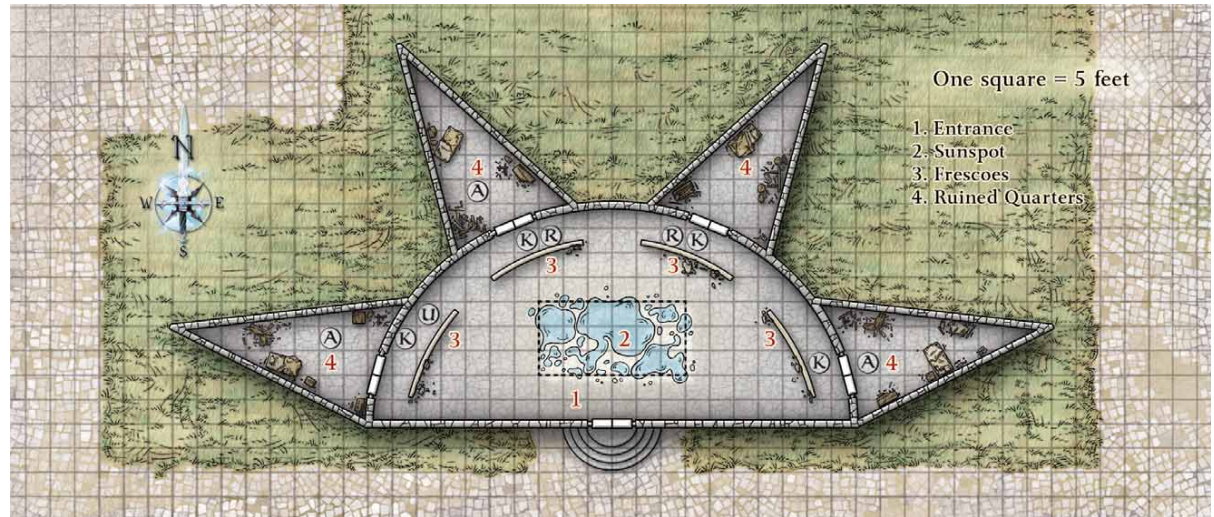
TACTICS

Unless they are spotted, the Lost Ones hold their attacks until at least half the PCs are inside the temple.

The kidnapers use their *grab and go* power against lightly armored PCs or ranged attackers, pulling targets behind the frescoes and into melee range.

Szagyn stays in the thick of combat, using *storm of daggers* as often as possible and making dagger attacks while that power recharges.

The ravenous attack dogs target PCs at the periphery of combat, harrying melee combatants with *tripping lunge* and using *drag off prey* to keep their foes close.



If the death squad assassins appear in this encounter, they enter combat in the third round, having followed the PCs on their search for Alys. The doppelgangers focus *assassin's quarry* attacks against the strongest-looking melee combatants, making *assassin's longblade* attacks against lightly-armored PCs while *assassin's quarry* recharges.

The doppelgangers are not allies of the Lost Ones, but they know that the guild fears them. The Lost Ones and the doppelgangers do not target each other, but they do not treat each other as allies.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Dim light through the open ceiling. The triangular chambers beyond the doors are dark.

Doors: The double doors at the front of the temple are swollen and warped, requiring a DC 14 Strength check to pull open. The doors leading to the triangular chambers open easily.

Pooled Water: Most of the rain coming in through the hole in the ceiling disappears through cracks in the stone floor. However, the area directly beneath the hole is slick with pooled water and is difficult terrain.

Frescoes: Numerous holes have been punched through these damaged frescoes. They provide cover to creatures standing at their corners, or total cover to creatures behind them.

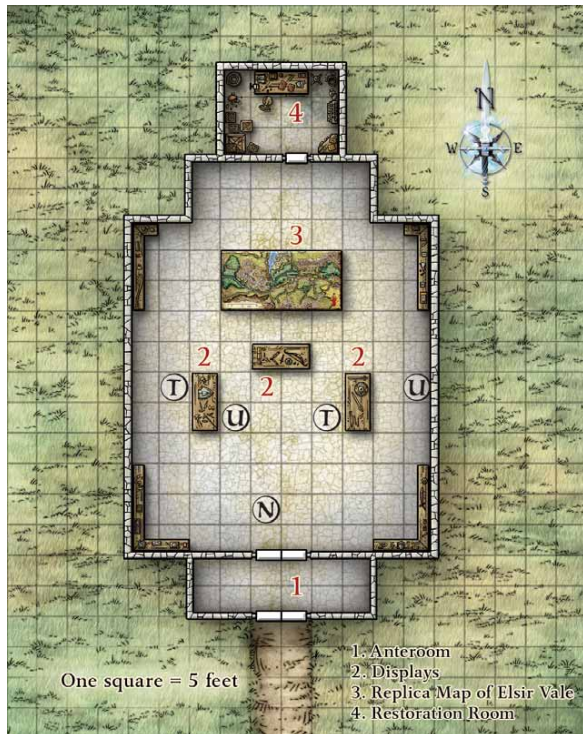
THE HALL OF GREAT VALOR

Encounter Level 8 (1,750 XP)

SETUP

- 1 bounty hunter snaremaster (N)
- 2 bounty hunter strongarms (T)
- 2 bounty hunter subduers (U)

A band of bounty hunters from Overlook catches up to the PCs at the Hall of Great Valor. A halfling snaremaster, two dwarf strongarms, and two human subduers are spoiling for a fight after their long



journey from Overlook, and they will go to any lengths to collect their reward.

Near the end of the encounter (or sooner if the PCs are having a tough time), Thorn appears to provide assistance. If the PCs are having an easy time in the fight, have one or more of the bounty hunters attempt to flee only to be taken out by Thorn waiting at the door. Award the PCs full experience, however. For more information, see “Departing Brindol,” below.

At a break in the PCs’ questioning of Amyria, read:

A sudden crash from the hall outside is punctuated by an explosion of fire. A burning bottle has been lobbed through one of the hall’s windows, shattering to spread flaming liquid across tables and display cases. A moment later, the locked front door is kicked open, a squad of armed figures bursting in.

Bounty Hunter Snaremaster (N) Level 7 Artillery

Small natural humanoid, halfling XP 300
Initiative +7 **Senses** Perception +11
HP 61; **Bloodied** 30
AC 19; **Fortitude** 18, **Reflex** 20, **Will** 19
Speed 6
⊕ **Rapier** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
+14 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage.
⊕ **Bolas** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
Ranged 10/20; +12 vs. Reflex; 2d4 + 5 damage, and the target is restrained (save ends).
⚡ **Keep 'Em Separated** (standard; recharge ☞☞☞) ♦ **Weapon**
Requires bolas; ranged 10/20; three targets in range; +10 vs. Reflex; 4d4 + 5 damage, and the target slides 2 squares and is restrained (save ends).
Second Chance (immediate interrupt; when the bounty hunter snaremaster would be hit by an attack; encounter)
The bounty hunter snaremaster forces the attacker to reroll the attack and take the new result.
Alignment Unaligned **Languages** Common, Dwarven
Str 10 (+3) **Dex** 19 (+7) **Wis** 16 (+6)
Con 13 (+4) **Int** 13 (+4) **Cha** 10 (+3)
Equipment leather armor, rapier, 6 bolas

2 Bounty Hunter Subduers (U) Level 7 Skirmisher

Medium natural humanoid, human XP 300
Initiative +8 **Senses** Perception +5
HP 76; **Bloodied** 38
AC 21; **Fortitude** 20, **Reflex** 19, **Will** 18
Speed 6
⊕ **Maul** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
+12 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage.
⊕ **Knockout Blow** (standard; recharge ☞☞☞) ♦ **Weapon**
Requires maul; +10 vs. Fortitude; 4d6 + 5 damage, and the target is knocked prone and dazed (save ends).
Combat Advantage
The bounty hunter subduer deals an extra 2d6 damage on melee attacks against any target it has combat advantage against.
Alignment Unaligned **Languages** Common
Skills Nature +10
Str 18 (+7) **Dex** 16 (+6) **Wis** 14 (+5)
Con 12 (+4) **Int** 10 (+3) **Cha** 10 (+3)
Equipment leather armor, maul

2 Bounty Hunter Strongarms (T) Level 7 Brute

Medium natural humanoid, dwarf XP 300
Initiative +4 **Senses** Perception +11; low-light vision
HP 98; **Bloodied** 49
AC 19; **Fortitude** 20, **Reflex** 17, **Will** 19
Speed 5
⊕ **Greataxe** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
+10 vs. AC; 1d12 + 8 damage.
⚡ **Clear The Area** (standard; recharge ☞☞☞) ♦ **Weapon**
Requires greataxe; close burst 1; +8 vs. AC; 2d12 + 10 damage, and the target is pushed 1 square.
Brute Rush
When a bounty hunter strongarm makes a bull rush attack, he pushes the target 2 squares instead of 1 square.
Stand Your Ground
When an effect forces the bounty hunter strongarm to move—through a push, a pull, or a slide—the bounty hunter strongarm moves 1 square less than the effect specifies. When an attack would knock the bounty hunter strongarm prone, the bounty hunter strongarm can roll a saving throw to avoid falling prone.
Alignment Unaligned **Languages** Common, Dwarven
Str 13 (+4) **Dex** 12 (+4) **Wis** 16 (+6)
Con 18 (+7) **Int** 11 (+3) **Cha** 8 (+2)
Equipment leather armor, greataxe

TACTICS

The bounty hunters have no interest in the history of the Hall of Great Valor, and even less compunction against destroying it as they target the PCs.

The bounty hunter subduers use their *knockout blow* as often as possible, flanking with maul attacks for combat advantage while that power recharges.

The snaremaster targets powerful-looking melee combatants with *keep 'em separated* or individual bola attacks, hoping to keep PCs out of the fight.

The strongarms stay in the thick of melee to maximize the use of their *clear the area* power. They make bull rush attacks with *brute rush* to keep the PCs in motion, giving the subduers room to maneuver.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Bright light throughout

Burning Floor: The wooden floors of the Hall of Great Valor become hazardous as the fire spreads. Start the fire in a square of your choice. Each round that it burns (until the PCs successfully complete the “Dousing the Flames” skill challenge), the fire spreads into an additional 1d4 squares at random. See the skill challenge and the hazard statistics block for more information.

Freestanding Displays: These tall slabs of solid stone support artifacts relating to the incursions of the Red Hand of Doom. The displays provide cover. Clambering over a display costs 1 extra square of movement.

Map of Elsir Vale: This three-dimensional model represents the Elsir Vale region and depicts the major sites of battles against the Red Hand of Doom. It initially provides cover. However, the map and its underlying table are fragile, and will collapse if any creature attempts to clamber over it or if it takes more

than 10 points of damage from area attacks. Once it collapses, the map and its table count as difficult terrain.

DOUSING THE FLAMES

Even as they fight, the PCs must deal with the fire spreading within the Hall of Great Valor. This skill challenge allows the PCs to get the fire under control before the hall is consumed.

Setup: The Hall of Great Valor is burning, and you must work fast if you hope to save it.

Level: 6 (250 XP)

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

Primary Skills: Athletics, Perception, Thievery.

Special: The PCs do not earn failures in the skill challenge for failing a skill check. Instead, they accrue 1 failure at the end of any round in which no success was gained. When the top of the initiative order comes up, the failure occurs before the first creature's turn.

In addition to the checks below, a success in the skill challenge is gained by a PC who targets 1 or more squares of burning floor with a power that deals any amount of cold damage.

Athletics (DC 8): With a show of strength, the PC tips over a display case to smother the flames.

Perception (DC 14): The PC determines which way the flames are spreading, and can direct his or her allies' efforts in that direction.

Thievery (DC 14): The PC pries up burning floorboards, creating gaps so the flames cannot spread any further. On a failed check, the PC takes 1d6 fire damage.

Success: If the PCs achieve 4 successes before 3 failures, they manage to keep the museum from

burning down, preserving the heritage of the people of Brindol. The PCs gain a +2 bonus to Diplomacy checks in Brindol until they depart for Fortress Graystone.

Failure: If the PCs get 3 failures before 4 successes, the Hall of Great Valor is consumed by fire. The PCs' efforts to save it cost each member of the party 1 healing surge. Additionally, the folk of Brindol blame them for drawing the murderous bounty hunters down on their community. Word quickly spreads, and all PCs take a -2 penalty to Diplomacy, Gather Information, and Intimidate checks made in Elsir Vale until the end of this adventure.

Burning Floor Hazard

Level 4 Obstacle
XP 175

The fire started by the bounty hunters spreads along the dusty timbers of the floor.

Hazard: Anyone passing through the flames runs the risk of taking fire damage.

Perception

No check is necessary to notice the fire.

Trigger

The fire attacks when a creature enters a square of burning floor.

Special

Each round that the fire burns, it extends its range into 1d4 additional squares, chosen at random.

Attack

Opportunity Action

Melee

Target: Creature in the flames

Attack: +7 vs. Reflex

Hit: 1d6 + 2 fire damage.

Countermeasures

Any attack that deals cold damage targeting 1 or more squares of burning floor douses the flames in those squares. However, until the skill challenge has been successfully completed, new squares of flame will erupt in subsequent rounds.

THE STAIRS

Encounter Level 7 (1,500 XP)

SETUP

- 2 Wicked Fang sentries (E)
- 2 Wicked Fang scouts (C)
- 1 stonewalker spirit (S)

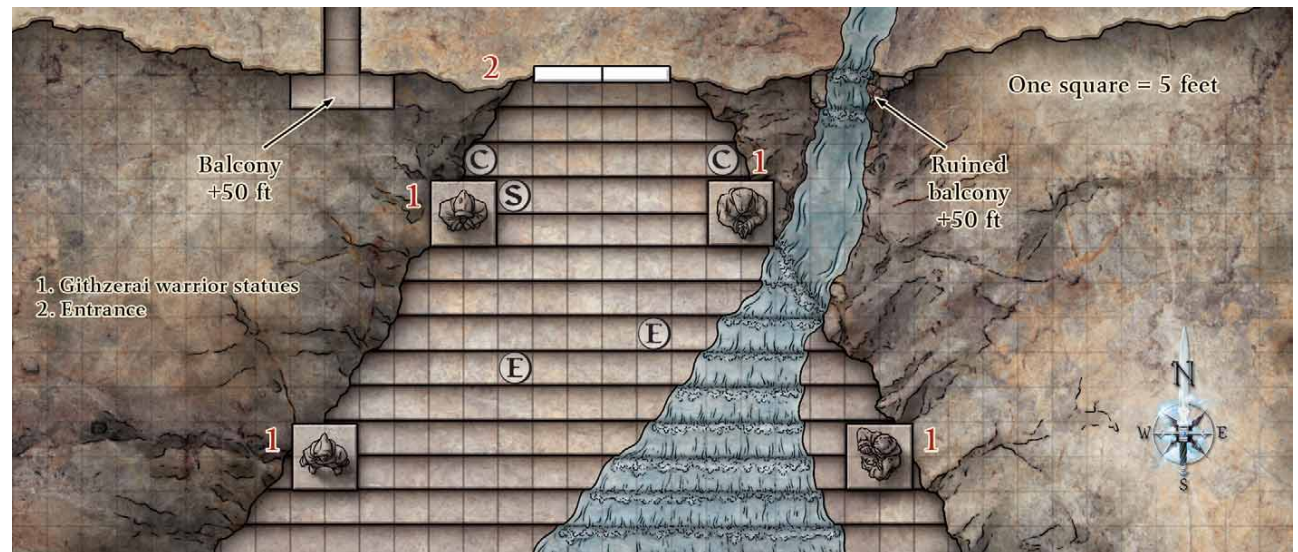
When the PCs climb the great stairs leading up and into Fortress Graystone, they are challenged by the defenders placed here by Fangren. Gnoll sentries are aided by a creature sent by agents of the demon Lord Yeenoghu—a stonewalker spirit that lurks among the statues on the stairs. Thus far, the guards have dealt with little more than animals wandering in from the forest, and they are spoiling for a real fight.

When the PCs see the stairs, read:

Against the cliff face ahead, a massive stone staircase rises, narrowing as it reaches a set of double stone doors set into the rock wall. Four large statues, each depicting a githzerai warrior in full combat regalia, stand on pedestals watching over the entrance to Fortress Graystone. A small waterfall flows down the side of the mountain, eroding a stone balcony set further up the cliff face and leaving the stone steps slick and treacherous.

2 Wicked Fang Scouts (C)	Level 7 Skirmisher
Medium natural humanoid	XP 300
Initiative +7	Senses Perception +10, low-light vision
HP 77; Bloodied 38	
AC 21; Fortitude 19, Reflex 19, Will 18	
Speed 7	
⊕ Shadar-Kai Short Sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+12 vs. AC; 1d6 + 9 damage (crit 1d6 + 15), or 1d6 + 11 damage (crit 1d6 + 17) while bloodied; see also <i>pack attack</i> .	
⊕ Hand Crossbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Range 10/20; +12 vs. AC; 1d6 + 9 damage, or 1d6 + 11 damage while bloodied; see also <i>pack attack</i> .	
⚔ Cowardly Shot (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Requires hand crossbow; ranged 10/20; +12 vs. AC; 1d6 + 9 damage, or 1d6 + 11 damage while bloodied; the gnoll scout can shift 2 squares both before and after making the attack; see also <i>pack attack</i> .	
Pack Attack	
The gnoll scout deals an extra 5 damage on melee and ranged attacks against an enemy that has two or more of the scout's allies adjacent to it.	
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Abyssal, Common
Str 16 (+6)	Dex 15 (+5) Wis 14 (+5)
Con 13 (+4)	Int 10 (+3) Cha 10 (+3)
Equipment: hide armor, shadar-kai short sword, hand crossbow, 20 bolts	

2 Wicked Fang Sentries (E)	Level 7 Soldier
Medium natural humanoid	XP 300
Initiative +6	Senses Perception +11, low-light vision
HP 80; Bloodied 40	
AC 23; Fortitude 20, Reflex 18, Will 19	
Speed 7	
⊕ Shadar-Kai Greatsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+14 vs. AC; 1d12 + 5 damage (crit 1d12 + 17), or 1d12 + 7 damage (crit 1d12 + 19) while bloodied, and the target is marked until the end of the gnoll sentry's next turn; see also <i>pack attack</i> .	
⚔ Defend the Pack (standard; recharge 1/1) ♦ Weapon	
Close burst 1; +12 vs. AC; 1d12 + 5 damage, or 1d12 + 7 damage while bloodied, and the target is marked until the end of the gnoll sentry's next turn; see also <i>pack attack</i> .	
Defensive Lure (move; encounter)	
The gnoll sentry shifts 3 squares, then pulls all targets it has marked 3 squares.	
Pack Attack	
The gnoll sentry deals an extra 5 damage on melee attacks against an enemy that has two or more of the gnoll sentry's allies adjacent to it.	
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Abyssal, Common
Str 19 (+7)	Dex 13 (+4) Wis 16 (+6)
Con 16 (+6)	Int 10 (+3) Cha 8 (+2)
Equipment: hide armor, shadar-kai greatsword	



Stonewalker Spirit (S)	Level 7 Lurker
Medium elemental magical beast (earth)	XP 300
Initiative +10 Senses Perception +5	
HP 45; Bloodied 22	
AC 21; Fortitude 19, Reflex 19, Will 20	
Immune disease, petrification, poison; Resist insubstantial	
Speed fly 6 (hover)	
⊕ Spectral Grasp (standard; at-will)	
+10 vs. Reflex; 2d4 + 7 damage.	
⊕ Petrifying Touch (standard; recharge [E])	
+10 vs. Fortitude; the target is slowed (save ends). <i>First Failed Save:</i> The target is immobilized instead of slowed (save ends). <i>Second Failed Save:</i> The target is petrified (no save), and is considered to be a statue for the purposes of the <i>possess statue</i> ability.	
Possess Statue (free, when entering the same space as a statue; at-will)	
The stonewalker spirit assumes the form of a possessed statue. Use the possessed statue stat block instead of the stonewalker spirit's stat block.	
Flee the Form (free, when a possessed statue is reduced to 0 hit points; at-will)	
The stonewalker spirit takes 16 damage (ignores insubstantial) as it reverts to its normal form, then moves up to its speed.	
Alignment Unaligned Languages Abyssal, Primordial	
Skills Stealth +11	
Str 10 (+3) Dex 17 (+6) Wis 14 (+5)	
Con 16 (+6) Int 11 (+3) Cha 19 (+7)	

Perception Check

DC 14: *Though you see no sign of anyone on the stairs, telltale shadows give away the presence of creatures hiding behind the statues.*

As the PCs climb the stairs, read:

With a yelp, four gnolls slip out of hiding places behind the statues and race forward to attack.

The stonewalker spirit begins the encounter hovering behind one of the statues, which it possesses in the first round.

Possessed Statue	Level 7 Brute
Large natural animate	XP –
Initiative +10 Senses Perception +5	
HP 24; Bloodied 12	
AC 21; Fortitude 20, Reflex 17, Will 20	
Speed 5	
⊕ Stone Fists (standard; at-will)	
+10 vs. AC; 2d8 + 7 damage.	
⊕ Thundering Charge (standard; recharge [E]) ♦ Thunder	
+10 vs. AC; 4d8 + 7 damage; the possessed statue can move up to its speed before making this attack, and any creature that hits the possessed statue with an opportunity attack during this movement takes 1d8 + 7 thunder damage.	
Surefooted	
The possessed statue ignores difficult terrain.	
Merely a Shell	
A possessed statue has a hit point total of its own, and does not share hit points with its stonewalker spirit form. Damage dealt to the possessed statue is not dealt to the stonewalker spirit form.	
Alignment Unaligned Languages Abyssal, Primordial	
Str 19 (+7) Dex 11 (+3) Wis 14 (+5)	
Con 19 (+7) Int 11 (+3) Cha 19 (+7)	

TACTICS

The stonewalker spirit possesses a statue in the first round, attacking in that form. It uses *thundering charge* as often as possible, laying into the PCs with its stone fists while it waits for that power to recharge. If forced to flee a statue, the stonewalker spirit uses its *petrifying touch* power on a spellcaster or ranged combatant before possessing another statue.

The gnoll sentries stay front and center in melee, maximizing the effect of their *defend the pack* attacks, then making greatsword attacks while that power recharges.

The gnoll scouts snipe with shortbows against any PCs on the outskirts of melee. If pressed, they drop their bows and attack with short swords.

The gnolls on the stairs fight in close proximity to take advantage of their *pack attack* power.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Bright sunlight during the day; dim starlight at night.

Stairs: The wide stone stairs leading up to the entrance are difficult terrain when ascending. Characters descending or moving horizontally along the stairs treat them as normal terrain.

Waterfall: Where the waterfall flows down the stairs, the stone has been worn smooth and slippery. Any creature that falls prone in one of those square slides 1 square down the stairs.

Statues: The four statues depict the ancient githzerai who built Fortress Graystone. A statue provides cover unless possessed by the stonewalker spirit. When possessed by the stonewalker spirit, the statue breaks free of its pedestal, destroying it and turning the squares it occupied into difficult terrain.

Wall and Balcony: The balcony juts out from the wall 50 feet above the top of the stairs. The crumbling stone wall cannot be climbed.

THORN'S ATTACK

Encounter Level 11 (3,000 XP)

SETUP

Thorn, bounty hunter
2 elderwood falcons
2 ironwood hounds

Though he has shown great caution as he follows the PCs and reactivates the traps in Fortress Graystone, the bounty hunter Thorn eventually makes his move against the party.

This encounter can take place at any time once the PCs have arrived at Fortress Graystone, at your discretion. Thorn should attack at a point when the PCs' resources have been depleted—after a difficult encounter, halfway through an attempt to take an extended rest, and so on. (Allow the PCs to take a short rest before Thorn attacks, as they are likely to need their encounter powers and have a chance to heal up in order to defeat him.)

Since this encounter can take place anywhere in Fortress Graystone, use the “Features of the Area” from the appropriate location. If Thorn attacks when the PCs have left the fortress to take an extended rest in the forest, map the area to incorporate the features presented below.

Thorn attempts to catch the PCs unawares in order to gain a surprise round, either approaching by way of one of the secret doors in the fortress or attacking from cover elsewhere.

Perception Check

DC 19: *A faint sound betrays footsteps behind you. The elf mercenary Thorn is attempting to approach unheard, two fierce-looking hounds at his side and a pair of hunting falcons on his shoulders. As you see him, he snarls a command, the dogs bounding forward as the falcons take to the air.*

2 Elderwood Falcons		Level 6 Skirmisher
Medium natural animate		XP 250
Initiative +9	Senses Perception +6; low-light vision	
HP 70; Bloodied 35		
AC 20; Fortitude 17, Reflex 19, Will 18		
Speed 2, fly 6 (hover)		
⊕ Talon (standard; at-will)		
+11 vs. AC; 2d4 + 4 damage, and the target slides 1 square.		
↓ Swoop (standard; at-will)		
The elderwood falcon shifts 1 square, makes a talon attack, then shifts 1 square.		
Alignment Unaligned	Languages –	
Str 8 (+2)	Dex 19 (+7)	Wis 16 (+6)
Con 14 (+5)	Int 2 (-1)	Cha 6 (+1)

2 Ironwood Hounds		Level 6 Soldier
Medium natural animate		XP 250
Initiative +6	Senses Perception +4; low-light vision	
HP 69; Bloodied 34		
AC 22; Fortitude 18, Reflex 17, Will 16		
Speed 6		
⊕ Bite (standard; at-will)		
+13 vs. AC; 2d6 + 2 damage, and the target is marked until the end of the ironwood hound's next turn.		
↓ Drive Back (standard; at-will)		
+11 vs. Fortitude; 2d6 + 2 damage, and the target is pushed 2 squares and the ironwood hound can shift 2 squares. The ironwood hound must end its shift adjacent to the target's new position.		
Alignment Unaligned	Languages –	
Skills Intimidate +7		
Str 16 (+6)	Dex 13 (+4)	Wis 12 (+4)
Con 13 (+4)	Int 2 (-1)	Cha 8 (+2)

Thorn	Level 9 Solo Skirmisher	
Medium fey humanoid, elf	XP 2,000	
Initiative +11	Senses Perception +7	
HP 388; Bloodied 194		
AC 25; Fortitude 21, Reflex 24, Will 23		
Saving Throws +5		
Speed 6		
Action Points 2		
⊕ Longsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+14 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage		
⊕ Hand Crossbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
Range 10/20; +14 vs. AC; 1d6 + 6 damage		
↘ Double Bolts (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
Thorn makes two hand crossbow attacks.		
↘ Gripping Net (minor; recharge [III]) ♦ Weapon		
Range 2/5; Requires net; +12 vs. Reflex; target is restrained (save ends).		
↘ Pepper Bomb (minor; recharge [II], [III], [III]) ♦ Weapon		
Range 5/10; Requires pepper bomb; +12 vs. Reflex; target is blinded (save ends).		
↘ Retaliatory Shot (immediate reaction; when hit by a ranged or area attack; at-will)		
Thorn makes a hand crossbow attack against the target that hit him.		
✦ Bolt Storm (standard; encounter) ♦ Weapon		
Requires hand crossbow; area burst 2 within 10; +12 vs. AC; 3d6 + 8 damage.		
✦ Desperate Bolt Storm (free; when first bloodied; encounter) ♦ Weapon		
Thorn's bolt storm recharges, and he uses it immediately.		
Elven Accuracy (free; encounter)		
Thorn can reroll an attack roll. He must use the second roll, even if it is lower.		
Wild Step		
Thorn ignores difficult terrain when he shifts.		
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Common, Elven	
Skills Bluff +12, Insight +12, Stealth +14, Survival +12, Thievery +14		
Str 13 (+5)	Dex 20 (+9)	Wis 16 (+7)
Con 17 (+7)	Int 11 (+4)	Cha 10 (+4)
Equipment leather armor, hand crossbow with 40 bolts, longsword, net, 6 pepper bombs		

TACTICS

The first full round, Thorn takes two minor actions to target a wizard or other controller with *pepper bomb* and hit a melee combatant with *gripping net*. He then makes hand crossbow attacks against lightly armored foes, using *bolt storm* if he can target three or more PCs. While wielding his hand crossbow, he uses *retaliatory shot* to target PCs engaged by the hounds or the falcons. If pressed into melee, he spends his action



points to make additional *pepper bomb* or *gripping net* attacks, resorting to longsword attacks only if he has no other option.

The ironwood hounds stay in the thick of melee, making bite attacks and using *drive back* to keep combatants away from Thorn.

The elderwood falcons make *swoop* attacks against lightly armored PCs, staying out of melee range and sliding foes who try to engage Thorn.

AFTERMATH

If Thorn is kept alive, he can be easily convinced to tell the PCs his story in exchange for his life. The bounty hunter is happy to bargain away his knowledge of the fortress's secret passageways, and to fill the PCs in on the layout of any sections they have not yet seen. In addition, Thorn knows most of the history of the fortress (having explored it in his youth), and he can fill the PCs in on the information presented on page 65.

Thorn reserves his most significant knowledge to bargain for his freedom, promising the PCs (truthfully) that he will abandon his pursuit of them if they let him flee the fortress. If the PCs agree, Thorn informs them that Sarshan is behind the bounty placed on their heads in Overlook. (If Thorn does not survive this encounter, the PCs discover a note on his body linking Sarshan to the bounty.)

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Use the following features to create an encounter area outside the fortress if Thorn attacks while the PCs are taking an extended rest.

Trees: Squares containing trees are difficult terrain and provide concealment to anyone standing in them. A tree's trunk provides cover to anyone standing adjacent to it.

Stream: Where the waterfall hits the tree line, it carves out a narrow stream that flows 5 feet deep and is difficult terrain. Characters in the water gain cover except against attacks from submerged enemies. Fighting in the water imposes a -2 penalty to attack rolls except with spears and crossbows.

Boulders: These 5-foot-high rocks provide cover. A boulder can be climbed with a DC 10 Athletics check.

GITHZERA! MIND TRAP

Encounter Level 8 (1,750 XP)

SETUP

- 1 gnoll demonic scourge (D)
- 2 Wicked Fang Maulers (M)
- 2 Wicked Fang Lashers (L)

The githzerai mind trap was disabled when the gnolls seized control of the fortress. However, Thorn has beaten the party here and reactivated it, hoping to

Gnoll Demonic Scourge (D) Level 8 Brute (Leader)
Medium natural humanoid XP 350

Initiative +6 **Senses** Perception +7; low-light vision

Leader of the Pack aura 5; allies in the aura gain a +1 bonus to attack rolls. While this creature is bloodied, the bonus increases to +2.

HP 106; **Bloodied** 53

AC 20; **Fortitude** 21, **Reflex** 18, **Will** 18

Speed 5

⚔ **Heavy Flail** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

+13 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage, or 2d6 + 7 while bloodied; against a bloodied enemy, this attack also knocks the target prone; see also *pack attack*.

Bloodthirst

If the gnoll demonic scourge bloodies an enemy with a melee attack, an ally adjacent to the enemy can make a melee attack against that enemy as an immediate reaction.

Overwhelming Attack

 (free; encounter)

The gnoll demonic scourge applies its *bloodthirst* power to two allies instead of one.

Pack Attack

The gnoll demonic scourge deals an extra 5 damage on melee attacks against an enemy that has two or more of the demonic scourge's allies adjacent to it.

Alignment Chaotic evil **Languages** Abyssal, Common

Skills Insight +10, Intimidate +13, Religion +10

Str 20 (+9) **Dex** 14 (+6) **Wis** 12 (+5)

Con 16 (+7) **Int** 13 (+5) **Cha** 15 (+6)

Equipment hide armor, heavy flail

wear the PCs down by pitting them against the gnoll defenders now trapped here.

The gnoll demonic scourge and his two lashers begin in the second chamber, while the two gnoll maulers begin in the first chamber near the entrance to the fortress.

When the PCs enter the fortress, read:

As the stone doors open, you see a wide octagonal chamber before you. On five of the walls, portals glow and pulse with arcane energy. The far side of the room appears to be made of extremely thick glass, revealing a second chamber beyond with four portals on the wall. A massive circle of carved

2 Wicked Fang Maulers (M) Level 7 Brute
Medium natural humanoid XP 300

Initiative +4 **Senses** Perception +6; low-light vision

HP 94; **Bloodied** 47

AC 19; **Fortitude** 20, **Reflex** 18, **Will** 19

Speed 7

⚔ **Shadar-Kai Greatsword** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

+10 vs. AC; 1d12 + 8 damage (crit 1d12 + 20), or 1d12 + 10 damage (crit 1d12 + 22) while bloodied; see also *pack attack*.

⚔ **Backhand** (minor; recharge ☞ ☞) ♦ **Weapon**

+10 vs. AC; 1d6 + 8 damage, or 1d6 + 10 damage while bloodied, and the target is knocked prone; see also *pack attack*.

⚔ **Beat Back** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

+10 vs. AC; 1d12 + 8 damage (crit 1d12 + 20), or 1d12 + 10 damage (crit 1d12 + 22) while bloodied, and the target is pushed 2 squares; see also *pack attack*.

Pack Attack

The gnoll mauler deals an extra 5 damage on melee attacks against an enemy that has two or more of the gnoll mauler's allies adjacent to it.

Alignment Chaotic evil **Languages** Abyssal, Common

Skills Athletics +12

Str 19 (+7) **Dex** 13 (+4) **Wis** 17 (+6)

Con 14 (+5) **Int** 10 (+3) **Cha** 8 (+2)

Equipment: hide armor, shadar-kai greatsword

runes dominates the floor of the first chamber, while a smaller circle adorns the floor of the room beyond.

TACTICS

The gnoll maulers stay in the thick of melee, using their *backhand* power as often as possible alongside *beat back* and greatsword attacks.

The gnoll lashers focus *whip flay* and *drag around* attacks on spellcasters and ranged combatants. Both the maulers and lashers use their forced movement abilities to force PCs through the portals, splitting the party.

The gnoll demonic scourge stays in the area with the maximum number of allies, increasing the effectiveness of its *leader of the pack* aura and *bloodthirst* ability.

2 Wicked Fang Lashers (L) Level 9 Skirmisher
Medium natural humanoid XP 400

Initiative +11 **Senses** Perception +7; low-light vision

HP 93; **Bloodied** 46

AC 23; **Fortitude** 21, **Reflex** 22, **Will** 21

Speed 7

⚔ **Barbed Whip** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

Reach 2; +14 vs. AC; 1d8 + 4 damage (or 1d8 + 6 damage while bloodied) and ongoing 5 damage (save ends); see also *pack attack*.

⚔ **Whip Flay** (standard; encounter) ♦ **Weapon**

Requires barbed whip; reach 2; +14 vs. AC; 3d8 + 7 damage (or 3d8 + 9 damage while bloodied) and ongoing 10 damage (save ends); see also *pack attack*.

⚔ **Drag Around** (standard; recharge ☞ ☞) ♦ **Weapon**

Requires barbed whip; reach 2; +12 vs. Fortitude; 2d8 + 5 damage (or 2d8 + 7 damage while bloodied) and the target slides 3 squares; see also *pack attack*.

Pack Attack

The gnoll lasher deals an extra 5 damage on melee attacks against an enemy that has two or more of the gnoll lasher's allies adjacent to it.

Alignment Chaotic evil **Languages** Abyssal, Common

Skills Stealth +14

Str 16 (+7) **Dex** 20 (+9) **Wis** 16 (+7)

Con 13 (+5) **Int** 10 (+4) **Cha** 10 (+4)

Equipment: hide armor, barbed whip

RUNNING THE MIND TRAP

The githzerai mind trap's shifting portals are meant to confuse the PCs, but their movement can be tracked by you in a relatively simple way. When the first creature passes through a portal, make a tally mark indicating that the portals have shifted. On subsequent turns, if a creature steps through a portal in the first room, find that portal in the second or third rooms (treating both as one area), then move a number of portals counterclockwise equal to the current tally. Afterward, add another tally mark.

If a creature steps into a portal in the second room, find the correct exit portal in the first room, then move clockwise a number of portals equal to the current tally. (Do not add another tally for creatures moving from the second room to the first.)

When your tally reaches 5, the portals have shifted back to their initial positions and you can start again.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Torches on the walls and the arcane runes on the floor fill both chambers with bright light.

Arcane Circles: The first and second chambers in the mind trap feature circles of glowing arcane runes that power the area's portals. A DC 19 Arcana check and 10 minutes work allows a PC to control the circles, stabilizing the portals and preventing them from shifting each time a creature passes through (see below).

Mind Trap Portals: The githzerai mind trap is designed to disorient creatures attempting an incursion of Fortress Graystone. The mind trap consists of a set of linked portals, five in the first chamber, four

in the second, and one in the final chamber. Each of the portals in the first chamber is linked to one of the other portals, as noted by the numbers on each portal. When a creature enters one portal, it exits through the other portal of the same number.

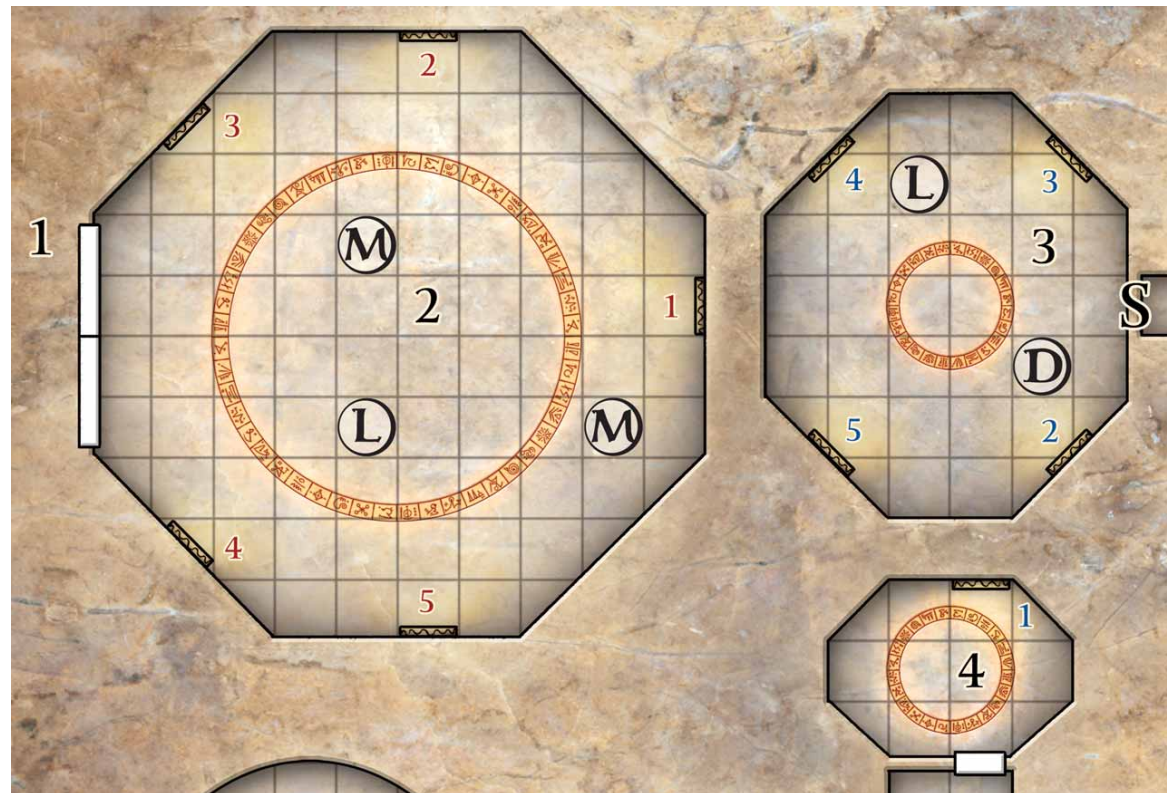
However, each time a creature passes through a portal in either direction, the portals in the first chamber shift one position clockwise. For example, portal 1 begins on the north wall of the room. The first time a creature passes through any portal, portal 1 shifts to the south side of the room, with all the other portals moving with it accordingly.

Only the portals in the first chamber shift position, and this movement is undetectable by simple

observation. In order to exit the mind trap, each character must reach the exit chamber by passing through portal 1, or by taking the secret door in the second chamber.

Secret Door: This portal leads to the secret passages used by the gnolls (and Thorn) to move about the fortress. A DC 19 Perception check reveals the presence of the door, which can be opened normally.

Translucent Walls: The stone walls between the three githzerai mind trap chambers have the magical appearance of massive sheets of glass. These walls block line of effect but not line of sight, and allow the PCs to see into the other chambers (helping them determine how to exit the mind trap).



THE CELLS

Encounter Level 9 (1,900 XP)

SETUP

- 1 Wicked Fang keeper (W)
- 2 Wicked Fang guards (G)
- 1 Wicked Fang mauler (M)
- 1 Wicked Fang lasher (L)

Since taking over Fortress Graystone, the gnolls have captured dozens of prisoners on Sarshan's orders. Three survivors of these raids are currently being held in an area the gnolls refer to as the cells. These prisoners and their unfortunate predecessors are fated to become the subjects of Fangren's dark experiments.

When the PCs first descend the stairs, read:

From somewhere ahead comes a foul smell and the barking of harsh voices.

When the PCs can see into this area, read:

At the bottom of the second staircase is a crescent-shaped chamber set with three doors, its walls and floors stained red-black with dried blood. The stench of rot and filth is overwhelming, a number of gnolls apparently oblivious to it as they argue among themselves.

If a PC speaks gnoll, the argument concerns the keeper reminding the other guards that the prisoners cannot be eaten, on Fangren's orders. The PCs can make Stealth checks against the gnolls' Perception checks in an attempt to approach unseen. However, the gnolls are alert.

Wicked Fang Keeper (W) Level 8 Elite Controller
Medium natural humanoid XP 700

Initiative +9 **Senses** Perception +7; low-light vision
HP 178; **Bloodied** 89
AC 24; **Fortitude** 20, **Reflex** 23, **Will** 20
Speed 7

⚔ **Shadar-Kai Short Sword** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
+13 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage (crit 1d6 + 17), or 2d6 + 7 damage (crit 1d6 + 19) while bloodied; see also *pack attack*.

⚔ **Handaxe** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
Ranged 5/10; +13 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage (crit 1d6 + 17), or 2d6 + 7 damage (crit 1d6 + 19) while bloodied; see also *pack attack*.

☂ **Rain of Blades** (standard; at-will)
The gnoll keeper makes three handaxe attacks, each of which must be against a different target.

⚔ **No Escape This Time** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
Requires short sword; +13 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage (crit 1d6 + 17), or 2d6 + 7 damage (crit 1d6 + 19) while bloodied and the target is knocked prone; see also *pack attack*.

⚔ **Keeper's Shackles** (minor; recharge [3])
Targets adjacent prone creature; +12 vs. Fortitude; target is restrained (until escape).

Caltrops (minor; encounter)
The gnoll keeper can designate a 1-square burst area within 5 squares; that area is filled with caltrops. Until the end of the encounter, any creature that enters a square filled with caltrops without treating it as difficult terrain takes 1d6 + 4 damage.

Pack Attack
The gnoll keeper deals an extra 5 damage on melee attacks against an enemy that has two or more of the gnoll keeper's allies adjacent to it.

Alignment Chaotic evil **Languages** Abyssal, Common
Skills Intimidate +11
Str 13 (+5) **Dex** 20 (+9) **Wis** 17 (+7)
Con 17 (+7) **Int** 10 (+4) **Cha** 14 (+6)
Equipment: hide armor, shadar-kai short sword

2 Wicked Fang Guards (G) Level 6 Soldier
Medium natural humanoid XP 250

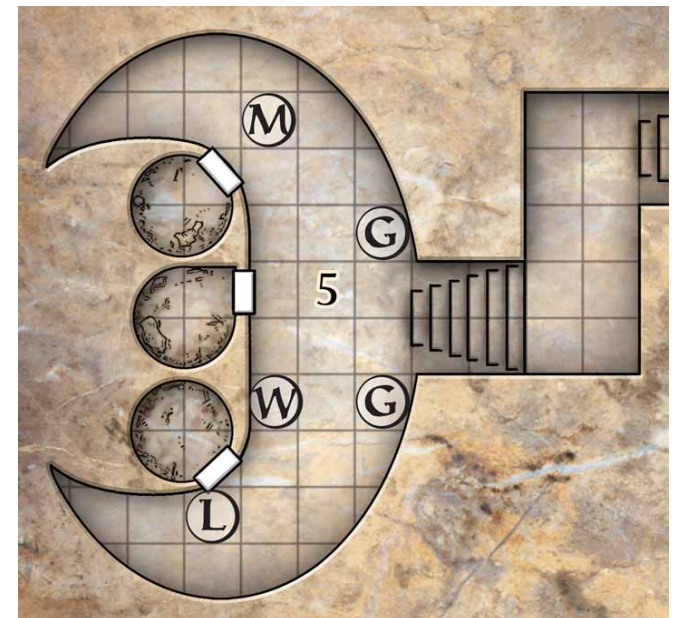
Initiative +7 **Senses** Perception +4; low-light vision
HP 74; **Bloodied** 37
AC 22; **Fortitude** 19, **Reflex** 18, **Will** 17
Speed 7

⚔ **Shadar-Kai Greatsword** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
+13 vs. AC; 1d12 + 7 damage (crit 1d12 + 19), or 1d12 + 9 damage (crit 1d12 + 21) while bloodied, and the target is marked until the end of the gnoll guard's next turn; see also *pack attack*.

⚔ **Pinning Attack** (standard; encounter) ♦ **Weapon**
Requires greatsword; +11 vs. Fortitude; 1d12 + 7 damage (crit 1d12 + 19), or 1d12 + 9 damage (crit 1d12 + 21) while bloodied, and the target is immobilized until the end of the gnoll guard's next turn; see also *pack attack*.

Pack Attack
The gnoll guard deals an extra 5 damage on melee attacks against an enemy that has two or more of the gnoll guard's allies adjacent to it.

Alignment Chaotic evil **Languages** Abyssal, Common
Str 14 (+5) **Dex** 15 (+5) **Wis** 13 (+4)
Con 18 (+7) **Int** 10 (+3) **Cha** 8 (+2)
Equipment: hide armor, shadar-kai greatsword



Wicked Fang Mauler (M)		Level 7 Brute
Medium natural humanoid		XP 300
Initiative +4 Senses Perception +6; low-light vision		
HP 94; Bloodied 47		
AC 19; Fortitude 20, Reflex 18, Will 19		
Speed 7		
⊕ Shadar-Kai Greatsword (standard; at-will) ⊕ Weapon		
+10 vs. AC; 1d12 + 8 damage (crit 1d12 + 20), or 1d12 + 10 damage (crit 1d12 + 22) while bloodied; see also <i>pack attack</i> .		
⊖ Backhand (minor; recharge ☼☼☼☼)		
+10 vs. AC; 1d6 + 8 damage, or 1d6 + 10 damage while bloodied, and the target is knocked prone; see also <i>pack attack</i> .		
⊖ Beat Back (standard; at-will) ⊕ Weapon		
+10 vs. AC; 1d12 + 8 damage (crit 1d12 + 20), or 1d12 + 10 damage (crit 1d12 + 22) while bloodied, and the target is pushed 2 squares; see also <i>pack attack</i> .		
Pack Attack		
The gnoll mauler deals an extra 5 damage on melee attacks against an enemy that has two or more of the gnoll mauler's allies adjacent to it.		
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Abyssal, Common	
Skills Athletics +12		
Str 19 (+7)	Dex 13 (+4)	Wis 17 (+6)
Con 14 (+5)	Int 10 (+3)	Cha 8 (+2)
Equipment: hide armor, shadar-kai greatsword		

TACTICS

The gnoll keeper throws his *caltrops* to impede the PCs' movement, then stays back to throw handaxes at lightly armored targets. If pressed into melee, he uses *no escape this time* to set up his *keeper's shackles* attack.

The gnoll guards mark the most powerful looking melee combatants in an attempt to keep them occupied. They reserve their *pinning attack* for a spellcaster or ranged combatant.

The gnoll mauler takes on the most powerful-looking melee combatant with *beat back* and greatsword attacks. When its *backhand* power is recharged, it uses it to push its current foe into melee with the guards or the lasher, then selects another target.

Wicked Fang Lasher (L)		Level 9 Skirmisher
Medium natural humanoid		XP 400
Initiative +11 Senses Perception +7; low-light vision		
HP 93; Bloodied 46		
AC 23; Fortitude 21, Reflex 22, Will 21		
Speed 7		
⊕ Barbed Whip (standard; at-will) ⊕ Weapon		
Reach 2; +14 vs. AC; 1d8 + 4 damage (or 1d8 + 6 damage while bloodied) and ongoing 5 damage (save ends); see also <i>pack attack</i> .		
⊖ Whip Flay (standard; encounter) ⊕ Weapon		
Requires barbed whip; reach 2; +14 vs. AC; 3d8 + 7 damage (or 3d8 + 9 damage while bloodied) and ongoing 10 damage (save ends); see also <i>pack attack</i> .		
⊖ Drag Around (standard; recharge ☼☼☼☼) ⊕ Weapon		
Requires barbed whip; reach 2; +12 vs. Fortitude; 2d8 + 5 damage (or 2d8 + 7 damage while bloodied) and the target slides 3 squares; see also <i>pack attack</i> .		
Pack Attack		
The gnoll lasher deals an extra 5 damage on melee attacks against an enemy that has two or more of the gnoll lasher's allies adjacent to it.		
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Abyssal, Common	
Skills Stealth +14		
Str 16 (+7)	Dex 20 (+9)	Wis 16 (+7)
Con 13 (+5)	Int 10 (+4)	Cha 10 (+4)
Equipment: hide armor, barbed whip		

The gnoll lashers target spellcasters and ranged combatants with *whip flay* and *drag around* attacks, using their reach to fight past their allies if need be.

DEVELOPMENT

Three prisoners occupy the cells. All are in failing health but have enough strength to flee the fortress if given food and water.

The captives have no knowledge of the gnolls' operations or plans.

The prisoners are all from different areas of Elsir Vale, and they have no idea why they were kidnapped by the gnolls. Each is a person of some importance—a

wealthy landowner, a curate at a church of Pelor, and a retired sage.

If any of the gnolls are kept alive for questioning, they speak of Fangren's experiments in the ritual chamber. They know that he uses the prisoners to test the effects of powerful magic on living subjects, but they do not know his overall plans.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Torches shed bright light throughout the area. The cells are dark if their doors are closed; dimly lit if their doors are open.

Cells: The cells in which the prisoners are held were once the personal chambers of the githzerai who built the fortress. Their furnishings rotted away long ago, and the prisoners now sleep on beds of filthy straw. The doors are not locked, but the prisoners' fear keeps them in line.

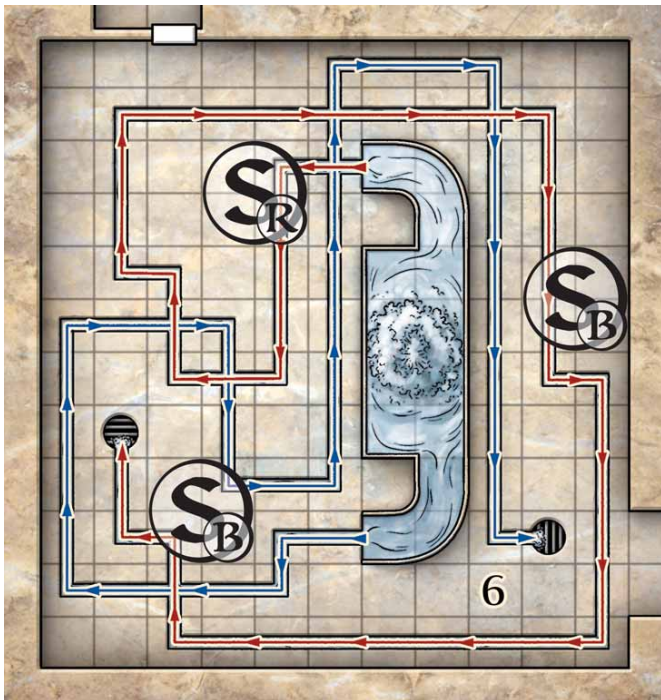
TRAINING CHAMBER

Encounter Level 8 (1,850 XP)

SETUP

- 1 ruin-touched beastcaller (R)
- 2 ruin-touched bloodwalkers (B)
- 3 slaughterfang hyenas (S)

Once a githzerai training ground, this chamber has been given over to the ruin-touched gnolls within the Wicked Fang tribe. The ruin-touched—gnolls who undergo powerful rituals in order to gain the supernatural grace of their demon lord—gave Fangren the knowledge that allowed him to control the planar breach at the heart of Fortress Graystone.



When the characters can see into this area, read:

The ceiling of this huge chamber rises some 60 feet overhead. The sound of rushing water sounds out faintly, a meager reflection of its source—a waterfall descending from an opening in the ceiling to a pool set within a raised platform. Two stone gutters carry water down from the pool into channels in the floor, creating small rivers that flow through circuitous paths in the ground with great speed. Every few seconds, the noise of stone on stone sounds out as these aqueducts in the floor shift to follow a new path.

2 Ruin-Touched Bloodwalker Level 9 Skirmisher

Medium natural humanoid, gnoll XP 400

Initiative +11 **Senses** Perception +6; low-light vision
HP 95; **Bloodied** 47

AC 23; **Fortitude** 19, **Reflex** 22, **Will** 21; see also *blood defense*
Speed 6

⊕ **Jagged Sickle** (standard; at will) ♦ **Weapon**
+14 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage (crit 1d6 + 17).

⊕ **Blood Defense** (standard; target must be bloodied; at will) ♦ **Weapon**
+14 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage, and the bloodwalker gains a +2 power bonus to all defenses until the end of its next turn.

Bloodwalk (move; recharge ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐) ♦ **Teleportation**
The bloodwalker teleports up to 10 squares to a space adjacent to a bloodied creature, including itself if it is bloodied.

Blood Frenzy (free; the bloodwalker must be bloodied; at-will)
When the bloodwalker makes a successful melee attack, it shifts 2 squares.

Pack Attack
The bloodwalker deals an extra 5 damage on melee attacks against an enemy that has two or more of the bloodwalker's allies adjacent to it.

Alignment Chaotic Evil **Languages** Abyssal, Common
Skills Intimidate +13, Religion +10, Stealth +14

Str 15 (+6) **Dex** 21 (+9) **Wis** 14 (+6)
Con 15 (+6) **Int** 13 (+5) **Cha** 18 (+8)

Equipment: hide armor, jagged sickle

Beastcaller Level 7 Controller

Medium natural humanoid, gnoll XP 300

Initiative +7 **Senses** Perception +6; low-light vision
HP 81; **Bloodied** 40

AC 21; **Fortitude** 19, **Reflex** 19, **Will** 21
Speed 6

⊕ **Claw** (standard; at will)
+13 vs. AC; 2d6 + 3 damage.

⊕ **Javelin** (standard; at will) ♦ **Weapon**
Range 5/10; +13 vs. AC; 2d6 + 3 damage.

✦ **Murderous Flock** (standard; recharge ☐ ☐ ☐)
Ravens appear from nowhere and descend upon the battlefield. Burst 3 within 20; targets enemies; +11 vs. Reflex; 2d4 + 5 damage, and the target is blinded and takes ongoing 5 damage (save ends both). **Miss:** Half damage, and ongoing 5 damage (save ends) and the target is not blinded.

✦ **Erupting Swarm** (standard; recharge ☐ ☐ ☐)
Vermin boil from the earth and ravage everything in their path. Burst 3 within 10; targets enemies on the ground; +11 vs. Fortitude; 2d4 + 5 damage, and the target is immobilized and takes ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends both). **Miss:** Half damage, and ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends) and the target is not immobilized. **Effect:** The area becomes difficult terrain until the end of the encounter.

⤴ **Against the Tide** (minor 1/round; at-will)
Ranged 10; targets one creature hit by *murderous flock* or *erupting swarm* this turn; +13 vs. Fortitude; the beastcaller slides the target 3 squares or the target is knocked prone.

Alignment Chaotic Evil **Languages** Abyssal, Common
Skills Religion +11

Str 14 (+6) **Dex** 17 (+7) **Wis** 15 (+6)
Con 17 (+7) **Int** 15 (+6) **Cha** 20 (+9)

Equipment leather armor, 3 javelins

3 Slaughterfang Hyenas (S) Level 6 Skirmisher

Large natural beast

XP 250

Initiative +8 **Senses** Perception +6; low-light vision**HP** 71; **Bloodied** 35**AC** 20; **Fortitude** 19, **Reflex** 18, **Will** 18**Speed** 8Ⓢ **Bite** (standard; at will)

+11 vs. AC; 1d8+4 damage.

Harrier

If a slaughterfang is adjacent to an enemy, all other creatures have combat advantage against that enemy when making melee attacks.

Pack Attack ♦ **Mount**

The slaughterfang hyena deals an extra 5 damage on melee attacks against an enemy that has two or more of the hyena's allies adjacent to it.

When mounted by a friendly rider of 6th level or higher who also has the pack attack trait, the slaughterfang and its rider count as allies for pack attack purposes, meaning they need only one additional adjacent ally to use this ability.

Ravaging Charge (when mounted by a friendly rider of 6th level or higher who also has the pack attack trait; at will)

♦ **Mount**

When making a charge attack, the slaughterfang hyena and its rider both deal extra damage as per their pack attack power, even if they have no other allies adjacent to the foe. If they do have at least one other ally adjacent to the foe, their pack attack deals an extra point of damage (that is, 6 rather than 5).

Alignment Unaligned**Languages** –**Str** 19 (+7)**Dex** 16 (+6)**Wis** 16 (+6)**Con** 15 (+5)**Int** 2 (-1)**Cha** 6 (+1)

TACTICS

The ruin-touched gnolls begin the encounter mounted on the slaughterfang hyenas. Once they are bloodied, the bloodwalkers dismount while the hyenas continue to fight on their own.

The ruin-touched beastcaller sends its *murderous flock* and *erupting swarm* against the PCs, employing *against the tide* to slide individual PCs into the aqueducts or into position for flanking attacks.

The ruin-touched bloodwalkers focus on a single target each, making *jagged sickle attacks* until they are bloodied. They then use their *bloodwalk* power to regroup or to follow the foe that bloodied them, as appropriate.

The slaughterfang hyenas make charge attacks whenever possible, staying close to grant *pack attack* bonuses to both them and their riders.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Braziers built into the walls provide bright light throughout the area.

Waterfall and Pool: The waterfall descends from an opening in the ceiling 60 feet above, where a mountain stream has been diverted into the fortress. The water cascades down from the ceiling to land in a pool set within a 10-foot-tall platform, then is shunted into aqueducts (see below).

The water in the pool is 3 feet deep and is difficult terrain. Additionally, the force of the falling water deals 1d6 damage to any creature that ends its turn in the pool.

The platform provides cover and can be climbed with a DC 15 Athletics check.

The magical power that shunts the water through the aqueducts also mutes the noise of the waterfall to a faint roar.

Aqueducts: Shallow aqueducts mark out a circuitous path across the floor of the chamber. Water is magically shunted through these channels with enough force to move creatures, testing the balance and perception of the githzerai who trained here. Stone tiles slide over the aqueduct segments not currently in use, allowing creatures to pass over those squares unhindered. These paths are indicated on the map by red and blue lines, with arrows indicating the direction in which the water flows to drain grates cemented into the stone floor.

When the encounter begins, determine which path the water is currently following by rolling 1d6. On an odd result, the water flows along the red path; on an even result, along the blue path. At the beginning of each round, roll again to determine whether the flow of water continues or changes.

At the start of a creature's turn, if it is in a square through which water is flowing, it slides 1 square along the water's path. If the next square in the path is currently occupied, that creature also slides 1 square, and so on.

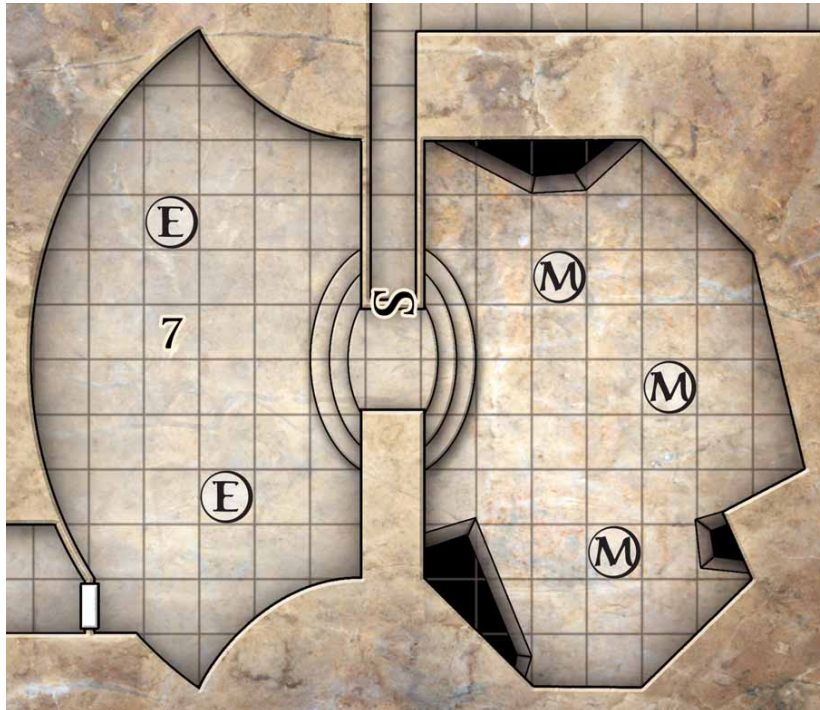
MEDITATION CHAMBER

Encounter Level 8 (1,850 XP)

SETUP

- 2 githzerai psionic echoes (E)
- 3 mindscramblers (M)

The gnolls of the Wicked Fang pack consider this area haunted. As a result, it remains untouched and as it was when the githzerai abandoned this place.



When the PCs approach this area (whether through the secret door or the double doors), read:

The door before you appears to have been jammed shut with the broken haft of a spear. Scrawled across its face are warnings written in the Abyssal tongue of the gnolls: “DANGER! HAUNTED! STAY OUT!”

When the PCs can see into this area, read:

This huge chamber is divided into two zones. To the south is a wide hall with sweeping, curved walls. To the north is a rough-edged cavern full of odd angles and irregular ridges across the floor. The walls of this second chamber have been painted in chaotic and clashing colors, three pits along its edge falling off into darkness. A wide wall separates these two areas, cut by a circular platform that rises 15 feet high.

When the PCs enter the meditation chamber, their presence disturbs the area’s ancient guardians. In the southern chamber (an area dedicated to law), the ghostlike psionic echoes of two githzerai warriors perceive the PCs as intruders and manifest to attack. At the same time, the githzerai’s appearance summons three mindscramblers in the northern chamber, infused with the energy of primordial chaos.

When the first PC passes more than 3 squares from either the main door or the secret door, read:

Suddenly, the air in the southern chamber begins to shimmer as the spectral figures of two githzerai appear. Though they wield no weapons, their intentions are clear as they circle around you, preparing to strike.

At the same time, the chaotic colors of the walls to the north are suddenly rent by dazzling light. Three translucent forms appear, their shifting colors blazing as they move to attack.

2 Githzerai Psionic Echoes (E)		Level 9 Soldier
Medium elemental humanoid		XP 400
Initiative +9	Senses Perception +9	
HP 92; Bloodied 46	AC 25; Fortitude 20, Reflex 21, Will 22	
Speed 7		
⊕ Unarmed Strike (standard; at-will)		
+16 vs. AC; 2d6 + 6 damage.		
⊗ Lesser Mindstrike (standard; at-will) ⊕ Psychic		
Range 10; +14 vs. Will; 1d10 + 9 psychic damage.		
⊕ Psionic Strike (standard; encounter) ⊕ Psychic		
+14 vs. Will; 2d8 + 9 damage plus 1d8 psychic damage; until the end of its next turn, the target has vulnerable 10 psychic.		
Iron Mind (immediate interrupt; when the githzerai psionic echo would be hit by an attack; encounter)		
The githzerai psionic echo gains a +2 bonus to all defenses until the end of its next turn.		
Unstable Manifestation (immediate reaction; when the githzerai psionic echo takes damage; encounter)		
The githzerai psionic echo becomes insubstantial until the end of its next turn.		
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Common, Deep Speech	
Str 14 (+6)	Dex 17 (+7)	Wis 11 (+4)
Con 12 (+5)	Int 10 (+4)	Cha 20 (+9)

3 Mindscramblers (M) Medium elemental animate	Level 8 Skirmisher XP 350
Initiative +9	Senses Perception +3
HP 89; Bloodied 44	
AC 22; Fortitude 20, Reflex 20, Will 20	
Speed 6	
⊕ Chaos Touch (standard; at-will) ◆ Psychic +11 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 7 psychic damage.	
⊕ Scrambled Mind (standard; at-will) ◆ Psychic +11 vs. Will; 1d6 + 7 psychic damage, and the target makes a melee basic attack against one of its adjacent allies.	
⊕ Dizzying Touch (standard; recharge 5/1) ◆ Psychic +11 vs. Will; 3d6 + 7 psychic damage, and the target slides 3 squares and is dazed (save ends).	
↗ Misdirection (immediate interrupt; when an enemy within 10 squares moves or shifts; encounter) +11 vs. Will; the target is pushed 3 squares and may not continue its movement.	
Trace Chance (standard; encounter) Ranged 5; no attack roll required; the next melee attack made against the target gains a +5 power bonus and, if it hits, it is automatically a critical hit.	
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Primordial
Skills Intimidate +12	
Str 11 (+4)	Dex 16 (+7)
Con 17 (+7)	Wis 8 (+3)
	Cha 16 (+7)

TACTICS

The mindscramblers select targets for their *trace chance* ability, then use their *dizzying touch* on randomly selected foes. They make *chaos touch* or *scrambled mind* attacks while waiting for *dizzying touch* to recharge, reserving the latter for targets with adjacent allies.

The githzerai psionic echoes open with *psionic strikes*, then make *lesser mindstrike* attacks against the same target to maximize damage. They follow up with *unarmed strike* and *lesser mindstrike* attacks against whatever PCs the mindscramblers are not engaging.

The mindscramblers and the psionic echoes are diametrically opposed to each other, but they focus their attacks exclusively on the PCs. However, they do not aid each other or flank.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: The walls in both parts of the chamber glow with dim light.

Ground: The ridges in the northern part of the chamber make the floor in that area difficult terrain. The floor in the southern part of the chamber is normal.

Pits: Shadowy illusion magic make the pits in the northern part of the chamber appear bottomless. In actuality, each is only 10 feet deep. A creature that falls into a pit takes 1d10 damage and is blinded by the shadow until it can climb out. It takes a DC 15 Athletics check to escape a pit.

Circular Platform: the platform that marks the center of the chamber stands 15 feet high. Its wide steps can be climbed or descended normally.

Secret Door: A secret door on the western side of the barrier that divides the chamber leads to the passage running through the fortress. Once located (Perception DC 19), the door can be opened easily.

MARSHALING POINT

Encounter Level 8 (1,804 XP)

SETUP

- Kyrion, shadar-kai weaponmaster (S)
- 1 Wicked Fang warmaster (W)
- 8 Wicked Fang recruits (R)
- 2 gnoll huntmasters (H)

This former githzerai great hall has been converted into a training area for new Wicked Fang recruits. A shadar-kai weaponmaster, Kyrion, has been training the recruits in the fighting style of the shadar-kai and instructing the pack's warmaster in the use of his magic weapon, a barbed sword known as Wicked Fang.

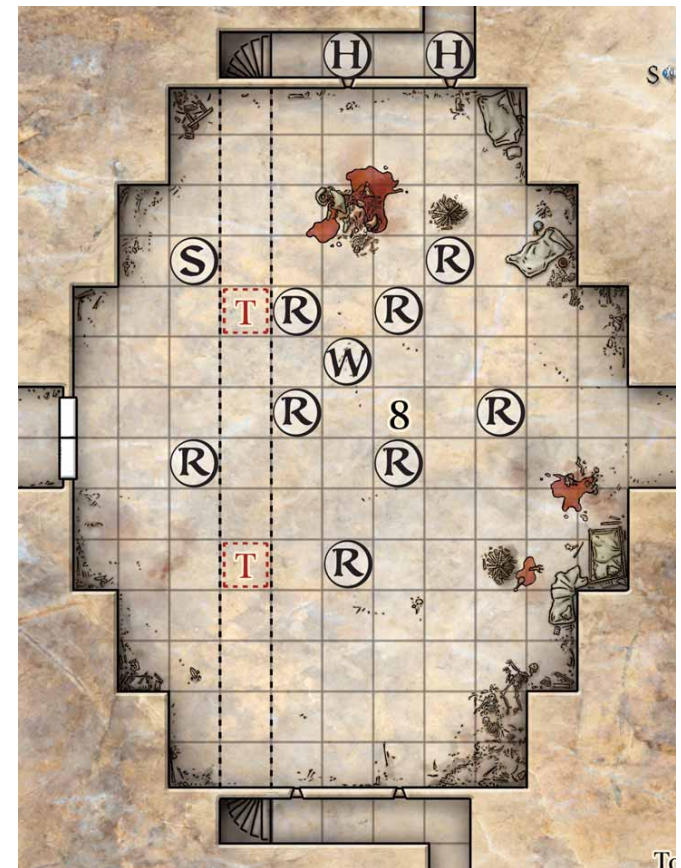
Two gnoll huntmasters armed with longbows begin the encounter in the secret passage on the far west side of the room.

When the PCs can see into this area, read:

The foul scent of gnoll assaults you the moment the door is opened. This massive chamber was once decorated with bas-reliefs, now crumbled and defaced by the marks of weapons. Crude practice dummies scattered across the chamber are under attack by a pack of armed gnolls under the direction of a shadar-kai.

The east and west walls of the chamber are lined with dark arrow slits. Two trapdoors in the southern part of the chamber are open, ladders visible and leading down.

Kyrion, Shadar-kai	Level 8 Skirmisher
Weaponmaster (S)	
Medium shadow humanoid	XP 350
Initiative +11	Senses Perception +7; low-light vision
HP 84; Bloodied 42	
AC 22; Fortitude 20, Reflex 21, Will 20	
Speed 6	
⊕ Shadar-Kai Short Sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	+13 vs. AC; 1d6 + 9 damage (crit 1d6 + 15).
⊗ Hurl Weapon (standard; at will) ♦ Weapon	Ranged 5/10; +13 vs. AC; 1d6 + 9 damage; the shadar-kai weaponmaster can use any melee weapon for this attack.
↓ Disarming Strike (standard; recharge ☼☼) ♦ Weapon	+11 vs. Reflex; 3d6 + 9 damage (crit 1d6 + 27) and the target drops one weapon it is holding. The shadar-kai weaponmaster can choose to catch the dropped weapon in a free hand or have it land on the ground at his feet (in his square).
My Weapon Now (free; when the shadar-kai weaponmaster successfully catches a weapon a target drops; at-will)	The shadar-kai weaponmaster makes a basic attack with the weapon his target just dropped.
Shadow Jaunt (move, encounter) ♦ Teleportation	The shadar-kai weaponmaster teleports 3 squares and becomes insubstantial until the start of his next turn.
Weapon Master	The shadar-kai weaponmaster is considered to be proficient with all weapons.
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Common
Skills Acrobatics +14	
Str 17 (+7) Dex 20 (+9)	Wis 16 (+7)
Con 12 (+5)	Int 10 (+4) Cha 10 (+4)
Equipment: leather armor, shadar-kai short sword	



Wicked Fang Warmaster (W) Level 8 Brute (Leader)
Medium natural humanoid XP 350

Initiative +6 **Senses** Perception +7; low-light vision
Warmaster's Aura aura 5; the gnoll warmaster gains a +1 bonus to AC and all defenses for each ally within the aura (maximum +5)
HP 107; **Bloodied** 53
AC 20; **Fortitude** 20, **Reflex** 19, **Will** 20
Speed 7

⊕ **Wicked Fang** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
 +11 vs. AC; 2d8 + 8 damage (crit 3d8 + 24), or 2d8 + 10 (crit 3d8 + 26) damage while bloodied; see also *pack attack*.

‡ **Forward the Wicked Fang** (standard; encounter) ♦ **Weapon**
 Requires *Wicked Fang*; +11 vs. AC; 4d8 + 8 damage (crit 3d8 + 40), or 4d8 + 10 damage (crit 3d8 + 42) while bloodied, and all gnoll allies within the warmaster's aura make a basic attack; see also *pack attack*.

Pack Attack

The gnoll warmaster deals an extra 5 damage on melee attacks against an enemy that has two or more of the gnoll warmaster's allies adjacent to it.

Wicked Fang Power (free; when an attack with the weapon keyword hits; daily)

The target also takes ongoing 13 damage (save ends).

Alignment Chaotic evil **Languages** Abyssal, Common
Skills Intimidate +10

Str 14 (+6) **Dex** 10 (+4) **Wis** 16 (+7)
Con 17 (+7) **Int** 14 (+4) **Cha** 13 (+5)

Equipment: hide armor, *Wicked Fang* (see page 96)

8 Wicked Fang Recruits (R) Level 8 Minion
Medium natural humanoid XP 88

Initiative +7 **Senses** Perception +5; low-light vision
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion
AC 22; **Fortitude** 20, **Reflex** 18, **Will** 18
Speed 7

⊕ **Shadar-Kai Greatsword** (standard; at-will)
 +13 vs. AC; 8 damage, or 10 damage while bloodied; see also *pack attack*.

Pack Attack

The gnoll recruit deals an extra 5 damage on melee attacks against an enemy that has two or more of the gnoll recruit's allies adjacent to it.

Alignment Chaotic evil **Languages** Abyssal, Common
Str 16 (+7) **Dex** 12 (+5) **Wis** 13 (+5)

Con 14 (+6) **Int** 10 (+4) **Cha** 8 (+3)

Equipment: hide armor, shadar-kai greatsword

2 Gnoll Huntmasters (H) Level 5 Artillery
Medium natural humanoid XP 200

Initiative +6 **Senses** Perception +11; low-light vision
HP 50; **Bloodied** 25
AC 19; **Fortitude** 16, **Reflex** 17, **Will** 14
Speed 7

⊕ **Handaxe** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
 +9 vs. AC; 1d6 + 3 damage, or 1d6 + 5 damage while bloodied; see also *pack attack*.

↘ **Longbow** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
 Ranged 20/40; +10 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage, or 1d10 + 6 damage while bloodied; see also *pack attack*.

Pack Attack

The gnoll huntmaster deals an extra 5 damage on melee and ranged attacks against an enemy that has two or more of the huntmaster's allies adjacent to it.

Alignment Chaotic evil **Languages** Abyssal, Common
Skills Intimidate +7, Stealth +11

Str 16 (+5) **Dex** 19 (+6) **Wis** 14 (+4)
Con 14 (+4) **Int** 8 (+1) **Cha** 7 (+0)

Equipment leather armor, handaxe, longbow, quiver of 30 arrows

TACTICS

The gnoll warmaster tries to keep minions within his *warmaster's aura* at all times, maximizing his defenses. He wields *Wicked Fang* in melee, using *forward the Wicked Fang* early on in combat before his minions begin to fall.

The gnoll recruits fight with abandon, staying close together in order to take advantage of their *pack attack*.

The gnoll huntmasters enter the fray in the second round, firing their longbows through the arrow slits. They target any creatures that have two or more gnolls adjacent to them in order to take advantage of their *pack attack*. If the PCs pursue them into the passageway, the gnolls attack with handaxes. However, if all their allies in the main chamber fall, the huntmasters flee the fortress and are not seen again.

Kyrion engages the most powerful-looking melee combatant, using *disarming strike* to take the target's weapon, making an attack against the foe with *my weapon now*, then using *hurl weapon* to attack one of the PC's allies. He then focuses short sword attacks on the initial target, hoping for a quick kill.

Though the gnolls fight to the finish, Kyrion is more concerned with saving himself. If he is bloodied and the warmaster is killed, he attempts to flee through the secret passage and out of the fortress.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Torches in wall sconces fill the area with bright light. The secret passageway is filled with dim light within 10 feet of the open trapdoors, but is dark elsewhere. (The gnolls and Kyrion know the layout of the secret passages, and can move through them at full speed even with no light.)

Arrow Slits: Arrow slits along the walls allow a creature to make ranged attacks from within the secret passage. An arrow slit grants a ranged attacker superior cover while granting him or her a clear view of the battlefield. The firer determines the target's cover from the square just outside the slit.

Trap Doors: Two trapdoors here lead to the secret passage running through the fortress. A ladder (Athletics DC 5 to climb) drops down to the passageway below. The trap doors are not hidden, and require a minor action to open or close.

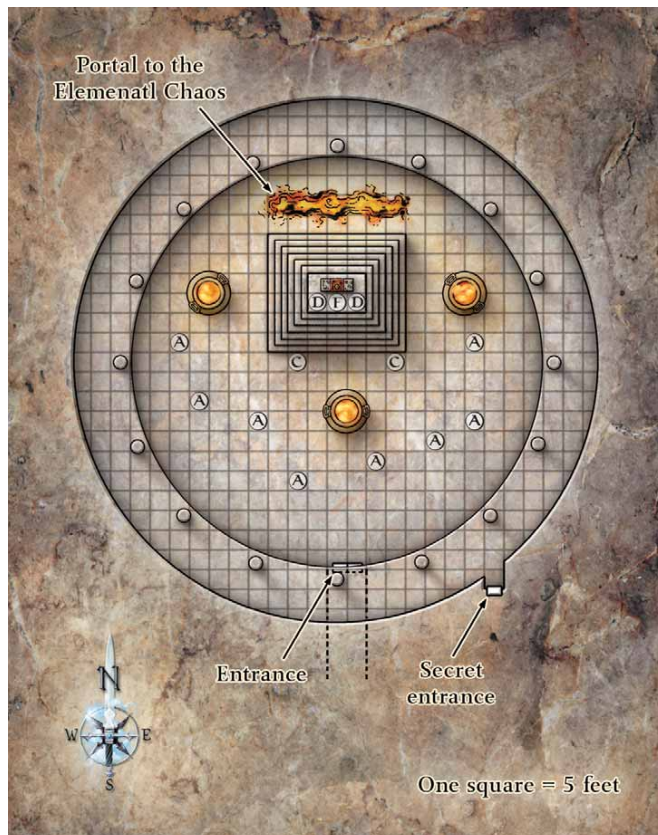
RITUAL CHAMBER

Encounter Level 12 (3,454 XP)

SETUP

- Fangren, gnoll shaman (F)
- 2 disciples of Yeenoghu (D)
- 2 crocottas (C)
- 8 abyssal wretches (A)

Within this chamber, Fangren is in the final stages of the ritual that will open the conduit to Yeenoghu's



realm in the Elemental Chaos. With the link established, the gnoll shaman will be able to ascend to full power as an exarch of the Destroyer. Assisting Fangren in his foul quest are two of his most trusted disciples and two crocottas summoned from the Elemental Chaos. Additionally, eight abyssal wretches lurk in the ritual chamber—all former captives from Elsir Vale that Fangren used as test subjects to evaluate the conduit's power. Now slaves to the shaman, they defend him with their lives.

In addition to Fangren's followers, the gnoll shaman can manipulate the energy of the conduit to create a fearsome weapon.

When the PCs can see into this area, read:

A deep thrumming noise echoes throughout this high-domed ritual chamber, the air crackling with energy. Three large cauldrons burn furiously along walls that rise 10 feet to a wide balcony fronted by crimson curtains. An altar sits atop a stepped dais in the center of the room, a group of hooded gnolls around it. A short distance away, the air ripples in a shifting haze of energy where a portal takes form.

Scattered around the chamber are a number of hunched humanoid creatures—the helpless captives of Elsir Vale, transformed into horrid abyssal wretches. As they spot you, they raise a keening howl, lurching forward to attack.

Fangren (F)	Level 11 Elite Controller (Leader)
Medium natural humanoid, gnoll	XP 1,200
Initiative +8	Senses Perception +7; low-light vision
Bloodlust aura 3; all allies within the aura gain a +2 bonus to attack rolls.	
HP 228; Bloodied 114	
AC 27; Fortitude 25, Reflex 22, Will 26	
Resist 10 variable (1/encounter; MM 282)	
Saving Throws +2	
Speed 7	
Action Points 1	
⚡ Caustic Touch (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire	
+15 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 5 fire damage, or 2d6 + 7 damage while bloodied; see also <i>pack attack</i> .	
⚡ Chaos Bolt (standard; at-will)	
+14 vs. Reflex; 2d4 + 5 damage, and the target is slowed until the end of Fangren's next turn.	
⚡ Blastback (standard; recharge 2/3) ♦ Fire	
+15 vs. Reflex; 4d8 + 5 fire damage, or 4d8 + 7 fire damage while bloodied, and the target is pushed 6 squares; see also <i>pack attack</i> .	
⚡ Vortex of Chaos (standard, encounter) ♦ Fire, Psychic	
Area burst 1 within 10; +13 vs. Reflex; 3d10 + 6 fire damage, and target takes ongoing 10 psychic damage and is dazed (save ends both).	
Favor of Yeenoghu (minor 1/round; at-will)	
The Claw of Yeenoghu (see page 91) makes one attack.	
Shun the Nonbeliever (immediate reaction; when an enemy moves adjacent to Fangren; at-will)	
The target slides 3 squares.	
Pack Attack	
Fangren deals an extra 5 damage on melee attacks against an enemy that has two or more of Fangren's allies adjacent to it.	
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Abyssal, Common
Skills Arcana +13, Religion +15	
Str 12 (+6)	Dex 13 (+6) Wis 15 (+7)
Con 18 (+9)	Int 16 (+8) Cha 21 (+10)
Equipment ritual robes, 4 sacrificial daggers	

2 Disciples of Yeenoghu (D)		Level 7 Artillery
Medium natural humanoid		XP 300
Initiative +7 Senses Perception +6; low-light vision		
HP 62; Bloodied 31		
AC 19; Fortitude 18, Reflex 20, Will 19		
Speed 7		
⊕ Sacrificial Dagger (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+14 vs. AC; 2d4 + 5 damage, or 2d4 + 7 damage while bloodied; see also <i>pack attack</i> .		
⊖ Ray of Destruction (standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic		
Range 10; +12 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 5 necrotic damage, or 2d8 + 10 necrotic damage while bloodied; see also <i>pack attack</i> .		
✱ Ruinous Burst (standard; recharge [III]) ♦ Fire, Necrotic		
Area burst 2 within 10; +10 vs. Reflex; 3d10 + 5 fire and necrotic damage, or 3d10 + 5 fire and necrotic damage while bloodied.		
Pack Attack		
The disciple of Yeenoghu deals an extra 5 damage on melee and ranged attacks against an enemy that has two or more of the disciple's allies adjacent to it.		
Alignment Chaotic evil		Languages Abyssal, Common
Skills Religion +14		
Str 11 (+3)	Dex 12 (+4)	Wis 16 (+6)
Con 14 (+5)	Int 18 (+7)	Cha 11 (+3)
Equipment ritual robes, sacrificial dagger		

8 Abyssal Wretches (A)		Level 6 Minion
Medium elemental humanoid		XP 63
Initiative +3 Senses Perception +1		
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion		
AC 18; Fortitude 17, Reflex 15, Will 16		
Speed 6		
⊕ Twisted Claw (standard; at-will)		
+9 vs. AC; 6 damage.		
⊖ Inspire Revulsion (standard; at-will) ♦ Fear, Psychic		
Close burst 1; targets one enemy in burst; +7 vs. Will; 6 psychic damage, and the target takes a -2 penalty on attack rolls until the end of the abyssal wretch's next turn.		
Alignment Chaotic evil		Languages –
Str 14 (+5)	Dex 10 (+3)	Wis 6 (+1)
Con 11 (+3)	Int 2 (-1)	Cha 11 (+3)

2 Crocottas* (C)		Level 9 Skirmisher
Medium elemental beast (demon)		XP 400
Initiative +9 Senses Perception +11; darkvision		
HP 94; Bloodied 47		
AC 23; Fortitude 22, Reflex 21, Will 20		
Resist 5 variable (1/encounter; MM 282)		
Speed 8		
⊕ Gore (standard; at-will)		
+14 vs. AC; 2d6 + 4 damage.		
⊖ Haunting Laughter (standard; encounter) ♦ Fear, Psychic		
Close burst 3; +12 vs. Will; 2d10 + 6 damage, and the target slides 1 square. <i>Miss</i> : The target slides 1 square.		
⊖ Morphic Visage (minor; recharge [II], [III]) ♦ Illusion		
Close blast 3; +12 vs. Will; the crocotta gains combat advantage against the target until the end of its next turn.		
Craven (immediate reaction, when targeted by a power with the fear keyword; at-will)		
Whenever a crocotta is the target of an attack with the fear keyword, it shifts 4 squares away from the source of the attack.		
Feint		
If a crocotta shifts at least 1 square during its turn, its melee attacks deal an extra 1d6 damage.		
Alignment Chaotic evil		Languages –
Skills Stealth +12		
Str 19 (+8)	Dex 17 (+7)	Wis 15 (+6)
Con 14 (+6)	Int 5 (+1)	Cha 11 (+4)
*First appeared in <i>Dragon</i> #364.		

TACTICS

At the first sign of trouble, Fangren hits the largest group of PCs with *vortex of chaos*. He then falls back to direct the Claw of Yeenoghu against the party, using *shun the nonbeliever* and *blastback* to push enemies within reach of the claw. If the conduit is disabled before the shaman is killed, he attacks the closest PCs in a fury.

The Disciples of Yeenoghu stay out of melee, using *ray of destruction* from the edge of the fray, then climbing to the balcony to use that power and *ruinous burst*.

The crocottas open combat with *haunting laughter* to draw PCs on the periphery into melee. They then

wade into the fray to make gore attacks, using *morphic visage* as often as possible to gain combat advantage.

The abyssal wretches stay close to Fangren, using *inspire revulsion* to protect their leader.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: The blazing cauldrons fill the area with bright light.

Balcony: A 10-foot wall fronts the main floor of the chamber, a balcony circling the room beyond it. Columns along the balcony rise to the ceiling, crimson curtains hanging between them. A secret entrance to the ritual chamber can be found in the southeast corner of the balcony.

Dais and Altar: The steps of the dais are difficult terrain when ascending, but are normal terrain for characters moving down or along them.

The altar atop the dais is the focal point of Fangren's ritual. Any creature that touches the altar takes 10 radiant damage, as does any creature that begins its turn in contact with the altar.

The Conduit: The shimmering portal is the physical manifestation of the conduit that Fangren hopes to open to Yeenoghu's realm in the Elemental Chaos. As soon as the PCs appear, Fangren interrupts the still-incomplete ritual in order to take control of the conduit's energy, creating the Claw of Yeenoghu.

Claw of Yeenoghu

Hazard

Level 8 Lurker

XP 350

Through the planar conduit, a massive, clawed hand of primal elemental energy reaches for you.

Hazard: A claw of elemental energy under Fangren's control emerges from the conduit to target any creature within 2 squares of it.

Perception

No check is necessary to notice the claw.

Trigger

The Claw of Yeenoghu attacks as directed by Fangren.

Attack

Minor Action Melee

Target: One creature within 2 squares of the conduit

Attack: +11 vs. Reflex

Hit: 2d6 + 5 fire and necrotic damage, and the target is grabbed and takes ongoing 10 fire and necrotic damage (until escape; DC 19).

Countermeasures

The countermeasures for the Claw of Yeenoghu are described in the skill challenge.

**Closing the Conduit**

Skill Challenge

Level 9

XP 1,200

The gnolls have been defeated, but you must still deal with vortex. You must find a way to safely disrupt the energy conduit to the Elemental Chaos, breaking the connection Fangren has created to the realm of Yeenoghu and closing the breach for good.

Even if the PCs kill Fangren without disabling the Claw of Yeenoghu, the energy conduit remains a threat. The PCs need to close the vortex to the Elemental Chaos before they can perform the ritual that Amyria has charged them with.

Complexity

3 (requires 8 successes before 3 failures).

Primary Skills

Arcana, Athletics, History, Perception, Religion.

Other Skills

Endurance.

Victory

Fangren's ritual is undone and the conduit is closed, safely breaking the connection to the Elemental Chaos.

Defeat

The PCs manage to close the conduit, but in doing so, they release a backlash of elemental energy that floods the chamber. All creatures in the room are plagued by terrible nightmares of destruction and ruin each time they sleep or trance. All PCs indefinitely lose one healing surge, so that they regain one less healing surge than normal each time they take an extended rest. The Remove Affliction ritual can remove this effect.

Arcana (DC 14)

The PC uses his or her mastery of arcane knowledge to manipulate the energy flowing from the Elemental Chaos, turning it back on itself.

Athletics (DC 14)

By physically shifting the altar, the PC disrupts the complex connection to the Elemental Chaos created by Fangren's ritual.

History (DC 19)

The PC recalls knowledge of Fortress Graystone and its construction that helps nullify the flow of energy through the conduit.

Perception (DC 19)

The PC notes subtle changes in the flow of energy from the conduit, indicating essential points of weakness in Fangren's uncompleted ritual.

Religion (DC 14)

The PC recites prayers whose power is anathema to Yeenoghu, disrupting the flow of energy between the altar and the demon lord's domain.

Endurance (DC 8)

PCs making Arcana or Athletics checks in the skill challenge put themselves directly into the flow of the conduit's energy. For each Arcana or Athletics check made, a character must also make an Endurance check or take 1d6 damage. This check does not count as a success or failure in the challenge. ✕

About the Author

Rodney Thompson is a game designer at Wizards of the Coast, Inc. His previous design credits include the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game Saga Edition*, the *Starships of the Galaxy* supplement, and *The Force Unleashed Campaign Guide* supplement.

APPENDIX 1: NEW MONSTERS

ABYSSAL WRETCH

When Fangren discovered that the ritual chamber of Fortress Graystone was built around a planar breach, he drew on the knowledge of the ruin-touched gnolls to create the conduit to the Elemental Chaos. However, the shaman's desire to become an exarch of Yeenoghu involved energy that even the ruin-touched gnolls could not predict the effects of.

Fangren decided to use captives the gnolls had kidnapped on Sarshan's orders as test subjects. The first results were abyssal wretches—humans, elves, and other humanoids twisted into horrific reflections of their original forms, tainted by the evil of Yeenoghu.

Abyssal Wretch		Level 6 Minion	
Medium elemental humanoid		XP 63	
Initiative +3	Senses Perception +1		
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.			
AC 18; Fortitude 17, Reflex 15, Will 16			
Speed 6			
⊕ Twisted Claw (standard; at-will)			
+9 vs. AC; 6 damage.			
⚡ Inspire Revulsion (standard; at-will) ♦ Fear, Psychic			
Close burst 1; targets one enemy in burst; +7 vs. Will; 6 psychic damage, and the target takes a -2 penalty on attack rolls until the end of the abyssal wretch's next turn.			
Alignment Chaotic evil		Languages —	
Str 14 (+5)	Dex 10 (+3)	Wis 6 (+1)	
Con 11 (+3)	Int 2 (-1)	Cha 11 (+3)	

ABYSSAL WRETCH TACTICS

Abyssal wretches are brutish minions. If an enemy is vulnerable to psychic damage, they always target that enemy with inspire revulsion. Typically, wretches serving a more powerful master will use *inspire revulsion* as a defense mechanism to protect their leader.

DISCIPLE OF YEENOGHU

Disciples of Yeenoghu are life-long servants of the demon lord, serving gnoll cults as sages and scholars. A disciple of Yeenoghu collects the darkest, vilest lore surrounding the Ruler of Ruin, acting as a servant of the cult's leaders and whipping gnoll packs into a frenzy in the service of the demon lord.

Disciple of Yeenoghu		Level 7 Artillery	
Medium natural humanoid, gnoll		XP 300	
Initiative +7	Senses Perception +6; low-light vision		
HP 62; Bloodied 31			
AC 19; Fortitude 18, Reflex 20, Will 19			
Speed 7			
⊕ Sacrificial Dagger (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon			
+14 vs. AC; 2d4 + 5 damage, or 2d4 + 7 damage while bloodied; see also <i>pack attack</i> .			
☠ Ray of Destruction (standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic			
Range 10; +12 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 5 necrotic damage, or 2d8 + 10 necrotic damage while bloodied; see also <i>pack attack</i> .			
✖ Ruinous Burst (standard; recharge [E]) ♦ Fire, Necrotic			
Area burst 2 within 10; +10 vs. Reflex; 3d10 + 5 fire and necrotic damage, or 3d10 + 5 fire and necrotic damage while bloodied.			
Pack Attack			
The disciple of Yeenoghu deals an extra 5 damage on melee and ranged attacks against an enemy that has two or more of the disciple's allies adjacent to it.			
Alignment Chaotic evil		Languages Abyssal, Common	
Skills Religion +14			
Str 11 (+3)	Dex 12 (+4)	Wis 16 (+6)	
Con 14 (+5)	Int 18 (+7)	Cha 11 (+3)	
Equipment ritual robes, sacrificial dagger			

DISCIPLE OF YEENOGHU TACTICS

A disciple of Yeenoghu prefers to stand back, using *ray of destruction* and *ruinous burst* on enemies from afar.

MINDSCRAMBLER

When the psionic githzerai inhabited Fortress Graystone, the meditation room enabled them to clear their minds of the chaos within and focus on the discipline

needed to achieve their top fighting form. Over long years, the githzerai were able to use their mental discipline to purge untamed emotions. As a result, the psionic residue of these chaotic emotions eventually coalesced into chaotic beings of pure mental energy.

Mindscramblers appear to be translucent beings with a vaguely humanoid shape. Mindscramblers have no discernable features, appearing to be little more than a mass of shifting color and light.

Mindscrambler		Level 8 Skirmisher	
Medium elemental animate		XP 350	
Initiative +9	Senses Perception +3		
HP 89; Bloodied 44			
AC 22; Fortitude 20, Reflex 20, Will 20			
Speed 6			
⊕ Chaos Touch (standard; at-will) ♦ Psychic			
+11 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 7 psychic damage.			
⚡ Scrambled Mind (standard; at-will) ♦ Psychic			
+11 vs. Will; 1d6 + 7 psychic damage, and the target makes a melee basic attack against one of its adjacent allies.			
⚡ Dizzying Touch (standard; recharge [E][E]) ♦ Psychic			
+11 vs. Will; 3d6 + 7 psychic damage, and the target slides 3 squares and is dazed (save ends).			
➤ Misdirection (immediate interrupt; when an enemy within 10 squares moves or shifts; encounter)			
+11 vs. Will; the target is pushed 3 squares and may not continue its movement.			
Trace Chance (standard; encounter)			
Ranged 5; no attack roll required; the next melee attack made against the target gains a +5 power bonus and, if it hits, it is automatically a critical hit.			
Alignment Chaotic evil		Languages Primordial	
Skills Intimidate +12			
Str 11 (+4)	Dex 16 (+7)	Wis 8 (+3)	
Con 17 (+7)	Int 8 (+3)	Cha 16 (+7)	

MINDSCRAMBLER TACTICS

Mindscramblers use *trace chance* before approaching to use *dizzying touch*. If the mindscrambler is swarmed, it uses *misdirection* to keep an enemy at bay.

PSIONIC ECHO

As the githzerai purged their negative emotions, so too did their disciplined minds leave imprints on Fortress Graystone. Literally a reflection of raw mental power, psionic echoes appear as spectral githzerai warriors. A psionic echo forces itself into existence by sheer will. While it manifests, it is as solid and real as any other physical object, though it continues to appear hazy and translucent.

Githzerai Psionic Echo		Level 9 Soldier
Medium elemental humanoid		XP 400
Initiative +9	Senses Perception +9	
HP 92; Bloodied 46		
AC 25; Fortitude 20, Reflex 21, Will 22		
Speed 7		
⊕ Unarmed Strike (standard; at-will)		
+16 vs. AC; 2d6 + 6 damage.		
⊗ Lesser Mindstrike (standard; at-will) ◆ Psionic		
Range 10; +14 vs. Will; 1d10 + 9 psychic damage.		
⊕ Psionic Strike (standard; encounter) ◆ Psionic		
+14 vs. Will; 2d8 + 9 damage plus 1d8 psychic damage; until the end of its next turn, the target has vulnerable 10 psychic.		
Iron Mind (immediate interrupt; when the githzerai psionic echo would be hit by an attack; encounter)		
The githzerai psionic echo gains a +2 bonus to all defenses until the end of its next turn.		
Unstable Manifestation (immediate reaction; when the githzerai psionic echo takes damage; encounter)		
The githzerai psionic echo becomes insubstantial until the end of its next turn.		
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Common, Deep Speech	
Str 14 (+6)	Dex 17 (+7)	Wis 11 (+4)
Con 12 (+5)	Int 10 (+4)	Cha 20 (+9)

PSIONIC ECHO TACTICS

Psionic echoes single out a weaker target and use *psionic strike* to make them more vulnerable to *mindstrikes*. It usually waits until it is bloodied to use *unstable manifestation*.

STONEWALKER SPIRIT

Stonewalker spirits are conjured from the Elemental Chaos, and are incorporeal in their natural form. Little more than an elemental consciousness, a stonewalker spirit can pass into earth or rock to create a body for itself. Statues are the favored bodies of stonewalker spirits.

Stonewalker Spirit	Level 7 Lurker	
Medium elemental magical beast (earth)	XP 300	
Initiative +10	Senses Perception +5	
HP 45; Bloodied 22		
AC 21; Fortitude 19, Reflex 19, Will 20		
Immune disease, petrification, poison; Resist insubstantial		
Speed fly 6 (hover)		
⊕ Spectral Grasp (standard; at-will)		
+10 vs. Reflex; 2d4 + 7 damage.		
⊕ Petrifying Touch (standard; recharge [3])		
+10 vs. Fortitude; the target is slowed (save ends). <i>First Failed Save</i> : The target is immobilized instead of slowed (save ends). <i>Second Failed Save</i> : The target is petrified (no save), and is considered to be a statue for the purposes of the <i>possess statue</i> ability.		
Possess Statue (free, when entering the same space as a statue; at-will)		
The stonewalker spirit assumes the form of a possessed statue. Use the possessed statue stat block instead of the stonewalker spirit's stat block. The spirit can leave the statue as a free action.		
Flee the Form (free, when a possessed statue is reduced to 0 hit points; at-will)		
The stonewalker spirit takes 16 damage (ignores insubstantial) as it reverts to its normal form, then moves up to its speed.		
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Abyssal, Primordial	
Skills Stealth +11		
Str 10 (+3)	Dex 17 (+6)	Wis 14 (+5)
Con 16 (+6)	Int 11 (+3)	Cha 19 (+7)

STONEWALKER SPIRIT TACTICS

Stonewalker spirits want to be in possessed statue form when possible. If no statue is available, the spirit uses *petrifying touch* to create one.

WICKED FANG GNOLLS

The Wicked Fang are a pack of gnomish mercenaries whose thirst for blood is equaled only by their greed. Initially consisting of little more than Fangren and his closest allies, the pack's dealings with operatives of the shadar-kai Sarshan have seen its numbers swell.

Wicked Fang Scout	Level 7 Skirmisher	
Medium natural humanoid, gnomish	XP 300	
Initiative +7	Senses Perception +10, low-light vision	
HP 77; Bloodied 38		
AC 21; Fortitude 19, Reflex 19, Will 18		
Speed 7		
⊕ Shadar-Kai Short Sword (standard; at-will) ◆ Weapon		
+12 vs. AC; 1d6 + 9 damage (crit 1d6 + 15), or 1d6 + 11 damage (crit 1d6 + 17) while bloodied; see also <i>pack attack</i> .		
⊗ Hand Crossbow (standard; at-will) ◆ Weapon		
Range 10/20; +12 vs. AC; 1d6 + 9 damage, or 1d6 + 11 damage while bloodied; see also <i>pack attack</i> .		
Cowardly Shot (standard; at-will) ◆ Weapon		
Requires hand crossbow; ranged 10/20; +12 vs. AC; 1d6 + 9 damage, or 1d6 + 11 damage while bloodied; the gnomish scout can shift 2 squares both before and after making the attack; see also <i>pack attack</i> .		
Pack Attack		
The gnomish scout deals an extra 5 damage on melee and ranged attacks against an enemy that has two or more of the scout's allies adjacent to it.		
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Abyssal, Common	
Str 16 (+6)	Dex 15 (+5)	Wis 14 (+5)
Con 13 (+4)	Int 10 (+3)	Cha 10 (+3)
Equipment : hide armor, shadar-kai short sword, hand crossbow, 20 bolts		

WICKED FANG SCOUT TACTICS

Wicked Fang scouts prefer to fight from range, using *cowardly shot* to leap out from behind cover, make an attack, and then retreat back behind cover.

Wicked Fang Sentry	Level 7 Soldier	
Medium natural humanoid, gnoll	XP 300	
Initiative +6	Senses Perception +11, low-light vision	
HP 80; Bloodied 40		
AC 23; Fortitude 20, Reflex 18, Will 19		
Speed 7		
⬇ Shadar-Kai Greatsword (standard; at-will) ⬆ Weapon		
+14 vs. AC; 1d12 + 5 damage (crit 1d12 + 17), or 1d12 + 7 damage (crit 1d12 + 19) while bloodied, and the target is marked until the end of the gnoll sentry's next turn; see also <i>pack attack</i> .		
⬅ Defend the Pack (standard; recharge [E]) ⬆ Weapon		
Close burst 1; +12 vs. AC; 1d12 + 5 damage, or 1d12 + 7 damage while bloodied, and the target is marked until the end of the gnoll sentry's next turn; see also <i>pack attack</i> .		
Defensive Lure (move; encounter)		
The gnoll sentry shifts 3 squares, then pulls all targets it has marked 3 squares.		
Pack Attack		
The gnoll sentry deals an extra 5 damage on melee attacks against an enemy that has two or more of the gnoll sentry's allies adjacent to it.		
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Abyssal, Common	
Str 19 (+7)	Dex 13 (+4)	Wis 16 (+6)
Con 16 (+6)	Int 10 (+3)	Cha 8 (+2)
Equipment: hide armor, shadar-kai greatsword		

WICKED FANG SENTRY TACTICS

Wicked Fang sentries use *defend the pack* frequently to mark multiple enemies, attempting to make enemies focus on them. If a marked enemy tries to move away, the sentry uses *defensive lure* to draw them back into the area.

MORE MONSTERS

For more information on some of the monsters used in this adventure, see Ari Marmell's *Creature Incarnations: Gnolls* from *Dragon* #369 (which includes more information on the ruin-touched gnolls and the slaughterfang hyenas) and Robert J. Schwalb's *Demonomicon of Iggwilv: Yeenoghu* (which includes the crocotta) from *Dragon* #364.

Wicked Fang Mauler	Level 7 Brute	
Medium natural humanoid, gnoll	XP 300	
Initiative +4	Senses Perception +6; low-light vision	
HP 94; Bloodied 47		
AC 19; Fortitude 20, Reflex 18, Will 19		
Speed 7		
⬇ Shadar-Kai Greatsword (standard; at-will) ⬆ Weapon		
+10 vs. AC; 1d12 + 8 damage (crit 1d12 + 20), or 1d12 + 10 damage (crit 1d12 + 22) while bloodied; see also <i>pack attack</i> .		
⬇ Backhand (minor; recharge [E][E])		
+10 vs. AC; 1d6 + 8 damage, or 1d6 + 10 damage while bloodied, and the target is knocked prone; see also <i>pack attack</i> .		
⬇ Beat Back (standard; at-will) ⬆ Weapon		
+10 vs. AC; 1d12 + 8 damage (crit 1d12 + 20), or 1d12 + 10 damage (crit 1d12 + 22) while bloodied, and the target is pushed 2 squares; see also <i>pack attack</i> .		
Pack Attack		
The gnoll mauler deals an extra 5 damage on melee attacks against an enemy that has two or more of the gnoll mauler's allies adjacent to it.		
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Abyssal, Common	
Skills Athletics +12		
Str 19 (+7)	Dex 13 (+4)	Wis 17 (+6)
Con 14 (+5)	Int 10 (+3)	Cha 8 (+2)
Equipment: hide armor, shadar-kai greatsword		

WICKED FANG MAULER TACTICS

Wicked Fang maulers are frequently used to defend other gnolls, using *beat back* to keep enemies from getting too close. If the mauler and its target are close to hazardous terrain, it uses *backhand* to knock the target into that area.

Wicked Fang Lasher	Level 9 Skirmisher	
Medium natural humanoid, gnoll	XP 400	
Initiative +11	Senses Perception +7; low-light vision	
HP 93; Bloodied 46		
AC 23; Fortitude 21, Reflex 22, Will 21		
Speed 7		
⬇ Barbed Whip (standard; at-will) ⬆ Weapon		
Reach 2; +14 vs. AC; 1d8 + 4 damage (or 1d8 + 6 damage while bloodied) and ongoing 5 damage (save ends); see also <i>pack attack</i> .		
⬇ Whip Flay (standard; encounter) ⬆ Weapon		
Requires barbed whip; reach 2; +14 vs. AC; 3d8 + 7 damage (or 3d8 + 9 damage while bloodied) and ongoing 10 damage (save ends); see also <i>pack attack</i> .		
⬇ Drag Around (standard; recharge [E][E]) ⬆ Weapon		
Requires barbed whip; reach 2; +12 vs. Fortitude; 2d8 + 5 damage (or 2d8 + 7 damage while bloodied) and the target slides 3 squares; see also <i>pack attack</i> .		
Pack Attack		
The gnoll lasher deals an extra 5 damage on melee attacks against an enemy that has two or more of the gnoll lasher's allies adjacent to it.		
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Abyssal, Common	
Skills Stealth +14		
Str 16 (+7)	Dex 20 (+9)	Wis 16 (+7)
Con 13 (+5)	Int 10 (+4)	Cha 10 (+4)
Equipment: hide armor, barbed whip		

WICKED FANG LASHER TACTICS

The Wicked Fang lasher uses *whip flay* against a bloodied opponent when possible, trying to bring them down quickly. When an enemy gets close, the lasher uses *drag around* to maneuver the enemy into a place where other gnolls can get *pack attack* bonuses.

Wicked Fang Keeper	Level 8 Elite Controller
Medium natural humanoid, gnoll	XP 700
Initiative +9	Senses Perception +7; low-light vision
HP 178; Bloodied 89	
AC 24; Fortitude 20, Reflex 23, Will 20	
Speed 7	
⊕ Shadar-Kai Short Sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+13 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage (crit 1d6 + 17), or 2d6 + 7 damage (crit 1d6 + 19) while bloodied; see also <i>pack attack</i> .	
⊗ Handaxe (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 5/10; +13 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage (crit 1d6 + 17), or 2d6 + 7 damage (crit 1d6 + 19) while bloodied; see also <i>pack attack</i> .	
✧ Rain of Blades (standard; at-will)	
The keeper makes three handaxe attacks, each of which must be against a different target.	
⊥ No Escape This Time (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Requires short sword; +13 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage (crit 1d6 + 17), or 2d6 + 7 damage (crit 1d6 + 19) while bloodied and the target is knocked prone; see also <i>pack attack</i> .	
⊥ Keeper's Shackles (minor; recharge [E])	
Targets adjacent prone creature; +12 vs. Fortitude; target is restrained (until escape).	
Caltrops (minor; encounter)	
The keeper can designate a 1-square burst area within 5 squares; that area is filled with caltrops. Until the end of the encounter, any creature that enters a square filled with caltrops without treating it as difficult terrain takes 1d6 + 4 damage.	
Pack Attack	
The keeper deals an extra 5 damage on melee attacks against an enemy that has two or more of the keeper's allies adjacent to it.	
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Abyssal, Common
Skills Intimidate +11	
Str 13 (+5)	Dex 20 (+9) Wis 17 (+7)
Con 17 (+7)	Int 10 (+4) Cha 14 (+6)
Equipment: hide armor, shadar-kai short sword	

WICKED FANG KEEPER TACTICS

The Wicked Fang warden primarily concerns itself with keeping enemies hemmed in close to allies. As such, it uses *caltrops* to block off one avenue of escape. The Wicked Fang warden attempts to use *no escape this time* to knock enemies prone before restraining them with *keeper's shackles*.

Wicked Fang Guard	Level 6 Soldier
Medium natural humanoid, gnoll	XP 250
Initiative +7	Senses Perception +4; low-light vision
HP 74; Bloodied 37	
AC 22; Fortitude 19, Reflex 18, Will 17	
Speed 7	
⊕ Shadar-Kai Greatsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+13 vs. AC; 1d12 + 7 damage (crit 1d12 + 19), or 1d12 + 9 damage (crit 1d12 + 21) while bloodied, and the target is marked until the end of the gnoll guard's next turn; see also <i>pack attack</i> .	
⊥ Pinning Attack (standard; encounter) ♦ Weapon	
Requires greatsword; +11 vs. Fortitude; 1d12 + 7 damage (crit 1d12 + 19), or 1d12 + 9 damage (crit 1d12 + 21) while bloodied, and the target is immobilized until the end of the gnoll guard's next turn; see also <i>pack attack</i> .	
Pack Attack	
The gnoll guard deals an extra 5 damage on melee attacks against an enemy that has two or more of the gnoll guard's allies adjacent to it.	
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Abyssal, Common
Str 14 (+5)	Dex 15 (+5) Wis 13 (+4)
Con 18 (+7)	Int 10 (+3) Cha 8 (+2)
Equipment: hide armor, shadar-kai greatsword	

WICKED FANG GUARD TACTICS

The Wicked Fang guards engage as many enemies as possible, using *pinning attack* when foes attempt to escape.

Wicked Fang Recruit	Level 8 Minion
Medium natural humanoid, gnoll	XP 88
Initiative +7	Senses Perception +5; low-light vision
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion	
AC 22; Fortitude 20, Reflex 18, Will 18	
Speed 7	
⊕ Shadar-Kai Greatsword (standard; at-will)	
+13 vs. AC; 8 damage, or 10 damage while bloodied; see also <i>pack attack</i> .	
Pack Attack	
The gnoll recruit deals an extra 5 damage on melee attacks against an enemy that has two or more of the gnoll recruit's allies adjacent to it.	
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Abyssal, Common
Str 16 (+7)	Dex 12 (+5) Wis 13 (+5)
Con 14 (+6)	Int 10 (+4) Cha 8 (+3)
Equipment: hide armor, shadar-kai greatsword	

WICKED FANG RECRUIT TACTICS

Wicked Fang recruits do their best to swarm their enemies. They always try to keep at least two recruits adjacent to a target at all times, giving other Wicked Fang pack members a pack attack bonus.

Wicked Fang Warmaster	Level 8 Brute (Leader)
Medium natural humanoid, gnoll	XP 350
Initiative +6	Senses Perception +7; low-light vision
Warmaster's Aura aura 5; the gnoll warmaster gains a +1 bonus to AC and all defenses for each ally within the aura (maximum +5)	
HP 107; Bloodied 53	
AC 20; Fortitude 20, Reflex 19, Will 20	
Speed 7	
⊕ Wicked Fang (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+11 vs. AC; 2d8 + 8 damage (crit 3d8 + 24), or 2d8 + 10 (crit 3d8 + 26) damage while bloodied; see also <i>pack attack</i> .	
⊥ Forward the Wicked Fang (standard; encounter) ♦ Weapon	
Requires <i>Wicked Fang</i> ; +11 vs. AC; 4d8 + 8 damage (crit 3d8 + 40), or 4d8 + 10 damage (crit 3d8 + 42) while bloodied, and all gnoll allies within the warmaster's aura make a basic attack; see also <i>pack attack</i> .	
Pack Attack	
The gnoll warmaster deals an extra 5 damage on melee attacks against an enemy that has two or more of the gnoll warmaster's allies adjacent to it.	
Wicked Fang Power (free; when an attack with the weapon keyword hits; daily)	
The target also takes ongoing 10 damage (save ends).	
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Abyssal, Common
Skills Intimidate +10	
Str 14 (+6)	Dex 10 (+4) Wis 16 (+7)
Con 17 (+7)	Int 14 (+6) Cha 13 (+5)
Equipment: hide armor, <i>Wicked Fang</i> (see page 96)	

WICKED FANG WARMASTER TACTICS

Wicked Fang warmasters try to keep as many allies within the range of *warmaster's aura* as possible. They use *forward the wicked fang* early, preferably when many other pack members are nearby.

APPENDIX 2: NEW ITEMS

The following new magic items are featured in this adventure, and can be claimed as treasure by the PCs.

FIGURINES OF WONDROUS POWER

Elderwood Falcon

Level 10

This wooden statuette depicts a falcon with wings outspread.

Wondrous Item 5,000 gp

Power (Daily ♦ Conjuration): Standard Action. Use this figurine to conjure an ancient falcon of the Feywild (see below for statistics). As a free action, you can spend a healing surge when activating this item to give the creature temporary hit points equal to your healing surge value.

Elderwood Falcon

Medium natural animate

Initiative as conjurer **Senses** Perception +9;
low-light vision

HP 15; **Bloodied** 7

AC 24; **Fortitude** 21, **Reflex** 22, **Will** 22

Speed 6, fly 8

⊕ **Talons** (standard; at-will)
+15 vs. AC; 2d4 + 4 damage.

↓ **Swoop** (standard; at-will)
The elderwood falcon shifts 1 square, makes a talon attack, then shifts 1 square.

Alignment Unaligned **Languages** –
Str 11 (+5) **Dex** 19 (+9) **Wis** 18 (+9)
Con 16 (+8) **Int** 2 (+1) **Cha** 8 (+4)

Ironwood Hound

Level 10

This wooden statuette depicts a hunting hound dashing toward its prey.

Wondrous Item 5,000 gp

Power (Daily ♦ Conjuration): Standard Action. Use this figurine to conjure a yellow-furred hunting hound (see below for statistics). As a free action, you can spend a healing surge when activating this item to give the creature temporary hit points equal to your healing surge value.

Ironwood Hound

Medium natural animate

Initiative as conjurer **Senses** Perception +8;
low-light vision

HP 15; **Bloodied** 7

AC 24; **Fortitude** 22, **Reflex** 19, **Will** 21

Speed 6

⊕ **Bite** (standard; at-will)
+15 vs. AC; 2d6 + 3 damage.

↓ **Drive Back** (standard; at-will)
+13 vs. Fortitude; 2d6 + 3 damage, and the target is pushed 2 squares and the ironwood hound can shift 2 squares. The ironwood hound must end its shift adjacent to the target's new position.

Alignment Unaligned **Languages** –
Str 13 (+6) **Dex** 12 (+6) **Wis** 16 (+8)
Con 18 (+9) **Int** 2 (+1) **Cha** 8 (+4)

WICKED FANG

The sword known as *Wicked Fang* was crafted as a gift for the gnoll pack of the same name. Sarshan ordered his shadar-kai warriors to travel to Overlook and kidnap one of the greatest dwarven weaponsmiths in the city, bringing him back to the Shadowfell to do the arms dealer's bidding. Sarshan commanded the weaponsmith to craft *Wicked Fang*. When the job was done, Sarshan ordered the weaponsmith killed and his blood used in the ritual that bestowed the sword with its magical properties.

The completed sword was sent back to the world as a gift to Fangren, who in turn gave it to his most trusted warmaster. However, before the weapon was sent from the Shadowfell, several of the shadar-kai witches in Sarshan's service warned him that the weapon was destined to be at the center of great events, and urged him to not let the weapon pass from his possession. Sarshan ignored the witches' warnings, sending his lieutenant Kyrion to train the gnolls in the proper use of shadar-kai weapons, including *Wicked Fang*.

QUEST IDEAS

The Vengeful Family: The family of the dwarf weaponsmith from Overlook has learned of the existence of *Wicked Fang* and seeks to reclaim it. When they discover that the PCs have the weapon, they assume the party was involved in the weaponsmith's death, vowing vengeance against them. The PCs must clear their names and convince the dwarves that their loved one has already been avenged.

The Cursed Blade: Bad luck (of the DM's design) seems to follow the PC carrying *Wicked Fang*, and he or she learns that the blade holds a dark curse. The PC's only hope is to travel to an ancient holy site of Moradin and beseech the god of creation to remove the curse from the weapon.

Tipping the Scales of War: The shadar-kai witches were right in their prophecy, and as the PCs find themselves caught up in further adventures, they discover that *Wicked Fang* was created for a higher purpose. Having fallen into the PCs' hands as a part of their destiny, the weapon is the only thing that can destroy an enemy they will one day face.

Wicked Fang

Level 13

This weapon's jagged blade seems permanently stained with the blood of those it has slain.

Lvl 13	+3	17,000 gp	Lvl 23	+5	425,000 gp
Lvl 18	+4	85,000 gp	Lvl 28	+6	2,125,000 gp

Weapon: Longsword

Enhancement: Attack rolls and damage rolls

Critical: +1d8 damage per plus

Property: Whenever you use a power with the weapon keyword that deals ongoing damage, increase that ongoing damage by an amount equal to the weapon's enhancement bonus.

Power (Daily): Free action. Use this power when you hit with an attack with the weapon keyword. In addition to the normal effects of the attack, the target takes ongoing 10 damage (save ends).
Level 23 or 28: Ongoing 15 damage.