



HEROIC

1-10

*“Our eyes are open,
our fists are closed.
Our walls are stone,
our shields are steel.
Our faces are many,
our soul is dwarf.
And thus is there no
foe against whom
Overlook cannot
stand.”*

It is an ancient Overlook proverb—some would even call it a prayer—and it’s about to be put to the ultimate test.

by Ari Marmell

illustrations by Michael Komarck,
Rob Alexander and William O'Connor

♦
cartography by Mike Schley



THE TEMPLE BETWEEN

An adventure for 9th-level characters

The western end of Elsir Vale has been greatly troubled in recent days. The threat of the orc hordes from beyond the Stonehome Mountains, though turned back at Bordrin's Watch, still lingers in the people's minds. Peculiar and hostile creatures of shadow lurk in the caverns and caves below. Political squabbling grows among the city's powerful dwarf clans.

All this makes the city particularly vulnerable to an enemy nobody saw coming—that nobody even imagined. This enemy has goals and objectives far beyond the ultimately unimportant Elsir Vale, but the first step is the utter subjugation of Overlook.

An enemy who, at least in part, is already here.

"The Temple Between" is an adventure for 9th-level characters, and it is challenging enough to take them to 11th level by the time all is said and done. Although intended as the final chapter of the heroic tier portion of the Scales of War Adventure Path, it can be run as a standalone adventure, or as an adventure in a campaign of your own making, with a small degree of modification. It contains elements of urban investigation, dungeon delving, and even wartime conflict, making it a suitable adventure to players of many tastes and preferences.

BACKGROUND

Few today are aware of it, but the western regions of Elsir Vale have long been rich in planar magic. Perhaps this is due to the fact that the giants, soldiers, and servants of the primordials once dwelt nearby in large numbers, driving their dwarf slaves to great works. Whatever the cause, the region is run through with "cracks" in reality—portals that lead to

other worlds. In the course of the Adventure Path, the PCs have already discovered one, traveling to the Shadowfell through the caverns beneath the Happy Beggar poorhouse. What they do not yet know—though they might discover it soon enough—is that a gateway to the Astral Sea waits in a great cathedral beneath the Stonehome Mountains, and a doorway to the Feywild lies hidden where the Elsir River flows from the mountains. (The region might well also contain a portal to the Elemental Chaos, but if so, it does not influence this adventure.)

No, the humans and elves and dwarves of Elsir Vale know nothing about this, but not everyone is so ignorant. A few sages know. A few priests know.

And the githyanki know.

Indeed, at the behest of their leaders in the astral city of Tu'narath, they have caused much of Elsir's worries of late. They arranged the theft of the platinum sword from Brindol, and they employed the shadar-kai, not only as weapons suppliers but to encourage the orcs of the west to rise. For the githyanki want Elsir Vale, badly, and particularly the planar portals it contains. Using it as a beachhead, they could easily launch an incursion, not merely into the mortal realm, but other worlds besides. And there is no reality, no plane of existence, on which the githyanki do not have *some* design or other.

The semi-disgraced General Zithiruun is in charge of this operation, or at least commands the forces seeking to carry it out. Forced to make use of mercenaries and lesser soldiers, to keep the githyanki involvement secret, he has carefully set up his pawns, maneuvering and manipulating, and now the time draws near to take Overlook by force.

Unknown to Zithiruun, and even to his commanding officers, they themselves are merely pawns

WHAT IS AN ADVENTURE PATH?

Scales of War is the fourth Adventure Path to appear in the pages of *Dungeon*® Magazine. But what, you ask, is an Adventure Path? Quite simply, it is a series of related adventures intended to form a complete D&D campaign that takes your players from 1st level all the way to, in the case of Scales of War, 30th level.

Previous Adventure Paths, presented with the 3rd Edition D&D® rules, took characters from 1st to 20th level. But with all three tiers in the new edition ripe and ready to explore, we're pushing the limit with Scales of War. Each tier takes roughly six adventures to traverse, which means we'll finish off this Adventure Path in about eighteen issues. Each adventure advances characters from between one and a half to two levels of experience. We recognize that not everyone will meet every encounter or complete every quest, however, so periodically, we'll point you to a supplemental Side Trek or short adventure to keep your PCs on pace. Plus, roughly every few months, *Dragon*® will feature new support content for Scales of War.

Finally, this Adventure Path is intended to function as a complete D&D campaign. That means we'll be making assumptions about the history of the world as we move along, just as you would in any campaign you run. We'll be borrowing heavily from the D&D mythology of 4th Edition, as well as all the great ideas that have cropped up in other products over the years—including the pages of past issues of *Dungeon*!

Enjoy your stay in Scales of War, and keep an eye out for next month's installment.

on a larger board; schemes far more devious than a simple githyanki invasion are afoot. But this is a discovery, and a challenge, for a future adventure. For now, the PCs have more than enough on their plates as it is.

THE MOUNTAINROOT TEMPLE

A subterranean structure built by the same order that would later go on to construct the Monastery of the Sundered Chain, the Mountainroot Temple stands deep beneath the Stonehome Mountains. Built when the dwarves were still celebrating their freedom from the giants, it was not a dwarven structure, but a temple built for *anyone* who wanted to pay tribute to Moradin, of any race. It held great reliquaries of holy icons, enormous cathedrals where hundreds could worship at once, and even a doorway to the Astral Plane whence angels and exarchs of Moradin would appear to discourse with the god's most favored priests and champions. To facilitate a grand community of Moradin worshipers, the Mountainroot Temple had, in addition to its astral doors and its main entryway into the mountains, four mystical doorways constructed. Each linked to another temple of Moradin elsewhere in the world, so the faithful could come and go with ease.

And for decades, even centuries, the temple thrived. Slowly, however, relations between Moradin's faithful grew strained. Priests assigned to other, "lesser" temples grew envious of those at Mountainroot. Many of the dwarf faithful grew haughty, considering themselves Moradin's "true" children, and sought to oust all others, or at least put them in lesser places, denying them access to the temple's wonders.

Was it Moradin's wrath? A curse brought upon them by the giants they'd so long ago escaped? Or simply a natural catastrophe without greater meaning? None can say. Whatever the case, some centuries ago, the mountain was struck by an earthquake. Portions of the inner tunnels collapsed, damaging several chambers of the Mountainroot Temple, destroying others entirely. Panicked, the priests and the faithful grabbed up their treasures and holy icons—at least most of them—and fled using the surviving magical portals.

Once they'd settled elsewhere, the bulk of Moradin's priests decided that this way was better. By scattering from the temple, they would allow the dwarves to build their own shrines, without feeling constrained by the other races, and the jealousy that marred the priesthood would fade. Although they mourned the loss of the great cathedral, and those few treasures they'd been unable to save, they declared the quake to have been Moradin's will and left the temple abandoned. In time, most faithful, even most priests save those most thoroughly learned in their history, forgot it had ever been.

Most, but not all. After a few decades, a small group of Moradin worshipers—mostly dwarves, but with members of other races as well—returned to the Mountainroot Temple. They cleaned it up as best they could and vowed to maintain it until it should some day become important once again. The most powerful of their number took on the title of Caretaker and lived within the temple, in a small structure built inside the larger reliquary. The Caretaker carefully attuned himself to the temple's surviving magic, allowing him to control the constructs and divine defenses and traps that protected the structure from outside invasion.

ZITHIRUUN'S PLAN

And so it remained, until the githyanki learned of the temple and decided controlling it would better enable them to control Overlook, and by extension, Elsir Vale.

Zithiruun's plan is to take Overlook by simultaneously attacking from without and from within. Already he has a force of mercenary soldiers hiding in the wilds, ready to march on the city. Now, he's working to gain full control of the Mountainroot Temple—and the Stone Anvil, its anchor in Overlook—through which he can move a second force from the Astral Sea into the city's undefended heart.

To that end, Zithiruun has suborned a number of Overlook's priests and military officers. Most of them, including several priests and Watch Captain Aerun, were kidnapped and subject to a difficult psychic ritual cast by incredibly powerful githyanki. The result is that these poor people's minds were destroyed, and they have been possessed by several githyanki, who are even capable of manifesting some of their normal powers (albeit in weakened form).

Unfortunately, the possessing githyanki cannot access anything more than the victim's base personality; they have no access to specific memories. So High Priest Durkik of the Stone Anvil has *not* been possessed. Rather, he is being held captive and tortured for information, while a hired doppelganger takes his place in public, holding the Stone Anvil in readiness for Zithiruun's forces.

All of which would have gone undetected, if not for the alertness and curiosity of an old woman named Haelyn . . .

THE QUESTS

“The Temple Between” offers PCs several opportunities to earn quest XP. Provided here is a list of quests, and their rewards, in the adventure.

Minor Quest—Learn Haelyn’s Fate

As requested by the priest Lavinya, the PCs must investigate the shrine of Erathis, and Grovald, its new caretaker, to learn what happened to the kindly old woman who once attended it.

Reward: 400 XP.

Major Quest—Recover the *Incunabulum Primeval*

This ancient religious text, dating back to the dwarf rebellion against the giants, exists somewhere within the depths of the Mountainroot Temple. Durkik wants it returned before their enemies can get their hands on it. (It’s currently on the hag Hethralga, in area M8 of the Mountainroot Temple.)

Reward: 2,000 XP (and 3,600 gp—the equivalent of three 9th-level treasure parcels—as promised by the priests of Moradin).

Major Quest—Prevent the Fall of Overlook

Once his scheme is prematurely cut short, General Zithiruun decides to take the city with what forces he already has available. Although Overlook is hardly a population of weaklings, they do require the PCs’ aid.

Reward: Up to 2,500 XP, depending on Victory Point totals; see page 37 (and up to 7,000 gp—the equivalent of four 10th-level treasure parcels—as promised by the Council of Elders).

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

The PCs have just completed an adventure of obvious importance (the freeing of Amyria from her imprisonment in the form of a platinum sword, if they’re playing through the Adventure Path). It appears as though nothing of consequence immediately follows—at least until the next night, when the PCs, through one of various means, receive hints that all is not well back in Overlook.

Returning to their home away from home, the heroes initially find nothing amiss. Slowly, however, they discover—through the prodding of Lavinya, priestess of Erathis, if not on their own—that several of the city’s priests are acting peculiarly and, perhaps more importantly, Haelyn, keeper of Erathis’s shrine, has vanished. Following up on these minor discrepancies, the PCs swiftly find hints leading to a conspiracy worming its way into the city’s hierarchy. Several of the conspiracy’s members are possessed (though the PCs do not learn by whom), while others—including High Priest Durkik Forgeheart of the Stone Anvil—have been replaced by doppelganger mercenaries. The PCs trace the conspirators back to their headquarters in a large warehouse, where they have the opportunity to rescue the real Durkik.

The PCs then learn of the Mountainroot Temple and find out that one of its mystical portals is located in a hidden sepulcher beneath the Stone Anvil. Using it, the PCs go to the abandoned ancient temple, where they must confront both a cadre of fey and a band of mercenaries employed by General Zithiruun. They also find, unfortunately, that they cannot leave! Here, assuming the PCs defeat their various foes, they make the following discoveries:

- ◆ The Caretaker of the temple is currently being tortured, and the pain and madness inflicted upon him have thrown the temple’s defenses into chaos. This is why, among other things, nobody can leave.
- ◆ The fey are seeking an ancient tome of great power. They were sent by Cachlain, the Stone-Skinned King, a fomorian noble who—along with his new advisor, Sovacles—will play an important role in future installments of the Scales of War.
- ◆ The mercenaries serve someone called General Zithiruun, who seeks the temple—and indeed, the entire region!—for access to the various planar portals. The conspiracy in Overlook was only the first step, and the city will soon be facing a full-scale military invasion!

Finally, once the Caretaker allows them to leave, the PCs must return to the Council of Elders with a warning of the forthcoming siege. Here, the PCs can finally cement their place as heroes to this military city, as their help proves instrumental in Overlook’s survival—and as they finally come face to face with General Zithiruun, and learn of the githyanki involvement in all that has come before.

PREPARING FOR ADVENTURE

“The Temple Between” allows the PCs a variety of opportunities to shine, from investigation to exploration, and from skill challenges to a variety of combat situations. They face a diversity of foes and must

SKILL CHALLENGES AND EXPERIENCE POINTS

This adventure makes use of a number of skill challenges—in particular, offering several opportunities for the PCs to interrogate prisoners or survivors of their various combats. It’s important for you, as DM, to give XP only for those skill challenges that are meaningful, without allowing unnecessary repetition.

Here’s what we mean, by way of example. In the Shrine of Erathis, the PCs have the opportunity to interrogate Grovald, as well as a number of his soldiers, both human and doppelganger. Because the PCs receive different information from Grovald than from his soldiers, they can receive XP for both skill challenges—one for Grovald, one for any of the soldiers. Once they have successfully interrogated a soldier, however, they should *not* receive XP for interrogating any other soldiers at the same location, because they all offer the same information. Similarly, because all the fey in the Mountain Root temple give the same information, and all the soldiers of the githyanki give the same information, the PCs can gain XP for only two interrogations—one fey, one other—in that area.

figure out the right questions to ask the right people. As such, it’s important that you, as DM, have at least a reasonable level of familiarity with the events herein. It’s best if you can read through the entire adventure beforehand, but if you’re in a hurry, you should at least review each specific section, and its related encounters, before play. (The adventure is divided into three chapters, making a piecemeal approach feasible, if not the most recommended.)

WHAT YOU NEED TO PLAY

This adventure includes the encounters the PCs face as they explore and adventure in the area. It also provides tactical maps and more for the adventure. If you and your players haven’t read through the *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS 4th Edition* rules yet, that is your first best step so that you make certain you understand the rules. Also as mentioned above, read through at least the first of the adventure’s three “chapters” before starting. This review enables you to become familiar with the material and the style of presentation. You might also want to take a look at the sections below regarding the adventure format.

USING TACTICAL ENCOUNTERS

Each encounter includes several common elements, as described below.

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 2 or more levels higher 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.

ADAPTING THE ADVENTURE

“The Temple Between” is designed with five players in mind. You can easily adapt the adventure for larger groups easily by adding more treasure and inserting a few extra monsters using the guidelines presented in the *Dungeon Master’s Guide*. When adapting the adventure for larger groups, keep it simple. Where possible, just add one monster whose level equals the encounter level for each additional PC. Otherwise, look for appropriate monsters from this adventure (see the Appendix, in particular) and the *Monster Manual* to help stiffen up the resistance.

This adventure is also designed for 9th-level characters. As written, a slightly larger group of 8th-level characters can play through the adventure, but be sure to give the characters plenty of chances to take extended rests so that they can have a fair shot at surviving the expedition. For higher-level groups, adapting the adventure takes a bit more work. You need to add monsters and increase the treasure rewards to amounts appropriate for the characters. In all, adjusting the adventure is not too arduous, and with a little work, you can run this scenario for groups of three to eight players, and for characters of 8th through 13th level.

SETUP

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

Several encounters include monsters that are either hidden, or do not appear until later in combat. In these instances, do not place those monsters on the map unless at least one PC has succeeded on the Perception check to notice them, or when they enter combat.

READ-ALoud TEXT

Read aloud text provides information about 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; they are written for the most common approach to a particular situation and 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 the like.

TREASURE PREPARATION

As with previous installments of the Scales of War campaign, “The Temple Between” makes use of the parcel system of treasure rewards as described in the *Dungeon Master’s Guide*. The characters should accumulate seventeen parcels by the end of the adventure. Of these, they should gain the reward for completing the quests (four parcels for 1,000 gp), and then whatever treasures they find along the way (the remaining thirteen). You can supply these treasures in whatever way you wish, but the Treasure Parcels sidebar presents the most likely rooms to bear treasure. During your preparation, assign parcels from those that follow to the rooms in the spaces provided. Use the players’ wish lists to come up with magic items for the first eight parcels. (Consider saving at least one or two of the highest level magic items for later in the adventure, after the PCs have obtained 10th level.)

Treasure Parcels

Parcel A: _____ C-4 (the Shrine of Erathis).
 Parcel B: _____ C-9 (the Warehouse).
 Parcel C: _____ M-5 (the Vault).
 Parcel D: _____ M-5 (the Vault).
 Parcel E: _____ M-5 (the Vault).
 Parcel F: _____ M-6 (the Grand Cathedral, on the persons of the spitting trolls and/or the two-headed troll).
 Parcel G: _____ M-8 (the Lesser Sanctum, on the persons of Hethralga and/or the cyclopes).

Parcel H: _____ M-9 (the Reliquary).
 Parcel I: _____ M-9 (the Reliquary).
 Parcel J: _____ M-9 (the Reliquary).
 Parcel K: _____ M-10 (the Underchambers).
 Parcel L: _____ T-2 (Death from Above, on the person of the berbalang).
 Parcel M: _____ T-5 (the Final Encounter, on the person of Zithiruun).

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 eight parcels.

Parcel 1: Magic item, level 14.

Parcel 2: Magic item, level 13.

Parcel 3: Magic item, level 13.

Parcel 4: Magic item, level 12.

Parcel 5: Magic item, level 12.

Parcel 6: Magic item, level 11.

Parcel 7: Magic item, level 11.

Parcel 8: Magic item, level 10.

Parcel 9: A gold statuette of a female dwarf blacksmith at work at the forge, worth 1,500 gp; and a sapphire worth 1,000 gp.

Parcel 10: A small ruby carefully chiseled into the shape of a burning flame, worth 1,500 gp; 800 gp; and 2 potions of healing.

Parcel 11: A small pouch containing 4 polished stones of alexandrite, worth 500 gp each (2,000 gp total); and 100 gp.

Parcel 12: A silver hammer (useless as a tool or weapon) worth 250 gp; and 3 potions of healing.

Parcel 13: A small gold-framed portrait of an old priest, worth 400 gp; and two potions of healing.

STARTING THE ADVENTURE

As noted in the previous adventure, Amyria requests that the PCs accompany her to Overlook as they leave the fortress. If they choose not to go with her, she goes by herself. If they do travel with her, she fares them well once they reach the entrance to the city, and then she slips into the crowd around the entrance. PCs can choose to attempt to follow her at this point, and if so, they find that she heads to the Temple of Ioun in the Nine Bells district, where she prays.

ALTERNATE HOOKS

If you're running this adventure on its own or as part of your own campaign, rather than as part of the Scales of War—or if you prefer a different means of starting things off—one of these hooks might work better for you.

THE MESSAGE

One night, as the party beds down to camp, a PC abruptly hears a voice in his head. A DC 10 Arcana check identifies it as the result of the Sending ritual.

“My name is Lavinya. I believe a hidden danger is growing within Overlook. Please come to Erathis’s old temple as soon as you’re able.”

It’s a cryptic message, yes, but that’s the problem with Sending. The PCs might wonder how a woman they’ve never met can send them a Sending at all. If they ask her later on, Lavinya tells them that she was in one of the crowds that greeted them after their heroic triumph against the orc hordes in “The Siege of Bordrin’s Watch” (or some other adventure in your own campaign).

NO PLACE LIKE HOME

It’s entirely possible that the PCs have taken to thinking of Overlook as their home—or at least a base of operations—by this point in the Adventure Path. If they appear inclined to return to Overlook on their own, without any outside encouragement, allow

them to do so. They can arrive at the city without any inkling that something is amiss, and remain that way until they either visit the shrine of Erathis or the Stone Anvil, or until they receive Lavinya’s message at their favorite inn or tavern.

OVERLOOK LOCATIONS SUMMARY

The following Overlook locations come into play in this adventure. The numbers given refer to the location’s position on the map of Overlook in “Siege of Bordrin’s Watch.”

Caer Overlook (High Hall district), 21: The seat of government in Overlook, this fortress houses the meeting chamber of the Council of Elders—called the High Hall, after which the district is named—as well as the offices of various district representatives.

The Divine Knot (Nine Bells District), 24: The Divine Knot is a corner of the Nine Bells district, occupied by an array of dirty, dilapidated temples all but clustered together, like old men huddling against the cold. The temples of Avandra, Bahamut, Erathis, Kord, the Raven Queen, and Zehir still operate, albeit with small and impoverished congregations. The old temples of Ioun, Moradin, and Pelor have long since closed. The temple of Moradin was replaced with the Stone Anvil, while the other two no longer have organized services in the city.

The Ministry of War (High Hall District), 22: A complex of several buildings around a courtyard, the Ministry of War trains Overlook’s soldiers, and houses the barracks and offices of the city garrison.

The Pig and Bucket Tavern (Blister District), 5: An infamous tavern, well known for its beer hall, its wide selection of cheap drinks, and the great many criminals, mercenaries, and adventurers who frequent the place looking for work.

The Shrine of Erathis (Tradetown District), 13: A small shrine, little more than an altar and a statue. So far as the PCs know, the shrine is tended by a kindly old woman named Haelyn.

The Stone Anvil (Hammerstone District), 15: A grand cathedral to Moradin, the Stone Anvil is a combination temple and fortress. It is the most powerful church in the city, and it is currently run by High Priest Durkik Forgeheart, an old dwarf whose faith and sense of social responsibility have been slowly chipped away beneath the weight of years.

PART ONE: RETURN TO OVERLOOK

Parts One and Three of this adventure take place in the city of Overlook, first introduced in “The Siege of Bordrin’s Watch,” the second installment of the Scales of War (Dungeon #157). “The Temple Between” assumes that PCs are familiar with—and somewhat well known within—Overlook, and it details only those portions of the city important to this adventure. You might wish to have that adventure handy, for easy reference.

As the PCs approach the city, read:

The towering walls of Overlook rise slowly but steadily over the horizon as you draw ever nearer your destination. From a distance, the city looks as secure and serene as ever, but as you move closer, you can see that all is not as you left it. A great mass of activity bustles around the gates, people lugging stone and timber this way and that, all beneath the watchful eyes of sentinels who stand dutifully atop the wall. One particular blond-bearded dwarf in plate armor—an officer, you would assume—stands atop the gate shouting orders to everyone in sight.

Although the activity doesn’t appear especially rushed or frantic—indeed, you see people pausing to talk or jest with one another as they work (and when the officer isn’t looking)—it appears as though Overlook were mobilizing for war.

The PCs are hailed as they approach, while the sentinels atop the walls and by the gates offering friendly but careful greetings. Multiple crossbows are trained on the party until they identify themselves, but once they do, their welcome becomes far warmer. Several workers and soldiers stop to clap their hands, and

the sentinels swiftly lower their weapons and stand taller at their posts. Word has spread of the PCs’ heroics on behalf of the city so far, and their return is seen as a good omen.

If the PCs ask, any one of the workers or soldiers—or the officer, who introduces himself as Captain Aerun—tells them that yes, the city is making preparations for war. It’s not that they anticipate any *specific* trouble, and indeed, the Council of Elders and the various priesthoods have reason to hope that, with the defeat of the orc invasion and the closing of the Shadowfell gate, their city is good and safe for a long time to come. Still, recent troubles have stirred up a strong “better safe than slaughtered” mentality among the populace and the city leaders, and so the Council of Elders have ordered that Overlook’s defenses be repaired and enhanced.

Should the PCs question any of the locals about any *current* troubles, they receive only puzzled and slightly concerned replies. “No problems going on that I know about,” is the common response. “Why, is there something we should be worried about?”

For at least their first few hours in Overlook, then, the PCs find no signs of the troubles that drew them here—or at least, they *probably* don’t.

At least in this part of the adventure, no random urban encounters occur. At this point, the PCs are famous enough—and, more importantly, skilled enough and of a high enough level—that your average street thief or other ne’er-do-well gives them a substantially wide berth.

SUBTLE CHANGES

If the PCs have come in response to Lavinya’s sending, they can proceed immediately to the temple of Erathis in the Divine Knot. If so, continue with “The

Shadow of Civilization,” below. Similarly, depending on what personal connections they’ve made in past visits to Overlook, they might also decide to visit either the Stone Anvil or Haelyn at the Shrine of Erathis. In these cases, proceed either to C3 or C4, respectively.

But in most instances, the PCs likely find somewhere to take their ease, an establishment where they can grab a bite to eat other than trail rations, and a bed somewhat softer and less bug-infested than the open earth.

It is possible that the PCs might seek out old allies (or enemies), as long as they feel they have nothing else to do. At the moment, this isn’t likely to accomplish much of anything. The Council is currently far too busy dealing with preparations for war and various administrative catastrophes (some of which were engineered by Captain Aerun or other infiltrators to keep them busy), and has nothing for the PCs to do except maybe lend a hand reinforcing the gates. Bram Ironfell is currently out of town. Although you’re welcome to have the PCs talk to any NPCs with whom they have a past relationship, none of it amounts to much.

KEEP TRACK OF TIME

From the moment the PCs arrive in Overlook, keep track of how much time they spend. Whether they complete their exploration of the Mountainroot Temple within five days from this point, or not, impacts their ultimate chances of success when the city falls under siege. See “Victory Points,” page 37, in Part Three: The Siege of Overlook.

THE FIRST NIGHT HOME

Lavinya has been making a concerted effort at contacting the PCs, and there are few places in the city she hasn't visited. Regardless of what establishment the PCs wind up patronizing, one of the servers or proprietors approaches them a few moments after they've ordered refreshments or paid for a room.

Read the following aloud:

"Begging your pardon, m'lords and ladies, but you look familiar to me. You are the folks who saved us from the orcs, and from those foul creatures of shadow, aren't you?"

Assuming the PCs affirm their identities, the server continues:

"Well, I'm sorry to disturb you and all, but there's someone been looking for you. Woman named Lavinya? She's a priestess at the temple of Erathis, over in the Divine Knot. She's been leaving messages all over town—says she desperately needs to speak with you. She begs you to come see her at the temple, just as soon as you can get there."

It's vaguely possible the PCs might refuse to go (in which case, one has to wonder if they're the heroes they're reputed to be), in which case you can have Lavinya track them down at some point over the next day or two. The adventure, as written, assumes that the PCs agree to meet with her, either immediately or the following day.

THE SHADOW OF CIVILIZATION

As the PCs pass through the Divine Knot, read the following:

You cannot help but notice, as you pass, that the old temple of Moradin appears to be under as much construction as the city ramparts. Great frameworks and ladders stand alongside the building, and you can see lumber stacked along the inner walls through the open windows. It looks as though not every priesthood in Overlook is as badly off these days as that of Erathis.

Even as compared to other temples of the Knot, the temple of Erathis has seen better days. As the PCs approach, read:

It's all but impossible to tell what color the stones of this temple might once have been, for now they're a repugnant mixture of smoke-stained gray, dirty-handprint brown, and bird-dropping white. The stench of the Nine Bells district appear to congregate here, as though seeking admittance and absolution, and you've seen zombies that looked (and smelled) healthier than some of the unfortunate, impoverished souls shambling along the streets with empty eyes.

Three wide steps that don't appear to have been swept in days rise toward a heavy wooden door that boasts a relatively fresh coat of polish—one that cannot begin to conceal the rot beneath.

Regardless of the time of day or night, when the PCs enter they see a largely empty cathedral, its pews old and candles burned down to nubs. At the far end stands an altar to Erathis, which is far better maintained than anything around it. A dark-haired and gold-robed half-elf, grown old before her time, kneels

before the altar, rising and turning at the sound of the door.

"Thank you," she says as she recognizes the PCs. "I knew Erathis would guide you to me."

For a few moments she waits on the PCs, offering what comfort she can, pointing them toward the pews at the front of the cathedral (the cleanest ones), offering a few glasses of cheap wine, and the like.

Only once they're settled—or when they lose patience and press her on why she summoned them—does she frown thoughtfully and begin.

"My name is Lavinya," she tells you. "I'm the last priestess here; the others all departed years ago, when the Nine Bells went all to seed, and the temples with it. I keep it open and functioning as best I can on my own, but . . ."

She shakes her head, as though reminding herself to stay on topic. "Do you know Haelyn?" she asks.

If the PCs do not, she says the following:

"Haelyn is a wonderful old woman. She's the caretaker of the shrine to Erathis, over in Tradetown."

If the PCs do know Haelyn, skip that particular bit of dialogue and continue with the following sets of text. They have been broken up to allow for more interaction, but if none is forthcoming, continue to the next set of text.

"I'm sure you know," she continues, "that most worship of Erathis in Overlook takes place there, rather than here. I must admit, I haven't always been a friend to Haelyn. I was . . . bitter, very bitter, at what happened to my temple. But after a time, we got to know each other, and we've become great friends."

“And that’s why I need you!” Lavinya looks up, her eyes suddenly narrowed. “Something is wrong! Something’s happened to Haelyn, I know it, and maybe not just to her!”

At this point, Lavinya takes a sip of her drink, then says:

“A few weeks ago, Haelyn just disappeared. I went by the shrine to speak with her and she was gone. There’s a man named Grovald maintaining the shrine now. I don’t know him; I’ve never met him before, and nobody I talk to knows him, either. He told me that Haelyn left on a spiritual retreat and would be back in a few months.

“But I know better! Haelyn needed no ‘spiritual retreat.’ Her faith was strong, and it was centered on that shrine! And even if she had, she wouldn’t have up and left—without telling me.”

Now Lavinya shakes her head and gauges the reactions of the PCs, then continues:

“I must confess, I went back at night and snooped around a bit, not just in the shrine, but peering through the windows of the groundskeeper’s cottage. I’ve offered penance to Erathis for my trespass, but I had to know what happened! I didn’t . . . I found no trace of Haelyn, but I did catch a glimpse of a letter through the cracks in the shutters. I couldn’t read much of it, and I dared not stay long, but I’m certain it was addressed to ‘G’—that must be Grovald, right?—and it began with ‘I am commanded to ask if you’ve had any further problems with the worshipers of . . .’ That’s all I saw, but it sounds sinister enough!

“And that,” she says morosely, “is where things got even worse. I went to the authorities, but they told me there was nothing to look into, that Haelyn—or any citizen—can travel as they please. I spoke to some of the other priests—Aelys of Bahamut, Durkik of Moradin at the Stone Anvil, Kyrrist of

Avandra, even Matron Volorvyn of the Raven Queen. Some of these have long been my friends, and even those who were not have at least been respected colleagues. And all of them brushed me off! They were distant, uncaring, even cold, as though my worries were of no moment! Volorvyn appeared barely to recognize me, and while we’ve never been close, we’ve known one another on and off for years.”

Lavinya looks at each of the PCs, one by one, while continuing:

“And that’s when I thought of you, Overlook’s new heroes. I’m terrified that something has happened to my friend and that something is wrong with my fellow priests. I should, we all should, be showering you with gifts and thanks, not heaping even more cares onto your shoulders—but I’ve little influence left in this city, and I have nobody else to whom I can turn.”

Lavinya smiles gratefully when the PCs agree. (Again, the adventure, as written, assumes they do so.)

She can’t offer much in the way of additional information, though she does try to advise the PCs if they ask her council.

“You could talk to one of the priests, I suppose,” she mutters doubtfully. “I’m not sure they’d agree to speak with you at any length, though. Everyone’s so busy with the mobilization. And these are important people; you can’t just, uh, ‘hero’ your way into the building and confront them,” she adds with a smile. “Still you might learn something from them.

“You could examine the shrine of Erathis. You might well find something I missed. Or you could search Haelyn’s home, which is on the same lot as the shrine. I looked for her there, but when she didn’t answer, it felt wrong for me to just barge in. But now . . .” She shrugs.

Lavinya can, of course, give the PCs directions to any of these locations, or any other public location of which they might ask her.

If the PCs ask her (or anyone else around town) about the work going on at the old temple of Moradin, she answers as follows:

“Oh, that. High Ancestor Durkik recently assigned most of his underpriests to restoring the old temple. Something about wanting to expand, I think, so that other races who might not be comfortable in the Stonehammer district could return to Moradin.”

Finally, if your players are accustomed to using sword and spell to deal with every obstacle and aren’t used to subtlety and restraint, you can use Lavinya—who is, after all, a priest of the goddess of civilization—to remind them to behave themselves. The PCs do not have any *legal* authority here, after all. They can fight to defend themselves, and against any criminal element they might discover, but they can’t just pull steel on a high priest or a squad of city watch and expect things to go their way. Some element of discretion is *vital*.

OUT OF ORDER

Don’t worry if the PCs do things in a different order than presented here; everything still works. For instance, if they go to the Shrine of Erathis and begin investigating Haelyn’s disappearance on their own, you can still have them receive Lavinya’s message later that same evening. Everything that needs to happen can happen regardless of when the PCs get to it.

INVESTIGATING OVERLOOK

The PCs have a variety of approaches they can take here, and a number of locations of interest.

Don't, however, feel that you *must* force the PCs to stick only to the locations presented below. If they come up with another avenue of investigation, you can “wing it” and let them pursue that course, perhaps allowing them to find their answers some other way. You can try to gently guide them back on track; perhaps other NPCs also express suspicion of Grovald, or comment on priests acting peculiarly. Or you might run an extra ambush encounter (see C7, below), giving the PCs another opportunity to question their attackers, and thus pointing them back toward Captain Aerun.

A COLLECTION OF CLUES

For DMs not accustomed to running this sort of investigation, this sidebar presents the various bits of information the PCs can pick up in each of the following encounters, just to help you keep it straight.

C1: At the Stone Anvil, the PCs learn that High Ancestor Durkik adamantly doesn't want them snooping around.

C2: The PCs learn that the Ironfell Clan is one of the investors in the reconstruction of the old temple of Moradin in the Divine Knot—but this is a red herring and is not relevant to the ongoing investigation. More relevant is the admission by Ancestor Karros that High Ancestor Durkik is not acting himself lately.

C3: At the other temples, the PCs can experience for themselves the fact that many of the city's high priests are acting peculiarly.

C4 and C5: During the day, the PCs learn only that the people don't especially trust the new caretaker,

C1: THE STONE ANVIL

Under normal circumstances, a group with such a disparate racial makeup as the party would have a few problems sauntering through the dwarf-heavy (and elitist) district of Stonehammer. Their current status as heroes of the city, however, grants the PCs a bit of leeway.

As they approach the Stone Anvil, read the following:

As compared to so much of the rest of Overlook, the Stonehammer district might almost be a different city. Broad, clean streets flow like rivers of rock between enormous, sweeping edifices, carved with near magical

Grovald, and possibly that Haelyn didn't pack up for a “spiritual journey.” If they return at night, they can locate the body of Haelyn and learn of Grovald's connection to Durkik either through an interrogation or the half-burned note.

C6: If the PCs go to the authorities, they might discover that Captain Aerun appears more interested in keeping them out of any subsequent investigation than in investigating.

C7: If the PCs question their ambushers, they learn that a corrupt city watchperson has hired them and can be found nightly at the Pig and Bucket.

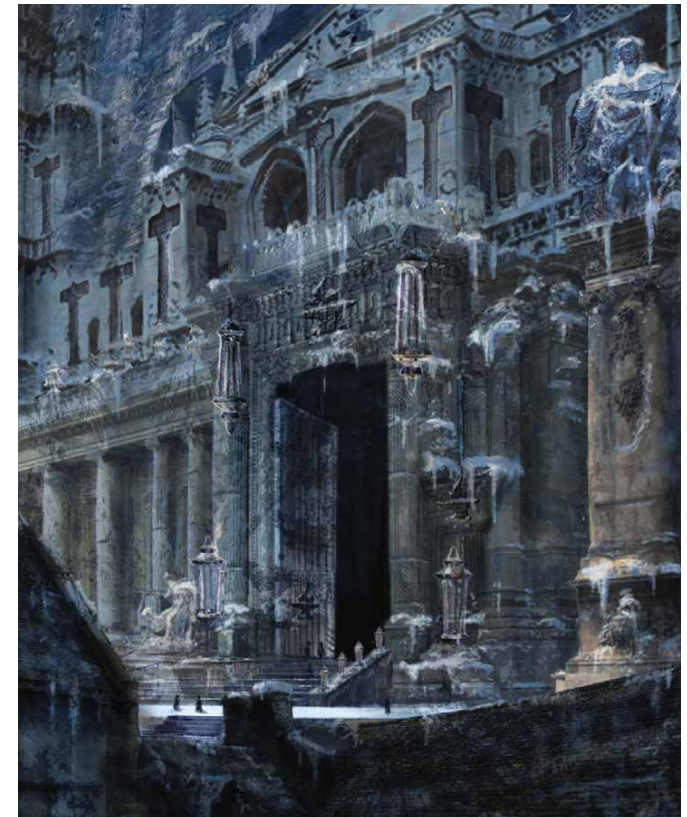
C8: At the Pig and Bucket, the PCs learn (or confirm) that the corrupt guardsman is Aerun.

Culmination: The PCs should be suspicious of either Durkik, Aerun, or both. They can follow either of them to the warehouse (C9), leading to the conclusion of this portion of the adventure.

precision. The air is clean here, and the voices you hear are raised in laughter or negotiation, without the tinge of desperation so common in some of the poorer quarters.

And then you are there. It rises up before you like a fortress, constructed of blocks of stone larger than many of Overlook's houses. At its height, looking down upon even its tallest neighboring buildings, glint leaded windows in the shape of hammers. The doors at the entryway stand open, inviting all who would worship, and a good thing it is—for these doors are 40 feet high if they're an inch, and the lot of you together might have difficulty dragging them open.

This is the Stone Anvil, temple of Moradin and the spiritual heart of Overlook.



If the PCs peer into the sanctuary—which is no less sweeping, magnificent, and ostentatious than the building’s exterior—they see about a hundred worshipers (if they came during the day) or about a dozen worshipers (if they came at night) engaged in prayer, heads bowed and chanting in low, sonorous voices. As usual, the overwhelming majority of the faithful here are dwarves. The services are being led by a young dwarf female who reads from a great, steel-bound tome that, when open, is nearly as broad as she is. There is no sign here of anything out of the ordinary, or of High Ancestor Durkik himself.

If the PCs examine the halls surrounding the main sanctuary, however, things don’t appear so mundane. A great many tasks appear to have been left undone; floors are not swept, candelabras are unpolished, torches and braziers have been allowed to burn out. (If the PCs ask any of the faithful about this, they are once again told that most of Durkik’s underpriests are currently hard at work restoring the old temple in the Divine Knot.)

If they explore farther still, going deeper into the temple than most worshipers ever travel, they don’t have long to explore. Within mere moments, High Ancestor Durkik appears, accompanied by a contingent of the city watch. He demands, in no uncertain terms, that the PCs depart immediately. The guards are apologetic—they recognize the PCs as heroes—but adamant. The priest has the legal and religious authority to demand that the party leaves, and the guards are here to ensure they do just that.

Still, while they haven’t learned any concrete details, the PCs can now be pretty sure that something odd is afoot at the Stone Anvil.

If the PCs return at night, with the intent of spying on or following High Ancestor Durkik, proceed to the Heart of the Conspiracy skill challenge, below.

INTERROGATION

Several of the following encounters allow the PCs the opportunity to interrogate their foes, if they take any alive. When dealing with a human thug or a doppelganger assassin, this is a level 8 skill challenge; when dealing with Grovald or the false Durkik, it is level 9. In either case, the challenge has a complexity of 2, with Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate, and Insight as the primary skills. PCs can use Religion, with an easy check, against Grovald or the false Durkik (revealing that they’re not true followers of Erathis or Moradin), or Streetwise, with an easy check, against the others (to discover some of their criminal affiliations). These don’t qualify as successes, but grant the PCs +2 bonuses to other checks in the challenge until their next failure. Similarly, a promise of freedom buys a +2 bonus to all such checks, and a bribe of at least 100 gp grants an automatic success with the thugs and doppelgangers, but not Grovald or the false Durkik.

If the PCs succeed, the subject answers all their questions. If they fail, but with one or more successes, the subject answers a number of questions equal to the PCs successes, but at least one answer is a lie.

If the PCs wish, they can question enemies they’ve killed, using the Speak with Dead ritual. In this case, use the “Dead Witness” skill challenge (*Dungeon Master’s Guide*, page 78, as either a level 8 or level 9 challenge, as appropriate).

See the individual entries for suggestions on what information the NPCs can offer.

C2: THE TEMPLE OF MORADIN IN THE DIVINE KNOT

The PCs might decide to look more thoroughly at the old temple of Moradin to see if any answers lie there. Although the PCs might be briefly misdirected by a red herring or two, they can also make a friend within the ranks of Moradin’s priests who reinforces their suspicions of High Ancestor Durkik.

As the PCs arrive at the temple, read:

The amount of work going on here makes the place look less like a house of worship and more like an anthill on a massive scale. Workers of all races scurry through doors and windows, clambering up scaffolds of wood and iron. The sounds of grunts, curses, shouted orders, and the monotonous thump of hammers on nails make it all but impossible to hear yourself think.

Once the PCs enter the structure, continue:

The work continues inside as well as out. Workers with boards on their shoulders, wheelbarrows, or heavy hammers move back and forth before you. The floor is covered with dust, both stone and wood, and heaps of rubble lie in every corner.

Not everyone here is a simple laborer, however. Leaning against the leftmost wall, her eyes narrowing as she watches you, is a young, heavily muscled woman clad in scale armor. One hand rests on the hilt of a longsword at her waist.

Assuming the PCs have played through prior installments of the Scales of War, they recognize the warrior immediately. This is Megan Swiftblade, leader of an adventuring party called the Freeriders. Though their interactions when they first met might have been friendly enough, Megan and her team resent the PCs

for becoming greater heroes of Overlook than they, and while that resentment doesn't equate to true hatred or hostility—the Freeriders aren't evil—they aren't inclined to do the PCs any favors.

Then again, Megan's not the one the PCs have the most worry about. As soon as the PCs attempt to move farther into the room, or to speak to or attract anyone's attention, read:

Abruptly, one of the dwarf workers turns and stops in front of you, coming within inches of running his wheelbarrow over [insert a character's name]'s foot. He hitches his thumbs through his belt—a gesture that puts one hand uncomfortably near the haft of his hammer—and glares with beady eyes above a dirty beard. “You bastards ain't welcome here,” he announces gruffly. “You might have the rest of the city hoodwinked, but not us.”

This particularly unpleasant dwarf is Murrik Ironfell, a member of the Ironfell Clan with whom the PCs came into conflict back in “The Lost Mines of Karak.” He's not shy about introducing himself, so the PCs shouldn't wonder long why he's bothering them. And many of the other workers on site are also of that clan, slowly assembling around Murrik as he continues to taunt the PCs. Megan and the other Freeriders begin to assemble as well. If the PCs ask her why she's here, she tells them, “The priests of Moradin hired us to make sure the old temple was free of any dangerous people or creatures for the renovation. You're starting to look dangerous to me.”

You can let this go on for a few minutes, allowing the PCs and Murrik to exchange threats and insults.

Once it appears ready to escalate into violence, the PCs agree to back down, or they continue to insist to see someone in charge, read the following:

A red-bearded dwarf, clad in worker's leathers and a smock but with the hammer of Moradin hanging about his neck, pushes his way through the crowd. “All right, all of you back to work!” he barks. Turning to you, he bows his head with cold politeness. “I'm Ancestor Karros of Moradin,” he says. “Why don't I escort you out?”

Ancestor Karros says little as he walks with the PCs back through the main door and down the steps, but the party can get him to open up. This level 7 skill challenge has a complexity of 1 and uses Bluff, Diplomacy, and Religion (to establish a common ground) as the primary skills. If the PCs succeed, Karros becomes a bit more talkative and—assuming the PCs ask the right questions or steer the conversation in the right direction—eventually provides the following information.

- ◆ High Priest Durkik has assigned almost the entire staff of the Stone Anvil to working on the reconstruction of the old temple. He's barely kept enough priests on hand there to conduct regular services. Karros doesn't speak ill of Durkik, but he hints at the fact that he doesn't approve. The idea of the renovation came out of nowhere, and neither Karros nor the other priests can figure out *why* it's being done.
- ◆ Durkik called for investors from Overlook's dwarves to aid in the reconstruction. The Ironfell Clan was among those to contribute money and workers. Many of the workers have been speaking poorly about the PCs any time their status as “heroes” comes up in conversation.

- ◆ Although he appears almost unwilling to admit it, Karros confesses that Durkik hasn't been himself for weeks now. He's worried about the old priest.

C3: OTHER TEMPLES IN THE DIVINE KNOT

If the PCs attempt to speak with any of the other priests in the Divine Knot, the priests politely listen to their concerns, promise to look into them, thank the PCs for their time, and ask them to leave. Allow the PCs to attempt a DC 20 Insight check; if they succeed, they realize that the priests act somewhat distant—as though they were distracted or preoccupied with something pressing.

If the PCs return at night, with the intent of spying on or following any of the priests, proceed to the Heart of the Conspiracy skill challenge, below.

C4: THE SHRINE OF ERATHIS

As the PCs approach the shrine, read:

As compared to Overlook's temples, this shrine is poor indeed—and yet it offers a sense of intimacy that the greater edifices do not. Several wooden poles stuck in the earth support walls and ceiling of heavy fabric, barely enough to keep the rain off the altar within it. The altar is littered with candle stubs and scraps of parchment, which are the remnants of prayers and offerings.

Beyond the makeshift sanctuary, a statue of Erathis stands in the middle of a pool of stagnant water, staring off toward the horizon. Many of the bricks of the pool are broken or missing, and a closer glance suggests that the “statue” was in fact a fountain at one point, but the mechanism has failed—likely many years ago.

Several rickety cottages stand on the edge of the property, apparently held together by little more than faith and an extra coating of paint.

If the PCs come during the day, continue with the following:

Several townsfolk move in and out of the curtain-housed shrine, leaving written prayers on the altar and occasionally glancing askance at a fellow who paces behind it. He is a tall human, bald-headed with features sharp as an eagle's, clad all in somber black. He mutters to himself as he paces.

Insight Check

DC 16: *It's pretty clear from his body language that the man doesn't want to be here, though any time one of the citizens utters a prayer to Erathis, he replies with a quick "So may it be."*

If the PCs speak with him, he introduces himself as Grovald. He answers any questions about Haelyn with the same "spiritual retreat" story he gave Lavinya (and no, he doesn't know where she went or when she'll be back). If the PCs press him or try to talk about any other issue, he insists that he's busy praying along with his faithful and returns to pacing. At this point, he starts muttering more loudly, offering prayers to Erathis. A DC 18 Insight check suggests he's lying about Haelyn.

Again, the PCs' reputation as saviors of Overlook comes to the rescue.

After the quick exchange with Grovald (and before the PCs can contemplate doing something foolish in front of witnesses), read the following:

One of the faithful, an older woman dressed in shabby but well-mended shawl and dress, stands up from the altar and turns her eyes on you. "I know you!" she calls out. "Thank you so much for all you've done!"

As she approaches you, however, she glances once at Grovald and her eyes narrow. In a much softer tone of

voice, she says, "I couldn't help but overhear, and a lot of us have asked him the same questions. We don't trust him, and we're worried about Haelyn. Almost nobody comes here after dark anymore, so if you want the chance to talk to him in private, when he's not so 'busy,' that'd be a good time to come back. Maybe you can find out what's going on."

INTERROGATING GROVALD OR HIS SOLDIERS

Assuming the PCs ask the right questions or guide the conversation down the proper path, they learn the following information.

From the Thugs or Doppelgangers: These are simple hoods and members of the Lost Ones criminal organization. Someone has been coming to the Lost Ones to hire out a lot of extra muscle. This particular group of thugs was hired by Grovald. They don't know who *he* works for, but they've seen him meeting with a dwarf on occasion. They don't know who *else* has been hiring muscle, or if they're tied into the same conspiracy, but they know that they're far from the only thugs to be hired as soldiers lately.

From Grovald: Grovald grudgingly admits that he killed Haelyn and buried her behind the fountain. He claims he was ordered to do so by individuals who didn't like her poking her nose in where it wasn't wanted. If pressed, he confesses that he's ultimately working for someone named General Zithiruun. Grovald doesn't know what he's a general of, and he doesn't know what species, for the general wears a hooded cloak, but he does wear a strange armor of iron joints and leather harnesses. At the moment, though, Grovald takes his orders from Durkik, high priest of "that rock-headed idiot god." He knows that Durkik spends

The PCs can take a casual look around the grounds during the day, and Grovald doesn't stop them. But any attempt to look inside cottage C4A, or any thorough searching (such as climbing inside the fountain) brings threats of him calling the watch and having the PCs charged with trespassing. (As long as they're at least a little bit subtle, he doesn't appear to notice if

most of his time at the temple, but that the high priest frequently disappears for the night; to where, Grovald doesn't know.

If pressed on the issue, Grovald confesses that he is the priest of "the master of darkness." (A DC 10 Religion check reveals this to be an occasional title for Zehir.) Grovald claims that his involvement here is purely mercenary—and this is the truth because he was paid for his assistance—but PCs who don't believe him might wind up chasing false clues for a bit, seeking a Zehir connection..

SPEAKING WITH HAELYN

If the PCs use Speak with Dead on Haelyn, there's no need for a skill challenge; she's happy to aid them. Alas, all she can tell them is that Grovald murdered her as she prayed in the shrine for guidance. She had recently noticed a change in the personalities of various priests in the city, but was laughed off when she confronted them. (She admits, now, that it was foolish of her to let on that she suspected them, but she's been a trusting sort.) She was praying that Erathis would send a sign of what to do next when Grovald entered and slew her with his magic. She asks the PCs to please thank Lavinya for her concern.

they poke around Haelyn's shack at C5, at least not during the day.)

If and when the PCs return here at night, proceed to the tactical encounter.

Tactical Encounter: C4/C5 The Shrine of Erathis and Haelyn's Home (page 41).

C5: HAELYN'S HOME

As the PCs approach, read:

This small cottage on the grounds of the shrine looks comfortable, but old and rickety. Bricks are missing from the chimney, and the paint is peeling from the walls.

The door is locked, requiring a DC 18 Thievery check to open. Once the PCs enter, read:

The dust of days, if not weeks, lies over a homey little abode. An ash-filled fireplace stands in one corner, with an old table and two equally old, but comfortable looking, chairs beside it. A pantry stands alongside a door that would almost have to lead to the bedroom.

A faint stench, foul and out of place with the cottage's peaceful appearance, tickles your nostrils.

The PCs find no trace that anyone has been in here in some time. In the bedroom, clothes are packed neatly in the chest by the foot of the bed, piled almost as high as the lid will allow.

The stench is coming from the pantry, which contains several rotting vegetables, fruits, and cuts of meat, all swarming with ants and fruit flies. The players can probably figure out what this means, but if not, allow them a DC 5 Intelligence check to realize that perishable foods in the pantry and a chest of clothes almost completely full are *not* signs of someone who was preparing for a long journey.

C6: THE MINISTRY OF WAR

At some point in their investigations, the PCs might decide to try going to the authorities and getting some help. If they do so, they're directed to the Ministry of War—specifically, the office wherein the officers of the city garrison work.

As the PCs approach, read the following:

The Ministry of War is huge, consisting of six buildings arrayed around a central courtyard—all within an imposing set of guard walls, of course. As you approach the gate, two guards, a dwarf and a dragonborn, step forward and cross their spears before you. "State your business within," the dwarf demands.

The guards have no intention of barring the PCs' path, since the Ministry of War is open to all during business hours. They're just following protocol. Once the PCs explain their purpose, the guards are happy to provide directions to the office, which is in one of the buildings nearest the main entrance to the compound.

Once the PCs enter the office, read:

A dwarf stands up from behind the desk as you enter. His blond beard is tightly braided, his armor brightly polished. It takes you only a moment to recognize him as the officer you saw shouting orders from the wall when you first arrived in Overlook.

"I'm Captain Aerun," he says in a gruff voice. "I'm honored to have Overlook's heroes in my office. What can I help you with?"

Aerun listens intently and politely, scowling in anger when the PCs mention some of the vile things they've seen, and shaking his head if they mention having found Haelyn's body and/or killing Grovald. Ultimately, however, regardless of what the PCs tell him, Aerun's response is the same.

"These are indeed grave matters you bring to me," he says. "I'll get looking into them at once. And you once again have the thanks of a grateful city. Go on and take a load off, wherever you're staying. I'll let you know how the investigation turns out."

No matter how the PCs argue, Aerun refuses to allow them to take part in the investigation, going so far as to *order* them to stay out of it, and leave further efforts to the proper authorities. If they show any signs of hostility, argue with him for *too* long, or demand to speak to someone else, he calls in several guards to escort the PCs out. The guards are deferential, since they respect the party a great deal, but they follow orders.

During this exchange, allow the PCs to make Insight checks. With a DC 16, a character recognizes that Aerun is more interested in keeping them out of the investigation than he is in finding out the truth. With a DC 20, the character realizes that something about Aerun's behavior isn't right; even though he's engaged in the conversation, something about him appears vaguely distant, as though he's thinking about something else. If the PCs have been to visit the priests at the various temples in the Divine Knot, they recognize this as the same behavioral quirk.

If the PCs come back at night, with the intent of spying on or following Aerun, they see him depart in civilian clothes. Eventually, he leads them to the Pig and Bucket (see C8).

C7: AMBUSH IN THE ALLEY

Precisely when this encounter occurs depends on the PCs. (Don't assume it has to happen after the scenes described previously, just because it's given as C7 on the list.) The attack happens on a random street corner when any *one* of the following events have occurred:

INTERROGATING THE AMBUSHERS

Assuming the PCs ask the right questions or guide the conversation down the proper path, they can learn the following information:

These hoods had orders to attack them. They normally work for the Lost Ones criminal organization, but in recent weeks, customers have been coming to the Lost Ones to hire out a lot of extra muscle. This particular group of thugs was hired out to, of all people, a city watch member! The hoods don't know his name, but they know him by appearance. He shows up at the Pig and Bucket almost every night so they can report to him and receive their orders. They don't know who he works for, only that they're to follow his orders. They know that he often heads out into the city after leaving the Pig and Bucket, and not in the direction of the High Hall district, but they don't know where he goes.

Similarly, they don't know who *else* has been hiring muscle, or if they're tied into the same conspiracy, but they know that they're far from the only thugs to be hired as soldiers lately.

If asked, they describe the guardsman as a blond-bearded dwarf with a gruff voice. If the PCs have been to see Captain Aerun, further description appears to match him perfectly.

- ◆ The PCs have been to the Stone Anvil and at least one other location mentioned here as part of this investigation, or
- ◆ The PCs have been to see Captain Aerun and at least one other location mentioned here as part of this investigation, or
- ◆ The PCs have defeated Grovald and his soldiers in combat.

Obviously, the attack doesn't occur *instantly* after these conditions are met, but some point in the next few hours, as the PCs are traveling about the city.

Tactical Encounter: C7 Ambush in the Alley (page 43).

C8: THE PIG AND BUCKET

The Pig and Bucket is a cheap, filthy, yet unaccountably popular one-story tavern in the district called the Blister. Squished between a couple of boarding houses said to sell a lot more than just board, it's known for its wide variety of beers, and its wide variety of crooks, mercenaries, and thugs who frequent the place looking for work.

If the PCs enter, read:

Most of the building's interior consists of the beer hall. Booths line the walls, while long tables and rear-bruising benches fill the middle of the room between. Along the far wall runs a wooden bar—you can see the graffiti carved into it even from here—behind which stand stacks of kegs.

Assuming the PCs are here at night, looking for (or having followed) Captain Aerun, they can see him in one of the far booths, speaking to a scruffy looking individual in a shabby gray cloak. If the PCs have taken steps to disguise themselves, Aerun doesn't recognize them. If they have not, they have exactly 1 round to do something with themselves before he notices them.

Hopefully, the PCs are wise enough either to disguise themselves, or to wait outside. If he sees them, he keeps drinking for a few minutes, then leaves and casually returns to the Ministry of War, and the PCs have lost their chance to follow him that night.

If the PCs remain unnoticed, however, and try to follow Aerun after he departs, continue with the Heart of the Conspiracy skill challenge.

INTERROGATING THE POSSESSED

Unfortunately, the possessed individuals—including Aerun and several priests other than Durkik—are effectively immune to interrogation. After all, the PCs cannot offer them anything they require, and they have no fear, for they can abandon the body and return to their own. If, however, the PCs try to interrogate them, a DC 21 Insight check reveals that the individuals are possessed by an outside force. If the possessing githyanki realizes the PCs know this, it immediately leaves the body, which falls to the ground as a dead shell.

THE HEART OF THE CONSPIRACY

After a day or two of investigation, the PCs should have a couple of strong suspects: Captain Aerun and High Ancestor Durkik. They might suspect some of the other priests as well. If they choose, and put themselves in a position to do so, they can follow any one of these individuals to the warehouse wherein the conspiracy makes its headquarters. They can accomplish this with an extended skill challenge.

Skill Challenge: SC1 Catching Durkik (page 44).

C9: THE WAREHOUSE

This warehouse, located in the midst of the Blister district, is the headquarters of the conspiracy and the location where they're holding the real Durkik.

As the PCs approach, read:

Nothing in particular makes this warehouse stand out. It's a large, squat building, with a huge front door that opens by sliding up into the ceiling on rails. A rickety wooden staircase along one wall leads to a door that presumably opens onto an upper level.

Under normal circumstances, assume that the two githyanki-possessed individuals at the warehouse are Captain Aerun and Goodman Kyrrist, priest of Avondra. If the PCs have done something to prevent one of these two from being present, replace the missing with one of the other possessed priests (named in Lavinya's tale).

Tactical Encounter: C9 The Warehouse (page 45).

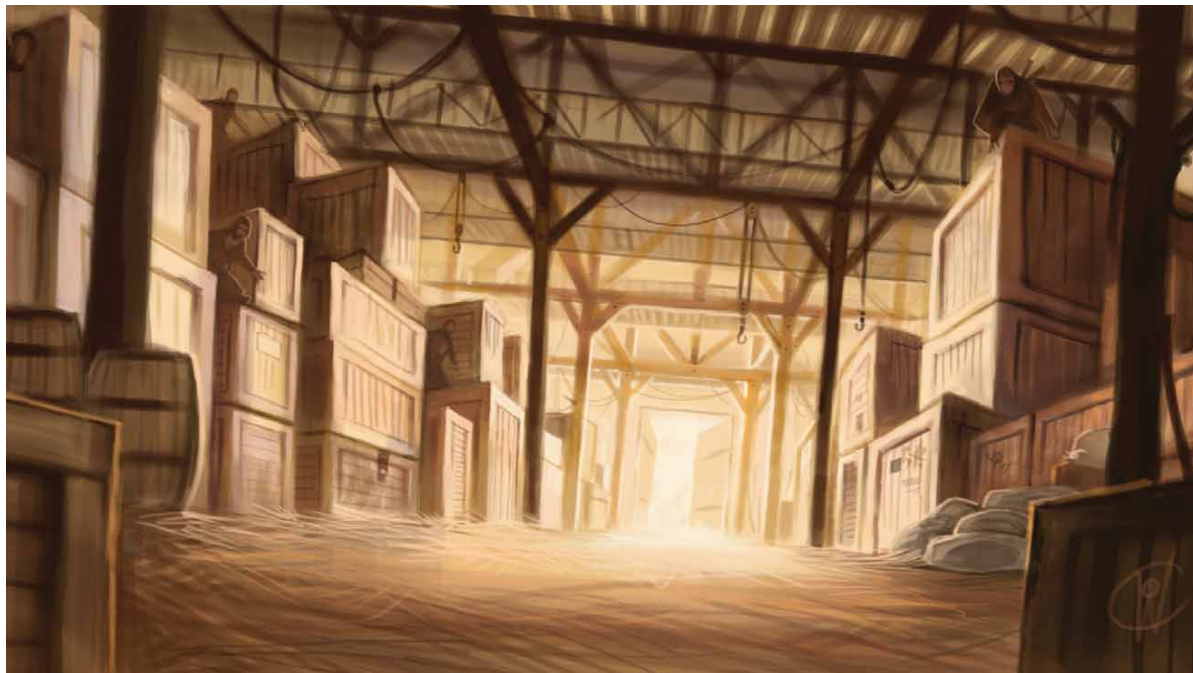
INTERROGATING THE CONSPIRATORS

As before, the PCs can interrogate any captives or survivors (except the two possessed individuals).

Assuming the PCs ask the right questions or guide the conversation down the proper path, they can learn the following information:

The conspirator reveals that a doppelganger has taken the place of the *real* high priest Durkik, who is being held prisoner in a secret chamber beneath the warehouse. He tells the PCs he is working for someone called General Zithiruun. Like Grovald, he hasn't seen Zithiruun's face, but recognizes him by his hooded cloak and his strange leather-and-steel harness. He knows that Zithiruun wants them to hold the Stone Anvil, and to question Durkik about the security and magic of another temple, called "Mountainroot." The false Durkik assigned most of the priests of Moradin to rebuilding the old temple as a means of keeping them occupied and out of the Stone Anvil.

The conspirator does not know why Zithiruun is interested in this "Mountainroot Temple." He knows only that Zithiruun has grown more and more frustrated with Durkik's failure to answer their questions; a few days ago, he stormed off insisting that he was going to "find out for himself," though he ordered them to keep trying in his absence, and record what they learned.



C9A: RESCUING DURKIK

When the PCs descend the ladder beneath the trapdoor in the warehouse, read:

You are within a narrow, stone-walled hallway. Mildew darkens the mortar between the bricks and fills the air with the damp scent of rot. A steel door, speckled with rust, stands at the far end of the hall. It boasts a small barred window, but from here you cannot see what might lie beyond.

Once the PCs near the door and can see through the bars, continue:

A dwarf, his flesh bruised and beaten, his hair and beard matted with blood, stands chained to the far wall of a stench-ridden, claustrophobic cell. It takes you a moment to recognize him as none other than High Priest Durkik Forgeheart!

Slowly, as though even so minor a move pains him, he looks up to meet your gaze through the bars, his eyes widening slightly as he recognizes you. "Be careful," he rasps in a hoarse voice. "The door's trapped."

He gestures with a finger, the chain clinking, to indicate a series of tubes that protrude from the walls of the cell, pointing in his direction. "And not to kill you, either," he adds impassively. "They don't want me escaping."

The door can be picked with a DC 21 Thievery check (as can the chains on his wrists, once the PCs move inside), but if the door is opened without the safeguards being disabled, one or more of the tubes fires a sharpened spike into Durkik's chest, killing him. The "trap" is three traps, each of which must be disabled.

**3 Spike Tubes
Trap****Level 9 Warder
XP 400**

Hidden tubes with powerful springs lurk within the walls, waiting to launch brutal iron spikes.

Perception

- ◆ DC 24: Through careful study, you determine how the mechanism fits together, allowing you to advise your allies how to work on it. This grants your allies a +2 bonus to Thievery checks made to disable the trap. (Each of the three traps requires a separate Perception check to grant this bonus.)

Initiative +10**Trigger**

If the PCs open the door without disarming all three traps, or if the characters fail four total countermeasure attempts (see below), all remaining traps fire.

Attack**Standard Action** **Melee 2****Target:** Everyone within the cell.**Attack:** +17 vs. AC; a prisoner chained by the manacles in the cell is hit automatically.**Hit:** 2d8+7 damage; against a prisoner chained by the manacles, this is considered a coup de grace attack, dealing 23 damage per functioning trap. In Durkik's case, this is more than enough to kill him.**Countermeasures**

- ◆ A character adjacent to the cell door can reach through the bars and attempt to physically wrench a tube off-target, thus disarming it, with a DC 28 Athletics check. Only two of the three traps are positioned to make this possible.
- ◆ A character adjacent to the cell door can disarm one of the three tubes with a DC 28 Thievery check.

If the PCs accidentally trigger the trap, Durkik gasps, "Bring me . . . to Karros . . ." with his last, choking breath.

SOME ANSWERS AND SOME HELP

The following section is written under the assumption that the PCs successfully rescue Durkik from the cell (or, failing that, that one of them casts the Raise Dead ritual on him). If this is not the case, the PCs might

cast Speak with Dead or, if they follow his dying wish, take him to Ancestor Karros. After finding out from the PCs what happened, Karros casts Speak with Dead. In these cases, do not use the standard rules for Speak with Dead, since Durkik's spirit is lingering, hoping to help. Instead, it uses the connection opened by the ritual to converse with them normally. Thus, you can still run the scene largely as written here; change any of his offers to accompany the PCs to him ordering Karros to do the same.

Once the PCs free Durkik, read the following:

The dwarf slowly limps from his cell, wincing with every step. Clearly he is in a great deal of pain, but despite that fact, his eyes are alert.

"Thank you," he says simply. "You're the answer to every prayer I've offered Moradin. But I fear, as grateful as I am to be out and alive, that I've little good news for you."

The PCs can help him as he talks. You can allow the PCs to ask questions and roleplay the conversation, or give them the information Durkik provides.

First, thanks to everything he overheard and the questions he was asked, Durkik knows roughly what the conspirators were up to. If the PCs don't already have it, he can provide all the information given above under the "Interrogating the Conspirators" text. He tells the PCs that Aerun and some of the other priests were possessed in a dark ritual, but that he was not because General Zithiruun required information from him.

At this point, Durkik tells the PCs about the Mountainroot Temple (all the information presented under that heading in the Background section).

Once he has shared the above information, read the following:

“As you’ve doubtless guessed,” he says to you, his voice still weak, “the Stone Anvil contains one of those portals to the Mountainroot Temple. I don’t know why this General Zithiruun wants the temple, but it’s clearly what he’s after.

“It’s funny, he’s had me tortured for days to make me describe the Mountainroot’s mystical defenses, but the truth is, I don’t know much about them. I know about the temple only because, as High Priest, I was told of it by my predecessor. I can tell you that the defenses are psychically linked to the Caretaker, allowing him to control them, but beyond that, I know little. But even had I told them that much, I doubt they’d have believed me.”

Durkik coughs twice, then continues:

“I don’t know why he wants the temple,” he repeats, “but I know it cannot be good for us. I know not who else in this city might have been compromised—who can be trusted. That leaves only you.

“The entrance from the Stone Anvil is carefully hidden within an old sepulcher. The chamber is hidden behind a secret door; I can escort you to it, but no farther. What I cannot do is tell you how to access the portal, for I don’t know, and I am oathbound never to enter the sepulcher. But my hope is that, once you find it, you can figure out how to use it.

“I must ask you one thing more,” he adds swiftly. “When the Mountainroot Temple was abandoned, the priesthood took most of our ancient religious relics with them. Most, but not all. Somewhere within the temple lies a tome entitled, when translated into Common, the Incunabulum Primeval. It is a book of great power for those who know how to use it. If you can find it and return it to us, I can promise you a reward of no less than 3,600 gp from the temple treasury, as well as legal right to any other treasure you find in, and can carry out of, the Mountainroot.”

BACK TO THE STONE ANVIL

Durkik (or Karros, if Durkik is dead) leads the PCs back through the towering halls of the Stone Anvil. (The PCs might decide to take an extended rest first and approach the temple the following day. If they’re badly depleted, you might even suggest this to them.) Several of the priests and guards appear nervous about allowing the PCs to pass, but none are prepared to gainsay their guide.

Read the following:

After a dozen halls and several wide stairs, your guide stops inside a great chamber. Shelves of old scrolls line the stone walls, and great marble tables occupy the room’s center. Dust lies thick over it all, proving that this room is rarely used.

For a few moments, the priest fumbles with the scrolls on one particular rack. Finally, a loud click resounds throughout the room, and one of the walls slides open with a deafening rumble and a cascade of powdered stone.

“This is it,” he tells you. “The sepulcher. I cannot go any farther.”

C10: THE PORTAL IN THE SEPULCHER
Read the following (and consider drawing out the map whether or not combat ensues, since the room can be difficult to envision):

You are standing at one end of a long chamber. Chandeliers hanging from the ceiling spring to life even as you pass through the secret door, illuminating all that lies before you.

To the right and left, stairs lead down to an open lower level, transforming the floor on which you now stand into a central walkway, with two narrower ledges along both sides of the room. At even intervals along those walkways the floor abruptly widens, almost like the teeth on a gear.

At the far end of the chamber, a bright silver filigree of unimaginable complexity bulges from the wall. It shows a scene of Moradin hard at work at his forge. Four statues—two flanking the filigree, two flanking the entrance—show Moradin with a pair of ravens perched on his shoulders. Perhaps these are meant to honor the Raven Queen, who watches over even Moradin’s dead?

The PCs can discover that the remains of the honored dead must be interred inside, and they must descend to the lower level to find the name plates.

Read the following when they move down:

The open space between those protrusions slopes sharply down from the walkway to lower level.

Once the PCs draw near the filigree imagine, continue:

Now that you’ve come closer, you can see an old stone door in the wall behind the filigree image. You can, however, see no way to access it.

Should any PC touch the filigree in any way, read:

The image suddenly bends as the face of Moradin turns toward you and speaks in a voice of rending metal. “Who would step through the portal to the heart of Moradin’s worship must first prove he understands Moradin in his own heart.

“Think you carefully on Moradin’s precepts, his teachings, his actions, and his favored disciples. Then speak unto me a parable, a tale of Moradin, not that you have learned from his texts, but that you have created yourself. Let it show your understanding of his words and his ways, and you may pass.”

Should any PC touch the filigree in any way, begin the skill challenge.

Skill Challenge: SC2 Entering the Portal (page 48).

Tactical Encounter: C10 The Portal in the Sepulcher (page 49).

PART TWO: THE MOUNTAINROOT TEMPLE

The PCs are almost certainly expecting danger in the Mountainroot Temple. They're probably *not* expecting two competing factions.

NO EXIT

Perhaps the single most important feature of the Mountainroot is that nobody can leave. Because of the Caretaker's torment, the magical security has gone off-kilter. Anyone can *enter* the temple, but nobody can leave. Any attempt to do so, even by using teleportation, rebounds as though the individual has hit an invisible wall. (This is why the fey have not departed and why Zithiruun hasn't returned to Overlook.) The PCs can leave only by locating the Caretaker and assisting in his recovery.

DUNGEON FEATURES

Certain elements of the dungeon are universal throughout the complex.

Doors: Unless otherwise mentioned, none of the doors are locked and all can be opened by depressing a lever in the handle. Doors open inward, and so the hinges are in the room's interior.

Stairs: Stairs count as difficult terrain and are made from stone.

EXTENDED REST

Fortunately for the PCs, since they cannot depart, they have several areas in which they can safely rest. Once they have defeated the fey in M1, the broken corridors in the northeast are a safe place to camp. Areas A and F of M10 are safe, and once the PCs have dealt with the marching hammers and the trap, the rest of M10 is safe as well. Should the PCs try to sleep in M2, M3, or M4, they're attacked briefly by some of the fey from M5, who then retreat back to that area. Similarly, if the PCs try to sleep in M6, the forces from M9 might launch a few attacks.

Keep track of how much time the PCs spend resting; remember they're still on a deadline if they want to earn the most victory points.

MOUNTAINROOT TEMPLE OVERVIEW

The temple includes the following areas.

M1: THE CHAMBER OF DOORS

Numerous doors open up into a chamber that leads to other connected temples, and deeper into the Mountainroot.

Tactical Encounter: M1 The Chamber of Doors (page 50).

M2: TEA ROOM

Read the following:

A small round table and a few chairs occupy this otherwise empty chamber. Several cracked teacups and ale mugs, covered in dust and cobwebs, stand on the table where they were abandoned so long ago.

The secret door requires a DC 22 Perception check to locate. It is not locked, and it opens by depressing a hidden catch in the wall.

M3: DINING ROOM AND KITCHEN

Read the following:

Several long tables, capable of seating dozens, stretch the length of the room. Chairs are scattered about, some having been knocked over or broken just recently. A few humanoid corpses—small, with gray skin and wicked teeth—lie strewn about. Of whatever slew them, there's no sign.

These are the bodies of several quicklings who came out second-best against some of Zithiruun's trolls. The above description applies to M3A: The Dining Room. If the PCs enter M3B: The Kitchen, they find huge fire pits full of ash, large wooden counters with knife marks and meat stains, and a plethora of old brass tools and pots that are worth pretty much nothing.

The door in the east wall leads to M10, the area beneath M6.

M4: WINE STORAGE

Read the following:

Wooden racks line the walls, empty and dust-covered. From their size and shape, you'd guess that they once held bottles of wine and kegs of ale.

M5: THE VAULT

The vault is a multilevel room that contains storage for valuables behind heavy portcullises.

Tactical Encounter: M5 The Vault (page 52).

QUESTIONING THE FALLEN

As with their enemies in the city, the PCs can learn much by interrogating survivors here in the temple. (Well, *some* of the survivors; any attempt to interrogate the trolls or the two-headed troll is likely met with an utter lack of anything useful or even intelligible.)

This interrogation is a level 10 skill challenge with a complexity of 2 and Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate, and Insight as the primary skills. PCs can use Arcana, with an easy check, against any of the fey (to know that they are not behaving as normal fey of their type should). This doesn't qualify as a success, but it grants the PCs +2 bonuses to other checks in the challenge until their next failure. Similarly, a promise of freedom buys a +2 bonus to all such checks.

If the PCs succeed, the subject answers all their questions. If they fail, but with one or more successes, the subject answers a number of questions equal to the PCs successes, but at least one answer is a lie.

If the PCs wish, they can question dead foes by using the Speak with Dead ritual. In this case, use the "Dead Witness" skill challenge (*Dungeon Master's Guide*, page 78, as a level 10 skill challenge).

FROM THE FEY . . .

The characters learn that the fey were sent "to this foul place" by someone they call Cachlain, the Stone-Skinned King. (Further questioning, or a DC 25 Arcana check, reveals that Cachlain is an infamous fomorian king of the Feywild.) He sent these fey in search of a valuable prize, which they refer to as "the parchment voice you call *Incunabulum Primeval*." They know that it is a tome of great power and that Cachlain has sought

it for some time. Only recently, however, have they learned that its retrieval has become urgent, because the court's divinations suggested that someone else was about to get their hands on it. The fey admit that Cachlain's new counselor—someone named Sovacles, whom they have never met—tried to talk him out of sending them, but that the king was too desperate to get the book.

The fey admit that their group's leader, whom they call "Our Lady of the Deathly Song," already has the tome. (If the PCs are questioning Hethralga, the howling hag, she admits to having it on her person after a bit of hemming and hawing.) Alas, they cannot leave because "the Others"—a band of humanoids consisting mostly of trolls—appeared and took the Caretaker prisoner, thus cutting off all possible exit. "They are organized and serve some higher master," the fey muse, "but we know not who. Perhaps they are the reason Cachlain felt we must retrieve the parchment voice so swiftly."

If the PCs ask the fey what they want, they answer with, "Now? We seek only to escape the temple. A portal to the Feywild stands at the base of the mountains, where the waters flow from above to reach the plains. We would return home—with the *Incunabulum* if possible, but at least with our lives."

FROM THE SOLDIERS OF GENERAL ZITHIRUUN . . .

The characters learn that, as with the thugs in Overlook, these are hired mercenaries. They can confirm the name "General Zithiruun," but also as with his minions in Overlook, the general has avoided showing his face to these

soldiers, even as he worked and fought alongside them. They know he is humanoid and tall (for a human), but nothing more; his hood, cloak, and the combination armor-and-harness hide his features.

The soldiers admit that they *have* been instructed to look for the *Incunabulum Primeval*, but that the book is only a secondary objective. Zithiruun wants the temple. He intends to make use of its various magical portals to funnel soldiers into Overlook from elsewhere in the vale so that he can take the city in a combined attack from within and without. (This is why he wanted to keep people out of the Stone Anvil; he intends to use it as his assembly point for the soldiers who come through the portal.) Zithiruun seeks control over the entire western Elsir Vale, due to both its economic importance and because of the various portals that exist throughout it.

Overlook is about to face an attack from the soldiers Zithiruun has assembled throughout the vale. He gathered these soldiers slowly enough, and in small enough groups that they've utterly bypassed Bordrin's Watch—even if the PCs do stop him here! And it's happening in a matter of days!

They also admit that, as frustrated as Zithiruun was over Durkik's refusal to break, he has grown all but *enraged* that the Caretaker won't relinquish control over the temple's defenses, or even allow them to leave. He is keeping the Caretaker prisoner, and he has come near to torturing the fellow to death.

M6: THE GRAND CATHEDRAL

The Grand Cathedral is an enormous central chamber with multiple levels. The room served as the heart of Moradin worship in the days that the temple still functioned.

Tactical Encounter: M6 The Grand Cathedral (page 54).

M7 AND M8: THE SHATTERED BARRACKS AND THE LESSER SANCTUM

This portion of the temple, most thoroughly damaged by the ancient cave-ins, is currently the home camp for the invading fey.

Tactical Encounter: M7/M8 The Shattered Barracks and the Lesser Sanctum (page 58).

M9: THE RELIQUARY

This peculiar chamber housed the greatest of the temple's religious treasures, as well as the astral portal through which Moradin's exarchs occasionally traveled. It includes a great many subchambers.

Tactical Encounter: M9 The Reliquary (page 61).

M10: THE UNDERCHAMBERS

These rooms beneath the upper levels of M6 were the day-to-day living quarters of the priests.

Tactical Encounter: M10 The Underchambers (page 65).

DEPARTING THE TEMPLE

Once the PCs have found the Caretaker in area M9I, they might at first be stunned—or even believe that they are being tricked—to find that he is no normal dwarf, but an azer! (*Monster Manual*, page 22; his stats should not prove necessary, but if they do, treat him as an azer foot soldier with the Ritual Caster feat and training in Arcana and Religion.) The PCs can free him from his shackles with a DC 22 Thievery check, but freeing his mind is something else entirely. The Caretaker has been subject to hideous tortures, and he's hovering on the brink of insanity.

A DC 17 Heal check reveals that a Remove Affliction ritual could set him right in the head again. Alternatively, the PCs can attempt to help him by using skills. Do not treat this as a skill challenge; rather, the PCs must make four skill checks against a DC of 21. One success must be with the Heal skill; the others can be Diplomacy, Heal, or Religion. Once they've achieved four successes, they bring the Caretaker back from the brink of insanity. Each attempt, regardless of which skill is being used, takes 15 minutes, so even four straight successes requires a full hour.

Incidentally, should the PCs ask, the Caretaker has no other name; he abandoned it when he assumed this duty and answers to nothing else.

Once the PCs succeed, read the following:

The azer blinks once, and when he looks at you again, his eyes are clear—or rather, they appear to burn with an inner fire that they lacked earlier. He speaks in heavily accented Common. “You have my thanks, strangers. You should not be here, but as you are—and as I needed you—I will take this to be Moradin’s will. I know not who these creatures were, who invaded my home and dealt so cruelly with me, but I know their intentions! I heard them plan! They seek to attack the city of Overlook, from both without and—through my temple—within! Even though the latter has been thwarted, the former might yet lie ahead; Overlook, and indeed Elsr Vale, might suffer greatly. But tell me, who are these villains? Do you know? Tell me all that has happened, please.”

Assuming the PCs are at least vaguely forthcoming, the Caretaker listens, shaking his head sadly.

“I knew that the tall one wanted me to turn over stewardship of the temple to him,” he says. “I fear that, in my pain, I might indeed have granted him control over some of the constructs, but I denied him any more than



that. I . . . I fear that when you awoke me from my stupor, the portals were instantly unbarred. He has likely fled already. But at least I can swiftly return you to Overlook the same way.”

If the PCs ask him about the *Incunabulum*, he reluctantly agrees to let them take it if they swear that they indeed intend to turn it over to Moradin’s church.

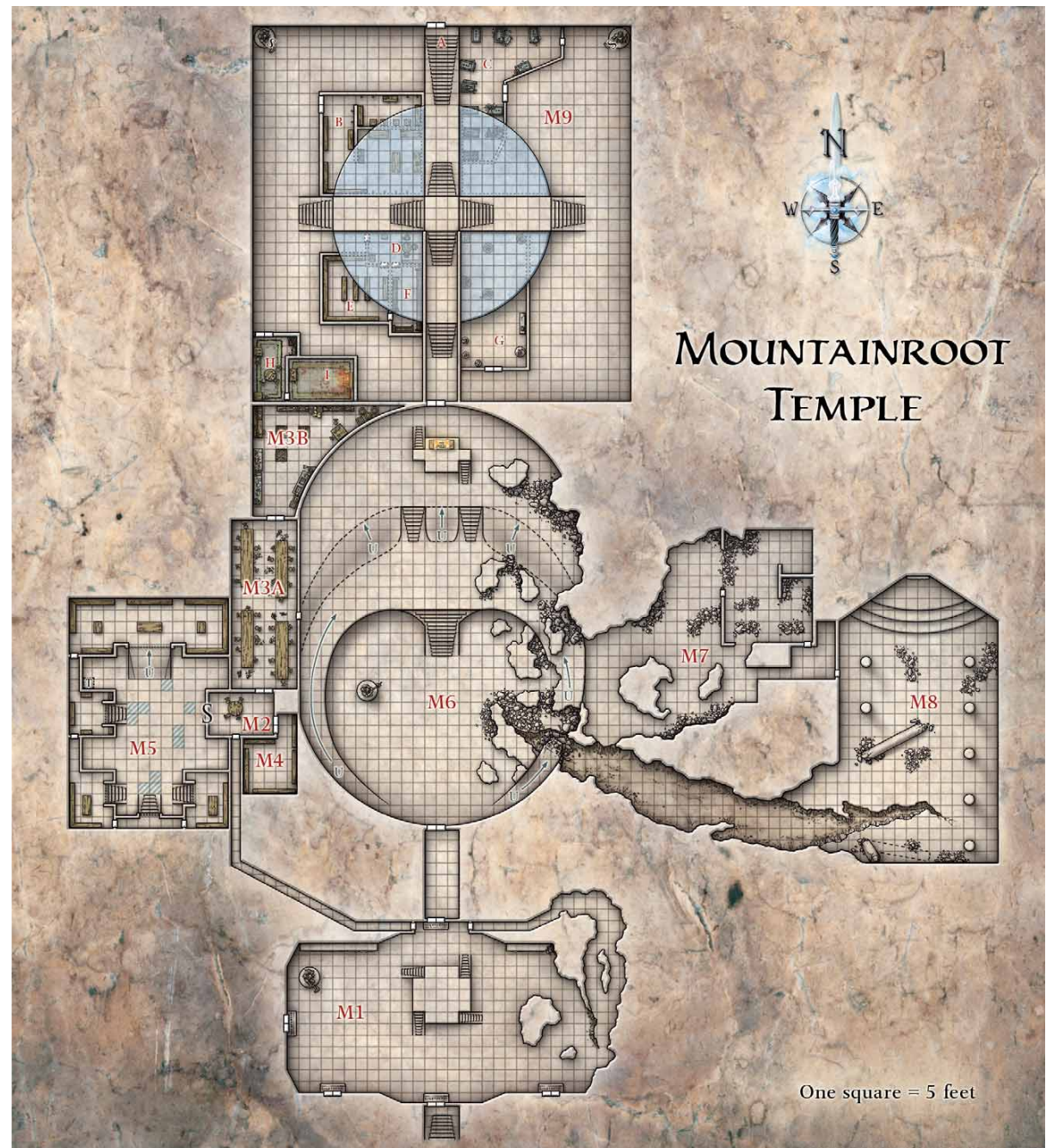
As they are preparing to leave, however, read the following:

“I realize time is short,” he tells you, “and that you must hurry back to warn the people of Overlook. Nevertheless, I must ask you . . . can you spare an hour, and perhaps a bit of your hard-won gains, to aid me with one final task? After the blood that was shed here, I must perform a ritual to reconsecrate the temple to Moradin. I cannot do it alone, and if you do not aid me, I will have to walk several miles through the mountains to find assistance at Bordrin’s Watch. Perhaps this sounds to you like the ramblings of an old fool, but I believe fully that Moradin will smile upon us for doing so.”

If the PCs agree, they need not make any rolls; the Caretaker is casting the ritual, while they assist. They do, however, have to provide 500 gp worth of precious metals that the ritual requires. They might feel as though they’re wasting time and money both, but indeed, reconsecrating the temple *does* aid them in their struggles to come. (See “Victory Points,” page 37).

When they complete the ritual, read the following:

For just an instant, as the last echoes of the rite fade away, the entire room grows ever so slightly warmer, as though heated from within by the fires of a small forge. The faint chime of hammers on steel reverberates from all around you, and then once more there is silence.



In addition, PCs who think quickly can provide even more aid to the city. Although he won't think of it himself—he's been through too much, and still isn't thinking clearly—the Caretaker can make the walk to Bordrin's Watch and request aid for the coming battle at Overlook. If a player suggests this, additional dwarves arrive in time to aid in the city's defense, and the PCs earn additional victory points.

Once these tasks are complete (or the PCs choose not to complete them at all), they can return to Overlook by using the Stone Anvil and bring warning of what's to come to the Council of Elders.

THE INCUNABULUM PRIMEVAL

When the PCs finally get their hands on this tome, they find it to be an enormous book, nearly 2 feet tall by 18 inches wide, and almost a foot thick. The pages are an incredibly heavy parchment, while the cover consists of thin planks of wood that are bound and hinged in iron.

The book is written in Dwarven, but also in a sort of cipher; no attempt at translating or decoding it functions without either the proper rituals, known only to the priesthood of Moradin, or magic more potent than any the PCs currently possess.

The *Incunabulum* indeed has great powers, of which the PCs might see the slightest hint during the siege of Overlook, but any more detailed familiarity with this potent item must wait for future adventures.

PART THREE: THE TAKING OF OVERLOOK

The endgame is upon the PCs now—not only of Zithiruun's plans, but the heroic tier, and the first third of the Scales of War. And that endgame is nothing less than the siege of Overlook. Zithiruun's plans to funnel a “fifth column” into the heart of the city might have been thwarted, but his mercenary armies throughout the Vale still pose a deadly threat. The PCs are not Overlook's *only* defenders, but at this point they're the most potent and the most important.

VICTORY POINTS

As with some prior DUNGEONS & DRAGONS adventures, “The Temple Between” makes use of a victory point system to help determine the outcome of the siege. Throughout the adventure so far, and indeed on into the siege, the PCs can accomplish certain goals that ultimately determine how well Overlook stands up to the attack. Once the adventure is concluded with the defeat (or victory) of Zithiruun, consult the table below to determine how many victory points the PCs have earned. The “Concluding the Adventure” section tells you how to interpret those points.

In addition, some entries on the table include a read-aloud description. Insert these at various points throughout the days of the siege, wherever they are most appropriate, as hints to the PCs that their prior actions have indeed proved effective and are aiding them now.

WARTIME URBAN ENCOUNTERS

During the siege, the PCs might have several extra encounters. This option exists in case the PCs have missed enough encounters or skill challenges that you don't think they'll make 11th level by the end of the adventure. Be careful, however, not to use too many of these encounters (or even any) if the PCs appear to be on track. Although you want them to achieve 11th level, you do *not* want them to do so before encountering Zithiruun.

Enemy Soldiers (Level 9; XP 2,200)

- ◆ 2 dragonborn gladiators (level 10 soldier; MM 86 or encounter T5)
- ◆ 3 trolls (level 9 brute; MM 254 or encounter T3)

More Death from Above (Level 10; XP 2,500)

- ◆ *berbalang* (level 10 solo skirmisher; MM 34 or encounter T2)

Traitors Within (Level 9; XP 2,250)

- ◆ 1 of the surviving possessed citizens (level 10 soldier; encounter C9)
- ◆ 3 doppelganger assassins (level 8 lurker; MM 71 or encounter C9)
- ◆ 5 streetwise thugs (level 9 minion; encounter C9)

Looters (Level 8; XP 1,800)

- ◆ 18 streetwise thugs (level 9 minion; encounter C9)

Victory Point Accumulation		
If the PCs...	They earn . . .	Read-Aloud
Rescue Durkik alive*	1	“As you race through the city toward your next objective, you notice a squad of soldiers standing victorious over a band of defeated trolls. Durkik stands beside them, his hands flickering with holy fire.”
Kill or defeat Captain Aerun	1	—
Complete their adventures in the Mountainroot Temple and return to Overlook within 5 days of first arriving in Overlook	3	“Although the sentries fearfully report a large force of trolls and other creatures approaching the gates, the army sounds smaller than you feared. Perhaps Zithiruun wasn’t able to assemble as many troops as he’d hoped.”
Assist the Caretaker in casting the ritual	2	“For just an instant, as you face your enemies, you once again feel a faint warmth, as of a forge fire, and hear the distant sound of chiming hammers. Your spirits soar with Moradin’s blessing.”
Send the Caretaker to Bordrin’s Watch for help	2	“A cheer arises from the sentries atop the wall, as a force of several hundred dwarves appears on the western horizon, striking at the enemy from behind.”
Return the <i>Incunabulum</i> to Durkik or Karros	1	“Farther down the street, you spot a team of dwarves wearing the holy hammer of Moradin. They are charging unharmed through a burning building to reach a band of mercenaries threatening civilians. Standing behind them, Durkik (or Karros) chants passages from the <i>Incunabulum</i> .”
Succeed in the skill challenge to aid the Council in formulating defensive strategies	2	—
Defeat the <i>berbalang</i> at encounter T2	1	—
Defeat the enemies at encounter T3	2	—
Defeat Zithiruun at encounter T5	3	—

*If the PCs used their own magic and resources to resurrect Durkik, they earn these points as well.

THE BATTLE FOR THE CITY: DAY ONE

The PCs emerge from the Stone Anvil to a welcoming committee of several Overlook soldiers. “The Council of Elders needs to speak with you immediately,” the squad’s commander tells the PCs. “Please come with me.”

Read the following:

Through the streets of Overlook and the gates of the mighty Caer Overlook, the soldiers escort you, until finally you have reached the imposing doors of the High Hall. Standing on the dais in the center of the chamber are three of the Council’s five members, as well as several more soldiers and High Priest Durkik Forgeheart.

Upon seeing you, Great Elder Morgoff Stonefirst waves at you, not to speak to them from below, but to join them upon the dais!

Once the PCs are on the dais, read:

“I was hoping to wait until all our members were present,” he tells you without preamble, “but we’ve still not heard from Elders Itrika Mountainhome or Olman Sledgemore—they are, presumably, occupied with other duties and our messengers haven’t reached them to tell them of this emergency conclave—and we’ve no more time to wait. High Ancestor Durkik, as well as several other citizens, such as Priestess Lavinya, have told us a bit of what’s been happening our city. But I’m given to understand that you can tell us far more. Please, what’s going on? Is Overlook in danger?”

Obviously, if Durkik is dead, replace the prior references, and all subsequent references, with Ancestor Karros.

SC3. COUNCIL OF WAR

Once the PCs tell the Council what has happened, and what is to come, Great Elder Morgoff asks them, as well as the guard officers and Durkik, to adjourn with the Council to the war room, where they can discuss defenses. On the way, Durkik moves to the PCs and asks, softly and almost reverently, if they’ve recovered the *Incunabulum Primeval*. If they give it to him, his eyes tear up, and he immediately hands the party a small pouch of platinum and gold coins equaling their promised reward.

Skill Challenge: SC3 Council of War (page 67).

THE BATTLE FOR THE CITY: DAY TWO

Over the course of the night, a small but fearsome mercenary army—consisting mostly of human soldiers and trolls, but with dragonborn and other creatures scattered throughout—creeps from the surrounding wilds and surrounds Overlook. The PCs awaken in the morning to the sound of catapult boulders slamming against the ramparts, and are swiftly summoned to the Council’s war room.

The following three encounters can occur in whatever order you prefer. They are written as assignments from the Council, but if you’d rather have the PCs stumble upon them while out and about, that’s fine, too.

Other battles and events take place over the course of this day and into the night, but unless you

wish to add some of the extra encounters previously described, the following are the only ones to involve the PCs directly.

T2: DEATH FROM ABOVE

Read the following:

As you stand in the war room, discussing tactics, a messenger barges in and drops to one knee, panting, at Great Elder Morgoff’s feet.

“My apologies for interrupting,” he gasps, “but Nine Bells is burning! A creature—gods, I’ve never seen anything like them—they’re flying over the district and dropping alchemical fire bombs! The local soldiers are dealing with some of them, but there are just too many!”

Unless the PCs, for some bizarre reason, refuse to go investigate, proceed to the tactical encounter.

Tactical Encounter: T2 Death From Above (page 68).

T3: HOLD THE GATE!

Either back at Caer Overlook or while out in the streets, a military courier catches up with the PCs. “The outer wall!” he shouts at them. “They’ve breached the outer wall, just north of the west gate!”

Tactical Encounter: T3 Hold the Wall! (page 70).

SC4: COMBING THE WRECKAGE

The PCs need to find one of the city councilmembers before she’s killed by the attackers.

Skill Challenge: SC4 Combing the Wreckage (page 72).

THE BATTLE FOR THE CITY: DAY THREE

The PCs face only one major encounter on the third day—which is fine, because they’re going to need everything they have to win.

T5: THE FINAL ENCOUNTER

Read the following:

Even as you rise from a night of troubled, martial dreams, a knock sounds on your chamber door. High Ancestor Durkik stands outside, looking grim.

“I bring word from Councilor Morgoff. In the late hours of the night, a squadron of soldiers was dispatched to investigate reports of enemies in the streets close to Caer Overlook. None have returned. As soon as you’ve risen and readied yourself, I’m to show you on the map where they were assigned, and ask you to investigate.”

Tactical Encounter: T5 The Final Encounter (page 73).



CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

Once word of Zithiruun's death spreads through the invaders, they gradually break off and retreat back into the wild. Most are mercenaries, after all, and there's little point in fighting on behalf of someone who's too dead to pay. (If the PCs attempt to question Zithiruun—or his corpse—treat it as an interrogation skill challenge, as per his soldiers in the Mountainroot Temple, but at 14th level. He can explain that the githyanki wanted the region for its various portals, and that the assignment came down from officers above him, but he knows nothing about who originated it or why it was happening now. These are details for a future adventure.)

But for now, the PCs have learned that the githyanki are behind at least some of the troubles that have beset Elsir Vale, and they can be content in the knowledge that they've defeated one of their major enemies and saved Overlook.

Or at least, they've *probably* saved it.

VICTORY POINT TOTALS

How well the PCs did—and how well Overlook survives—depends on their total number of victory points. (Future adventures in the Scales of War adventure path assume that the PCs achieved at least 13 victory points. If this is not the case in your campaign, you can either modify future adventures to make use of different NPCs than those who died here, or you can arrange to have these NPCs resurrected “behind the scenes.”

6 or fewer: If the PCs did this poorly, Overlook has likely either been conquered, or razed to the point where it requires almost complete rebuilding. The PCs gain no XP or monetary reward for the “Prevent the Fall of Overlook” quest. You'll have to modify future adventures in the Scales of War to account for the city's destruction—but then again, it's almost impossible for the PCs to have done this poorly without dying, so odds are you have other alterations to make anyway.

7 to 12: Overlook is severely damaged, but not to the point of destruction. The PCs earn 1,500 XP and 3,000 gp as reward for the “Prevent the Fall of Overlook” quest; the Council of Elders cannot afford to spare any more money from the reconstruction effort.

Lavinya and Durkik, alas, did not survive the city's final battles, though they gave their lives fighting for their homes and their neighbors. Any alliances the PCs might have established with them will have to be reforged with new NPCs.

The PCs are heroes of the city, but nobody has the time to honor them; in fact, the PCs are probably put to work with the rebuilding. Still, Overlook remains, and things have returned to at least some semblance of normal by the time the next adventure in the Scales of War begins.

13 or more: Overlook has weathered the storm, and though damaged, the city stands tall and proud. The PCs are hailed as great heroes, and several different establishments offer them free room and board for several months. The PCs gain 2,500 XP and 7,000 gp as rewards for the “Prevent the Fall of Overlook” quest, and they are invited to dine with the Council of Elders several times over the next few weeks.

Lavinya abandons the temple and instead takes over Haelyn's duties at the shrine. “If this is where the people wish to pray,” she tells the PCs, “then who am I to tell them otherwise? Erathis needs no stone walls, merely the hearts and souls of those who would bring civilization and culture to the world. Haelyn understood this long ago,” she adds with a sad smile. “I wish I'd not taken so long to learn it myself.”

Durkik, if he survived, has experienced a reawakening of faith. His time of confinement and torture, followed by his rescue at the hands of the PCs and his survival of the siege, have caused him to reevaluate the previous years. From a beaten-down, tired, and increasingly corrupt politician, he returns to his younger identity as a devout priest of Moradin. In helping to turn him around, the PCs have gained a grateful and powerful ally, and they have done great good to the religious community of Overlook as a whole. This is particularly important, considering that the high priests of other temples were suborned by the githyanki, and their replacements are all younger and inexperienced. Over the next months, Durkik emerges as a spiritual leader for the entire city.

And thus does the curtain fall on the PCs' heroic tier. Greater dangers and challenges await, as those behind the githyanki's efforts plot their vengeance and advance schemes of which the heroes have not yet learned. But for now, at least, the PCs have earned a few weeks of rest and the acclaim of Overlook's citizenry.

C4/C5: THE SHRINE OF ERATHIS AND HAELYN'S HOME

Encounter Level 9 (2,000 XP)

SETUP

2 doppelganger assassins (D)
Grovald, human priest (G)
5 streetwise thugs (S)

The shrine of Erathis is currently under the auspices of Grovald, Haelyn's "replacement." He dwells here, with a number of hired guards who spend the days lurking in Grovald's shack (C4A).

None of these individuals are present at first if the PCs appear at night. Grant them five minutes to search the grounds as they see fit before their enemies arrive. Use the positions marked in **RED** if the PCs are in the shrine when the enemies appear; those marked in **GREEN** if the PCs are in or near the fountain, or in cottage C5; and those marked in **BLUE** if the PCs are in cottage C4A.

The doppelgangers appear as humans, though dressed in darker clothes than the other thugs.

When the enemies first appear, read:

From the darkness, an arrogant voice says, "I'm just as glad you chose to come here at night. It makes things so much neater when we need not involve the authorities, don't you think?" You see a bald, sharp-faced man in dark clothes all but fading into the shadows, and movement comes from several other individuals in the night around him.

Perception Check

DC 24: Two other individuals, cloaked in darker hues than the rest, lurk around corners or in pools of shadow.

When a doppelganger assassin is slain, read:

The body at your feet warps and shifts, the skin turning pale gray, the eyes growing wide and dark. This is no human who lies before you!

When the PCs enter C4, read:

This cottage—more of a hut—is no more enticing inside than out. An old, rickety table and chair stand beside an ash- and charcoal-filled fireplace, and a door, standing slightly ajar, reveals what appears to be an equally cheap bed beyond.

Perception Check

DC 20: A scrap of parchment, only partly burned, lies in the ashes of the fireplace.

THE NOTE

The PCs have found an important clue in this scrap, even though much of it has been burned away. The legible portions read as follows:

*... unreachable for a time, as I must ... the priests' orders as you would my own, for he ... s always, be certain you destroy this mis ...
... eneral Zi ...*

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Several lanterns, hanging on the posts that support the fabric "tent," cast their light over the area. The bulk of the area is brightly lit, but the interiors of the buildings marked C4A and C5 are dimly lit.

Ceiling: The bulk of the shrine is outdoors. The shacks (C4A and C5) have 8-foot ceilings, and the fabric roof of the shrine is 10 feet overhead.

Beds, Chests, and Tables: Each of these can provide cover. Creatures can step up onto the furniture; this costs an extra square of movement.

Chairs: The chairs are not sufficient to provide cover, but a character can step up onto one with an extra square of movement, or use one as a makeshift weapon.

Doors: The outer doors of the two shacks are locked (DC 18 Thievery to open). The inner doors are not locked.

Fabric Curtains: The curtains that make up the covering of the shrine block line of sight. Pushing through or past them costs an extra square of movement.



Fireplaces: Both fireplaces hold ashes and charcoal. A character can move into the fireplace (though a Medium character has to squeeze; see *Player's Handbook*, page 292). Climbing up the inside of the chimney requires a DC 15 Athletics check.

Pantry: The pantry in C5 provides cover.

Pool: The water in the pool is not deep enough to swim in. It qualifies as difficult terrain.

If the PCs conduct a thorough search of the fountain, and make a DC 19 Perception Check, read:

Behind the fountain, not far from the nearest tree, a faint bulge in the earth mars the contours of the soil. It looks as though something was buried here recently.

If the PCs dig here, they find Haelyn's dead body.

Statue: The large statue of Erathis in the pool's center provides cover, and it can be climbed with a DC 12 Athletics check.

5 Streetwise Thugs (S) Level 9 Minion
Medium natural humanoid, human XP 100 each

Initiative +3 **Senses** Perception +3
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.
AC 21; **Fortitude** 19, **Reflex** 16, **Will** 16
Speed 6

Ⓛ **Longsword** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
+14 vs. AC; 6 damage.

Ⓢ **Crossbow** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
Ranged 15/30; +13 vs. AC; 6 damage.

Murder is a Team Sport
If a streetwise thug is flanking an enemy, it deals 1 extra point of damage per ally adjacent to the flanked enemy (including the ally who is granting the flank), to a maximum of +4.

Alignment Evil **Languages** Common
Skills Athletics +11, Thievery +8
Str 16 (+7) **Dex** 12 (+5) **Wis** 10 (+4)
Con 15 (+6) **Int** 9 (+3) **Cha** 11 (+4)

Equipment leather armor, crossbow, longsword, case with 20 bolts

Trees: The trees provide cover and can be climbed with a DC 15 Athletics check. Most are only between 10 and 20 feet (2 to 4 squares) high.

2 Doppelganger Assassins (D) Level 8 Lurker
Medium natural humanoid (shapechanger) XP 350 each

Initiative +13 **Senses** Perception +10
HP 69; **Bloodied** 34
AC 23; **Fortitude** 18, **Reflex** 21, **Will** 21
Speed 6

Ⓛ **Dagger** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
+13 vs. AC; 1d4 + 5 damage.

Ⓢ **Hand Crossbow** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
Ranged 10/20; +13 vs. AC; 1d4+5 damage.

Ⓡ **Shapeshifter Feint** (minor; at-will)
+11 vs. Reflex; the doppelganger assassin gains combat advantage against the target until the end of the doppelganger assassin's next turn.

Ⓜ **Cloud Mind** (standard; sustain minor; encounter) ♦ **Charm**
Close burst 5; +11 vs. Will; the doppelganger assassin is invisible to the target. Affected targets are unable to see the doppelganger for as long as it sustains the effect, until the doppelganger attacks, or until it is hit by an attack.

Combat Advantage
The doppelganger assassin deals 2d6 extra damage against any target it has combat advantage against.

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 (see *Change Shape*, *Monster Manual* page 280).

Alignment Evil **Languages** Common
Skills Bluff +15, Insight +12, Stealth +14
Str 12 (+5) **Dex** 21 (+9) **Wis** 12 (+5)
Con 15 (+6) **Int** 13 (+5) **Cha** 19 (+8)

Equipment dagger, hand crossbow, case with 20 bolts

TACTICS

Since Grovald's area attack affects enemies only, he stays in the back and lobs area and ranged powers, trying to weaken the PCs fast and impair their ability to maneuver. The thugs make straightforward attacks,

Grovald (G) Level 9 Elite Controller (Leader)
Medium natural humanoid, human XP 800

Initiative +5 **Senses** Perception +9
Unhallowed Resilience aura 3; when allies enter the aura or start their turns there, they gain a +1 bonus to all saving throws.

HP 194; **Bloodied** 97
AC 25; **Fortitude** 21, **Reflex** 23, **Will** 24
Saving Throws +2
Speed 5

Action Points 1
Ⓛ **Longsword** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Force, Weapon**
+13 vs. Fortitude; 1d6 + 5 damage, plus 1d6 force damage and push 3.

Ⓢ **Phantom Spear** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Force**
Ranged 12; +13 vs. Reflex; 1d8 + 5 force damage, and the target is immobilized until the end of Grovald's next turn.

Ⓜ **Twin Spears** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Force**
Grovald makes two *phantom spear* attacks.

Ⓜ **Phantom Spikes** (standard; sustain minor; recharge ⓂⓂ) ♦ **Force, Zone**
Area burst 1 within 15; +13 vs. Reflex; 3d8 + 5 force damage. *Aftereffect:* Any enemy that begins its turn in the area takes 5 force damage, and Grovald's enemies treat the zone as difficult terrain. Grovald can sustain or dismiss the zone as a minor action.

Ⓜ **Phantom Riposte** (immediate reaction when hit or missed by a melee attack; at-will) ♦ **Force**
Grovald makes an immediate *phantom spear* attack against the triggering enemy. This use of *phantom spear* does not provoke opportunity attacks.

Alignment Evil **Languages** Common, Deep Speech
Skills Religion +12
Str 10 (+4) **Dex** 12 (+5) **Wis** 20 (+9)
Con 17 (+7) **Int** 16 (+7) **Cha** 14 (+6)

Equipment chainmail, longsword

while the doppelgangers move around the combat, working to flank or otherwise gain combat advantage. Everyone involved fights to the end.

C7: ALLEY AMBUSH

Encounter Level 9 (2,100 XP)

SETUP

- 4 doppelganger assassins (D)
- 7 streetwise thugs (S)

The conspirators have learned that the PCs are investigating them, and they want the party dead. A band of cutthroats ambushes the PCs in an alley or on a street corner somewhere.

Once again, the doppelgangers begin the encounter in human form.



When the attack begins, read:

Without warning, a number of thugs come charging from around corners and out of doorways, and they hold their blades high!

Perception Check

DC 24: *A handful of other attackers, clad in black, blend into the shadows, but you spot them coming.*

When a doppelganger assassin is slain, read:

The body at your feet warps and shifts—the skin turns pale gray and the eyes grow wide and dark. This is no human who lies before you!

4 Doppelganger Assassins (D) Level 8 Lurker

Medium natural humanoid (shapechanger) XP 350 each

Initiative +13 **Senses** Perception +10
HP 69; **Bloodied** 34
AC 23; **Fortitude** 18, **Reflex** 21, **Will** 21
Speed 6

⚔ **Dagger** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
+13 vs. AC; 1d4 + 5 damage.

🏹 **Hand Crossbow** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
Ranged 10/20; +13 vs. AC; 1d4+5 damage.

⚡ **Shapeshifter Feint** (minor; at-will)
+11 vs. Reflex; the doppelganger assassin gains combat advantage against the target until the end of the doppelganger assassin's next turn.

🌀 **Cloud Mind** (standard; sustain minor; encounter) ♦ **Charm**
Close burst 5; +11 vs. Will; the doppelganger assassin is invisible to the target. Affected targets are unable to see the doppelganger for as long as it sustains the effect, until the doppelganger attacks, or until it is hit by an attack.

Combat Advantage
The doppelganger assassin deals 2d6 extra damage against any target it has combat advantage against.

🔄 **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 (see Change Shape, *Monster Manual* page 280).

Alignment Evil **Languages** Common
Skills Bluff +15, Insight +12, Stealth +14
Str 12 (+5) **Dex** 21 (+9) **Wis** 12 (+5)
Con 15 (+6) **Int** 13 (+5) **Cha** 19 (+8)
Equipment dagger, hand crossbow, case with 20 bolts

7 Streetwise Thugs (S) Level 9 Minion

Medium natural humanoid, human XP 100 each

Initiative +3 **Senses** Perception +3
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.
AC 21; **Fortitude** 19, **Reflex** 16, **Will** 16
Speed 6

⚔ **Longsword** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
+14 vs. AC; 6 damage.

🏹 **Crossbow** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
Ranged 15/30; +13 vs. AC; 6 damage.

Murder is a Team Sport
If a streetwise thug is flanking an enemy, it deals 1 extra point of damage per ally adjacent to the flanked enemy (including the ally who is granting the flank), to a maximum of +4.

Alignment Evil **Languages** Common
Skills Athletics +11, Thievery +8
Str 16 (+7) **Dex** 12 (+5) **Wis** 10 (+4)
Con 15 (+6) **Int** 9 (+3) **Cha** 11 (+4)
Equipment leather armor, crossbow, longsword, case with 20 bolts

TACTICS

The combat is straightforward. The thugs attack en masse, while the doppelgangers flit in and out of shadows or flank the PCs, trying for combat advantage.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: The lighting here is dependent entirely on the time: brightly lit by the sun during the day or dimly lit by distant street-side lanterns at night.

Buildings: The buildings here range from two to four stories (figure 4 to 8 squares) in height. The walls can be climbed with a DC 15 Athletics check.

The List: If the PCs search the bodies, they find on one of the doppelgangers a list of descriptions—of the PCs themselves! The parchment is stained with something which (with a DC 16 Perception check) appears to be beer and sausage grease. A DC 17 Streetwise check suggests that the source for the stain is the Pig and Bucket tavern.

SCI: CATCHING DURKIK

Encounter Level 9 (1,200 XP)

SETUP

Begin by reading the following:

After some time waiting, when the city is fully cloaked in the shadows of night, your quarry finally emerges. Glancing around, he turns and begins walking at a swift but inconspicuous pace.

If the PCs are following Durkik in specific, continue with:

Durkik ducks into an alley after walking a few blocks. Mere seconds later, another dwarf—slightly taller, with different hair and beard—emerges onto the street. You wouldn't even have noticed had you not been specifically watching, but much of his outfit appears to match Durkik's own, and his posture as he walks is identical.

If the PCs glance into the alley as they pass, they can confirm that neither Durkik, nor anyone else, remains within it. They've just witnessed the doppelganger who has taken Durkik's place alter his form, hoping to make himself less noticeable.

At this point, regardless of who they're following, begin the skill challenge.

Catching Durkik Skill Challenge

Level 9
XP 1,200

You make your way as silently through the streets of Overlook as you can, attempting to keep Durkik in sight without alerting him to your presence.

The party attempts to shadow their target through the city.

Complexity

3 (requires 8 successes before 3 failures).

Primary Skills

Acrobatics, Athletics, Perception, Stealth, Streetwise.

Victory

If the PCs succeed with 0 failures, they reach the warehouse without being detected. Only half their potential enemies are present (run the scene as two separate combat encounters, as described in the tactical encounter), and the PCs gain a surprise round when they arrive.

Partial Victory

If the PCs succeed with 1 failure, they're detected only at the last minute. Only half their potential enemies are present (run the scene as two separate encounters, as described in the tactical encounter), but the enemies are not surprised.

If the PCs succeed with 2 failures, they're detected as they near the warehouse. They face the entire complement of enemies (run the scene as a single 12th-level encounter), and the enemy is not surprised.

Defeat

The PCs are detected, and their quarry shakes them as he nears the warehouse. The PCs know the general area to which their target went, but not the specific building. They eventually find the warehouse, but it takes 2d6 hours of wandering, searching, and perhaps various bribes or Diplomacy and Streetwise checks made to the merchants and citizens of the area. The result is that not only must they face the entire complement of enemies (a single 12th-level encounter), but they've lost a great deal of time off their deadline. (See "Victory Points," page 37.)

Special If at least one member of the party is capable of turning invisible, the party gains 1 success automatically.

Acrobatics (DC 16)

Any given character can attempt Acrobatics only once in this fashion, whether he or she succeeds or fails, and a failure costs the PC a healing surge as well as counting as a failure. A successful check counts as a success on the skill challenge.

The PC darts around a corner, tumbles over a gap between rooftops, or otherwise stays near the quarry at an angle that makes the PC harder to detect.

Athletics (DC 16)

Any given character can attempt Athletics only once in this fashion, whether the PC succeeds or fails, and a failure costs the PC a healing surge as well as counting as a failure. A successful check counts as a success on the skill challenge.

Much like Acrobatics, the PC climbs walls, leaps between roofs or balconies, and otherwise follows by staying out of direct line of sight.

Perception (DC 20)

This does not qualify as a success, but succeeding on this check grants the party a +2 bonus to all further checks in this challenge until someone fails a check.

The PC carefully watches the target to keep him in view even from a distance or behind other people on the street.

Stealth (DC 20)

A successful check counts as a success on the skill challenge.

Darting behind pedestrians, into doorways, and through shadows, you move street to street without being seen.

Streetwise (DC 24)

A successful check counts as two successes. Once made, the characters cannot use Streetwise again for this skill challenge.

By using knowledge of Overlook's seedier areas, the PC can anticipate where the quarry is going.

OTHER METHODS

If the PCs can't (or don't think to) follow Durkik or Aerun, they have other ways to find out what they need to know. If they can catch Durkik alone, they can attempt to interrogate him, as described previously.

If they successfully interrogate him, Durkik can tell the PCs where the warehouse is. He also reveals all the information presented in the "Interrogating the Conspirators" sidebar, below.

Because the false Durkik didn't show up at the warehouse, the forces there are ready for trouble. Run the scenario as a 12th-level encounter, and the enemy cannot be surprised.

C9: THE WAREHOUSE

**Encounter Level 12 (3,250 XP) or
Encounter Level 8 (1,700 XP) and
Encounter Level 8 (1,550 XP)**

SETUP

3 doppelganger assassins (D)

2 possessed citizens (P)

12 streetwise thugs (S)

Or

First encounter (use RED placements)

2 doppelganger assassins (D)

1 possessed citizen (P)

5 streetwise thugs (S)

And

Second encounter (do not use the marks on the map since these enemies enter through one or two of the doors and position themselves based on the PCs' actions)

1 doppelganger assassin

1 possessed citizen

7 streetwise thugs

This warehouse has long been used by one of the criminal elements of Overlook as a headquarters, a central depot for illegal goods, and an occasional hideout. It has since been taken over by General Zithiruun's conspiracy.

Any creature on the map placed on the catwalk is on the catwalk; no enemies begin directly beneath it.

If the PCs enter on the ground floor, read:

A vast chamber stretches before you. Rows upon rows of crates—some stacked as high as 15 feet—form aisles and corridors. A catwalk runs around the perimeter, as well as across the cavernous room at several points, with an array of chains and pulleys dangling beneath.

If the PCs are in a position to see the office and balcony, read:

In one corner, a flight of stairs leads to a balcony built into the catwalk. Several walls surround what you would guess to be an office or counting house.

Perception Check

DC 13: *Several gruff-looking fellows, the sort you might not want to meet in a dark alley but wouldn't be surprised to find there, lurk atop the catwalk, atop several crates, and around a few corners, crossbows held at the ready.*

DC 24: *A few other foes stand hiding in the shadows, also aiming weapons your way. Their gray flesh and huge dark eyes are strong indications that they're not human!*

If the PCs somehow prevented Aerun from getting here, refer to one of the possessed priests instead in the text below this. If they haven't met Aerun, describe him as the officer from the wall when they first arrived.

If the PCs enter by the office door, read:

You are in a small counting house, which is occupied by little more than a table, a chair—and Captain Aerun, shock evident on his face as he rises. The wall behind him boasts a shuttered, glass-free window.

TACTICS

The doppelgangers and thugs initially launch volleys of crossbow bolts at the PCs, using the crates as cover. They keep moving, almost never staying in the same spot from round to round. The thugs prefer to close on the PCs in groups, but do so by maneuvering around and atop crates; they know better than to make a beeline for the enemy in an open corridor. The doppelgangers make use of similar tactics, but switch

constantly from melee to range and back again. The possessed citizens use their *telekinetic leap* to obtain an optimal position, and then maintain melee combat.

If the PCs enter through the office, the githyanki-possessed citizen takes his first move to fly out the window into the main warehouse, so as not to face the PCs alone.

The possessed citizens fight to the death. If two of the doppelgangers and over half the thugs are slain, the remainder attempt to flee.

1, 2, or 3 Doppelganger Assassins (D)	Level 8 Lurker
Medium natural humanoid (shapechanger)	XP 350 each
Initiative +13	Senses Perception +10
HP 69; Bloodied 34	
AC 23; Fortitude 18, Reflex 21, Will 21	
Speed 6	
⚔ Dagger (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+13 vs. AC; 1d4 + 5 damage.	
🏹 Hand Crossbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 10/20; +13 vs. AC; 1d4+5 damage.	
⚡ Shapeshifter Feint (minor; at-will)	
+11 vs. Reflex; the doppelganger assassin gains combat advantage against the target until the end of the doppelganger assassin's next turn.	
👁 Cloud Mind (standard; sustain minor; encounter) ♦ Charm	
Close burst 5; +11 vs. Will; the doppelganger assassin is invisible to the target. Affected targets are unable to see the doppelganger for as long as it sustains the effect, until the doppelganger attacks, or until it is hit by an attack.	
Combat Advantage	
The doppelganger assassin deals 2d6 extra damage against any target it has combat advantage against.	
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 (see Change Shape, <i>Monster Manual</i> page 280).	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common
Skills Bluff +15, Insight +12, Stealth +14	
Str 12 (+5)	Dex 21 (+9) Wis 12 (+5)
Con 15 (+6)	Int 13 (+5) Cha 19 (+8)
Equipment dagger, hand crossbow, case with 20 bolts	

1 or 2 Possessed Citizens (P) **Level 10 Soldier**
Medium natural humanoid XP 500 each**Initiative** +10 **Senses** Perception +6
HP 101; **Bloodied** 50**AC** 26; **Fortitude** 23, **Reflex** 21, **Will** 20**Saving Throws** +2 against charm effects**Speed** 5; see also *telekinetic leap*⊕ **Greatsword** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Psychic, Weapon**
+17 vs. AC; 1d12 + 4, plus 3d6 extra psychic damage if the target is immobilized, and the target takes a -2 penalty to saving throws against the immobilized condition until the start of the possessed citizen's next turn.✈ **Telekinetic Grasp** (standard; encounter)
Ranged 5; Medium or smaller target; +15 vs. Fortitude; the target is immobilized (save ends).**Telekinetic Leap** (move; encounter)
Ranged 10; the possessed citizen can fly 5 squares.**Alignment** Evil **Languages** Common, Deep Speech**Skills** History +11, Insight +11**Str** 20 (+10) **Dex** 16 (+8) **Wis** 12 (+6)**Con** 13 (+6) **Int** 12 (+6) **Cha** 13 (+6)**Equipment** leather armor, greatsword**5, 7, or 12 Streetwise Thugs (S)** **Level 9 Minion**
Medium natural humanoid, human XP 100 each**Initiative** +3 **Senses** Perception +3**HP** 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.**AC** 21; **Fortitude** 19, **Reflex** 16, **Will** 16**Speed** 6⊕ **Longsword** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
+14 vs. AC; 6 damage.⊗ **Crossbow** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
Ranged 15/30; +13 vs. AC; 6 damage.**Murder is a Team Sport**

If a streetwise thug is flanking an enemy, it deals 1 extra point of damage per ally adjacent to the flanked enemy (including the ally who is granting the flank), to a maximum of +4.

Alignment Evil **Languages** Common**Skills** Athletics +11, Thievery +8**Str** 16 (+7) **Dex** 12 (+5) **Wis** 10 (+4)**Con** 15 (+6) **Int** 9 (+3) **Cha** 11 (+4)**Equipment** leather armor, crossbow, longsword, case with 20 bolts

If the fight is divided into two encounters (see the rules for the Heart of the Conspiracy skill challenge, page 30), the second group arrives 1d4 + 4 minutes after the first battle ends. Unless a member of the first group escaped, they all enter through the office and the PCs can ambush them, thus gaining surprise. If someone *did* escape the first encounter, this second group has been warned, and they split up, entering by both the office and the door. They are ready for trouble and cannot be surprised.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: The warehouse is brightly illuminated by a sequence of lanterns and sunrods placed along the railing of the catwalk.

Ceiling: The ceiling is 35 feet overhead.

Catwalks: These metallic walkways, standing 20 feet above the floor, aid in the movement and placement of crates. A sequence of chains and pulleys runs across the underside of the catwalks. This enables a character to climb, hand-over-hand, along the underside of these catwalks with a DC 22 Acrobatics or Athletics check, at normal climbing speed.

Except where the ladders stand, the catwalk has a railing all the way around. Anyone wishing to deliberately climb or leap over the railing must spend an extra square of movement to do so, and any push, pull, or slide effect that would drag a creature over that railing must also spend an extra square to do so.

Chair: The chair is not sufficient to provide cover, but a character can step up onto it with an extra square of movement or use it as a makeshift weapon.

Crates: Each individual crate is roughly 5 feet (1 square) high, but they are often stacked two or three crates (that is, 10 or 15 feet, or 2 or 3 squares) in height, as marked on the map. Stepping up on a

single crate requires an extra square of movement, while moving *down* a single crate does not cost any additional movement. Climbing two or three crates requires a DC 20 Athletics check.

Doors: The central door slides upward into the ceiling. It isn't locked, but it *cannot* be opened stealthily, since the chains and pulleys rumble. The two side doors are both locked, and require a DC 19 Thievery check to open.

Ladders: The ladders are all 20 feet (4 squares) in height, but count as 6 squares of movement. A DC 12 Acrobatics or Athletics check allows a character to climb them at the normal 4 squares of movement.

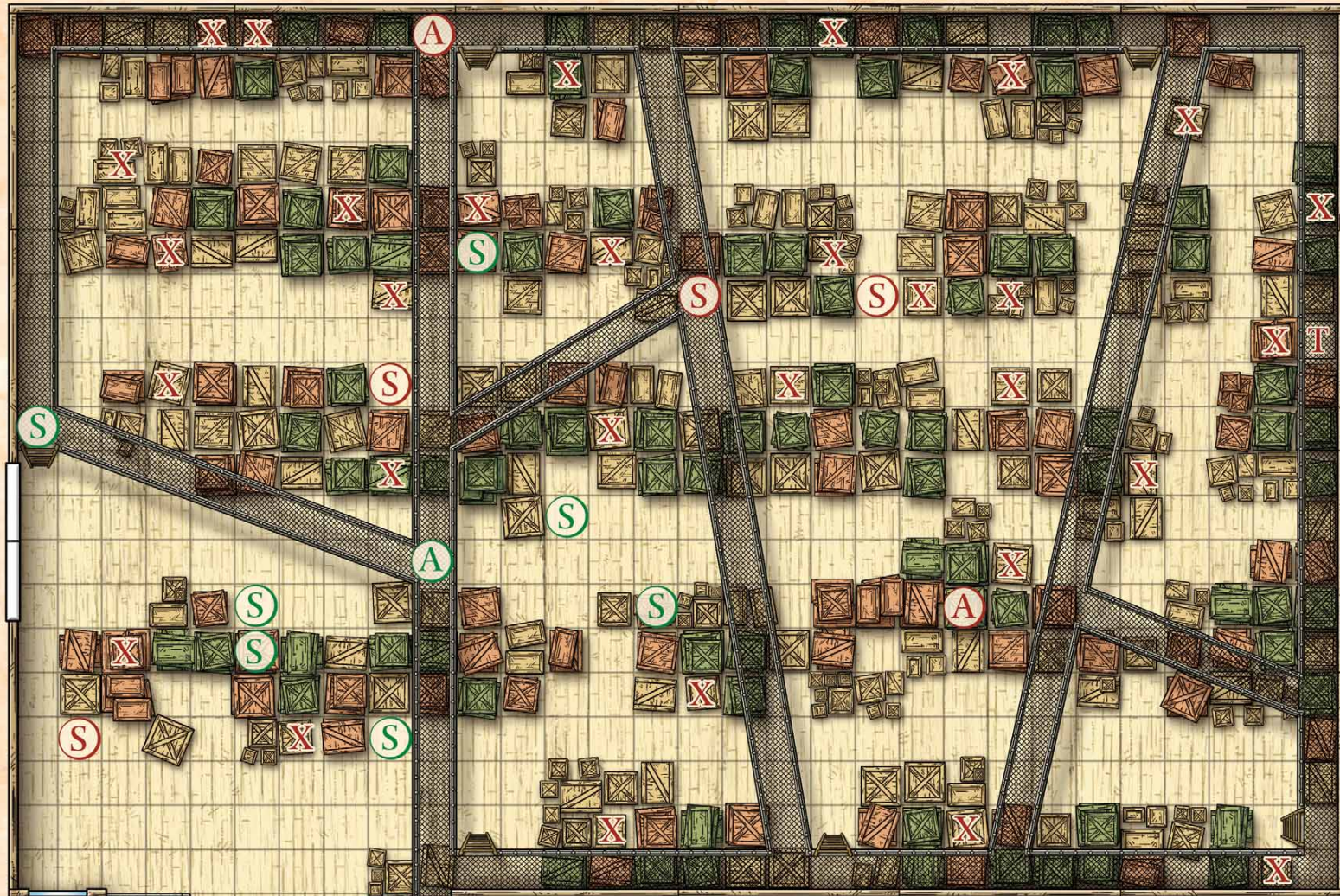
Stairs: The stairs count as difficult terrain.


Table: A character can step up onto the table with an extra square of movement. A DC 19 Strength check topples the table over, allowing it to serve as cover and knocking prone any creatures standing on it.

Trapdoor: The trapdoor requires a DC 21 Thievery check to open. The ladder beneath leads to an underground passage (unmapped) that itself leads to the cell (C9A) containing High Priest Durkik.

Weakened Crates: Several of the crates, as marked on the map, are weaker than others. A creature that moves atop that crate partially breaks through the wood. This immediately ends the creature's move action, even if it had movement remaining, and that crate is considered difficult terrain from that point onward.

Window: The window in the "office" upstairs is a simple wooden shutter over an empty frame. Moving through it does not cost extra squares (though anyone incapable of flight had better be prepared for a 20-foot fall).



-  5 feet high
-  10 feet high
-  15 feet high
-  Weak crate
-  Trap door



One square = 5 feet

SC2: ENTERING THE PORTAL

Encounter Level 9 (2,000 XP)

SETUP

Once one of the PCs touches the filigree, the skill challenge begins.

Entering the Portal Skill Challenge

Level 9
XP 2,000

The image suddenly bends as the face of Moradin turns toward you and speaks in a voice of rending metal. "Who would step through the portal to the heart of Moradin's worship must first prove he understands Moradin in his own heart.

"Think you carefully on Moradin's precepts, his teachings, his actions, and his favored disciples. Then speak unto me a parable, a tale of Moradin, not that you have learned from his texts, but that you have created yourself. Let it show your understanding of his words and his ways, and you may pass."

The PCs must convince the mystical portal that they have a sufficient understanding of Moradin's teachings by constructing a parable that accurately portrays the god's behavior and precepts, yet all is not lost if the PCs fail. They can still attempt to physically break through the filigree to reach the door. Doing so activates the room's magical defenses: a number of homunculi. Proceed to tactical encounter C10. Once the PCs have successfully completed that encounter, they can cut through the filigree as though it were a standard wooden door (it's metal, but it's thin).

Complexity

5 (12 successes before 3 failures)

Primary Skills

Athletics, Bluff, Diplomacy, History, Religion.

Victory

The portal judges the PCs worthy and opens, allowing them access to the Mountainroot Temple.

Partial Victory

The PCs are partially worthy, and this deactivates *part* of the malfunctioning magical wards. Their partial success means they have to fight fewer of the guardians in tactical encounter C10.

3 or fewer successes: The PCs are considered to have failed the challenge completely, as described below.

4 or 5 successes: The PCs face four writhing chains.

6 or 7 successes: The PCs face three writhing chains.

8 or 9 successes: The PCs face two writhing chains.

10 or 11 successes: The PCs fight only one writhing chain.

Defeat

The PCs must face all five writhing chain homunculi in the tactical encounter if they attempt to force their way through.

Special If the players go through the effort of coming up with a Moradin-based parable, grant them 2 automatic successes. If the party contains a divine character who worships Moradin, they gain 1 success automatically, and that character gains a +2 bonus to all Religion checks in this challenge.

Athletics (DC 20)

This does not count as a success in itself, but grants a +2 bonus to the next check attempted in this challenge. Any given character can attempt this use of Athletics only once.

The PC portrays (or fakes) a knowledge of forging techniques and other endeavors of which Moradin approves.

Bluff (DC 20)

This does not grant any successes, but it can be used to remove 1 failure. Bluff can be used in this fashion only once during this challenge.

The PC swiftly steps into the conversation, covering for an error made by one of his or her companions.

Diplomacy (DC 16)

Only one success can be achieved in this fashion. A failure on this check bestows a -2 penalty to further checks in this challenge until the next success, in addition to counting as a failure.

The PC attempts to convince the portal that the party is worthy, without offering any solid knowledge of Moradin's teachings.

History (DC 20)

Each success on this check counts as a success toward the skill challenge. Although there are no limits on the number of successes that can be obtained with History, History cannot account for all successes; the party must rely on at least one other skill to achieve complete success.

Using the PC's knowledge of past champions, priests, and followers of Moradin, the PC contributes to the construction of the parable.

Religion (DC 20)

Each success on this check counts as a success toward the skill challenge. A success against DC 25 counts as a success and removes 1 failure; this extra level of success can occur only once in this challenge. The PC draws on religious knowledge and an understanding of Moradin's precepts and teachings to aid in the construction of the parable.

C10: THE PORTAL IN THE SEPULCHER

Encounter Level 9 (2,500 XP*)

SETUP

5 or fewer writhing chains (W)

If the PCs fail the skill challenge to enter the Mountainroot Temple, they can attempt to force their way past the filigree imagery. Doing so activates the temple's defenses, which causes several constructs to attack. If the PCs successfully defeat the homunculi, however, nothing prevents them from destroying the barrier between them and the door.

Remove one or more writhing chains based on the number of successes, as described in the challenge. The first chain to be removed is the southwestern one, then the northwestern, then the southern, then the northeastern.

When the chains appear, read:

From the iron image, thin strings of metal—liquid, as though melting—shoot forth. They strike not at you, but at several of the hanging chandeliers, forming a canopy of metallic strands overhead. From those chandeliers, great lengths of chain drop to the floor and then rear up like striking serpents

TACTICS

The writhing chains might attempt to yank a PC off a ledge, but they otherwise fight in a straightforward fashion. They are smart enough to focus on one or two PCs, with one chain restraining the foe while the others pound on him.

If the PCs attack the iron strands running overhead, the strings break but instantly reform. Hacking at them provides no benefit.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: The room is brightly lit by ever-burning flames in the chandeliers. The chandeliers hang 10 feet down from the ceiling (and thus, 10 feet above the upper level and 20 above the lower).

Ceiling: The ceiling is 30 feet overhead from the lowest level.

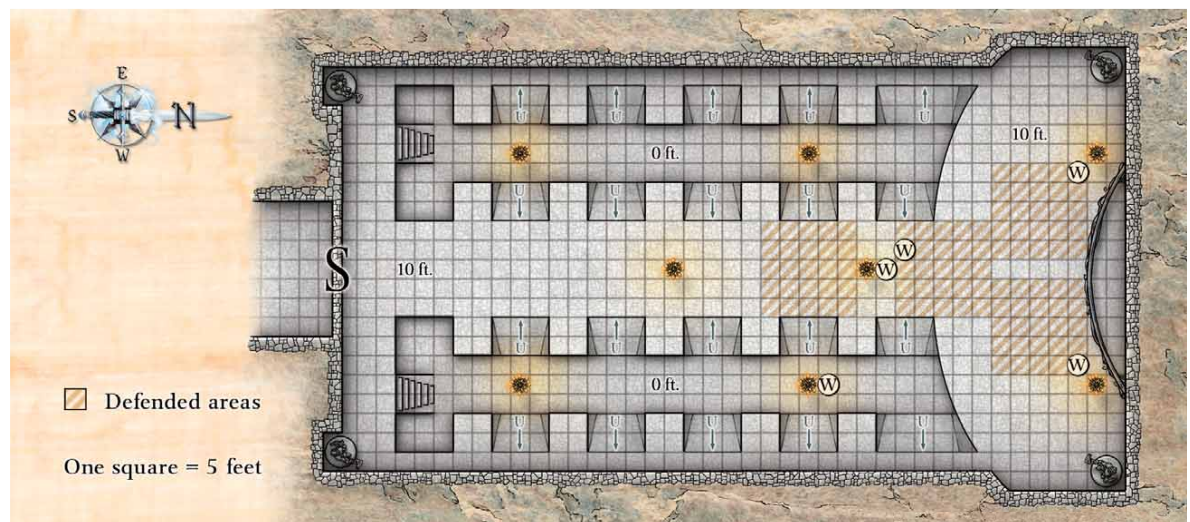
Slopes: The slopes count as difficult terrain for creatures moving up, but not down. A creature pushed or slid down a slope moves an extra square, and a character who falls prone on the slope slides 1 square toward the bottom.

Stairs: The stairs are considered difficult terrain.

Statues: These statues are of the god Moradin, with a pair of ravens—representing the Queen of Death—perched on his shoulders.

Writhing Chains Guarded Area: The guarded areas of the homunculi are marked on the map.

5* Writhing Chains (W)	Level 10 Skirmisher
Medium natural animate (construct, homunculus) XP 500 each	
Initiative +10 Senses Perception +7; darkvision	
HP 131; Bloodied 65	
AC 23; Fortitude 23, Reflex 23, Will 21	
Immune disease, poison	
Speed 7; see also <i>serpentine strike</i>	
⊕ Slam (standard; at-will)	
+13 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage.	
⊕ Winding Strike (standard; recharge Ⓜ; Ⓜ)	
+13 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage, and target slides 2 squares and is grabbed and restrained.	
Guarded Area	
When making attacks against a creature in its guarded area, the writhing chain gains a +2 bonus to hit, and can stretch itself, granting itself reach 3 on all melee attacks.	
Threatening Reach (within guarded area only)	
This creature can make opportunity attacks against all enemies within its reach (3 squares).	
Serpentine Strike (move; at-will)	
The chain shifts 3 squares.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages —
Skills Stealth +13	
Str 19 (+9)	Dex 17 (+8) Wis 15 (+7)
Con 21 (+10)	Int 18 (+9) Cha 12 (+6)
*Exact number of writhing chains could be fewer than five. Adjust encounter XP as necessary.	



MI: THE CHAMBER OF DOORS

Encounter Level 9 (1,800 XP)

SETUP

2 harpy screechers (H)

2 slystone dwarf ruffians (S)

The great vestibule of the Mountainroot Temple once held mystic portals to four separate temples of Moradin, as well as a single nonmagical entry: a stair that leads up into the Stonehome Mountains. Now, one of those magical doorways has been destroyed—as has much of the eastern side of the chamber—in various cave-ins. The PCs arrive through the door in the southwest.

The contingent of fey dispatched by King Cachlain has left behind a rearguard, assigned to watch for anyone entering the temple.

When the PCs enter the chamber by using the portal, read:

You feel no magic—no tingling or shimmering. It occurs between steps; one instant, you're in the sepulcher, and the next you're . . . not. You are in a great, stone-walled chamber. Numerous doorways—many of which are contained within deep stone arches, almost like artificial caves—provide egress. A platform with multiple stairs stands near the chamber's center, presumably for a ceremonial purpose long since forgotten. The eastern portion of the room appears to have been largely damaged in an ancient cave-in, marring one of two great reliefs that adorn the far wall.

Perched on one of the archways and atop the undamaged relief, a pair of foul females with ragged hair and the claws and wings of vultures turn piercing eyes in your direction, letting loose with a terrible, predatory cry. Only a few yards from you, what appears to be a scruffy, abnormally short dwarf peers at you between slitted lids.

Perception Check

DC 22: *From the corner of your eye, you spot a second thuggish-looking dwarf skulking quietly in the shadows of the broken wall.*

2 Harpy Screechers (H)		Level 9 Controller
Medium fey humanoid		XP 400 each
Initiative +7	Senses Perception +6	
HP 96; Bloodied 48		
AC 23; Fortitude 20, Reflex 20, Will 22		
Resist 10 thunder		
Speed 6, fly 8 (clumsy)		
⊕ Claw (standard; at-will)		
+14 vs. AC; 1d8 + 3 damage.		
↵ Alluring Song (standard; at-will) ♦ Charm		
Close burst 5; deafened creatures are immune; +15 vs. Will; the target is pulled 3 squares and immobilized (save ends).		
↵ Brutal Scream (standard; recharge Ⓜ Ⓜ) ♦ Thunder		
Close burst 5; +15 vs. Fortitude; 1d6 + 5 thunder damage. <i>Secondary Attack:</i> Area burst 1 within 5; centered on a target hit by <i>brutal scream's</i> primary attack; targets enemies only; +15 vs. Fortitude; 1d6 + 5 thunder damage and the target slides 3 squares.		
Alignment Evil	Languages Common	
Skills Stealth +12		
Str 16 (+7)	Dex 16 (+7)	Wis 15 (+6)
Con 16 (+7)	Int 11 (+4)	Cha 20 (+9)

2 Slystone Dwarf Ruffians (S)		Level 10 Soldier
Small fey humanoid		XP 500 each
Initiative +12	Senses Perception +5; low-light vision	
HP 104; Bloodied 52		
AC 26; Fortitude 23, Reflex 22, Will 21		
Speed 6; see also <i>mad dash</i>		
⊕ Hammer (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+17 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage, and the target is marked until the end of the slystone ruffian's next turn.		
⊕ Mighty Strike (standard; recharge Ⓜ Ⓜ) ♦ Weapon		
+17 vs. AC; 3d8 + 5 damage, and target is pushed 3 squares. The slystone dwarf ruffian can use this power as a part of a charge.		
Mad Dash		
When the slystone dwarf ruffian makes a charge attack, the enemy is knocked prone on a hit, in addition to any other effects of the attack.		
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Elven	
Skills Athletics +14		
Str 18 (+9)	Dex 21 (+10)	Wis 11 (+5)
Con 16 (+8)	Int 11 (+5)	Cha 18 (+9)
Equipment leather armor, hammer		

TACTICS

The harpies use *alluring song* to split up the PCs and move them into position where the slystone ruffians can attack—preferably with combat advantage—then shift to *brutal scream* as soon as a foe is in range. The harpies take to the air only if they must to keep the PCs in effective range, or if a foe draws too near their perch, and they attempt to remain perched on spots too high for melee combatants to easily reach. The slystone ruffians use ranged attacks initially, then charge their foes from multiple sides. The fey know that the broken passage in the east leads back to the room, and one of them might fake a retreat in an attempt to sneak up on the party from behind.

If three of the fey are slain and the last is bloodied, the survivor attempts to escape and might surrender if escape proves impossible.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

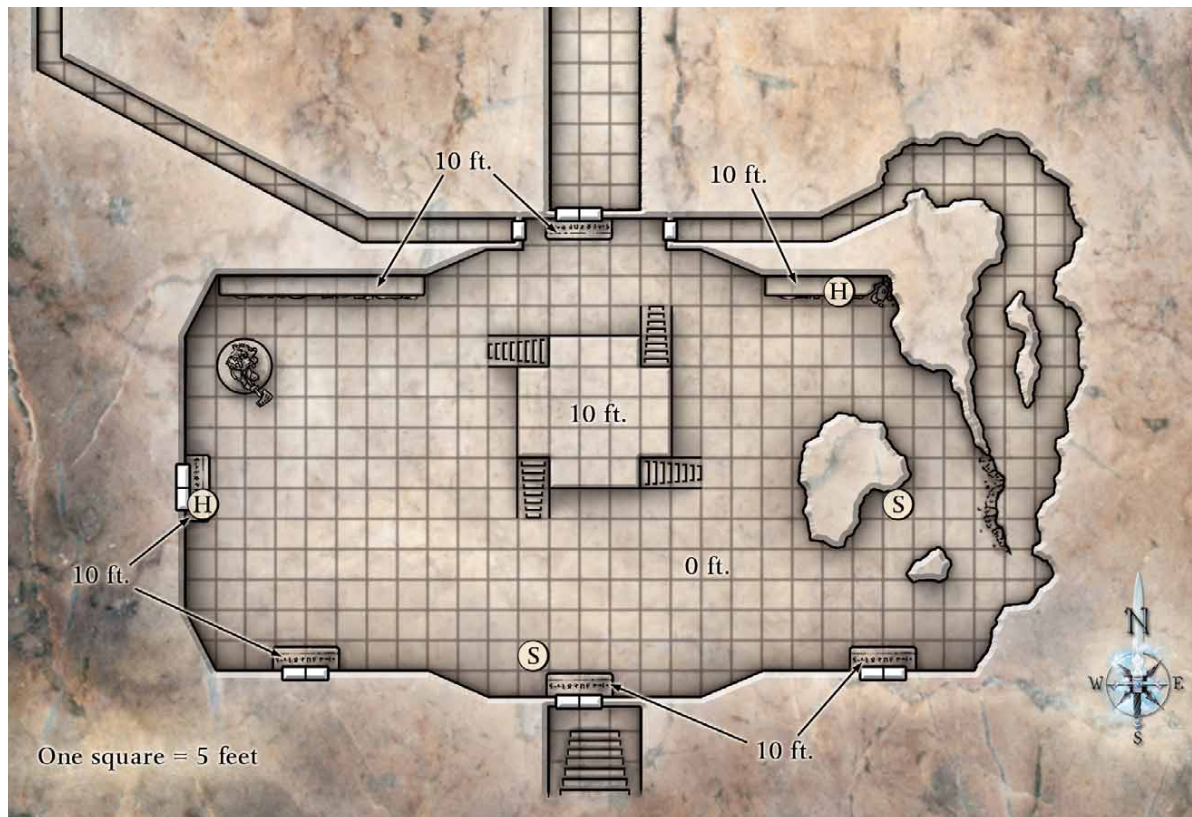
Illumination: The chamber is brightly lit by the fires carved into the two reliefs and the statue, which glow with a magical light. In the broken passage in the east, however, the only light is what the PCs bring with them.

Ceiling: The ceiling is 25 feet overhead.

Archways: The stone archways surrounding the double doors are 10 feet high and are steady enough for perching, standing, or even combat. They require a mere DC 14 Athletics check to climb.

Reliefs: These reliefs show scenes of dwarf smiths at work on a huge forge, while Moradin looks on from beyond. The eastern relief is broken off halfway across, but the fires still glow. The reliefs stick out far enough from the wall that they can serve the harpies as perches, but a normal humanoid attempting to stand on one must make a DC 17 Acrobatics check every round or topple off. They are, however, easy to climb, with a DC 10 Athletics check.

Doors: The southeast door, the southwest door (through which the PCs entered), and the western door are the surviving magical portals.



THE MAGIC DOORS

If the PCs open the door through which they entered, they see the sepulcher—but of course they can no longer reach it. If they open one of the other two, decide for yourself what sort of sights they see, based on where else in the campaign world you want the two remaining portals to lead. (You might use these to provide side adventures later on, as a brief diversion from the *Scales of War* adventure path.)

Remember that, until the PCs rescue the Caretaker, none of the external doors—either these magic ones, or the southern door that leads into the Stonehome Mountains—are usable. The PCs can look through them, but passing through them proves impossible.

Platform: The platform stands 10 feet off the ground. It has no sides or guardrail.

Statue: A statue of Moradin holds two fistfuls of fire that provide some of the chamber's lighting.

M5: THE VAULT

Encounter Level 10 (2,500 XP)

SETUP

2 harpy screechers (H)

3 quickling runners (Q)

Daggerspring floor

The Mountainroot Temple used the vault to store its valuables—not its religious icons and relics, which were kept in the reliquary (M9), but simple monetary treasures. These included works of art, jewels, the legal forms for grants of land, raw ore, and of course coins.

When the PCs enter the vault, read:

This uneven room is clearly a repository of a sort. The walls are of heavy stone—heavier, even, than you've seen elsewhere in the temple—and several short flights of stairs lead to vaultlike rooms. These separate chambers boast heavy portcullises, though the gates are currently all raised.

A pair of twisted, grotesque little humanoids, with dead-gray skin and inhuman features, drop the coins they were examining as you enter.

Perception Check

DC 25: You spot another pair of harpies, skulking just beyond two of the entries to the vaults!

DC 26: You can just barely make out another twisted gray humanoid, lurking in the chamber to the northeast.

2 Harpy Screechers (H)		Level 9 Controller
Medium fey humanoid		XP 400 each
Initiative +7 Senses Perception +6		
HP 96; Bloodied 48		
AC 23; Fortitude 20, Reflex 20, Will 22		
Resist 10 thunder		
Speed 6, fly 8 (clumsy)		
⊕ Claw (standard; at-will)		
+14 vs. AC; 1d8 + 3 damage.		
⚡ Alluring Song (standard; at-will) ♦ Charm		
Close burst 5; deafened creatures are immune; +15 vs. Will; the target is pulled 3 squares and immobilized (save ends).		
⚡ Brutal Scream (standard; recharge Ⓜ; Ⓜ) ♦ Thunder		
Close burst 5; +15 vs. Fortitude; 1d6 + 5 thunder damage.		
Secondary Attack: Area burst 1 within 5; centered on a target hit by <i>brutal scream's</i> primary attack; targets enemies only; +15 vs. Fortitude; 1d6 + 5 thunder damage and the target slides 3 squares.		
Alignment Evil		Languages Common
Skills Stealth +12		
Str 16 (+7)	Dex 16 (+7)	Wis 15 (+6)
Con 16 (+7)	Int 11 (+4)	Cha 20 (+9)

3 Quickling Runners (Q)		Level 9 Skirmisher
Small fey humanoid		XP 400 each
Initiative +13 Senses Perception +7; low-light vision		
HP 96; Bloodied 48		
AC 24 (28 against opportunity attacks); Fortitude 20, Reflex 24, Will 20		
Speed 12, climb 6; see also <i>fey shift</i> and <i>quick cuts</i>		
⊕ Short Sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+14 vs. AC; 1d6 + 7 damage.		
⚡ Quick Cuts (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
The quickling moves its speed. At any two points during its move, the quickling makes a melee basic attack at a -2 penalty. The quickling cannot use this power while immobilized or slowed.		
Fey Shift (standard; encounter)		
The quickling runner shifts 10 squares.		
Maintain Mobility (minor; recharge Ⓜ; Ⓜ; Ⓜ)		
An immobilized quickling runner is no longer immobilized.		
Alignment Evil		Languages Elven
Skills Acrobatics +21, Bluff +9, Stealth +16		
Str 9 (+3)	Dex 24 (+11)	Wis 17 (+7)
Con 16 (+7)	Int 14 (+6)	Cha 10 (+4)
Equipment short sword		

Daggerspring Floor Trap	Level 10 Obstacle
	500 XP

Several squares of the room (marked on the map) are trapped with spring-loaded blades, which trigger when stepped on. The trigger plates are old and stiff, and do not trigger when stepped on by Small or smaller creatures. While this renders any halfling (or other Small) PCs safe, it also means that the quicklings can run across the squares without harm.

Perception

♦ DC 26: The character can discern all adjacent trapped plates.

Additional Skill: Thievery

♦ DC 22: The party gains a +2 bonus to Perception checks to notice the trapped plates and Thievery checks to delay or disable the plates.

Trigger

When a creature enters or begins its turn in a trapped square, the trap attacks that creature.

Attack

Opportunity Action **Melee** 1

Target: Creature in a trapped square

Attack: +13 vs. Reflex

Hit: 2d10+6 damage. On a critical hit, the target is knocked prone and slowed (save ends).

Miss: Half damage.

Countermeasures

♦ A character who makes a successful Athletics check (DC 6, or DC 11 without a running start) can jump over a single plate.

♦ An adjacent character can disable a trigger plate with a DC 26 Thievery check.

TACTICS

The harpies use *alluring song* to drag PCs onto trapped squares, while the quicklings take advantage of the fact that they are too small to trigger the trap and seek to trick characters into chasing them onto the plates. (Because the harpies know where these squares are, they never voluntarily land or step onto them.) Otherwise, both use the interconnecting nature of the vault to maneuver, striking and then dashing behind cover, only to strike again from a different angle.

The quicklings have no interest in parley, but if all are slain, the surviving harpies might surrender (particularly if only one is left, or if both are bloodied).

SPECIAL ATTACK

A creature adjacent to a portcullis can yank it shut with a DC 22 Strength check. If another creature is directly beneath the gate (that is, in the square with the gate marked on the map), the character pulling down the gate can make a Strength vs. Reflex attack. If the attack succeeds, the gate closes on the creature, knocking it prone and causing ongoing 5 damage and restraining the creature (save ends both). The prone creature cannot stand until it has saved against the restraint.

Only Medium or larger creatures can attempt this, since Small or smaller creatures cannot reach the portcullis.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: The fey have scattered several sunrods across the room and in the vaults. This provides lighting for the entire area. The larger, central chamber is brightly lit, while the individual vaults are dimly lit.

Ceiling: The ceiling is 20 feet overhead.

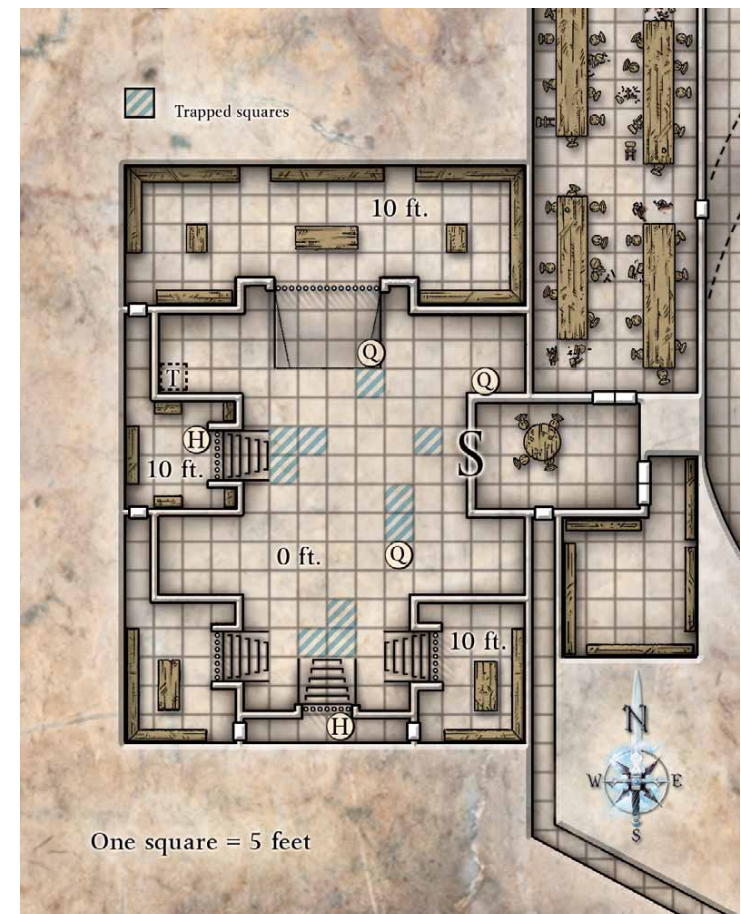
Daggerspring Squares: The trapped squares are marked on the map.

Portcullises: The gates are all currently raised and are corroded in place. A DC 22 Strength check allows a character to yank the bars down, thus closing a portcullis, at which point it requires a DC 20 Strength check to open again. See the sidebar.

Secret Door: The secret door to the east requires a DC 22 Perception check to locate. If the PCs entered by this door, however, they need not roll to find it again.

Secret Trapdoor: The trapdoor requires a DC 25 Perception check to locate. It opens onto a spiral stair that leads into an underground passage (not mapped). This eventually leads to another spiral stair, which comes up to the secret door in the statue in the northwest corner of the reliquary (M9).

Slope: The slope counts as difficult terrain for creatures moving up, but not down. A creature pushed or slid down the slope moves an extra square, and a character who falls prone on the slope slides 1 square south.



M6: THE GRAND CATHEDRAL

Encounter Level 13 (4,300 XP, but see below)

SETUP

This encounter initially includes the following creatures:

- 3 **banshrae dartswarmers** (B)
- 5 **quickling runners** (Q)
- 1 **slystone dwarf ruffian** (S)

Once the second wave of adversaries appears, the encounter also includes the following creatures (not marked on the map, since they aren't present at the beginning of the encounter):

- 1 **redspawn firebelcher**
- 2 **spitting trolls**
- 4 **trolls**
- 1 **two-headed troll**

For years, the grand cathedral of the Mountainroot Temple was the heart of Moradin worship in the region. A truly gargantuan chamber—more an artificial cavern than a “room”—it has suffered the ravages of time. It has been badly damaged by cave-ins over the years, and rubble covers the floor.

When the PCs enter, read:

Some of you have seen keeps smaller than the vast chamber around you. Roughly oval in shape, save for the crumbling walls to the east, the chamber consists of multiple levels. Stairs in the room's center, as well as great sweeping ramps

around the sides, climb to the second level 20 feet above. One of those ramps has partly collapsed along with the walls. Steeps stairs and slopes lead from there to a third level, and a platform not unlike the one in the temple's entry chamber stands high atop that. Huge chunks of wall and stone stand along the broken edge, forming natural ledges, and a deep crevice runs a jagged path to the southeast.

Perception Check

DC 20: *There's another of the vile, bestial-looking dwarves hiding in the lee of the stairs.*

DC 21: *Above, you spot several insectoid-featured humanoids perched on various ledges.*

DC 26: *And there are yet more foes—twisted gray humanoids roughly the size of halflings, lurking around various corners and in the shadows.*

At the start of the third round of combat, read:

A deafening boom rings out over the chamber, echoing through the vastness. Twice, three times, and then you hear a sudden shattering and the sound of wood rebounding off stone.

If a PC is in a position to see the northernmost door at this time, read:

The double doors burst open, and jagged bits of the lock hang loose. Through the open doorway barges an array of horrific figures: several green and mottled trolls, a pair of smaller creatures with similar features and narrowed eyes, and—most terrifying—a broad-shouldered troll with two shrieking heads. Accompanying one of the small trolls is a red-scaled reptile on a heavy chain, and smoke rises from its nostrils and from between its jagged teeth.

3 Banshrae Dartswarmers (B)		Level 11 Artillery
Medium fey humanoid		XP 600 each
Initiative +11 Senses Perception +7; low-light vision		
HP 89; Bloodied 44		
AC 23; Fortitude 20, Reflex 23, Will 22		
Speed 8		
⬇ Slam (standard; at-will)		
+13 vs. AC; 1d8 + 3 damage.		
↘ Blowgun Dart (standard; at-will) ⬆ Weapon		
Ranged 5/10; +16 vs. AC; 1d10 + 6 damage, and the target is dazed and takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls (save ends both).		
↙ Dart Flurry (standard; recharge ⏏ ⏏ ⏏) ⬆ Weapon		
Close blast 5; +16 vs. AC; 1d10 + 6 damage, plus the target is dazed and takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls (save ends both).		
Alignment Unaligned		Languages telepathy 20
Str 16 (+8)	Dex 22 (+11)	Wis 15 (+7)
Con 17 (+8)	Int 14 (+7)	Cha 20 (+10)
Equipment blowgun, darts		

5 Quickling Runners (Q)		Level 9 Skirmisher
Small fey humanoid		XP 400 each
Initiative +13 Senses Perception +7; low-light vision		
HP 96; Bloodied 48		
AC 24 (28 against opportunity attacks); Fortitude 20, Reflex 24, Will 20		
Speed 12, climb 6; see also <i>fey shift</i> and <i>quick cuts</i>		
⬇ Short Sword (standard; at-will) ⬆ Weapon		
+14 vs. AC; 1d6 + 7 damage.		
⬇ Quick Cuts (standard; at-will) ⬆ Weapon		
The quickling moves its speed. At any two points during its move, the quickling makes a melee basic attack at a -2 penalty. The quickling cannot use this power while immobilized or slowed.		
Fey Shift (standard; encounter)		
The quickling runner shifts 10 squares.		
Maintain Mobility (minor; recharge ⏏ ⏏ ⏏)		
An immobilized quickling runner is no longer immobilized.		
Alignment Evil		Languages Elven
Skills Acrobatics +21, Bluff +9, Stealth +16		
Str 9 (+3)	Dex 24 (+11)	Wis 17 (+7)
Con 16 (+7)	Int 14 (+6)	Cha 10 (+4)
Equipment short sword		

Slystone Dwarf Ruffian		Level 10 Soldier	
Small fey humanoid		XP 500	
Initiative +12 Senses Perception +5; low-light vision			
HP 104; Bloodied 52			
AC 26; Fortitude 23, Reflex 22, Will 21			
Speed 6; see also <i>mad dash</i>			
⬇ Hammer (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon			
+17 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage, and the target is marked until the end of the slystone ruffian's next turn.			
⬇ Mighty Strike (standard; recharge ⌘ ⌘) ♦ Weapon			
+17 vs. AC; 3d8 + 5 damage, and target is pushed 3 squares. The slystone dwarf ruffian can use this power as a part of a charge.			
Mad Dash			
When the slystone dwarf ruffian makes a charge attack, the enemy is knocked prone on a hit, in addition to any other effects of the attack.			
Alignment Evil		Languages Common, Elven	
Skills Athletics +14			
Str 18 (+9)		Dex 21 (+10)	
Con 16 (+8)		Int 11 (+5)	
		Cha 18 (+9)	
Equipment leather armor, hammer			

Redspawn Firebelcher		Level 12 Artillery	
Large natural beast (reptile)		XP 700	
Initiative +7 Senses Perception +6; low-light vision			
Fire Within (Fire) aura 5; allies who enter or start their turns within the aura gain resist 10 fire.			
HP 97; Bloodied 48			
AC 25; Fortitude 25, Reflex 22, Will 21			
Resist 20 fire			
Speed 4			
⬇ Bite (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire			
+16 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage, and ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends).]			
↘ Fire Belch (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire			
Ranged 12; +15 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 1 damage, and ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends).			
✦ Fire Burst (standard; recharge ⌘ ⌘) ♦ Fire			
Area burst 2 within 10; +15 vs. Reflex 3d6 + 1 damage, and ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends). <i>Miss</i> : Half damage, and no ongoing fire damage.			
Alignment Unaligned		Languages –	
Str 18 (+10)		Dex 13 (+7)	
Con 19 (+10)		Int 2 (+2)	
		Cha 8 (+5)	

2 Spitting Trolls		Level 10 Soldier (Leader)	
Medium natural humanoid		XP 500 each	
Initiative +12 Senses Perception +8			
HP 106; Bloodied 53; see also <i>troll healing</i>			
Regeneration 10 (if the troll takes acid or fire damage, regeneration does not function until the end of its next turn)			
AC 26; Fortitude 22, Reflex 23, Will 22			
Speed 6, climb 4			
⬇ Claw (standard; at-will) ♦ Poison			
+17 vs. AC; 1d6 + 5 damage, plus 1d6 poison damage.			
⌘ Javelin (standard; at-will) ♦ Poison, Weapon			
Ranged 10/20; +17 vs. AC; 1d6 + 5 damage, plus 1d6 poison damage.			
↘ Acid Spit (minor; recharge ⌘ ⌘) ♦ Acid			
Ranged 5; +15 vs. Reflex; 1d6 acid damage.			
Regenerative Empowerment (minor 1/turn, at-will)			
One troll within 10 squares whose regeneration is currently inactive (as a result of taking acid or fire damage) immediately reactivates the regeneration.			
Troll Healing ♦ Healing			
If the troll is reduced to 0 hit points by an attack that does not deal acid or fire damage, it rises on its next turn (as a move action) with 10 hit points.			
Alignment Chaotic evil		Languages Common, Giant	
Skills Athletics +13, Endurance +14			
Str 16 (+8)		Dex 21 (+10)	
Con 18 (+9)		Int 10 (+5)	
		Cha 13 (+6)	
Equipment leather armor, 10 javelins			

Two-Headed Troll		Level 10 Elite Brute	
Large natural humanoid		XP 1,000	
Initiative +5 Senses Perception +7			
HP 264; Bloodied 132; see also <i>troll healing</i>			
Regeneration 10 (if the troll takes acid or fire damage, regeneration does not function until the end of its next turn)			
AC 25; Fortitude 27, Reflex 19, Will 20			
Saving Throws +2			
Speed 6			
Action Points 1			
⬇ Claw (standard; at-will)			
Reach 2; +13 vs. AC; 3d6 + 7 damage.			
⬇ Smackdown (immediate reaction, when an enemy moves into a position that flanks the two-headed troll; at-will)			
The two-headed troll targets one creature flanking it; +11 vs. Fortitude; the target is knocked prone.			
Double Actions			
A two-headed troll rolls initiative twice, gets two turns during a round, and has a full set of actions (standard, move, minor) on each turn. Each set of actions corresponds to a different head. The troll's ability to take immediate actions refreshes on each of its turns.			
Dual Brain			
At the end of its turn, the two-headed troll automatically succeeds on all saving throws against the dazed and stunned conditions and against charm effects that a save can end.			
Troll Healing ♦ Healing			
If the troll is reduced to 0 hit points by an attack that does not deal acid or fire damage, it rises on its next turn (as a move action) with 10 hit points.			
Alignment Chaotic evil		Languages Giant	
Str 24 (+12)		Dex 10 (+5)	
Con 22 (+11)		Int 6 (+3)	
		Cha 10 (+5)	
Equipment hide armor			

4 Trolls		Level 9 Brute
Large natural humanoid		XP 400 each
Initiative +7	Senses Perception +11	
HP 100; Bloodied 50; see also <i>troll healing</i>		
Regeneration 10 (if the troll takes acid or fire damage, regeneration does not function until the end of its next turn)		
AC 20; Fortitude 21, Reflex 18, Will 17		
Speed 8		
⚔ Claw (standard; at-will)		
Melee 2; +13 vs. AC; 2d6 + 6 damage; see also <i>frenzied strike</i> .		
⚔ Frenzied Strike (free, when the troll's attack bloodies an enemy; at-will)		
The troll makes a claw attack.		
Troll Healing ♦ Healing		
If the troll is reduced to 0 hit points by an attack that does not deal acid or fire damage, it rises on its next turn (as a move action) with 10 hit points.		
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Giant	
Skills Athletics +15, Endurance +14		
Str 22 (+10)	Dex 16 (+7)	Wis 14 (+6)
Con 20 (+9)	Int 5 (+1)	Cha 10 (+4)

TACTICS

Initially, the fey fight to their strengths. The ban-shrae stay at range and snipe the PCs, while the quicklings and slystone ruffian maneuver in and out of melee combat. The slystone ruffian is particularly fond of bullrushing enemies off edges or into the ravine. The quicklings and slystone avoid bunching up or staying in one spot for long, preferring to make the PCs keep moving across the room and up and down between levels.

Once the trolls arrive, however, the fey split their attentions between the party and the new foes. Similarly, the trolls and firebelcher treat the fey and the PCs as equal threats.

The trolls spread out once they appear through the northernmost door. One spitting troll attempts to stay within 10 squares or so of the two-headed troll, where it can move in and use *poison spit* if the troll takes acid or fire damage. The other spitting troll—the one accompanying the firebelcher—remains near one of the other, normal trolls. Where possible, that spitting

troll also tries to remain near the firebelcher to take advantage of the creature's granted fire resistance.

The trolls and firebelcher fight to the death, no matter what, but if any fey survive after all the trolls and firebelcher are slain, they attempt to flee rather than continuing the fight against the PCs. If cornered, they surrender.

THREE-WAY FIGHTING

Once the battle between all three factions is engaged, it's *vital* that the DM play the monsters as focusing on *both* the PCs and the other monstrous faction. Some DMs might be tempted to have the monsters focus more on the PCs than on each other, while others might be tempted to give the PCs an easy time by having the monsters focus more on each other.

Avoid these temptations! This encounter (and its XP reward) is balanced under the assumption that, once all three factions are involved, each group of creatures focuses *equally* on the party and the other group. That doesn't mean that any individual monster needs to split its attacks, or that a monster should be stupid and ignore a particular threat. But in any given round, the troll faction should *average* the same number of attacks against the PCs as it does against the fey, and vice-versa.

Obviously, if one faction is whittled down faster than the others, the larger faction can devote more attacks to the PCs, and that's fine. But this should happen only if and when one group becomes markedly smaller than the other, and even then, the winning faction's attentions should be split proportionately between the party and the smaller group of foes.

Players might grow impatient if the DM spends too long rolling dice for NPCs attacking NPCs. Feel free to use average results for damage for each creature during this encounter. Do *not* use these averages when rolling damage against a PC, or when a monster is attempting to save against a PC's ability. But when monsters are attacking *each other*, these average values speed up play and allow the DM to more swiftly return to the players.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: The grand cathedral generates its own magical light. The chamber is brightly lit.

Ceiling: The ceiling is 70 feet overhead from the bottom level.

Altar: This great stone altar, shaped roughly like a primitive anvil, stands 5 feet in height, atop the platform at the highest level. Stepping up onto the altar requires an extra square of movement, and the altar provides cover.

Broken Stone Platforms: Along the eastern side of the room, enormous chunks of stone—broken parts of the wall, bits of the ceiling, and the like—lie scattered about. Many are flat enough that combatants can maneuver on top of them. They require a DC 21 Athletics check to climb, and vary in height as marked.

Crevice: The jagged crevice is roughly 20 feet deep, and—thanks to various doors and passages that were caved in long ago—provides the only means of accessing areas M7 and M8. It requires a DC 21 Athletics check to climb.

Doors: The doors to the reliquary at M9 were locked, until the trolls broke through them. Now they cannot be locked.

Edges: The edge of the second level overhangs level one slightly; see the map of M10.

Gap: This wide break in the eastern ramp has a ragged edge, and it ranges from 15 to 20 feet across.

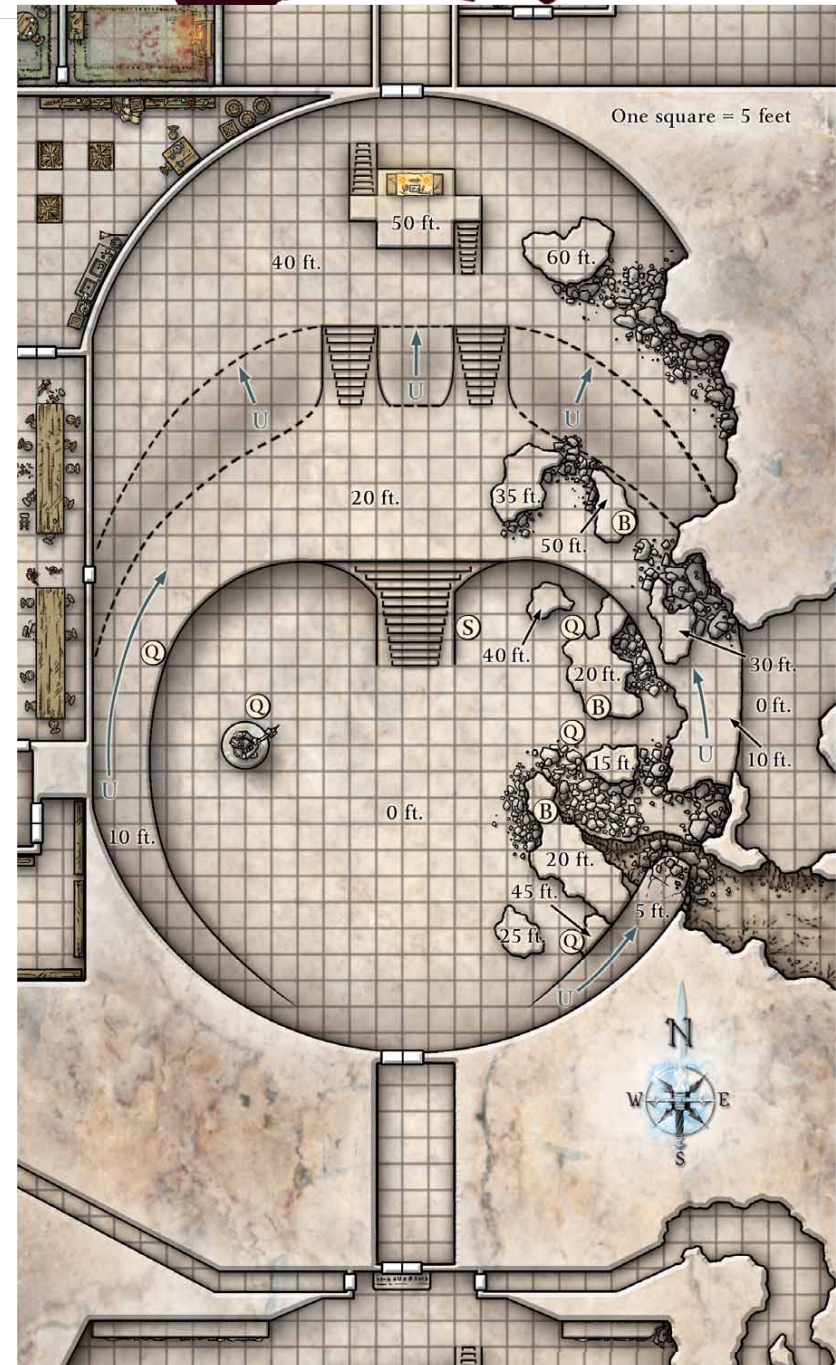
Rubble: The rubble scattered across the floor is difficult terrain.

Slope, Shallow: The two curved ramps that provide access from the first to the second level are shallow and do not qualify as difficult terrain. A creature pushed or slid down the slope moves an extra square.

Slope, Steep: The northern slopes require a DC 11 Athletics check to climb. A creature that steps (or is moved) onto the slope from the top immediately slides to the bottom of the slope and, unless it makes a DC 10 Acrobatics check, falls prone.

Stairs, Steep: The stairs that provide access from the second level to the third level are particularly steep. They are difficult terrain. A creature pushed or slid down the stairs moves an extra square, and a character who falls prone on the stairs also slides 1 square south.

Statue: The statue in the southwest is another statue of Moradin; this one holds an enormous hammer in both hands.



M7/M8: THE SHATTERED BARRACKS AND THE LESSER SANCTUM

Encounter Level 14 (5,100 XP)

SETUP

1 banshreae dartswarmer (B)

4 cyclops guards (C)

Hethralga, unique howling hag (H)

4 slystone ruffians (S)

Cave-in hazard

Here, in these broken and precarious chambers where the priests of the Mountainroot Temple once made their homes, and in the smaller sanctuary where they conducted services and rites too small or private for the grand cathedral, the leaders of the fey have made their camp. Hethralga, personal servant of King Cachlain, lurks here with her bodyguards and most trusted servants. She has already acquired the *Incunabulum*; now she seeks a way to return to the Feywild and grows ever more nervous with each passing hour that her followers fail to find a means of escape.

If the players enter M7 by using the crevice, read:

Hauling yourself up onto the ledge, you are in an uneven cave—clearly a result of one of the ancient cave-ins and not of any deliberate building. To the right, rubble litters the floor, making footing precarious.

Once the players move in far enough to see the eastern portion of M7, continue:

As you progress, it becomes apparent that some construction took place here at one point. Several broken

walls and sharp corners suggest that the cave-in reshaped what was once a part of the temple.

A faint glimmer of light, almost invisible, shines from the east.

Perception Check

DC 20: Barely visible, outlined against that faint light, are a pair of those short, gruff-looking dwarves.

If the players enter M7 by using the door from M8, read:

You are in a small chamber that has clearly seen better days. Whatever furniture was once here has long since either been removed or crumbled to dust, and the walls are webbed with cracks.

Once the players move down the western passage, or through the northern door, continue:

More wreckage and ruin. Clearly, old cave-ins have reduced what was once a series of carved chambers to broken rooms, twisted passages, and the occasional freestanding wall. Thick heaps of rubble stand here and there on the floor.

If the players enter M8 by using the crevice, read:

Climbing up from the crevice, you have a brief instant to look around. You are in a cathedral or religious sanctuary, far smaller than the main one behind you, and the hall boasts a dais at the far end, behind which looms a great relief of Moradin at his forge. A line of columns runs down both sides of the room; two of the great pillars have fallen, apparently toppled in the same cataclysm that created the crevice.

And then your brief moment of observation has passed, as a cadre of one-eyed giants, axes held high, converges on you!

Perception Check

DC 20: A handful of gnome-sized fey skulk in the shadows and around the various pillars.

DC 21: You spy an old dwarf crone, ancient beyond belief, atop the dais, almost blending in to the relief beyond.

DC 22: Not far from her, another of the insectoid fey crouches upon the steps of the dais, its unblinking eyes gazing in your direction.

If the players enter M8 through the door from M7, read:

The fleeing fey have led you into a much larger chamber. You are in a cathedral or religious sanctuary, far smaller than the main one behind you, and the hall boasts a dais at the far end, behind which looms a great relief of Moradin at his forge. A line of columns runs down both sides of the room; two of the great pillars have fallen, apparently toppled in the same cataclysm that created the crevice.

Retreating off the dais as you approach are another of the inhuman, insectoid fey and what appears to be an ancient dwarf crone, at least several centuries old. From beyond them, a cadre of one-eyed giants, axes held high, converges on you!

Perception Check

DC 20: A handful of gnome-sized fey skulk in the shadows and around the various pillars.

When a cyclops makes a cave-in attack, read:

The enormous figure slams a palm into the nearby pillar. The entire column of stone shudders—followed by a much louder rumble as a portion of the roof jars loose from above and tumbles downward!

When the cave-in hazard is triggered, read:

A low groan reverberates through the sanctum, sending dust raining down from above. And then the rain is far more than dust, as bits of rock begin to shake loose.

Banshrae Dartswarmer (B) **Level 11 Artillery**
Medium fey humanoid XP 600

Initiative +11 **Senses** Perception +7; low-light vision
HP 89; **Bloodied** 44
AC 23; **Fortitude** 20, **Reflex** 23, **Will** 22
Speed 8

⊕ **Slam** (standard; at-will)
+13 vs. AC; 1d8 + 3 damage.

↘ **Blowgun Dart** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
Ranged 5/10; +16 vs. AC; 1d10 + 6 damage, and the target is dazed and takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls (save ends both).

↖ **Dart Flurry** (standard; recharge ☐☐☐☐☐) ♦ **Weapon**
Close blast 5; +16 vs. AC; 1d10 + 6 damage, plus the target is dazed and takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls (save ends both).

Alignment Unaligned **Languages** telepathy 20
Str 16 (+8) **Dex** 22 (+11) **Wis** 15 (+7)
Con 17 (+8) **Int** 14 (+7) **Cha** 20 (+10)

Equipment blowgun, darts

4 Slystone Dwarf Ruffians (S) **Level 10 Soldier**
Small fey humanoid XP 500 each

Initiative +12 **Senses** Perception +5; low-light vision
HP 104; **Bloodied** 52
AC 26; **Fortitude** 23, **Reflex** 22, **Will** 21
Speed 6; see also *mad dash*

⊕ **Hammer** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
+17 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage, and the target is marked until the end of the slystone ruffian's next turn.

⚡ **Mighty Strike** (standard; recharge ☐☐☐☐☐) ♦ **Weapon**
+17 vs. AC; 3d8 + 5 damage, and target is pushed 3 squares. The slystone dwarf ruffian can use this power as a part of a charge.

Mad Dash
When the slystone dwarf ruffian makes a charge attack, the enemy is knocked prone on a hit, in addition to any other effects of the attack.

Alignment Evil **Languages** Common, Elven
Skills Athletics +14
Str 18 (+9) **Dex** 21 (+10) **Wis** 11 (+5)
Con 16 (+8) **Int** 11 (+5) **Cha** 18 (+9)

Equipment leather armor, hammer

Hethralga, Unique Howling Hag **Level 12 Controller**
Medium fey humanoid XP 700

Initiative +11 **Senses** Perception +10; low-light vision
HP 126; **Bloodied** 63; see also *shriek of pain*
AC 26; **Fortitude** 25, **Reflex** 24, **Will** 23
Speed 6; see also *fey step*

⊕ **Quarterstaff** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
+15 vs. AC; 1d10 + 5 damage.

↖ **Howl** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Thunder**
Close blast 3; +16 vs. Fortitude; 1d6 + 6 thunder damage, and the target is pushed 3 squares.

↖ **Shriek of Pain** (standard; recharges when first bloodied) ♦ **Thunder**
Close blast 5; +16 vs. Fortitude; 3d6 + 6 thunder damage, or 3d6 + 11 thunder damage if the howling hag is bloodied. **Miss:** Half damage.

Change Shape (minor; at-will) ♦ **Polymorph**
A howling hag can alter its physical form to appear as an old crone of any Medium humanoid race (see *Change Shape*, *Monster Manual* page 280).

Fey Step (move; encounter) ♦ **Teleportation**
The howling hag can teleport 10 squares.

Alignment Evil **Languages** Common, Elven
Skills Bluff +15, Insight +15, Nature +15
Str 21 (+11) **Dex** 21 (+11) **Wis** 18 (+10)
Con 22 (+12) **Int** 13 (+7) **Cha** 19 (+10)

Equipment quarterstaff

4 Cyclops Guards (C) **Level 14 Minion**
Large fey humanoid XP 250 each

Initiative +8 **Senses** Perception +13; truesight 6
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.
AC 27; **Fortitude** 26, **Reflex** 23, **Will** 23
Speed 6

⊕ **Battleaxe** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
Melee 2; +17 vs. AC; 7 damage.

⚡ **Evil Eye** (immediate reaction, when a melee attack misses the cyclops guard; at-will)
The cyclops guard makes a melee basic attack against the attacker.

Alignment Unaligned **Languages** Elven
Str 22 (+11) **Dex** 16 (+8) **Wis** 17 (+8)
Con 20 (+10) **Int** 11 (+5) **Cha** 11 (+5)

Equipment hide armor, heavy shield, battleaxe

Cave-In Hazard **Level 13 Lurker**
800 XP

A disruption sets off a chain reaction that doesn't end until all the room is covered in rubble.

Perception
♦ DC 31: The character notices that the area is unstable.

Additional Skill: Dungeoneering
♦ DC 26: Same as Perception, above.

Initiative +6

Trigger
Two rounds after the first time a cyclops makes a cave-in attack, or 4 rounds after combat has begun (whichever comes first), the cave-in hazard is triggered. Between the trigger and the cave-in's attack, characters in the area know that a cave-in is beginning. On its turn, the cave-in attacks a random area within the encounter area (M8).

Attack
Standard Action **Close burst** 1
Targets: Creatures in burst
Attack: +16 vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d12 + 8 damage
Miss: Half damage
Effect: The burst area becomes difficult terrain.
Sustain Standard: The cave-in attacks each round, targeting a different square.

Countermeasures
♦ A character who makes a DC 31 Dungeoneering check as a minor action can determine the square the trap will attack on its next turn.

TACTICS

The cyclopes immediately attempt to converge on the PCs, making use of their ability to trigger cave-ins any time a PC is appropriately positioned. They're also fond of bullrushing PCs back into the crevice as they climb out, and might even ready actions to do so. The hag and the banshrae stay at maximum range for their various powers; if the PCs attempt to close, the pair conducts a fighting retreat, moving either through the door to M7 or into the crevice, depending on which way the PCs are coming from. At least one of the slystones accompanies them when they do this,

potentially leading to a combat that makes multiple circuits of M7 and M8. The hag resumes her normal form after several rounds of combat.

If the PCs approach M8 by M7, rather than by the crevice, the slystone ruffians retreat so they can fight alongside their allies. Otherwise, they enter M8 in the second round of combat, having heard the commotion.

Once the random cave-in begins, Hethralga and the banshrae retreat to M7. The slystones and the cyclopes retreat as well, but more slowly, attempting to maintain melee as they do so (and, hopefully, keeping the PCs in the sanctum, and in range of the cave-in, longer).

SPECIAL ATTACK

A large or larger creature can deliberately cause rocks to fall from the ceiling by striking high up on one of the chamber's standing pillars. This requires a standard action, and the attacker can decide what square the attack is centered on, as long as it is within 4 squares of the pillar. This is a close burst 1, Strength vs. Reflex attack that deals $2d12 + 8$ damage (half damage on miss) and causes the area to become difficult terrain.

The leaning pillar (see below) can also be used as a makeshift attack. If pushed from the west with a DC 19 Strength check (being jammed against the wall, it won't move if shoved from any other direction), it falls to the ground and rolls to the position marked on the map. It makes a +16 vs. Reflex attack against anyone standing in its path; if it hits, it deals $2d8$ damage, pushes the target as far as it needs to for the target to be out of the way, and knocks the target prone. Once it lands, it is another fallen pillar, as defined below.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Area M8 is brightly lit by a magical glow emanating from the relief and the standing pillars. The light leaks through the door to M7, providing dim light for the easternmost room and passage. The rest of M7 is illuminated only by whatever light the PCs bring with them.

Ceiling: The ceiling of M7 is 15 feet overhead, while that of M8 is 30 feet overhead.

Crevice: The jagged crevice at the southwest is roughly 20 feet deep, and—thanks to various doors and passages that were caved in long ago—provides the only means of accessing area M6 from here. It requires a DC 21 Athletics check to climb its ledges.

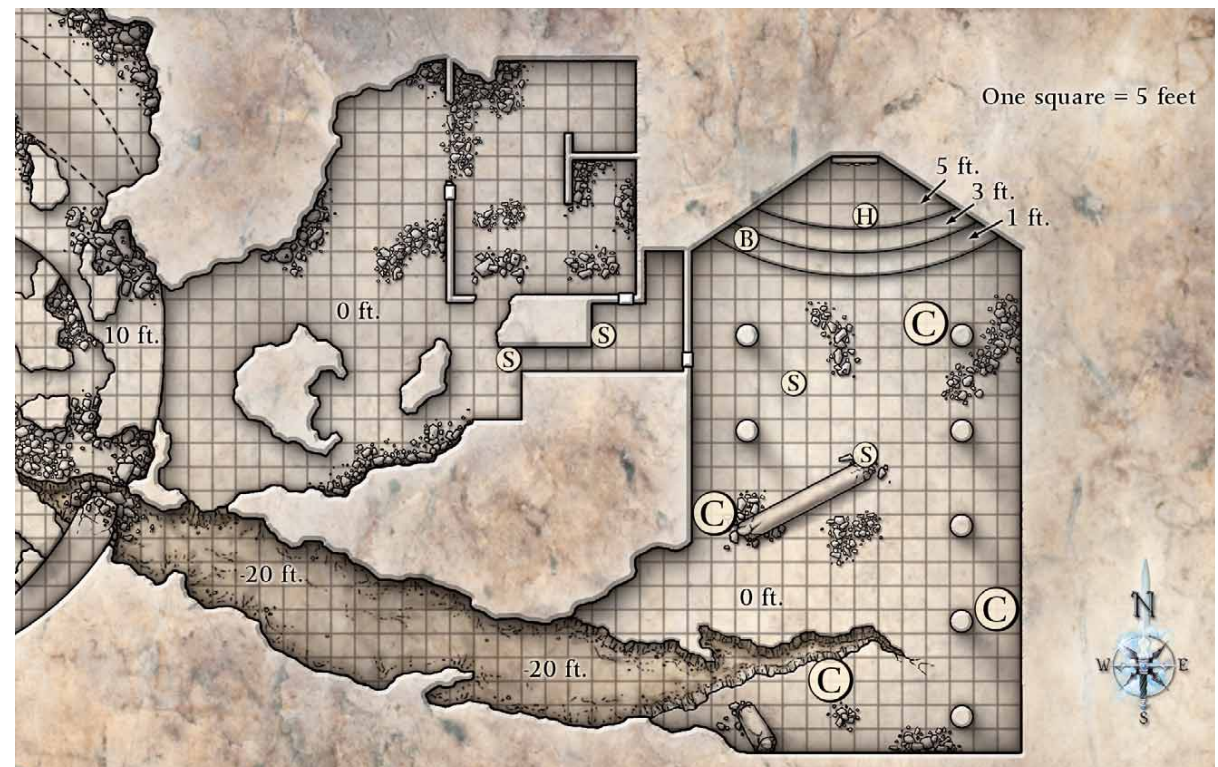
Dais: The steps of the dais are shallow enough that they do not impede movement.

The Incunabulum Primeval: In addition to any other treasure she might have, Hethralga has the *Incunabulum* on her person.

Pillar, Fallen: The fallen pillar provides cover. A creature can climb over or onto it; this requires an extra square of movement, and requires a DC 17 Acrobatics check if the creature wishes to move more than 1 square atop it.

Pillar, Leaning: The southwesternmost pillar in M8 leans precariously against the wall. It can be used as a makeshift weapon, as described above.

Rubble: The rubble is difficult terrain.



M9: THE RELIQUARY

Encounter Level 12 (3,700 XP)

SETUP

2 dragonborn gladiators (G)

1 eidolon (E)

1 spitting troll (P)

6 streetwise thugs (S)

2 trolls (T)

The first portion of the Mountainroot Temple ever carved from the Stonehome range, the reliquary served as the home for the sect's greatest religious treasures for years on end, though most were removed when the temple was largely abandoned. Its peculiar design was intended to allow priests and worshipers to come and gaze upon these great relics, without allowing anyone to approach. It was also here that angels and exarchs of Moradin appeared from the Astral Sea, entering by using the great double doors to the north. (Remember that, until the PCs rescue the Caretaker, exit from the temple—even by these astral doors—is impossible.)

Zithiruun and his soldiers arrived here from the Astral Sea as well, and here they have set up camp. They are holding the Caretaker hostage in the small building labeled I, where they have spent days torturing him. Although the Caretaker hasn't broken, he has slowly gone slightly mad, resulting in the peculiar behavior of some of the temple's magical defenses. This, alas, includes the temple's guardian eidolon, which has come to accept the githyanki soldiers and treats them as allies in combat.

Although they do not face him here, or even identify him for what he is, this is the PCs' first opportunity to spot their true enemy, General Zithiruun. He is the cloaked figure (described below) they see atop the platform. As soon as he steps out of sight, he heads at full speed for the secret door in the northwest. Given his ability to fly, he can reach that hidden exit and be through it in 2 rounds—possibly before the PCs even reach the platform.

Creatures indicated on the map in red are on the top platform or stairs. Creatures in yellow are on the ground floor, although possibly visible through the platform.

When the PCs enter, read:

You are in a wide corridor. Ahead of you, two flights of stairs, separated by a long landing, lead to a platform high above. Two figures stand atop that platform, apparently conversing. One is a rust-hued dragonborn clad in heavy armor. The other is a slender figure, its features hidden by a hooded cloak. He is clad in a sort of leather-and-steel harness. It looks less like armor than like the creation of a maddened surgeon—a full-bodysuit version of a brace designed to hold a broken limb in place.

You see them only for a split second, for before the door has even fully opened, both have stepped away from the edge and out of sight.

When the PCs reach the center platform, read:

Four stone stairs come together here, forming a small platform about 20 feet above a larger, circular surface. That surface appears to be made of glass or crystal, allowing a full view of the various chambers below. Some of those chambers extend out from beneath the crystal—open-roofed so that you can still see in. The stairs to the north rise upward, rather than down, culminating in a large

set of double doors several dozen feet above your current level, and a pair of massive statues of Moradin stand in the northwest and northeast corners. To the southwest stand a pair of small buildings—the only structures in the entire cavern that appear to have a roof.

An array of humanoid creatures stands scattered about the chamber, both on the platform or stairs, and down on the ground level. Not a one of them looks especially thrilled to see you.

WHAT IF THEY COME FROM THE VAULT?

If the PCs make their way to the reliquary from the hidden trapdoor in the vault (M5), rather than from the grand cathedral, the situation is only moderately different. You can give the PCs the same basic description (though obviously from a ground perspective, rather than above the platform). They still catch only a quick glimpse of Zithiruun, before he disappears—down to the south, rather than toward the secret door through which the PCs have emerged.

If the PCs open the double-doors in the north (marked A), read:

For an eternal instant, the world fades away as you stand upon the precipice of infinity. An ocean of pearlescent silver stretches ever onward, its tides and crests all but invisible as they slowly traverse the great expanse. Beneath those waters, stars and constellations twinkle with almost blinding clarity, and far in the distance, the great peaks of an unknown isle protrude from the endless waters.

The sense of vertigo here, at the edge of the world, is almost overwhelming, striking not merely at the body but at the mind and soul.

When the PCs first enter area B (or examine it from above), read:

Pedestals and podiums scattered across the room, as well as hooks and shelves along the walls, suggest that this was once a display chamber or gallery. Though most are empty, a few hooks still boast old tapestries and paintings, while the occasional podium displays a small sculpture. It looks as though the vast majority of the artwork has been gone for ages.

When the PCs first enter area C (or examine it from above), read:

Alcoves along the walls and great stone sarcophagi across the chamber indicate rather dramatically that this was once a sepulcher, likely for particularly holy members of the Church. Most of the sarcophagi have been broken into, ransacked, and desecrated. The air here smells a bit stale and dusty, but any scent of decay faded centuries ago.

When the PCs first enter area D (or examine it from above), read:

Apparently a sitting or study room, this chamber contains little but old, decaying chairs and a few small tables barely wide enough for a large tome.

When the PCs first enter area E (or examine it from above), read:

This room was obviously a library at some point. The shelves are mostly empty now, but they are large enough to have held several hundred books. A few heaps of molding parchment and leather are all that remain of those books that were dropped and left behind when the temple was abandoned.

Perception Check

DC 20: One of the piles of books has recently been disturbed. It looks much like something was removed from the bottom, allowing the rest of the heap to crumple inward. (Although the PCs cannot know this for sure, they might guess that this is where the Incunabulum Primeval was taken from—and they'd be right.)

When the PCs first enter area F (or examine it from above), read:

The specially carved racks and concave shelves suggest that this was once a repository for scrolls of various sizes.

When the PCs first enter area G (or examine it from above), read:

This rather sizable room boasts a smattering of large statues, idols, and carven pillars. Their random placement around the chamber indicates that they've been moved, and the great empty spaces suggest that this room once held many more such relics than it currently does.

When the PCs first enter area H, read:

This building and its attachment, the only two structures in this cavern to have roofs, are clearly of far more recent construction than most everything else herein. The walls are of thin stone and do not match the surroundings, and the floor is covered haphazardly with a thin rug. Several tables and chairs sit scattered about, and a cooking cauldron occupies one corner.

When the PCs first enter area I, read:

What was once a bedroom has been transformed into a chamber of horrors. Old blood has matted the carpet into a thin film that crunches beneath your feet. Dull blades and needles protrude from the surface of a desk, where they

were apparently stuck for safekeeping. A wooden bed frame leans against the wall at an angle; chained to it, dangling by his chafed and bloody wrists, is what appears to be a dwarf with hair and beard of writhing flame! Despite its touch, the wood of the frame shows no evidence of burning.

Once the PCs begin interacting with the Caretaker—assuming combat is over—consult “Departing the Temple” in the “Mountainroot Temple Overview.”

2 Dragonborn Gladiators (G)		Level 10 Soldier
Medium natural humanoid		XP 500 each
Initiative +9	Senses Perception +6	
HP 106; Bloodied 53; see also <i>dragonborn fury</i>		
AC 24; Fortitude 23, Reflex 20, Will 21		
Speed 5		
⚔ Bastard Sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+15 vs. AC (+16 while bloodied); see also <i>lone fighter</i> ; 1d10 + 5 damage.		
⚔ Finishing Blow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
Target must be bloodied; +15 vs. AC (+16 while bloodied); 2d10 + 5 damage, and the dragonborn gladiator's allies gain a +2 bonus to attack rolls until the end of the dragonborn gladiator's next turn.		
⚡ Dragon Breath (minor; encounter) ♦ Fire		
Close blast 3; +12 vs. Reflex (+13 while bloodied); 1d6 + 4 fire damage.		
Dragonborn Fury (only while bloodied)		
A dragonborn gains a +1 racial bonus to attack rolls.		
Gladiator's Strike		
When the dragonborn gladiator hits an enemy with an opportunity attack, the target is knocked prone.		
Lone Fighter		
The dragonborn gladiator gains a +2 bonus to melee attack rolls when adjacent to only one enemy.		
Alignment Unaligned		Languages Common, Draconic
Skills Athletics +15, History +7, Intimidate +15		
Str 12 (+10)	Dex 15 (+7)	Wis 12 (+6)
Con 18 (+9)	Int 10 (+5)	Cha 16 (+8)
Equipment scale armor, bastard sword		

Eidolon (E)		Level 13 Controller (Leader)	
Large natural animate (construct)		XP 800	
Initiative +8 Senses Perception +9			
Fearless Followers aura 5; allies who enter or start their turns within the aura are immune to fear.			
HP 132; Bloodied 66			
AC 28; Fortitude 26, Reflex 22, Will 23			
Immune disease, fear, sleep			
Speed 5			
Ⓣ Slam (standard; at-will)			
Melee 2; +19 vs. AC; 2d8+6 damage.			
☞ Divine Retribution (immediate reaction, when an enemy attacks the eidolon while <i>hallowed stance</i> is active; at-will) ♦ Radiant			
Divine radiance strikes the creature that attacked the eidolon: ranged 20; +17 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 5 radiant damage. <i>Miss</i> : Half damage. This attack does not provoke opportunity attacks.			
☞ Vengeful Flames (immediate reaction, when an enemy kills one of the eidolon's allies in the eidolon's line of sight; at-will) ♦ Fire			
Divine fire engulfs the enemy: ranged 20; +17 vs. Reflex; 1d8 + 5 fire damage, and ongoing 5 fire (save ends). This attack does not provoke opportunity attacks.			
Hallowed Stance (standard; at-will) ♦ Radiant			
The eidolon assumes a meditative stance. Until the end of its next turn, the eidolon gains resist 20 to all damage, and all allies in its line of sight deal 1d8 extra radiant damage on their melee attacks. If the eidolon moves, the effect ends.			
Alignment Unaligned		Languages –	
Str 22 (+12)	Dex 14 (+8)	Wis 16 (+9)	
Con 20 (+11)	Int 7 (+4)	Cha 11 (+6)	

TACTICS

The monsters' tactics depend largely on the PCs. If the heroes allow themselves to become trapped up on the platform, the monsters converge and try to surround them. Otherwise, they use a combination of focusing on specific PCs and fighting withdrawals to try to force the party to split up. In either case, the monsters do not remain in their starting positions, but converge on their foes as rapidly as possible. The

Spitting Troll		Level 10 Soldier (Leader)	
Medium natural humanoid		XP 500 each	
Initiative +12 Senses Perception +8			
HP 106; Bloodied 53; see also <i>troll healing</i>			
Regeneration 10 (if the troll takes acid or fire damage, regeneration does not function until the end of its next turn)			
AC 26; Fortitude 22, Reflex 23, Will 22			
Speed 6, climb 4			
Ⓣ Claw (standard; at-will) ♦ Poison			
+17 vs. AC; 1d6 + 5 damage, plus 1d6 poison damage.			
☞ Javelin (standard; at-will) ♦ Poison, Weapon			
Ranged 10/20; +17 vs. AC; 1d6 + 5 damage, plus 1d6 poison damage.			
☞ Acid Spit (minor; recharge ☞☞☞) ♦ Acid			
Ranged 5; +15 vs. Reflex; 1d6 acid damage.			
Regenerative Empowerment (minor 1/turn, at-will)			
One troll within 10 squares whose regeneration is currently inactive (as a result of taking acid or fire damage) immediately reactivates the regeneration.			
Troll Healing ♦ Healing			
If the troll is reduced to 0 hit points by an attack that does not deal acid or fire damage, it rises on its next turn (as a move action) with 10 hit points.			
Alignment Chaotic evil		Languages Common, Giant	
Skills Athletics +13, Endurance +14			
Str 16 (+8)	Dex 21 (+10)	Wis 17 (+8)	
Con 18 (+9)	Int 10 (+5)	Cha 13 (+6)	
Equipment leather armor, 10 javelins			

larger and stronger creatures are fond of bullrushing foes off the edge of the stairs or the crystal platform.

The eidolon never retreats to ground level, since it can keep line of sight to more allies from on high. If all the creatures but the eidolon are slain, it freezes, awaiting further instructions from the Caretaker. All other creatures here fight to the death.

6 Streetwise Thugs (S)		Level 9 Minion	
Medium natural humanoid, human		XP 100 each	
Initiative +3 Senses Perception +3			
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.			
AC 21; Fortitude 19, Reflex 16, Will 16			
Speed 6			
Ⓣ Longsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon			
+14 vs. AC; 6 damage.			
☞ Crossbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon			
Ranged 15/30; +13 vs. AC; 6 damage.			
Murder is a Team Sport			
If a streetwise thug is flanking an enemy, it deals 1 extra point of damage per ally adjacent to the flanked enemy (including the ally who is granting the flank), to a maximum of +4.			
Alignment Evil		Languages Common	
Skills Athletics +11, Thievery +8			
Str 16 (+7)	Dex 12 (+5)	Wis 10 (+4)	
Con 15 (+6)	Int 9 (+3)	Cha 11 (+4)	
Equipment leather armor, crossbow, longsword, case with 20 bolts			

2 Trolls (T)		Level 9 Brute	
Large natural humanoid		XP 400 each	
Initiative +7 Senses Perception +11			
HP 100; Bloodied 50; see also <i>troll healing</i>			
Regeneration 10 (if the troll takes acid or fire damage, regeneration does not function until the end of its next turn)			
AC 20; Fortitude 21, Reflex 18, Will 17			
Speed 8			
Ⓣ Claw (standard; at-will)			
Melee 2; +13 vs. AC; 2d6 + 6 damage; see also <i>frenzied strike</i> .			
Ⓣ Frenzied Strike (free, when the troll's attack bloodied an enemy; at-will)			
The troll makes a claw attack.			
Troll Healing ♦ Healing			
If the troll is reduced to 0 hit points by an attack that does not deal acid or fire damage, it rises on its next turn (as a move action) with 10 hit points.			
Alignment Chaotic evil		Languages Giant	
Skills Athletics +15, Endurance +14			
Str 22 (+10)	Dex 16 (+7)	Wis 14 (+6)	
Con 20 (+9)	Int 5 (+1)	Cha 10 (+4)	

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: The crystalline platform provides its own glow, as does the door to the Astral Sea, and it brightly illuminates the entire chamber.

Ceiling: The ceiling of the chamber is a full 100 feet above the ground floor. The crystal platform—which forms a ceiling or partial ceiling for the rooms on the ground—is 20 feet above that level. The ceiling of buildings H and I is 10 feet above the ground.

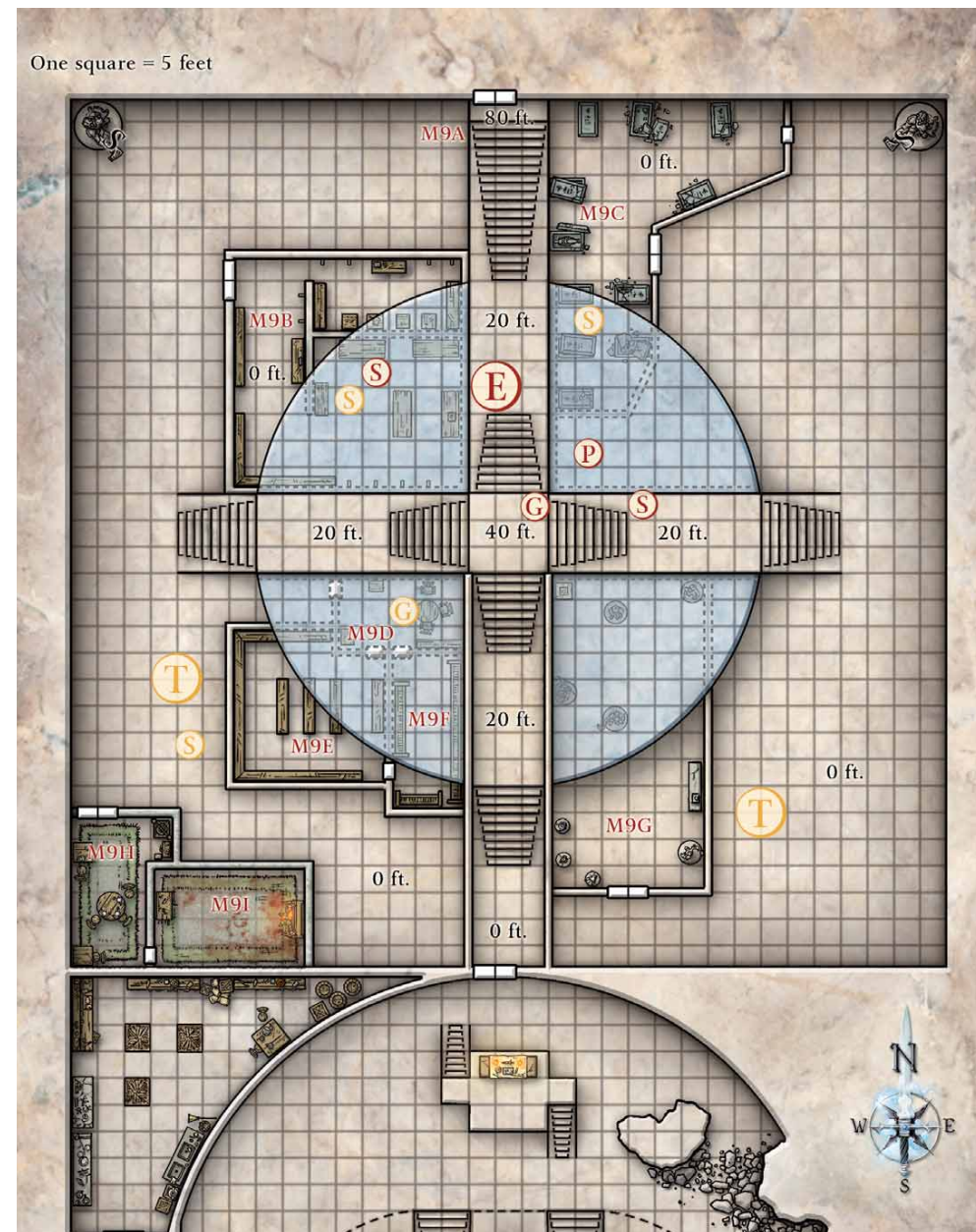
Crystal Platform: Although hard as stone, the crystal platform is as transparent as fine glass. This allows line of sight, but not line of effect. There is no railway or wall around the platform.

Doors: The doors into areas H and I are locked, requiring a DC 22 Thievery check to open. The doors to the Astral Sea (marked A) are covered in all manner of abstract carvings and flowing runes.

Furniture, Display Cases, and Shelves: The various chambers are filled with furniture—some intact, some broken. Assume that, at any time it matters, a piece of furniture requires an extra square of movement to stand on and can provide cover.

Secret Doors: The secret doors in the statues require a DC 25 Perception check to locate. The door in the northwest statue opens onto a spiral stair that leads into an underground passage (not mapped). This eventually leads to another spiral stair, which comes up to the secret trapdoor in the vault (M5). The secret door in the northeast statue leads to a spiral stair that leads to a dead end passage (not mapped). This used to connect to the barracks at M7, but most of the corridor, and the specific room to which it connected, have long since collapsed.

Walls: The walls of the chamber, and the walls of the southern passage/staircase, rise from floor to ceiling. The walls of the various chambers that stand partly or entirely beneath the crystalline platform rise 20 feet high. The portions of those rooms that jut beyond the crystal are not roofed; a creature can walk along the top of the walls, but they're narrow, requiring a DC 25 Acrobatics check for each standard or move action taken.



M10: THE UNDERCHAMBERS

Encounter Level 8 (1,800 XP)

SETUP

2 marching hammers (H)

Radiant tendrils trap

In the chambers formerly used by priests of Moradin for elements of daily life, the temple's mystical defenses are as crazed as ever, thanks to the Caretaker's incipient madness.

When the PCs trigger the radiant tendrils, read:

A whiplike tendril of piercing white light, so bright it threatens to blind the eye, reaches through the floor, as though the room seeks to wrap you in its coils.

When the PCs first see the marching hammers, either because they have come to the constructs or vice-versa, read:

A halfling-sized block of iron lumbers into view. It appears to be little more than an anvillike body with squat legs and a pair of heavy hammers at the end of long, writhing arms.

When the PCs first enter area A, read:

This chamber was apparently a foyer or waiting room. A ragged rug covers the floor, with a few old indentations indicating where chairs used to sit. The northeast door is ajar, showing a cloakroom with empty pegs protruding from the walls.

When the PCs first enter area B, read:

A great many doors line the walls in this chamber. A few are ajar, showing what appear to be wooden-walled monastic cells beyond them.

When the PCs first enter area C, read:

Nothing remains in this room but a few smatterings of broken furniture. Any hint of its original purpose was lost when the eastern wall partially collapsed long ago.

When the PCs first enter area D, read:

Despite the damage, this room still obviously serves as a combination meeting hall and library. A long table sits amid a smattering of chairs, and the chamber's western side is occupied by a more heavily upholstered chair, a bookcase, and a small altar to Moradin. All are covered in a fine coating of dust.

When the PCs first enter area E, read:

You've stepped into what appears to be an actual forge, which was perhaps used for ceremonial purposes or the creation of magic items. Two anvils occupy the room's northern side, while a fire pit filled with ancient white-gray ashes takes up the center of the chamber. Against the south wall, a larger anvil stands beneath the unblinking gaze of a statue of Moradin.

When the PCs first enter area F, read:

Whatever purpose this cave-in damaged chamber might once have served, it now appears as little more than an empty hollow.

Radiant Tendrils	Level 13 Obstacle
Trap	800 XP

Glaming tendrils of white light whip out to lash at you.

Perception

- ◆ DC 27: The character notices something strange about the area ahead, as though the floor was somehow absorbing a bit of the ambient light.

Additional Skill: Arcana

- ◆ DC 23: The character recognizes a faint glow from, and a sequence of runes scratched into, the fire pit, and realizes this is the trap's source. (The character must be in the forge [room E] to accomplish this.)
- ◆ DC 31: The party gains a +2 bonus to Thievery checks to disable the trap.

Trigger

When a creature enters or begins its turn in a trapped square, the trap attacks.

Attack

Opportunity Action **Melee**

Target: Creature in a trapped square

Attack: +18 vs. AC

Hit: 2d10 + 6 radiant damage and blind until the end of the target's next turn.

Aftereffect: -2 to attack rolls and checks until the end of the target's next turn.

Countermeasures

- ◆ A character who makes a successful DC 27 Acrobatics check can move through a trigger square without provoking the attack. The squares count as difficult terrain.
- ◆ An adjacent character can disable a trigger plate with a DC 31 Thievery check.

2 Marching Hammers (H)		Level 10 Brute
Small natural animate (construct, homunculus) XP 500 each		
Initiative +4	Senses Perception +12; darkvision	
HP 129; Bloodied 64		
AC 23; Fortitude 23, Reflex 17, Will 19		
Immune disease, poison, sleep		
Speed 6		
⊕ Hammer Hand (standard; at-will)		
+13 vs. AC; 3d6 + 5 damage.		
⊖ Hammering Charge (standard; at-will)		
The marching hammer can use this power as a part of a charge; +13 vs. AC; 3d6 + 5 damage, plus target is knocked prone.		
Beat Them When They're Down		
The marching hammer deals 1d6 extra damage when attacking a prone enemy.		
Guard Area (see <i>Monster Manual</i> , page 156)		
A marching hammer can make a <i>hammering charge</i> attack against any creature in its guarded area, even if the power hasn't recharged. If the marching hammer uses a charge attack to make its <i>hammering charge</i> , its speed increases to 8 when making that charge.		
Alignment Unaligned	Languages –	
Skills Perception +12		
Str 21 (+10)	Dex 8 (+4)	Wis 14 (+7)
Con 19 (+9)	Int 5 (+2)	Cha 13 (+6)

TACTICS

The marching hammers attack characters in their guarded area over other targets, but otherwise seek to slay all intruders. They try to approach intruders from opposite directions, making use of various doorways and corridors to flank foes. They fight in or near the trapped squares, since the trap is mystically attuned to them and they do not trigger it. The hammers have no compunctions about going *through* the wooden walls between penitent's cells if that's the best means of getting at an enemy.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: The only illumination is what the PCs bring with them.

Ceiling: The ceiling is 15 feet overhead.

Anvils: The three anvils in the forge are all but impossible to move. They provide cover, and a creature can step up onto one with an extra square of movement.

Bookcase: The bookcase in room D has no more books left on it, but it can be climbed with a DC 10 Athletics check.

Chairs: The chairs are not sufficient to provide cover, but a character can step up onto one with an extra square of movement, or use one as a makeshift weapon.

Fire Pit: The fire pit has no fire in it, but it is the source of the radiant tendrils trap.

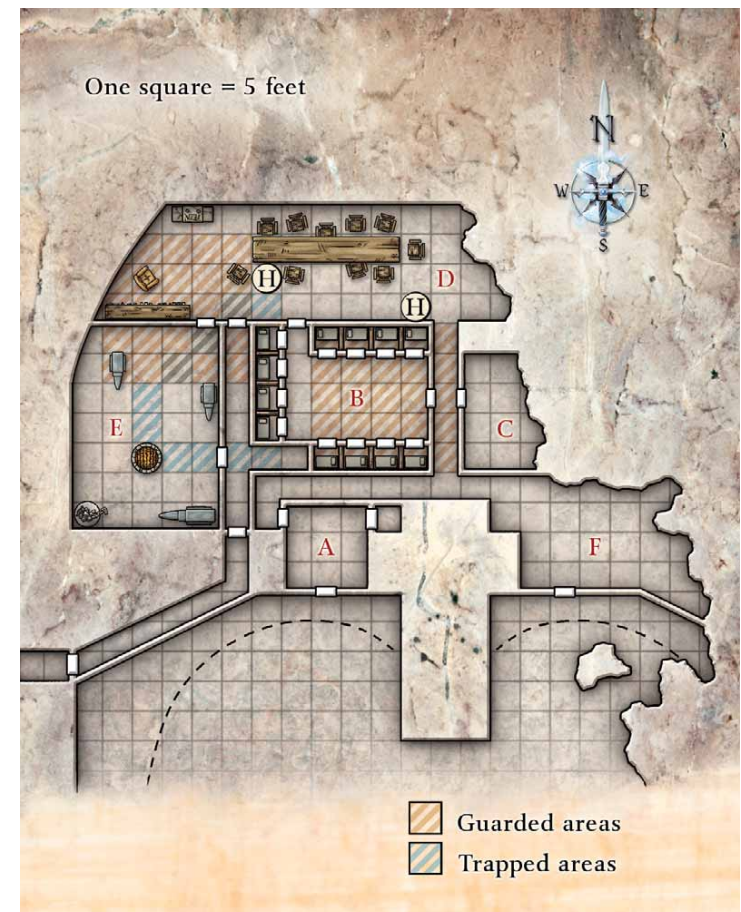
Marching Hammer Guarded Areas: The guarded areas of the homunculi are marked on the map.

Radiant Tendrils: The trapped squares are marked on the map.

Statue: This statue of Moradin carries a hammer and tongs, as though in the midst of forging.

Table: A character can step up onto the table with an extra square of movement. A DC 25 Strength check topples the table over, allowing it to serve as cover and knocking prone any creatures standing on it.

Wooden Walls: The walls between the penitent's cells are flimsy wood. They can be broken through with a DC 15 Strength check; this takes an extra square of movement. If the creature beats a DC 20 Strength check, this does not require an extra square.



SC3: COUNCIL OF WAR

Encounter Level 9 (1,200 XP)

SETUP

Once the PCs reach the council chamber, begin the skill challenge.

Council of War Skill Challenge

Level 9
XP 1,200

You find yourselves, along with the present members of the council, High Priest Durkik, and several officers, standing in a perfectly square room of stone walls. A table in the center of the room boasts an intricate model of Overlook, while each of the walls showcases maps of the surrounding area.

Great Elder Morgoff asks Durkik to offer a prayer to Moradin to open the meeting. Once done, he says, "Overlook is a martial city. We have mighty walls, strong soldiers. But we are accustomed to fighting foes such as orcs, not monstrous enemies such as trolls, who rise again each time they fall. My friends, you have more experience with such things. Will you help us plan? And would you make yourselves available to us throughout the siege, to deal with such dangers as our guards—skilled though they are—are unprepared to face? I offer you what reward I can for your help, though I cannot cite you numbers or amounts until I see what resources remain when—if—Overlook survives the coming days."

The PCs must aid the Council of Elders and the officers of the garrison in devising a defense for the city.

Complexity 3

(requires 8 successes before 3 failures).

Primary Skills

History, Insight, Intimidate, Religion, Thievery.

Victory

The PCs have helped come up with a viable defensive plan, and they gain victory points accordingly.

Defeat

The PCs cannot meaningfully contribute, and do not gain victory points.

Special If the players themselves come up with any creative uses of the city map or terrain for defensive purposes, grant them 1 or 2 automatic successes.

History (DC 20)

A successful check counts as a success on the skill challenge.

The PC draws on knowledge of past sieges over the course of history and suggests strategies accordingly.

Insight (DC 16)

This doesn't qualify as a success, but succeeding on this check grants the party a +2 bonus to all further checks in this challenge until someone fails a check. However, failure on this check imposes a -2 penalty to all further checks in this challenge until someone succeeds on a check. In either case, Insight can be used only once in this fashion.

With thought and contemplation, the PC anticipates some of the actions that the enemy is likely to take.

Intimidate (DC 20)

A successful check counts as a success on the skill challenge, but the group can gain up to 3 successes with this skill only.

By giving careful consideration to what sorts of positions and defenses are likely to be the most frightening or disheartening, the PC suggests effective placements for the soldiers.

Religion (DC 20)

A successful check counts as a success on the skill challenge.

Rather than focusing on historical accounts, the PC instead draws on knowledge of various battles described in the myths and tales of the world's religions.

Thievery (DC 20)

A successful check counts as a success on the skill challenge, but the group can gain up to 3 successes with this skill only.

The PC's knowledge of tricks and traps allows the PC to suggest various means to slow the enemy's advance, either through stealthily placed troops or hidden traps and obstacles.

Once the skill challenge is complete (for good or ill), Great Elder Morgoff's shoulders slump. "I fear we've done all we can for now," he says. "We must go and spread word to our soldiers of what is to come, and what they must do. My friends," he says to the PCs, "if you are willing, I would have you stay here at Caer Overlook tonight, so that you are ready on a moment's notice. I can have people show you to guest quarters. I suggest we all get a good night's sleep; I fear the next days will be tiring indeed."

T2: DEATH FROM ABOVE

Encounter Level 10 (2,500 XP)

SETUP

1 **berbalang** (B), initially with two **duplicates** (D)

Among the various forces Zithiruun has hired for the assault on Overlook is a trio of berbalangs, who have been promised not only substantial riches, but first pick of the captives and of the dead for their larders. Thankfully, the PCs themselves only have to deal with one.

As the battle commences, the berbalang swoops over a poor neighborhood in the Nine Bells district, dropping alchemical firebombs. It's not a tactically important target, but it's great for spreading panic, and the plethora of old buildings and wooden structures mean the flames will spread. The berbalang is already split into three different forms (the original and two duplicates), meaning the original currently has 204 hit points and the two duplicates each have 102.

Berbalang	Level 10 Solo Skirmisher
Medium immortal humanoid	XP 2,500
Initiative +13	Senses Perception +6
HP 408; Bloodied 204	
AC 25; Fortitude 22, Reflex 25, Will 21; see also <i>psychic deflection</i>	
Saving Throws +5	
Speed 6, fly 8	
Action Points 2	
⊕ Claw (standard; at-will)	
+14 vs. AC; 1d8 + 6 damage.	
Summon Duplicate (minor, not while bloodied; at-will) ♦	
Conjuration, Psychic	
The berbalang manifests an exact duplicate of itself in an unoccupied adjacent square. It can have no more than four duplicates at once, and duplicates cannot summon other duplicates. When a duplicate appears, it makes an initiative check and joins the battle on that initiative count. All damage a duplicate deals is treated as psychic damage. A duplicate has the same statistics as the berbalang except for its hit points. When the berbalang manifests a duplicate, the berbalang loses one-quarter of its current hit points and the duplicate appears with that quantity of hit points. The berbalang's maximum number of hit points remains the same.	

When the PCs approach, read:

Flames dance across a cluster of rooftops, and the crackling from the fire drowns out the screams of panic as citizens scramble in all directions. In the smoky air above, a trio of horrid winged humanoids, with mottled blue skin, whirl about on the inferno-birthered updrafts. Every few moments, one of them hurls a clay jug that bursts into flames as it strikes a nearby building.

Duplicates last until the berbalang reaches 0 hit points, absorbs them, or uses *sacrifice*. A duplicate must stay within 10 squares of the berbalang at all times or it disappears.

Absorb Duplicate (standard; at-will) ♦ **Healing**

The berbalang absorbs a duplicate adjacent to it and regains 50 hit points.

Berbalang Sneak Attack

A berbalang or a duplicate that flanks an enemy with another duplicate deals 1d8 extra damage on melee attacks against that enemy.

✱ **Sacrifice** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Psychic**

Area burst 1 centered on a duplicate; the berbalang can cause one of its duplicates to explode in a burst of psychic gore; +11 vs. Fortitude; 2d8 + 6 psychic damage, plus the target is dazed (save ends). *Miss*: No damage, but the target is dazed (save ends). *Effect*: The berbalang takes 25 damage.

Psychic Deflection (immediate reaction, when the berbalang is damaged by an attack; at-will) ♦ **Psychic**

The berbalang can deflect the damage it takes from an attack to one of its duplicates. Any effects or secondary attacks included in the attack are also deflected to the duplicate. The damage a duplicate takes in this way is considered psychic damage.

Alignment Evil	Languages Supernal	
Str 16 (+8)	Dex 22 (+11)	Wis 13 (+6)
Con 14 (+7)	Int 14 (+7)	Cha 15 (+7)

TACTICS

The true berbalang stays at range for the first few rounds, allowing its duplicates to close for melee. If any PCs are far enough from its duplicates that it won't hit them, it makes use of its special "firebomb" attack (see below). When a duplicate nears death (down to about one-quarter of its starting hit points), the berbalang moves in and absorbs it. It might then engage in combat, or spawn a new duplicate and retreat to range, depending on how effective the PCs are with distance attacks. Once the berbalang is down to fewer than 50 hit points, it won't spawn any more duplicates, for fear of—so to speak—spreading itself too thin.

SPECIAL ATTACK

The berbalang has three more firebombs in its possession. It makes an attack roll when it throws the firebomb, but it misses only on a natural 1, because it's not aiming for an individual, merely a particular square. (On a natural 1, select a random square adjacent to the one at which it was aiming.) The firebomb explodes in a burst 1. It causes no immediate damage, but it fills those squares with fire as defined in "Features of the Area."

FEATURES OF THE AREA

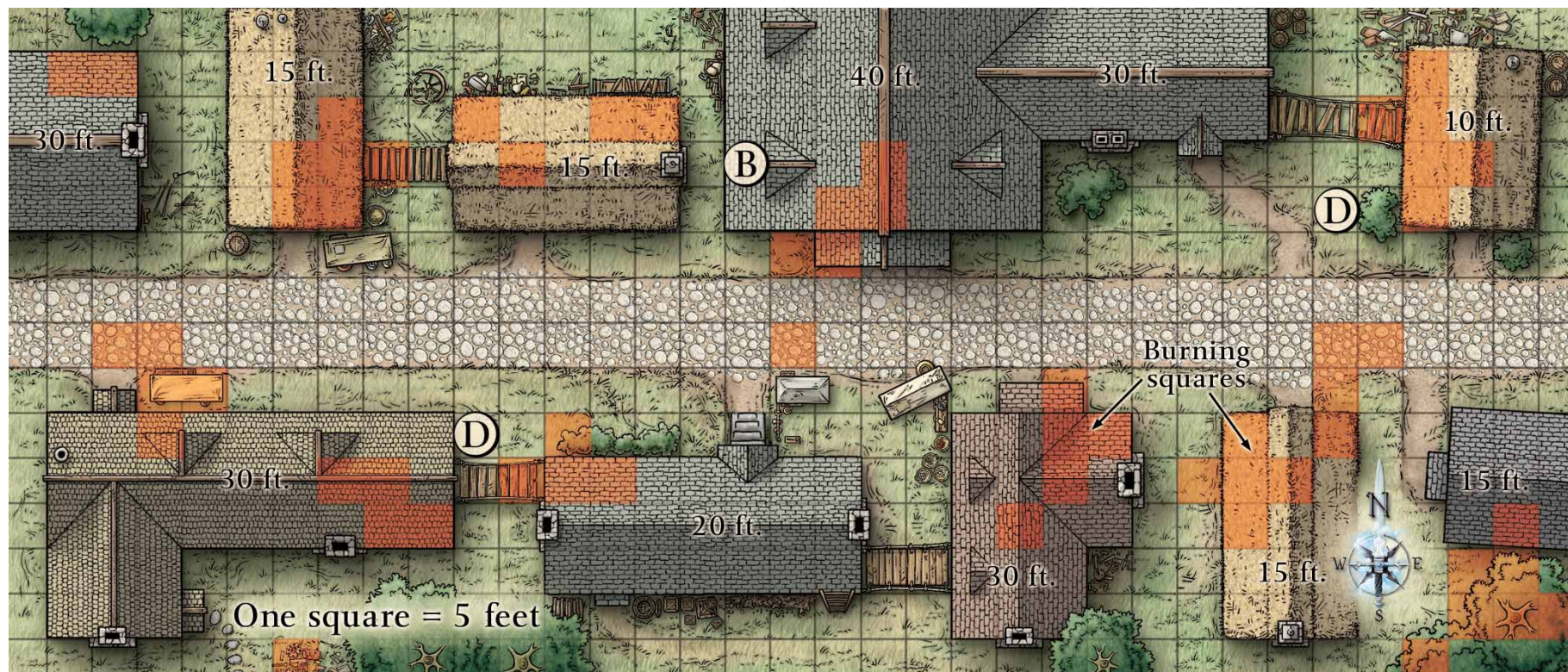
Illumination: The combination of daylight and fire provide as much bright light as the PCs could ever want.

Boards: These boards were placed to facilitate evacuation from one building to another. They can be kicked or pushed off with a DC 5 Athletics check, or a DC 20 Athletics check if someone is currently standing on them.

Buildings: The buildings range from one to four stories (2 to 8 squares) in height. Climbing the walls requires a DC 15 Athletics check.

Fire: The marked squares are on fire when combat begins. Creatures can enter or move through the squares unharmed—essentially running through the flames—but any creature that begins its turn in a fiery square takes 2d6 fire damage.

At the start of the berbalang's turn each round, one square adjacent to each fiery square becomes a fiery square. (Either choose or determine randomly.)



T3: HOLD THE WALL!

Encounter Level 12 (3,500 XP)

SETUP

1 spitting troll (P)

1 two-headed troll (T)

2 war trolls (W)

A squad of monstrous trolls, using a battering ram made of a bronze-capped tree trunk, has smashed a hole in one of the outer walls. The soldiers there have been driven back, and if someone doesn't stop them, the trolls will have free run of the city. "Someone" being the PCs, of course.

(Assume a few other trolls are present, but that the Overlook soldiers are dealing with them. On occasion, throw in a bit of description to remind the PCs that they aren't the only ones fighting.)

When the PCs arrive, read:

Rubble lies strewn about—rubble that used to be a 15-foot stretch of wall. Visible just beyond is a huge tree trunk, capped with bronze—presumably, the battering ram that created that hole.

Moving through the gap are several hideous trolls. The city guards appear to have a few occupied, but others—two in heavy armor, one with two heads, and one far smaller than the others—are moving unimpeded into the streets.

Spitting Troll (P)	Level 10 Soldier (Leader)
Medium natural humanoid	XP 500
Initiative +12 Senses Perception +8	
HP 106; Bloodied 53; see also <i>troll healing</i>	
Regeneration 10 (if the troll takes acid or fire damage, regeneration does not function until the end of its next turn)	
AC 26; Fortitude 22, Reflex 23, Will 22	
Speed 6, climb 4	
⬇ Claw (standard; at-will) ♦ Poison +17 vs. AC; 1d6 + 5 damage, plus 1d6 poison damage.	
⌘ Javelin (standard; at-will) ♦ Poison, Weapon Ranged 10/20; +17 vs. AC; 1d6 + 5 damage, plus 1d6 poison damage.	
☞ Acid Spit (minor; recharge ☞ ☞) ♦ Acid Ranged 5; +15 vs. Reflex; 1d6 acid damage.	
Regenerative Empowerment (minor 1/turn, at-will) One troll within 10 squares whose regeneration is currently inactive (as a result of taking acid or fire damage) immediately reactivates the regeneration.	
Troll Healing ♦ Healing If the troll is reduced to 0 hit points by an attack that does not deal acid or fire damage, it rises on its next turn (as a move action) with 10 hit points.	
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Common, Giant
Skills Athletics +13, Endurance +14	
Str 16 (+8)	Dex 21 (+10) Wis 17 (+8)
Con 18 (+9)	Int 10 (+5) Cha 13 (+6)
Equipment leather armor, 10 javelins	

TACTICS

The two-headed troll is a straightforward combatant, charging in and attempting to pulp the PCs into the ground. The war trolls make use of slightly more intelligent tactics, flanking or trying to fight from behind difficult terrain, taking full advantage of reach. The spitting troll remains at range and throws javelins.

Two-Headed Troll	Level 10 Elite Brute
Large natural humanoid	XP 1,000
Initiative +5 Senses Perception +7	
HP 264; Bloodied 132; see also <i>troll healing</i>	
Regeneration 10 (if the troll takes acid or fire damage, regeneration does not function until the end of its next turn)	
AC 25; Fortitude 27, Reflex 19, Will 20	
Saving Throws +2	
Speed 6	
Action Points 1	
⬇ Claw (standard; at-will) Melee 2; +13 vs. AC; 3d6 + 7 damage.	
⬇ Smackdown (immediate reaction, when an enemy moves into a position that flanks the two-headed troll; at-will) The two-headed troll targets one creature flanking it; +11 vs. Fortitude; the target is knocked prone.	
Double Actions A two-headed troll rolls initiative twice, gets two turns during a round, and has a full set of actions (standard, move, minor) on each turn. Each set of actions corresponds to a different head. The troll's ability to take immediate actions refreshes on each of its turns.	
Dual Brain At the end of its turn, the two-headed troll automatically succeeds on all saving throws against the dazed and stunned conditions and against charm effects that a save can end.	
Troll Healing ♦ Healing If the troll is reduced to 0 hit points by an attack that does not deal acid or fire damage, it rises on its next turn (as a move action) with 10 hit points.	
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Giant
Str 24 (+12)	Dex 10 (+5) Wis 14 (+7)
Con 22 (+11)	Int 6 (+3) Cha 10 (+5)
Equipment hide armor	

2 War Trolls (W) Level 14 Soldier XP 1,000 each

Initiative +12 **Senses Perception** +15
HP 110; **Bloodied** 55; see also *troll healing*
Regeneration 10 (if the troll takes acid or fire damage, regeneration does not function until the end of its next turn)

AC 30; **Fortitude** 29, **Reflex** 25, **Will** 25
Speed 7

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

Melee 2; +20 vs. AC; 1d12 + 7 damage, and the target is marked until the end of the war troll's next turn.

⚔ **Claw** (standard; at-will)

Melee 2; +20 vs. AC; 2d6 + 7 damage.

🏹 **Longbow** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

Ranged 20/40; +20 vs. AC; 1d12 + 3 damage.

⚔ **Sweeping Strike** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

Requires greatsword; close blast 2; +20 vs. AC; 1d12 + 7 damage, and the target is knocked prone.

Blood Pursuit (immediate reaction, when a bloodied enemy within 2 squares of the war troll moves or shifts; at-will)
 The war troll shifts 1 square closer to the enemy.

Threatening Reach

The war troll can make opportunity attacks against all enemies within its reach (2 squares).

🩹 **Troll Healing** ♦ **Healing**

If the war troll is reduced to 0 hit points by an attack that does not deal acid or fire damage, it rises on its next turn (as a move action) with 15 hit points.

Alignment Chaotic evil **Languages** Giant

Skills Athletics +17, Endurance +15

Str 24 (+14) **Dex** 16 (+10) **Wis** 16 (+10)

Con 20 (+12) **Int** 10 (+7) **Cha** 12 (+8)

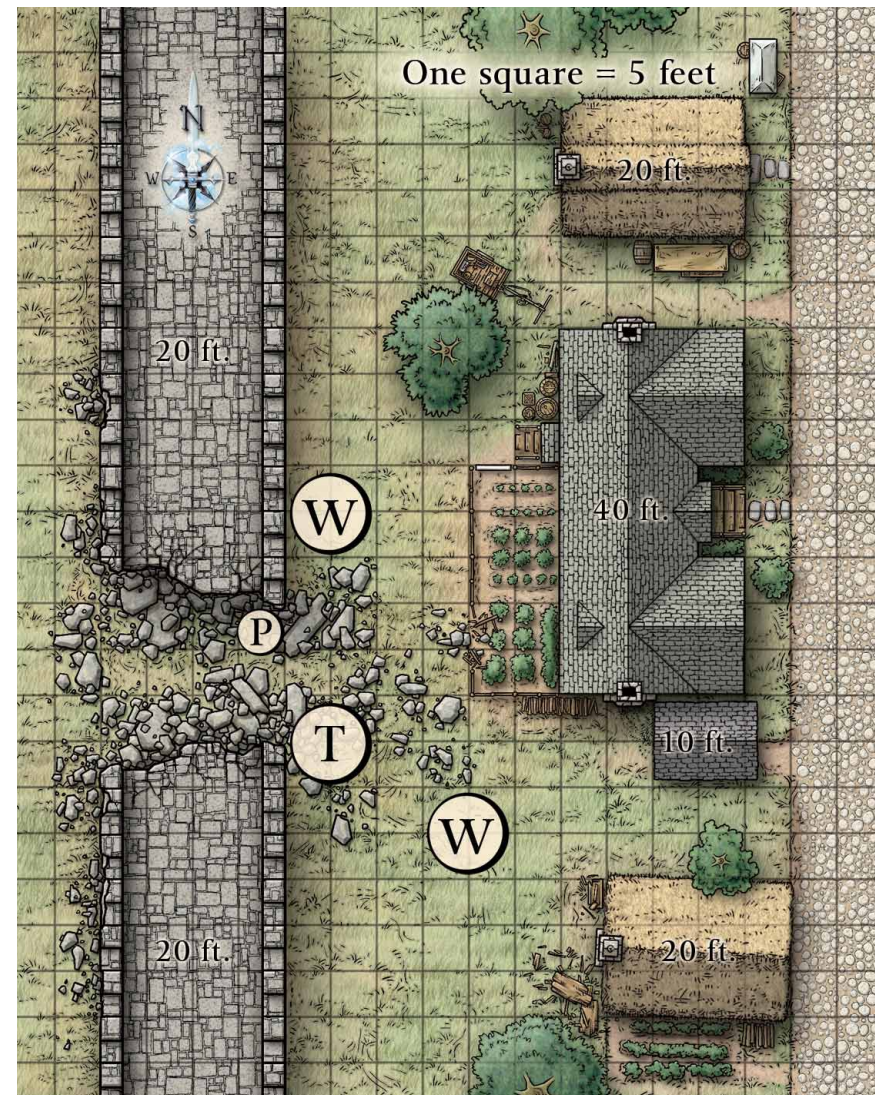
Equipment plate armor, greatsword, longbow, quiver of 30 arrows

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: This encounter takes place in bright daylight.

Buildings: The buildings range from two to eight stories (4 to 16 squares) in height. Climbing the walls requires a DC 15 Athletics check.

Rubble: The rubble qualifies as difficult terrain.



SC4: COMBING THE WRECKAGE

Encounter Level 11 (1,800 XP)

SETUP

One of the councilors is in trouble, and the PCs receive a request for assistance. The skill challenge begins with this request.

Combing the Wreckage Skill Challenge

Level 11
XP 1,800

Without warning, you hear Great Elder Morgoff's voice in your head. "Our diviners have located Councilor Mountainhome. A siege missile struck her home, which now burns as she lies unconscious! Please save her!"

Although the PCs likely don't know where Elder Mountainhome lives, anyone they ask can point them in the right direction: an expensive apartment in Stonehammer.

The PCs must search through a burning, crumbling building in search of Counselor Itrika Mountainhome.

Complexity 3

(requires 8 successes before 3 failures).

Primary Skills

Acrobatics, Athletics, Endurance, Heal, Perception.

Victory

The party finds the unconscious Itrika and successfully pulls her out before she chokes to death or is crushed.

Defeat

The party is too late to save the councilor, who dies in the inferno.

Special Reward creative use of magic. Perhaps various resistance-based spells can grant automatic Endurance successes, while using cold-based spells on the fires reduces the DCs of some of the checks.

Acrobatics (DC 21)

A successful check counts as a success on the skill challenge. Moving as swiftly and lithely as possible, the PC dodges around falling timbers and pockets of flame.

Athletics (DC 21)

A successful check counts as a success on the skill challenge. With a surge of strength, the PC bursts through intervening doors, reaches up to deflect crumbling roofs, or hauls a companion off a collapsing stair.

Endurance (DC 17)

At least one character must attempt this check every round, or it counts as attempting and failing the check. A success on this check grants no benefit; a failure on this check costs everyone in the party a healing surge, but does not count as a failure for purposes of the skill challenge. Despite the blazing heat, the choking smoke, and the blinding dust, the PC is not only able to keep going, but to keep friends moving as well.

Heal (DC 25)

A success on this check counts as both a success on the skill challenge and grants an automatic success on the party's next Endurance check in this challenge (or counters an Endurance failure rolled earlier in the round). Acting swiftly, the PC uses moistened cloths and herbal remedies to alleviate some of the burns and choking among the party.

Perception (DC 21)

This does not count as a success on the skill challenge, but grants you a +2 bonus to all future Acrobatics, Athletics, and Heal checks in this challenge, until the next failure. Squinting and concentrating, the PC finds his or her way, and leads allies through the smoke, the embers, and the falling rubble.

If the PCs succeed in rescuing the councilor, they receive thanks and an offer to meet up again after the current troubles are over. If she isn't brought to consciousness by the PCs, you could allow them to find someone who is willing to do so and possibly even help get her to safety.

T5: THE FINAL ENCOUNTER

Encounter Level 15 (6,100 XP)

SETUP

General Zithiruun (Z)

Rathoraiax (R)

2 dragonborn gladiators (G)

1 dragonborn raider (D)

1 redspawn firebelcher (B)

This is it. The party is about to come face to face with General Zithiruun and learn the identity of their enemy. This is the final battle of the siege and of the adventure, at least where the PCs are concerned. And if they're not very careful and skilled, it might be their last one ever.

When the PCs arrive, read:

Scattered around the open courtyard, and across the stoops of the nearby buildings, are the corpses of dozens of Overlook's soldiers. Some are badly burned, some slashed to ribbons, and some rotting as though they'd lain dead for weeks on end. Two dragonborn in heavy armor wait across the courtyard; one stands beside a large, red-scaled reptile exhaling large puffs of smoke.

Perception Check

DC 26: *Hiding amid the rubble and ruin is another dragonborn, one of darker scales and armor, wielding a pair of broad-bladed daggers.*

On the second round of combat, on Zithiruun's initiative, read:

A horrific boom reverberates from a nearby building as a massive beast soars over the rooftop, knocking several of the stones from their place. What appears to be a dead dragon, its scales dull, its gray leather skin showing between the gaps, rises into the air on broken wings. The entire top of its jaw is missing, showing upward pointing teeth and a wormlike tongue that thrashes about with a mind of its own.

And riding atop that beast is a humanoid figure clad in heavy hides, contained within a body harness of iron joints and leather straps. His limbs and face are gaunt, nearly desiccated. Several old wounds hang open, leaking trails of blood and puss, showing bare bone in some spots and metal plates in others. But despite his old injuries and deformities, his narrow features and his yellowed, leathery skin clearly mark him as one of the dread githyanki, raiders and conquerors of the Astral Sea.

Zithiruun, the Broken General (Z)		Level 14 Elite
Skirmisher (Leader)		XP 2,000
Medium natural humanoid		
Initiative +15	Senses Perception +9	
HP 280; Bloodied 140		
AC 30; Fortitude 26; Reflex 29; Will 28		
Resist 10 psychic		
Saving Throws +2 (+4 against charm effects)		
Speed 6		
Action Points 1		
⊕ Silver Saber (standard; at-will) ⊕ Psychic, Weapon		
+19 vs. AC; 1d8 + 6 damage plus 1d8 psychic damage.		
⊕ Thrown Saber (standard; at-will) ⊕ Psychic, Weapon		
Ranged 5/10 if thrown; +19 vs. AC; 1d8 + 6 damage plus 1d8 psychic damage.		
Special: If thrown, the weapon returns to Zithiruun's hand immediately after the attack is resolved.		
⊕ Silver Barrage (standard; at-will) ⊕ Psychic, Weapon		
Zithiruun makes two silver saber attacks.		
⊕ Silver Flurry (standard; recharge ⊕ ⊕) ⊕ Psychic, Weapon		
Zithiruun makes up to 2 attacks, each against a different target; he can shift 2 squares before the first attack, between each attack, and after the final attack; +19 vs. AC; 2d8 + 6 damage plus 2d8 psychic damage.		
Psionic Aim (immediate reaction when an ally within 5 squares misses with an attack; encounter)		
The ally can reroll the attack, keeping the second result.		
Mind Over Body		
Due to the psionic energy of the harness and armor he wears, Zithiruun uses Charisma in place of Wisdom for determining hit points and Fortitude defense. (He still uses Constitution for other purposes such as Endurance checks.)		
Mind Shock ⊕ Charm		
Whenever Zithiruun damages a target with his silver saber, thrown saber, silver flurry, or silver barrage attacks, the target cannot make opportunity attacks until the end of Zithiruun's next turn.		
Telekinetic Leap (move; at-will)		
Zithiruun can fly 5 squares.		
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Deep Speech, Draconic	
Skills History +16, Insight +14		
Str 6 (+5)	Dex 23 (+13)	Wis 15 (+9)
Con 6 (+5)*	Int 19 (+11)	Cha 20 (+12)
*See mind over body		
Equipment: Hide armor and body harness, two silver sabers		

Dragonborn Raider (D)		Level 13 Skirmisher
Medium natural humanoid		XP 800
Initiative +13 Senses Perception +13		
HP 129; Bloodied 64; see also <i>dragonborn fury</i>		
AC 27; Fortitude 23, Reflex 24, Will 21		
Speed 7		
⊕ Katar (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+19 vs. AC (+20 while bloodied); 1d6 + 4 damage (crit 2d6 + 10).		
↓ Twin Katar Strike (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
If the dragonborn raider doesn't take a move action on its turn, it shifts 1 square and makes two katar attacks, or vice versa.		
↖ Dragon Breath (minor; encounter) ♦ Fire		
Close blast 3; +14 vs. Reflex (+15 while bloodied); 1d6 + 3 fire damage.		
Combat Advantage		
The dragonborn raider deals 1d6 extra damage on melee and ranged attacks against any target it has combat advantage against.		
Dragonborn Fury (only while bloodied)		
A dragonborn gains a +1 racial bonus to attack rolls.		
Infiltrating Stride (move; recharges after the dragonborn raider attacks two different enemies with <i>twin katar strike</i>)		
The dragonborn raider shifts 3 squares.		
Alignment Unaligned		Languages Common, Draconic
Skills History +8, Intimidate +9, Stealth +16		
Str 18 (+10)	Dex 21 (+11)	Wis 14 (+8)
Con 17 (+9)	Int 10 (+6)	Cha 12 (+7)
Equipment leather armor, 2 katars		

TACTICS

The dragonborn gladiators close as rapidly as possible, while the dragonborn raider attempts to sneak or shift around the battle, working to obtain combat advantage. The redspawn firebelcher is trained to avoid its allies; it remains at range and snipes at the PCs.

When they appear on round two, Zithiruun is mounted on Rathoraiax, but they immediately separate, preferring to fight as two entities. The undead dragon is a clumsy flier, so once it lands and engages in battle, it normally remains on the ground.

Zithiruun uses *silver barrage* to cut through the party, and then makes use of whatever powers are most appropriate for the circumstances. He keeps in constant motion and tries to avoid getting in melee with defenders (since loss of mobility is crippling for him), preferring to let his allies deal with them while he takes down controllers and leaders. He is willing to retreat from the battle, but only to regroup and come back at the PCs again. (Although Zithiruun normally doesn't fight to the death, the success of this operation is his only means of regaining his position among the githyanki; he'll die trying to make it work.)

Rathoraiax (R)		Level 13 Elite Brute
Large natural animate (dragon, undead)		XP 1,600
Initiative +5 Senses Perception +9; darkvision		
HP 328; Bloodied 164		
AC 27; Fortitude 29; Reflex 22; Will 24		
Immune disease, poison; Resist 15 necrotic; Vulnerable 15 radiant		
Saving Throws +2		
Speed 4, fly 8 (clumsy)		
Action Points 1		
⊕ Claw (standard; at-will)		
Reach 2; +16 vs. AC; 2d10 + 6 damage, and the target is knocked prone if it is Large size or smaller.		
↓ Tail Crush (minor; at-will)		
Reach 2; prone targets only; +14 vs. Fortitude; 3d8 + 6 damage.		
↓ Savage Fury (standard; recharge ☞☞☞☞)		
Rathoraiax makes two claw attacks.		
↖ Breath of the Grave (standard; encounter) ♦ Necrotic, Poison		
Close blast 5; +14 vs. Fortitude; 4d10 + 6 poison and necrotic damage, plus the target takes ongoing 10 poison and necrotic damage and is weakened (save ends both).		
Alignment Unaligned		Languages –
Str 22 (+12)	Dex 9 (+5)	Wis 16 (+9)
Con 24 (+13)	Int 1 (+1)	Cha 3 (+2)

SPECIAL ATTACK

When Rathoraiax first appears—and if it takes to the air again later in combat—it might attempt to knock loose stones off the tops of buildings onto PCs below. It can only target characters who are within 2 squares of a building, and it must be adjacent to the top of that building, on the same side as the target. This is an area burst 1, +14 vs. the target's Reflex. The target takes 2d10 + 6 damage and is knocked prone. (On a miss, the target takes half damage and is not knocked prone.) The area becomes difficult terrain.

2 Dragonborn Gladiators (G)		Level 10 Soldier
Medium natural humanoid		XP 500 each
Initiative +9 Senses Perception +6		
HP 106; Bloodied 53; see also <i>dragonborn fury</i>		
AC 24; Fortitude 23, Reflex 20, Will 21		
Speed 5		
⊕ Bastard Sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+15 vs. AC (+16 while bloodied); see also <i>lone fighter</i> ; 1d10 + 5 damage.		
↓ Finishing Blow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
Target must be bloodied; +15 vs. AC (+16 while bloodied); 2d10 + 5 damage, and the dragonborn gladiator's allies gain a +2 bonus to attack rolls until the end of the dragonborn gladiator's next turn.		
↖ Dragon Breath (minor; encounter) ♦ Fire		
Close blast 3; +12 vs. Reflex (+13 while bloodied); 1d6 + 4 fire damage.		
Dragonborn Fury (only while bloodied)		
A dragonborn gains a +1 racial bonus to attack rolls.		
Gladiator's Strike		
When the dragonborn gladiator hits an enemy with an opportunity attack, the target is knocked prone.		
Lone Fighter		
The dragonborn gladiator gains a +2 bonus to melee attack rolls when adjacent to only one enemy.		
Alignment Unaligned		Languages Common, Draconic
Skills Athletics +15, History +7, Intimidate +15		
Str 21 (+10)	Dex 15 (+7)	Wis 12 (+6)
Con 18 (+9)	Int 10 (+5)	Cha 16 (+8)
Equipment scale armor, bastard sword		

Redspawn Firebelcher		Level 12 Artillery
Large natural beast (reptile)		XP 700
Initiative +7 Senses Perception +6; low-light vision		
Fire Within (Fire) aura 5; allies who enter or start their turns within the aura gain resist 10 fire.		
HP 97; Bloodied 48		
AC 25; Fortitude 25, Reflex 22, Will 21		
Resist 20 fire		
Speed 4		
⬇ Bite (standard; at-will) ⬆ Fire		
+16 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage, and ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends).		
↘ Fire Belch (standard; at-will) ⬆ Fire		
Ranged 12; +15 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 1 damage, and ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends).		
✱ Fire Burst (standard; recharge 2/3) ⬆ Fire		
Area burst 2 within 10; +15 vs. Reflex 3d6 + 1 damage, and ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends). Miss: Half damage, and no ongoing fire damage.		
Alignment Unaligned		Languages –
Str 18 (+10)	Dex 13 (+7)	Wis 13 (+6)
Con 19 (+10)	Int 2 (+2)	Cha 8 (+5)

FEATURES OF THE AREA

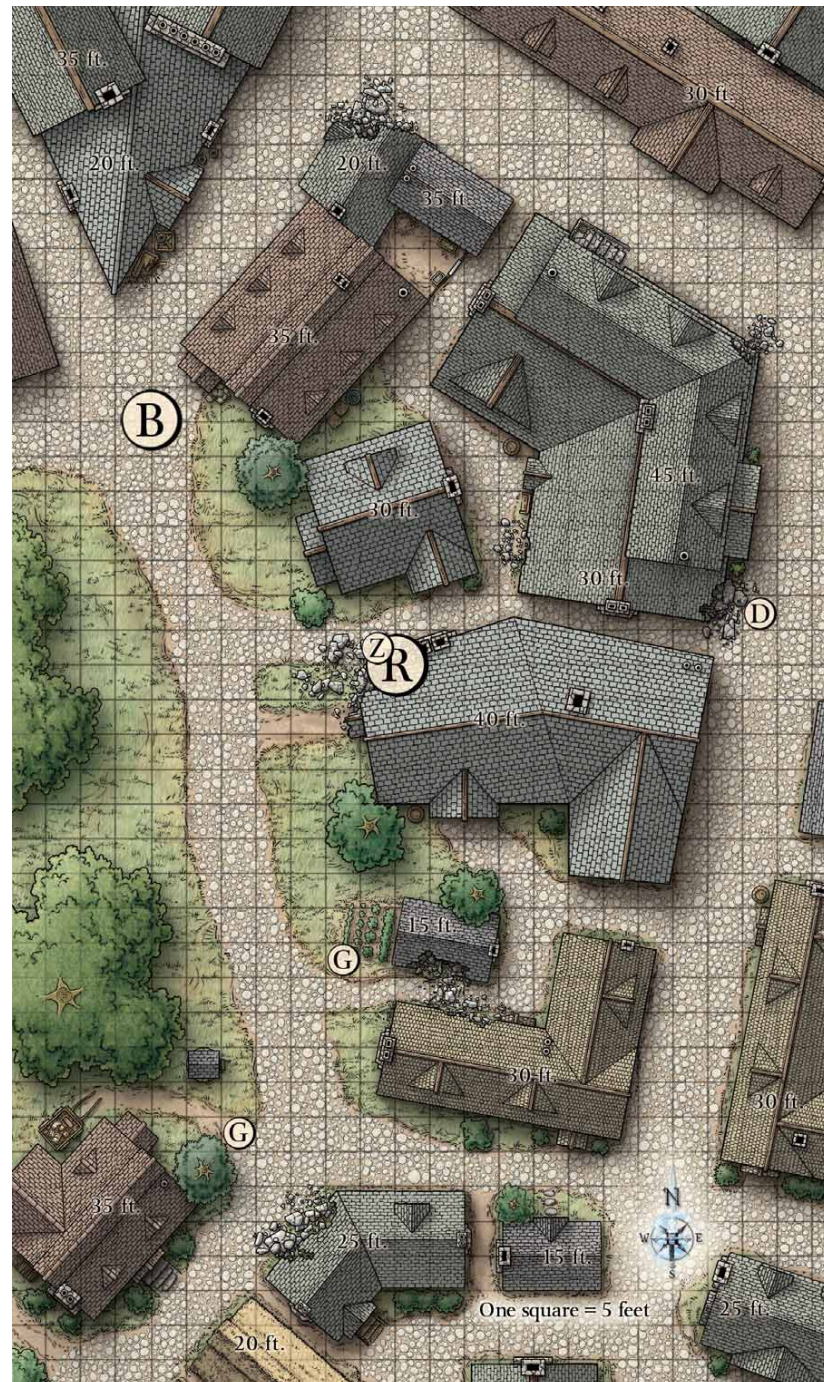
Illumination: This encounter takes place in early morning and is thus brightly lit.

Bodies: The corpses qualify as difficult terrain.

Buildings: The buildings range from two to eight stories (4 to 16 squares) in height. Climbing the walls requires a DC 15 Athletics check.

Rubble: The rubble is difficult terrain.

Trees: The trees provide cover and can be climbed with a DC 15 Athletics check. Most are only between 10 and 20 feet (2 to 4 squares) high.



APPENDIX 1: NEW MONSTERS

HARPY

HARPIES USE THEIR SWEET SONGS to pacify victims before tearing them to pieces with their claws. For more on harpies in general, see the *Monster Manual*, page 154.

Harpies screechers are closely related to the typical harpy, but they are a lot more potent—and hold a fearsome power in reserve.

Harpy Screecher		Level 9 Controller
Medium fey humanoid		XP 400
Initiative +7	Senses Perception +6	
HP 96; Bloodied 48		
AC 23; Fortitude 20, Reflex 20, Will 22		
Resist 10 thunder		
Speed 6, fly 8 (clumsy)		
⊕ Claw (standard; at-will)		
+14 vs. AC; 1d8 + 3 damage.		
↔ Alluring Song (standard; at-will) ♦ Charm		
Close burst 5; deafened creatures are immune; +15 vs. Will; the target is pulled 3 squares and immobilized (save ends).		
↔ Brutal Scream (standard; recharge ☹️ ☹️) ♦ Thunder		
Close burst 5; +15 vs. Fortitude; 1d6 + 5 thunder damage.		
Secondary Attack: Area burst 1 within 5; centered on a target hit by <i>brutal scream</i> 's primary attack; targets enemies only; +15 vs. Fortitude; 1d6 + 5 thunder damage and the target slides 3 squares.		
Alignment Evil	Languages Common	
Skills Stealth +12		
Str 16 (+7)	Dex 16 (+7)	Wis 15 (+6)
Con 16 (+7)	Int 11 (+4)	Cha 20 (+9)

HARPY SCREECHER TACTICS

Like other harpies, screechers use *alluring song* to lure victims in close, and they prefer to fight from the ground rather than in the air. A harpy screecher uses *brutal scream* if foes clump together, not merely to cause great harm but to force them to disperse, hopefully leaving one or more in a vulnerable position.

HARPY LORE

In addition to the information given in the *Monster Manual*, a character knows the following information with a successful Arcana check.

DC 20: Screechers are tougher relatives of normal harpies. Their attacks appear to infuse the target with the harpy's own deadly scream, forcing them to unleash it upon their allies.

HOMUNCULUS

HOMUNCULI ARE MINOR CONSTRUCTS created to guard specific places, objects, or beings. They require no food or sleep, and they can maintain their watch indefinitely.

The following types of homunculi, both dwarf-created, follow the same rules as other homunculi (*Monster Manual*, page 156). Marching hammers are small bodies of iron—shaped vaguely like anvils—with squat legs and a pair of long, writhing arms that end in heavy, double-headed warhammers. Writhing chains are little more than their name implies—long, heavy chains that writhe, move, and strike like serpents.

Marching Hammer		Level 10 Brute
Small natural animate (construct, homunculus)		XP 500
Initiative +4	Senses Perception +12; darkvision	
HP 129; Bloodied 64		
AC 23; Fortitude 23, Reflex 17, Will 19		
Immune disease, poison, sleep		
Speed 6		
⊕ Hammer Hand (standard; at-will)		
+13 vs. AC; 3d6 + 5 damage.		
⊕ Hammering Charge (standard; at-will)		
The marching hammer can use this power as a part of a charge; +13 vs. AC; 3d6 + 5 damage, plus target is knocked prone.		
Beat Them When They're Down		
The marching hammer deals 1d6 extra damage when attacking a prone enemy.		
Guard Area (see <i>Monster Manual</i> , page 156)		
A marching hammer can make a <i>hammering charge</i> attack against any creature in its guarded area, even if the power hasn't recharged. If the marching hammer uses a charge attack to make its <i>hammering charge</i> , its speed increases to 8 when making that charge.		
Alignment Unaligned		Languages —
Skills Perception +12		
Str 21 (+10)	Dex 8 (+4)	Wis 14 (+7)
Con 19 (+9)	Int 5 (+2)	Cha 13 (+6)

MARCHING HAMMER TACTICS

Marching hammers are tasked with guarding a particular area. They attack directly, moving in on the enemy—favoring foes already in their guarded area above those merely approaching it—and crushing them into pulp.

Writhing Chain		Level 10 Skirmisher
Medium natural animate (construct, homunculus) XP 500		
Initiative +10 Senses Perception +7; darkvision		
HP 131; Bloodied 65		
AC 23; Fortitude 23, Reflex 23, Will 21		
Immune disease, poison		
Speed 7; see also <i>serpentine strike</i>		
⊕ Slam (standard; at-will)		
+13 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage.		
↓ Winding Strike (standard; recharge ⓧ; ⓧ)		
+13 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage, and target slides 2 squares and is grabbed and restrained.		
Guarded Area		
When making attacks against a creature in its guarded area, the writhing chain gains a +2 bonus to hit and can stretch itself, granting itself reach 3 on all melee attacks.		
Threatening Reach (within guarded area only)		
This creature can make opportunity attacks against all enemies within its reach (3 squares).		
Serpentine Strike (move; at-will)		
The chain shifts 3 squares.		
Alignment Unaligned		Languages –
Skills Stealth +13		
Str 19 (+9)	Dex 17 (+8)	Wis 15 (+7)
Con 21 (+10)	Int 18 (+9)	Cha 12 (+6)

WRITHING CHAIN TACTICS

Like the hammers, writhing chains are normally assigned to guard an area. They prefer to stay out of range of enemies within that area, striking with their reach. Writhing chains are particularly fond of teaming up, which allows one to restrain a foe while the others pummel him.

SLYSTONE DWARF RUFFIANS

CRAFTY, ILL-TEMPERED, AND VIOLENT, slystone dwarves are fey cousins of gnomes, with whom they share little in common, though they more closely resemble squat, scruffy dwarves. (It is that resemblance that gave them their Common-tongue name.) Slystone dwarves possess a gift they call “the unyielding soul,” which allows them several magical abilities. The slystone dwarf ruffian, below, represents only one of the most common varieties of this brutal race.

Slystone Dwarf Ruffian		Level 10 Soldier
Small fey humanoid XP 500		
Initiative +12 Senses Perception +5; low-light vision		
HP 104; Bloodied 52		
AC 26; Fortitude 23, Reflex 22, Will 21		
Speed 6; see also <i>mad dash</i>		
⊕ Hammer (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+17 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage, and the target is marked until the end of the slystone ruffian's next turn.		
↓ Mighty Strike (standard; recharge ⓧ; ⓧ) ♦ Weapon		
+17 vs. AC; 3d8 + 5 damage, and target is pushed 3 squares. The slystone dwarf ruffian can use this power as a part of a charge.		
Mad Dash		
When the slystone dwarf ruffian makes a charge attack, the enemy is knocked prone on a hit, in addition to any other effects of the attack.		
Alignment Evil		Languages Common, Elven
Skills Athletics +14		
Str 18 (+9)	Dex 21 (+10)	Wis 11 (+5)
Con 16 (+8)	Int 11 (+5)	Cha 18 (+9)
Equipment leather armor, hammer		

SLYSTONE DWARF RUFFIAN TACTICS

Slystone ruffians initiate combat with *raging stone*, then charge into melee with *mad dash*. Once engaged in melee, they prefer to knock a foe away with *mighty strike* if they need some distance (perhaps to use *raging stone* again), rather than retreating.



SLYSTONE DWARF LORE

A character knows the following information with a successful Arcana check.

DC 15: Slystone dwarves were misnamed by the first humans to encounter them. Though they might appear to be small dwarves, they are in fact cousins to gnomes, albeit far more vicious and cruel. They take pleasure in the pain of others, and grow murderous at the slightest insult.

DC 20: Some slystone dwarves serve fomorian kings, others evil eladrins. They're mercenary and are happy working for anyone who offers them the opportunity for violence.

TROLL

A TROLL EATS ANYTHING THAT MOVES, from grubs to humans, and is rightly feared for its ravenous appetite, feral cunning, and remarkable regenerative powers. For more on trolls in general, see the *Monster Manual*, page 254.

Spitting trolls are smaller than their kin—averaging only the size of an adult human—but they’re also far smarter. A combination of their natural intelligence and the power that their *poison spit* grants them over other trolls often allows them to take leadership positions in troll packs.

Spitting Troll	Level 10 Soldier (Leader)
Medium natural humanoid	XP 500
Initiative +12 Senses Perception +8	
HP 106; Bloodied 53; see also <i>troll healing</i>	
Regeneration 10 (if the troll takes acid or fire damage, regeneration does not function until the end of its next turn)	
AC 26; Fortitude 22, Reflex 23, Will 22	
Speed 6, climb 4	
Ⓢ Claw (standard; at-will) ♦ Poison +17 vs. AC; 1d6 + 5 damage, plus 1d6 poison damage.	
Ⓢ Javelin (standard; at-will) ♦ Poison, Weapon Ranged 10/20; +17 vs. AC; 1d6 + 5 damage, plus 1d6 poison damage.	
⚔ Acid Spit (minor; recharge ☼☼) ♦ Acid Ranged 5; +15 vs. Reflex; 1d6 acid damage.	
Regenerative Empowerment (minor 1/turn, at-will) One troll within 10 squares whose regeneration is currently inactive (as a result of taking acid or fire damage) immediately reactivates the regeneration.	
Troll Healing ♦ Healing If the troll is reduced to 0 hit points by an attack that does not deal acid or fire damage, it rises on its next turn (as a move action) with 10 hit points.	
Alignment Chaotic evil Languages Common, Giant	
Skills Athletics +13, Endurance +14	
Str 16 (+8) Dex 21 (+10) Wis 17 (+8)	
Con 18 (+9) Int 10 (+5) Cha 13 (+6)	
Equipment leather armor, 10 javelins	

The rare two-headed trolls are just as brutal as their standard cousins, but far more dangerous.

SPITTING TROLL TACTICS

Spitting trolls prefer to let their allies move into melee and soften up the foe, while the spitting troll hangs back and throws javelins. After a few rounds, however, their bloodlust takes hold and they move in close. When fighting alongside other trolls, spitting trolls rarely use their *poison spit* as a weapon, preferring to hold it in reserve to aid their troll allies. The poison on a spitting troll’s claws and javelins is a variant of their naturally occurring poison, but the act of treating it for application to weapons removes its special properties where other trolls are concerned.

TWO-HEADED TROLL TACTICS

Like other trolls, the two-headed variety is not a subtle combatant. It wades into its foes, lashing out and counting on regeneration to keep it alive. Essentially, it fights just like a traditional troll, but with twice as many attacks.

TROLL LORE

In addition to the information given in the *Monster Manual*, a character knows the following information with a successful Nature check.

DC 20: Spitting trolls are smaller but smarter than other trolls. They boast a poison spit that can either harm other trolls like acid, or cause a troll’s regeneration to resume after being suppressed by fire or acid.

Two-headed trolls are much like normal trolls, but even more brutal and dangerous. Sages debate whether two-headed trolls are the results of crossbreeding between trolls and ettins, or a mutation caused when a troll’s regeneration ability manifests too early and warps the embryo while still in the womb.

Two-Headed Troll	Level 10 Elite Brute
Large natural humanoid	XP 1,000
Initiative +5 Senses Perception +7	
HP 264; Bloodied 132; see also <i>troll healing</i>	
Regeneration 10 (if the troll takes acid or fire damage, regeneration does not function until the end of its next turn)	
AC 25; Fortitude 27, Reflex 19, Will 20	
Saving Throws +2	
Speed 6	
Action Points 1	
Ⓢ Claw (standard; at-will) Melee 2; +13 vs. AC; 3d6 + 7 damage.	
⚔ Smackdown (immediate reaction, when an enemy moves into a position that flanks the two-headed troll; at-will) The two-headed troll targets one creature flanking it; +11 vs. Fortitude; the target is knocked prone.	
Double Actions A two-headed troll rolls initiative twice, gets two turns during a round, and has a full set of actions (standard, move, minor) on each turn. Each set of actions corresponds to a different head. The troll’s ability to take immediate actions refreshes on each of its turns.	
Dual Brain At the end of its turn, the two-headed troll automatically succeeds on all saving throws against the dazed and stunned conditions and against charm effects that a save can end.	
Troll Healing ♦ Healing If the troll is reduced to 0 hit points by an attack that does not deal acid or fire damage, it rises on its next turn (as a move action) with 10 hit points.	
Alignment Chaotic evil Languages Giant	
Str 24 (+12) Dex 10 (+5) Wis 14 (+7)	
Con 22 (+11) Int 6 (+3) Cha 10 (+5)	
Equipment hide armor	

APPENDIX II: ZITHIRUUN, THE BROKEN GENERAL

ONCE, HE REIGNED SUPREME.

General Zithiruun was a great hero—one of the most respected military leaders of a militant race. From the great city of Tu'narath, he led armies of the githyanki on raids across the Astral Sea, and into a dozen different regions and kingdoms of the mortal realm. From the deck of the astral galleon *Siun'kara* or the back of Rathoraiax, his great red dragon steed, Zithiruun proved an unstoppable force—a champion among a race of champions. Even Vlaakith, the fearsome githyanki lich queen, acknowledged his greatness, heaped great praise upon him.

And then the great General Zithiruun took on a foe beyond even his own prowess.

That it was a dragon, a dragon far greater than Rathoraiax, everyone knows, but tales of the confrontation differ as to whether it was a black wyrm, one of the fearsome scourge dragons, or something else entirely. But while not everyone knows precisely what it was Zithiruun faced, everyone knows what happened as a result.

A hideous burst of something—acid, perhaps, or pure necrotic energy—ripped the life from the red dragon Rathoraiax, shredding flesh and obliterating entire portions of the beast. And it was this attack that felled Zithiruun as well. It stripped the strength from his limbs, rotted bits of flesh and even weakened bone. Any lesser warrior would have died in that hideous moment, but the general clung to life through sheer force of stubborn, malignant will.

It took years for Zithiruun to retrain and reinvigorate his broken body. Even today, he is a shadow of what he once was—weaker in body, far less sound in mind. His own people have all but turned their backs on him; though his great achievements prevented them from executing or exiling him utterly, they scorn his weakness and hold him in contempt for allowing himself and his mount to be so soundly defeated. Today, Zithiruun serves as a lowly operative of Tu'narath's forces and he leads only lesser warriors into battle while answering to and obeying githyanki who would once have feared even to speak in his presence.

Zithiruun's native powers have mutated through his years of effort as he attempted to reinvigorate his body at the expense of his mental prowess. The ambition all githyanki share has been subsumed by a burning need to prove himself and to regain the position and the respect that were once his by right—even as he nurses a resentful hatred of the very people whose adulation he so desperately craves.

APPEARANCE

Zithiruun has been large for a githyanki, but since the destruction and atrophy of much of his musculature, he now appears almost impossibly tall and gaunt. Mixed with and attached to the traditional leathers of his people, he wears a contraption of braces and harnesses, constructed of leather straps and iron joints. These braces, supported at his shoulders and by a strap across his chest, run the length of his left arm and left leg, as well as a portion of his right leg. It is the straps that give those limbs rigidity; without them, they could scarcely move, and not support his weight. This harness also grants him full mobility; charged with both magic and psychic energy, it permits him motion and grants him strength he would otherwise lack.

His flesh clings tightly to his skeleton and puckers away from old wounds, exposing muscle and even charred bone. His left cheek gapes open, revealing a bit of metal plate that replaces a fragment of skull. A leather strap holds the left side of his jaw in place, replacing obliterated muscle.

He appears weak indeed, and in some ways he truly is. Yet Zithiruun wields his great silver saber with an astonishing, impossible precision, and his eyes burn with loathing and ambition to shame even the other githyanki.

Zithiruun, the Broken General Skirmisher (Leader)		Level 14 Elite
Medium natural humanoid		XP 2,000
Initiative +15 Senses Perception +9		
HP 280; Bloodied 140		
AC 30; Fortitude 26; Reflex 29; Will 28		
Resist psychic 10		
Saving Throws +2 (+4 against charm effects)		
Speed 6		
Action Points 1		
⊕ Silver Saber (standard; at-will) ♦ Psychic, Weapon +19 vs. AC; 1d8 + 6 damage plus 1d8 psychic damage.		
⊗ Thrown Saber (standard; at-will) ♦ Psychic, Weapon Ranged 5/10 if thrown; +19 vs. AC; 1d8 + 6 damage plus 1d8 psychic damage. <i>Special:</i> If thrown, the weapon returns to Zithiruun's hand immediately after the attack is resolved.		
↓ Silver Barrage (standard; at-will) ♦ Psychic, Weapon Zithiruun makes two <i>silver saber</i> attacks.		
↓ Silver Flurry (standard; recharge ☼ ☼) ♦ Psychic, Weapon Zithiruun makes up to 2 attacks, each against a different target; he can shift 2 squares before the first attack, between each attack, and after the final attack; +19 vs. AC; 2d8 + 6 damage plus 2d8 psychic damage. Psionic Aim (immediate reaction when an ally within 5 squares misses with an attack; encounter) The ally can reroll the attack, keeping the second result.		
Mind Over Body Due to the psionic energy of the harness and armor he wears, Zithiruun uses Charisma in place of Wisdom for determining hit points and Fortitude. (He still uses Constitution for other purposes such as Endurance checks.)		
Mind Shock ♦ Charm Whenever Zithiruun damages a target with his <i>silver saber</i> , <i>thrown saber</i> , <i>silver flurry</i> , or <i>silver barrage</i> attacks, the target cannot make opportunity attacks until the end of Zithiruun's next turn.		
Telekinetic Leap (move; at-will) Zithiruun can fly 5 squares.		
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Deep Speech, Draconic	
Skills History +16, Insight +14		
Str 6 (+5)	Dex 23 (+13)	Wis 15 (+9)
Con 6 (+5)*	Int 19 (+11)	Cha 20 (+12)
*See <i>mind over body</i>		
Equipment: Hide armor and body harness, two silver sabers		

DEVELOPMENT

Zithiruun burns with shame and resentment, even as he scrambles to fulfill the orders of his superiors. Where he once commanded legions, he now leads only a handful of soldiers. He who charted the course of entire wars now understands only his part in larger strategies. Yet, though he aches to turn on those who would dare command him, he knows that through obedience lies his only hope of regaining the honor and position he craves.

The Broken General is a tactical genius, but his once renowned patience and cunning are impeded by his ever-growing temper. Zithiruun frequently flies into a rage at his subordinates for the slightest failure or perceived disobedience, transforming his resentment for those above into punishment for those below. The strap that replaces one of his jaw muscles prevents him from opening his mouth wide, forcing him to eat soft, almost dainty morsels of food and occasionally to slur his words. Zithiruun's speech is fully intelligible most of the time, but on those rare occasions when he garbles a word, he blames others for their failure to comprehend.

Despite this temper, however, Zithiruun remains a consummate planner and a terror in combat, fully capable of leading his small teams to victory in even the most complex strategies. Zithiruun can also use his reputation for mad rage to his advantage, often faking a tantrum to make others underestimate his ability to scheme, to listen, and to advance his own agenda.

ZITHIRUUN'S TACTICS

Zithiruun prefers to fight alongside his mount Rathoraiax. He sweeps through his foes, opening with *silver barrage* if they greatly outnumber him and making use of his *mind shock* ability to stay mobile. If hard pressed, he flies to Rathoraiax's back and tries to stay at range, using distance attacks.

Despite his burning desire to prove himself, Zithiruun's hatred for other githyanki means that he's ill-disposed to sacrifice himself for their goals. Thus, he's willing to retreat from combat if things go poorly, even abandoning other githyanki allies.

Rathoraiax		Level 13 Elite Brute
Large natural animate (dragon, undead)		XP 1,600
Initiative +5 Senses Perception +9; darkvision		
HP 328; Bloodied 164		
AC 27; Fortitude 29; Reflex 22; Will 24		
Immune disease, poison; Resist 15 necrotic; Vulnerable 15 radiant		
Saving Throws +2		
Speed 4, fly 8 (clumsy)		
Action Points 1		
⊕ Claw (standard; at-will) Melee 2; +16 vs. AC; 2d10 + 6 damage, and the target is knocked prone if it is Large size or smaller.		
↓ Savage Fury (standard; recharge ☼ ☼ ☼) Rathoraiax makes two claw attacks.		
↓ Tail Crush (minor; at-will) Reach 2; prone targets only; +14 vs. Fortitude; 3d8 + 6 damage.		
↔ Breath of the Grave (standard; encounter) ♦ Necrotic, Poison Close blast 5; +14 vs. Fortitude; 4d10 + 6 poison and necrotic damage, plus target takes ongoing 10 poison and necrotic damage and is weakened (save ends both).		
Alignment Unaligned		Languages –
Str 22 (+12)	Dex 9 (+5)	Wis 16 (+9)
Con 24 (+13)	Int 1 (+1)	Cha 3 (+2)

RATHORAIAX

As a sign of his shame, Zithiruun was never granted the honor of a new dragon mount. Rather, he must make do with the animated body of Rathoraiax. This is yet another insult that burns in Zithiruun's craw, yet he's too intelligent a fighter to abandon a useful weapon purely out of spite.

Rathoraiax is clearly dead; most of his scales are a dull, rotten gray, gleaming with a faint red only in the brightest light. Many are missing completely, revealing desiccated, leathery skin. The entire top half of Rathoraiax's snout was destroyed in the attack that slew him. This left behind a "shelf" of his lower jaw sticking out from beneath the broken skull around his eyes, fangs protruding upward, and a dull, dead tongue lashing slowly above.

RATHORAIAX'S TACTICS

Rathoraiax lumbers into combat and seeks to pound its foes into the earth. After a few rounds of combat (or earlier, if Zithiruun orders it to do so), it looks for an opportunity to catch a handful of foes in its *breath of the grave* attack. Rathoraiax is relatively mindless and fights to the death unless ordered to retreat.

ZITHIRUUN LORE

The following information can be obtained with a successful History check. (In addition, see the standard githyanki lore, acquired with a Nature check, in the *Monster Manual*.)

DC 25: General Zithiruun was a great military leader and hero to the githyanki of Tu'narath. It's said that he was crippled and his mount slain in a battle against a sort of mighty dragon or fiend. Rumors disagree on whether he still lives and what position he might hold (if any) among the weakness-intolerant githyanki.