

MINI-4

COAXING THE FLAME

A DUNGEONS & DRAGONS[®] *LIVING
FORGOTTEN REALMS* ADVENTURE

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Your discoveries regarding a fire cult operating in the Windrise Ports brings you to the city of Harglast. You believe the leader of the cult is in town. Now begins the frenzied race to find him. A *Living Forgotten Realms* adventure that is part of the Embers of Dawn mini-campaign set in Harglast for characters level 1-4. It is recommended that you play the Embers of Dawn mini-campaign adventures in sequential order with one character for the best enjoyment and play possibilities within the mini-campaign, but it is not required.

Based on the original DUNGEONS & DRAGONS[®] rules created by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson and the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game designed by Andy Collins, Rob Heinsoo, and James Wyatt.

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Most likely you ordered this adventure as part of an RPGA event, or you received it from your organizer. To play this adventure and receive rewards for it, you must sanction it as part of an RPGA event. This event could be as elaborate as a big convention, or as simple as a group of friends meeting at the DM's house.

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By sanctioning and reporting this adventure you accomplish a couple of things. First, it is an official game, tracked under your play history. Second, DMs gain rewards for sanctioned RPGA play if they are members of the DM REWARDS program. DMing this adventure is worth one (1) point.

This adventure retires from RPGA-sanctioned play on December 31, 2012.

To learn more about RPGA event sanctioning and DM REWARDS, visit the RPGA website at www.wizards.com/rpga.

PREPARING FOR PLAY

In order to play this adventure, you'll need copies of the following D&D 4th Edition rulebooks: *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*. Any other rules referenced in this adventure will be noted in the **New Rules Items** section at the end of the adventure.

Throughout this adventure, text in bold italics provides player information for you to paraphrase or read aloud when appropriate. Information on nonplayer characters (NPCs) and monsters appear in abbreviated form in the adventure text.

Along with this adventure, you'll find a RPGA Session Tracking sheet. If you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, complete and turn in this sheet to your organizer directly after play.

READING MONSTER STAT BLOCKS

Most of the information should be easy to understand, as it mirrors the information presented in the *Monster Manual*. Attacks may have a letter next to them designating the type: M for melee, R for ranged, C for close, and A for area. A lower-case letter (used only in some melee and ranged attacks) denotes that the attack can be used as a basic attack.

IMPORTANT DM INFORMATION

As the DM of the session, you have the most important role in facilitating the enjoyment of the game for the players. You take the words on these pages and make them come alive. The outcome of a fun game session often creates stories that live well beyond the play at the table. Always follow this golden rule when you DM for a group:

Make decisions and adjudications that enhance the fun of the adventure when possible.

To reinforce this golden rule, keep in mind the following:

- **You are empowered to make adjustments to the adventure and make decisions about how the group interacts with the world of this adventure.** This is especially important and applicable outside of combat encounters, but feel free to use the "scaling the encounter" advice (usually for adjusting to different-sized groups) to adjust combat encounters for groups that are having too easy or too hard of a time in an adventure.
- **Don't make the adventure too easy or too difficult for a group.** Never being challenged makes for a boring game, and being overwhelmed makes for a frustrating game. Gauge the experience of the players (not the characters) with the game, try to feel out (or ask) what they like in a game, and attempt to give each of them the experience they're after when they play D&D. Give everyone a "chance to shine."
- **Be mindful of pacing, and keep the game session moving along appropriately.** Watch for stalling, as play loses momentum when this happens. At the same time, make sure that the players don't finish the adventure too early; provide them with a full play experience. *Living Forgotten Realms* adventures are designed to be

played within 3.5 - 4 hours; try to be very aware of running long or short. Adjust the pacing accordingly.

- **Give the players appropriate hints so they can make informed choices about how to interact with their environment.** Players should always know when enemies are affected by conditions and are bloodied. They should be given clues about how to interact with their surroundings so they can tackle skill challenges, combats, and puzzles without getting too frustrated over lack of information. This helps to encourage immersion in the adventure and gives players “little victories” for figuring out a good choice from a clue.

In short, being the DM for a *Living Forgotten Realms* adventure isn't about following the adventure's text word-for-word; it's about creating a fun, challenging game environment for the players. Chapters 1 and 2 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* are filled with good information about being a DM for a D&D game.

APPROPRIATE CHARACTER LEVELS

This adventure is designed for player characters (PCs) levels 1-4. Characters that fall outside of the level range may not participate in the adventure. Make certain to check the levels of the PCs before beginning play to ensure that they are the proper level.

Each adventure has a low-level version and a high-level version. The low level is meant for a group whose levels, on average, fall in the lower levels of the adventure's level spread. The high level is meant for a group whose levels, on average, fall in the higher levels of the adventure's level spread.

A group may decide to play the high level when their levels are more suited to the low level if everyone in the group agrees to do so; however, some of the rewards may not be available to them. Conversely, a group may decide to play the low level when their levels are more suited to the high level if everyone in the group agrees; however, some of the rewards may be less than what they'd ideally want from the adventure.

Reading the Numbers: Each encounter has a level and sometimes other values (such as XP or skill check DCs) listed with two numbers divided by a slash. The number before the slash is always the value for the low-level version of the adventure; the number after the slash is the value for the high-level version of the adventure.

FAILING TO DEFEAT AN ENCOUNTER

If a group fails to defeat an encounter - that is, if they have to flee from a combat because it's too tough or they reach the predetermined number of failures in a skill challenge before reaching success - they are only awarded half experience points (round down) for the encounter. If they manage to tackle the encounter later and defeat it, award them the other half of the experience points for the encounter.

CHARACTER DEATH

If a PC dies during the course of the adventure, the player of that character and the rest of the group have two options, provided that they have access to the Raise Dead ritual (either a PC has it and can use it or the characters return to civilization), they have access to the body, and it is possible to return the dead PC to life.

- **Pay the component cost for the ritual.** If the group chooses this option, the cost should be divided evenly among the group (500 gp for heroic tier, 5,000 gp for paragon tier, and 50,000 gp for epic tier). Using a source outside the group to cast the ritual costs 20% more than the component cost. Total cost when using an outside source is 600 gp for heroic tier, 6,000 gp for paragon tier, and 60,000 gp for epic tier. A PC that dies and chooses this method of return gains full (or half, if the party was defeated) experience points from the encounter in which the character died, but no experience points for any encounters that were missed while the character was dead. If there are encounters remaining, the PC continues to earn experience as normal, and receives a normal cut of the rewards at the end of the adventure.
- **Invoke the Death Charity clause.** If the group cannot afford to pay for the ritual (or doesn't desire to do so), the PC can choose to return to life at the end of the adventure. Doing so forfeits all rewards (including treasure and story rewards) earned for the adventure except experience points gained prior to the character's death (the character receives the experience point award for the encounter in which they died). The PC cannot participate in the same adventure a second time.

MILESTONES

No matter if the characters succeed or fail in an encounter, they reach a milestone if it is the second

encounter they've had since the start of the adventure or their last extended rest. **Encounters that do not give out experience points do not count for purposes of reaching a milestone.** Make certain to mention this information to the players when applicable, as it gives each PC another action point and affects how some magic item powers are used.

LASTING EFFECTS

Sometimes a PC suffers a lasting effect that isn't easily resolved before the end of the adventure. The two most common lasting effects are the death penalty and diseases.

Death Penalty: When a character dies and is brought back to life by the Raise Dead ritual, that character suffers a -1 penalty to all attack rolls, skill checks, saving throws, and ability checks until they have reached three milestones. The player should simply record the adventure where the character died on their adventure log, and then keep a running tally of milestones reached. Once the PC has reached the third milestone since coming back to life, they no longer suffer the penalty.

Diseases: Diseases take hold of a character and last until they are cured or they reach their final state. Normally, a PC makes an Endurance check after each extended rest to see if the disease improves, worsens, or maintains its current condition. At the end of the adventure, any character suffering from a disease must resolve the disease to either its cure or final state, using the necessary number of extended rests to do so. Other characters adventuring with the PC may decide to aid the afflicted character during this time. If a disease reaches its final state and the PC can get a Cure Disease ritual cast (and pay the appropriate costs), they may do so.

Other Lasting Effects: Other effects that last beyond the scope of the adventure should be resolved at the DM's discretion. Any effects that last for a specific period of time (that end after a certain number of days or a certain number of extended rests) should be resolved at the end of the adventure in which the effect was obtained (unless otherwise specified). Effects that use some sort of adventuring benchmark of unknown duration (such as milestones) should be recorded on the character's logsheet and tracked across adventures.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

This adventure assumes the players have played the previous three adventures in the Embers of Dawn mini-campaign (MINI1-1 thru MINI1-3).

In *MINI 1-1 Stirring the Embers*, the characters stumbled upon strange goings-on in Tarmalune. After some investigation they discovered the presence of the Cult of Reborn Flame and confronted Lakeral, a member of the cult. They killed Lakeral and discovered that he was sent from Sambral to oversee cult operations in Tarmalune.

In *MINI 1-2 The Burning Scent of Perfumed Swords*, the characters traveled to Sambral to investigate further. They discovered other adventurers had been on the trail of the cult. Their investigation eventually lead the PCs to a perfume shop where they interrupted the cult's ceremonial games and defeated the cultists there. They learned that the cultists operating in Sambral were sent by their superiors in Ramekho.

In *MINI 1-3 Building the Pyre*, the PCs traveled to Ramekho, being attacked by the cult's hired goons on the way. Once in Ramekho, they investigated the cult's work in the local mines and disrupted their activities. They then went to confront the cult leader at his local estate, getting a glimpse of the leader before he escaped. At the end of the adventure, they learned the cult leader was retreating to Harglast.

If the players have not played *Building the Pyre* (MINI1-3), Introduce them to Halagothra the Healer (from *Dragon #372*, "Backdrop: Tarmalune"). While in Tarmalune, Halagothra hires them to investigate the missing persons in Harglast and points them in the direction of the abandoned playhouse in Encounter 1 of this adventure. Make it known to them that a nefarious fire cult is operating in the city of Harglast and that they need to find and either kill or subdue the leader of this cult (a human man using the pseudonym Pyrultimus) in order to save the city's populace from the cult's diabolical plans.

DM'S INTRODUCTION

Following up on the information they learned in Ramekho (at the end of *Building the Pyre*), the PCs come to the port city of Harglast, intent upon the belief that the leader of the fire cult is residing within the city.

Once within the city walls, the PCs travel quickly to an old, abandoned playhouse that they believe is being used as a safehouse by the cult.

When the PCs enter the playhouse, they embark upon a series of events that will take them to many parts of the city. As the PCs move from encounter to encounter, the cultists are feverishly working to erase evidence of their presence in the city and safely escort their leader out.

At the end of the first round (Encounter 5), the PCs will come face-to-face with the person they believe is the

cult leader. This "leader" is, in fact, a doppelganger that the cult leader has employed to act as a decoy, using a technique that has worked well previously (*MINI1-1 Stirring the Embers*).

In Encounter 9, the PCs will get a glimpse of the cult leader before he flees and leaves his followers to kill the PCs.

This adventure is a frenzied race to find the cult leader before he escapes, even as the cultists work to remove evidence of their presence and stall the PCs at every turn. Reinforce this tone in every encounter. Press the players to jump into action. Remind them that time is of the essence. Keep the pace frantic and chaotic.

IN SLUMBER REMAIN QUEST CARD

Some PCs may have the *In Slumber Remain* Quest card in their stack. These PCs are looking to complete three tasks in order to participate in the second quest adventure, *Stir Not the World's Doom*. The tome they seek in order to complete task one can be found among the cultists' belongings in Encounter 9. If a PC recovers and later reads this tome, tell the player to record their successful completion of task one on their log. Should a PC have the *In Slumber Remain* Quest card in their stack and have already complete task one, give them the information in Encounter 9 anyway, as it provides additional clues about the Quest adventure.

PLAYER'S INTRODUCTION

Read or paraphrase the following to the players:

Information gleaned in Ramekho has led you to the bustling port city of Harglast. You arrive just before noon, the townfolk well into the swing of yet another busy day.

After speaking with a few passersby, you learn the location of the abandoned playhouse owned by the man you nearly caught in Ramekho who using the pseudonym Pyrultimus. You believe the building is being used as a safehouse by members of the fire cult. With a little luck, you'll be able to find cult leader and end the cultist threat in the Windrise Ports once and for all.

But you must act quickly.

ENCOUNTER 1: A PLAYHOUSE AND SOME PLAYERS

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 2/4 (649/901 XP)

SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures at the low tier:

- 1 cultist disciple (human guard) (D)
- 1 cultist bowman (B)
- 2 cultist acolytes (human bandits) (A)
- 4 cultist initiates (human rabble) (I)

This encounter includes the following creatures at the high tier:

- 1 cultist disciple (human guard) (D)
- 1 cultist bowman (B)
- 2 cultist acolytes (human bandits) (A)
- 4 cultist initiates (human rabble) (I)

The PCs arrive at an abandoned playhouse just before noon. Inside, a group of cultists are clearing out of this old safehouse, attempting to erase all evidence of their presence before leaving. The cultists have piled some debris against the front door, which falls when the PCs open the door, alerting cultists and negating any chance of a surprise round. The playhouse has no other entrances or windows. The PCs are attacked by these cultists when they enter the playhouse.

As the adventurers enter the area, read:

This simple hall was once a playhouse, complete with a large, open seating area and a stage at the far end. Obviously abandoned some time ago, it is strewn with rubble. You interrupt several shady-looking humans who seem to be gathering up gear and preparing to leave. As you enter, they draw their weapons and attack.

If the PCs attempt to parlay with the cultists upon entering, the cultist disciple addresses them and stalls, in order to provide time for his compatriots to surround the party. If any of the PCs have the story object **MINI16 Known Description** from *MINI1-3 Building the Pyre*, discussion is brief and hostile at best and these PCs are considered primary targets by the cultists.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: The flaming brazier in the center of the playhouse provides bright light for the entire chamber.

Ceiling: The ceiling of the chamber lies 20 feet above the main floor.

Flaming Brazier: Any creature can tip the flaming brazier over with a DC 5 Strength check, as a minor action, covering one adjacent square with flaming coals. Any creature that begins its turn in this square takes 1d6+2 fire damage. Any creature entering the square containing the brazier (before knocked over) or the fire (after knocked over), that creature takes 1d6+2 fire damage.

Stage: The 4x8 square area at the top edge of the map is the playhouse stage, the dotted line at the bottom edge denoting where the stage floor jumps up from the main floor of the hall. The stage stands 2 feet above the main floor. Moving from the main floor to the stage floor requires two squares of movement. An Athletics check at DC 12 removes this penalty. The two small rooms on either side of the stage are at the same level as the stage.

Rubble-Filled Areas: The cultists have piled rubble in a 2x4 square area just inside the front door of the playhouse. Additionally, a 2x2 square area on the main floor is filled with rubble. Treat these areas as difficult terrain.

Supplies: Several crates and barrels fill a 1x2 square area next to the stage. These containers are mostly empty but count as difficult terrain.

Prone Body: The crumpled form of a middle-aged, human woman dressed in rags lies next to the crates and barrels. This is Kalesstin, a homeless woman who was beaten nearly to death just before the PCs arrived. Any PC can make a DC 10 Perception check to see that she is still breathing.

TACTICS

The cultist disciple (the leader of the group) moves to engage the PC who presents the greatest melee threat, using *powerful strike* as often as possible.

The cultist acolytes work together to lock down a mobile PC by flanking and dazing their target with *dazing strike*.

The cultist bowman fires from afar at whichever PC the cultist disciple is fighting, moving back and forth on the stage, using *archer's mobility* to gain a bonus to attack rolls.

The cultist initiates work together to surround a PC or provide combat advantage to the cultist disciple or cultist acolytes.

The cultists are supremely devoted to their dark agenda and fight to the death.

If the cultist disciple is bloodied and the other cultists have been killed or subdued, he draws a letter from his belt and attempts to tear it up. Quick PCs can automatically stop him by grabbing him.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

Make the following adjustments to the combat based on the number of PCs present.

Four PCs: Remove the cultist initiates.

Six PCs: Add one cultist acolyte who starts the encounter on the main floor adjacent to the cultist disciple.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

If the PCs subdue and question the cultist disciple, he proves a difficult prisoner. If a PC succeeds at a DC 18 Intimidate check, the cultist disciple reveals, amidst various curses and oaths, that the cult is planning to escort their leader out of the city in the very near future though he doesn't know any specifics. After this revelation, he falls completely mute concerning the cult's activities.

If the PCs subdue any of the other cultists and attempt to question them, the cultists ignore their questions, praying under their breaths for the forgiveness of their otherworldly patron. They are too insane to be useful to the PCs.

If the PCs search the body of the cultist disciple, they discover a letter. Give them Handout 1. If the cultist disciple managed to tear up the letter, the PCs will have to reconstruct it first. Give them the handout, torn into several pieces.

If the PCs revive and question Kalesstin, she is very thankful for their rescuing her and is amiable in all interactions. She tells them the following:

- She came here looking for a homeless boy named Puk. Puk had previously revealed to her that he had information in his possession that he felt "dire forces" were seeking. Puk asked her to meet him here so he could prove what he knew.
- The cultists captured her when she came snooping around the playhouse looking for Puk.

If the PCs ask why she or Puk didn't simply go to the authorities, she tells them that neither she nor Puk trust the constabulary or city guard. Kalesstin is concerned that members of the city guard might be involved in what's going on in the city.

She implores the party to seek Puk out for more information on what is happening in Harglast (he can often be found in the dock district and is well-known there). She also tells the PCs that they should seek out Thelia Ondertos, the bar matron at the Leaping Hart Tavern, saying that Thelia is the town gossip and might know more about what's been happening in the city.

If the PCs ask Kalesstin to help them find Puk, she does so. Refer to Encounter 2 for specifics in how Kalesstin can help them find Puk.

If the PCs ask Kalesstin to lead them to The Leaping Hart Tavern, she does so, but doesn't enter the tavern, fearing for her life should she set foot in the building.

The PCs need to discover the letter the cultist disciple is holding and question Kalesstin in order to proceed to Encounters 2-4. Give the players every opportunity to seek these clues on their own. However, if they forget or ignore a clue, prompt them toward it so that the adventure can properly continue.

The cultist's letter points the PCs toward Encounters 3 and 4.

Kalesstin's information points the PCs toward Encounters 2 and 4.

The PCs may undertake Encounters 2-4 in any order. Each encounter reveals one piece of the clay tablet map referred to in the cultist's letter. The PCs must procure all three parts of the clay tablet map in order to proceed to Encounter 5.

If the PCs engage the city guard or any other authority figures during this adventure, they hit a dead end. The city guard is fully involved in other matters and regards the PCs with disdain for taking up their valuable time with "wild tales of a devious cult." If they press the guard, one of the guardsmen eyes them suspiciously.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The characters receive 129/180 experience points each for defeating the cultists.

TREASURE

The cultist disciple has 20/30 gp on his person. If the PCs search the crates near the stage, they find a *belt of vigor* and a *prison of Salzacas* in the cultist's belongings.

ENCOUNTER 1: A PLAYHOUSE AND SOME PLAYERS STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

| Human Guard (Cultist Disciple) | Level 3 Soldier |
|---|-----------------|
| Medium natural humanoid | XP 150 |
| Initiative +5 Senses Perception +6 | |
| HP 47; Bloodied 23 | |
| AC 18; Fortitude 16, Reflex 15, Will 14 | |
| Speed 5 | |
| m Halberd (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| Reach 2; +10 vs. AC; 1d10 + 3 damage, and the target is marked until the end of the cultist disciple's next turn. | |
| M Powerful Strike (standard; recharge 5-6) ♦ Weapon | |
| Requires halberd; reach 2; +10 vs. AC; 1d10 + 7 damage, and the target is knocked prone. | |
| R Crossbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| Ranged 15/30; +9 vs. AC; 1d8 + 2 damage. | |
| Alignment Evil Languages Common | |
| Skills Streetwise +7. | |
| Str 16 (+4) Dex 14 (+3) Wis 11 (+1) | |
| Con 15 (+3) Int 10 (+1) Cha 12 (+2) | |
| Equipment chainmail, halberd, crossbow with 20 bolts | |

| Cultist Bowman | Level 2 Artillery |
|---|-------------------|
| Medium natural humanoid | XP 125 |
| Initiative +5 Senses Perception +11 | |
| HP 32; Bloodied 16 | |
| AC 15; Fortitude 11, Reflex 13, Will 12 | |
| Speed 6; see also <i>flame step</i> | |
| m Short sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| +5 vs. AC; 1d6 + 4 damage. | |
| R Longbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| Ranged 20/40; +7 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage; see also <i>archer's mobility</i> . | |
| Archer's Mobility | |
| If the cultist bowman moves at least 4 squares from its original position, it gains a +2 bonus to ranged attack rolls until the start of its next turn. | |
| Flame's Favor (free; encounter) | |
| The cultist bowman can reroll an attack roll. It must use the second roll, even if it's lower. | |
| Flame's Escape (immediate reaction, when an enemy makes a melee attack against the cultist bowman; encounter) | |
| The cultist bowman shifts 1 square and makes a ranged attack against the enemy. | |
| Flame Step | |
| The cultist bowman ignores difficult terrain when it shifts. | |
| Alignment Evil Languages Common | |
| Skills Nature +11, Stealth +10 | |
| Str 13 (+2) Dex 18 (+5) Wis 16 (+4) | |
| Con 14 (+3) Int 12 (+2) Cha 11 (+1) | |
| Equipment leather armor, short sword, longbow, quiver of 30 arrows | |

| Human Bandit (Cultist Acolyte) | Level 2 Skirmisher |
|---|--------------------|
| Medium natural humanoid | XP 125 |
| Initiative +6 Senses Perception +1 | |
| HP 37; Bloodied 18 | |
| AC 16; Fortitude 12, Reflex 14, Will 12 | |
| Speed 6 | |
| m Mace (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| +4 vs. AC; 1d8 + 1 damage, and the cultist acolyte shifts 1 square. | |
| r Dagger (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| Ranged 5/10; +6 vs. AC; 1d4 + 3 damage. | |
| M Dazing Strike (standard; encounter) ♦ Weapon | |
| Requires mace; +4 vs. AC; 1d8 + 1 damage, the target is <i>dazed</i> until the end of the cultist acolyte's next turn, and the cultist acolyte shifts 1 square. | |
| Combat Advantage | |
| The cultist acolyte deals an extra 1d6 damage on melee and ranged attacks against any target it has combat advantage against. | |
| Alignment Evil Languages Common | |
| Skills Stealth +9, Streetwise +7, Thievery +9 | |
| Str 12 (+2) Dex 17 (+4) Wis 11 (+1) | |
| Con 13 (+2) Int 10 (+1) Cha 12 (+2) | |
| Equipment leather armor, mace, 4 daggers | |

| Human Rabble (Cultist Initiates) | Level 2 Minion |
|--|----------------|
| Medium natural humanoid | XP 31 |
| Initiative +0 Senses Perception +0 | |
| HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion. | |
| AC 15; Fortitude 13, Reflex 11, Will 11; see also <i>mob rule</i> | |
| Speed 6 | |
| m Club (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| +6 vs. AC; 4 damage | |
| Mob Rule | |
| The cultist initiate gains a +2 power bonus to all defenses while at least two other cultist initiates are within 5 squares of it. | |
| Alignment Evil Languages Common | |
| Str 14 (+2) Dex 10 (+0) Wis 10 (+0) | |
| Con 12 (+1) Int 9 (-1) Cha 11 (+0) | |
| Equipment club | |

ENCOUNTER 1: A PLAYHOUSE AND SOME PLAYERS STATISTICS (HIGH LEVEL)

| Human Guard (Cultist Disciple) | Level 5 Soldier |
|---|-----------------|
| Medium natural humanoid | XP 200 |
| Initiative +6 Senses Perception +7 | |
| HP 63; Bloodied 31 | |
| AC 20; Fortitude 18, Reflex 17, Will 16 | |
| Speed 5 | |
| m Halberd (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| Reach 2; +12 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage, and the target is marked until the end of the cultist disciple's next turn. | |
| M Powerful Strike (standard; recharge 5-6) ♦ Weapon | |
| Requires halberd; reach 2; +12 vs. AC; 1d10 + 8 damage, and the target is knocked prone. | |
| R Crossbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| Ranged 15/30; +11 vs. AC; 1d8 + 3 damage. | |
| Alignment Evil Languages Common | |
| Skills Streetwise +8. | |
| Str 16 (+5) Dex 14 (+4) Wis 11 (+2) | |
| Con 15 (+4) Int 10 (+2) Cha 12 (+3) | |
| Equipment chainmail, halberd, crossbow with 20 bolts | |

| Cultist Bowman (Level 4) | Level 4 Artillery |
|---|-------------------|
| Medium natural humanoid | XP 175 |
| Initiative +6 Senses Perception +12 | |
| HP 44; Bloodied 22 | |
| AC 17; Fortitude 13, Reflex 15, Will 14 | |
| Speed 6; see also <i>flame step</i> | |
| m Short sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| +7 vs. AC; 1d6 + 5 damage. | |
| R Longbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| Ranged 20/40; +9 vs. AC; 1d10 + 5 damage; see also <i>archer's mobility</i> . | |
| Archer's Mobility | |
| If the cultist bowman moves at least 4 squares from its original position, it gains a +2 bonus to ranged attack rolls until the start of its next turn. | |
| Flame's Favor (free; encounter) | |
| The cultist bowman can reroll an attack roll. It must use the second roll, even if it's lower. | |
| Flame's Escape (immediate reaction, when an enemy makes a melee attack against the cultist bowman; encounter) | |
| The cultist bowman shifts 1 square and makes a ranged attack against the enemy. | |
| Flame Step | |
| The cultist bowman ignores difficult terrain when it shifts. | |
| Alignment Evil Languages Common | |
| Skills Nature +12, Stealth +11 | |
| Str 13 (+3) Dex 18 (+6) Wis 16 (+5) | |
| Con 14 (+4) Int 12 (+3) Cha 11 (+2) | |
| Equipment leather armor, short sword, longbow, quiver of 30 arrows | |

| Human Bandit (Cultist Acolyte) | Level 4 Skirmisher |
|---|--------------------|
| Medium natural humanoid | XP 175 |
| Initiative +7 Senses Perception +2 | |
| HP 53; Bloodied 26 | |
| AC 18; Fortitude 14, Reflex 16, Will 14 | |
| Speed 6 | |
| m Mace (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| +6 vs. AC; 1d8 + 2 damage, and the cultist acolyte shifts 1 square. | |
| r Dagger (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| Ranged 5/10; +8 vs. AC; 1d4 + 4 damage. | |
| M Dazing Strike (standard; encounter) ♦ Weapon | |
| Requires mace; +6 vs. AC; 1d8 + 2 damage, the target is <i>dazed</i> until the end of the cultist acolyte's next turn, and the cultist acolyte shifts 1 square. | |
| Combat Advantage | |
| The cultist acolyte deals an extra 1d6 damage on melee and ranged attacks against any target it has combat advantage against. | |
| Alignment Evil Languages Common | |
| Skills Stealth +10, Streetwise +8, Thievery +10 | |
| Str 12 (+3) Dex 17 (+5) Wis 11 (+2) | |
| Con 13 (+3) Int 10 (+2) Cha 12 (+3) | |
| Equipment leather armor, mace, 4 daggers | |

| Human Rabble (Cultist Initiates) | Level 4 Minion |
|--|----------------|
| Medium natural humanoid | XP 44 |
| Initiative +1 Senses Perception +1 | |
| HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion. | |
| AC 17; Fortitude 15, Reflex 13, Will 13; see also <i>mob rule</i> | |
| Speed 6 | |
| m Club (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| +8 vs. AC; 5 damage | |
| Mob Rule | |
| The cultist initiate gains a +2 power bonus to all defenses while at least two other cultist initiates are within 5 squares of it. | |
| Alignment Evil Languages Common | |
| Str 14 (+3) Dex 10 (+1) Wis 10 (+1) | |
| Con 12 (+2) Int 9 (+0) Cha 11 (+1) | |
| Equipment club | |

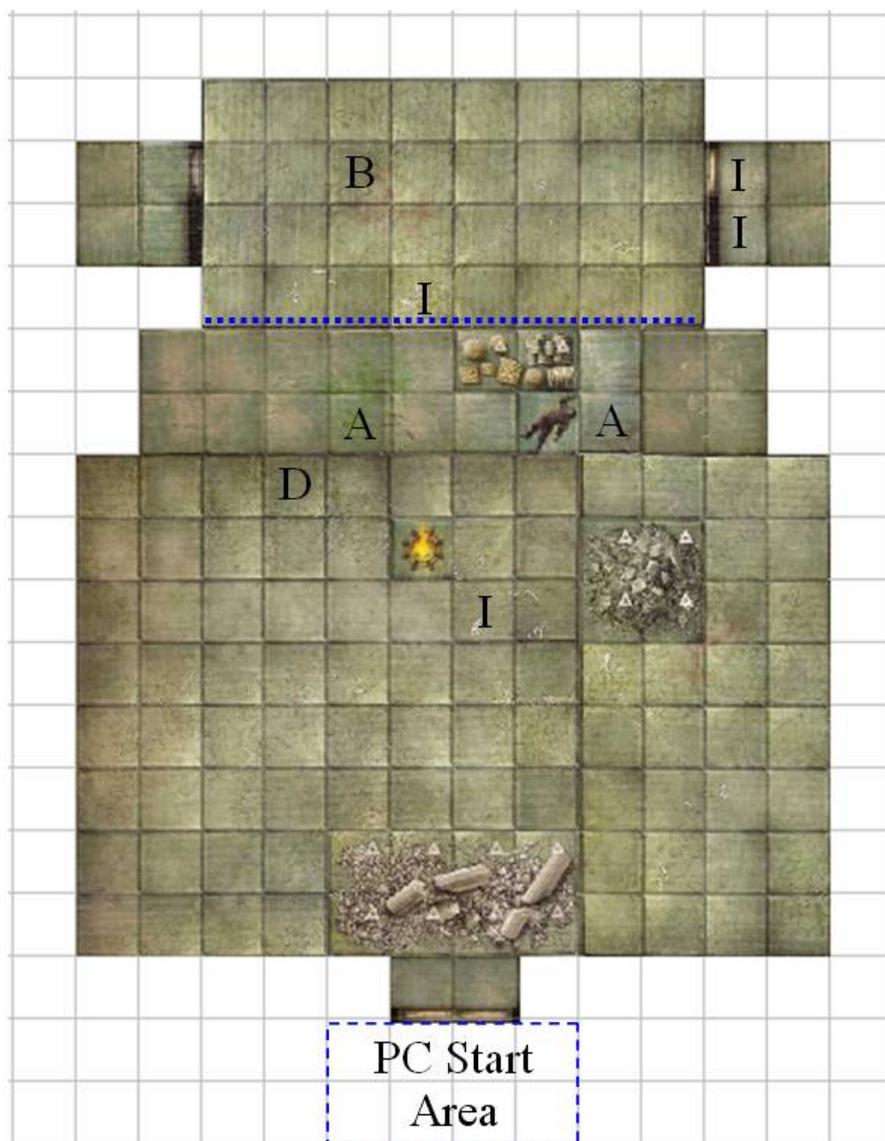
ENCOUNTER 1: A PLAYHOUSE AND SOME PLAYERS MAP

TILE SETS NEEDED

DU1:Halls of the Giant Kings

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----|----|
| Torture Chamber/Floor | 8x8 | x1 |
| Banquet Table/Floor | 4x8 | x1 |
| Barracks/Floor | 4x8 | x1 |
| Long Stairs/Floor | 2x8 | x1 |
| King Throne/Floor | 2x2 | x1 |
| Closed Wood Doors/Open Wood Doors | 1x2 | x1 |
| Closed Single Door/Open Single Door | 1x2 | x1 |
| Closed Single Door/Open Single | 1x2 | x1 |

| | | |
|------------------------|-----|----|
| Door | | |
| Smoke Trap/Floor | 1x2 | x1 |
| Floor/Darkness | 1x2 | x1 |
| Broken Columns/Floor | 2x4 | x1 |
| Crate and Barrel/Floor | 1x2 | x1 |
| Crime Scene/Floor | 1x1 | x1 |
| Flaming Brazier/Floor | 1x1 | x1 |
| Warrior Statue/Rubble | 2x2 | x1 |



ENCOUNTER 2: THE STREET URCHIN

SETUP

Puk (Bluff +3, Insight +5, Perception +3, Thievery +2)

This is a non-challenge encounter.

If the PCs seek out Puk in the dock district, have them make Streetwise checks. A successful check at DC 12 reveals the area Puk calls home, a narrow alley strewn with old crates and debris. If the PCs bring Kalesstin with them, she helps them search for Puk, eventually leading them to his alley home with no roll required.

If the PCs sneak into the alley, have each of them make a DC 13 Stealth check. If two or more PCs fail this check, Puk hears them coming. If the PCs make no attempt to be quiet, Puk automatically hears them coming.

If Puk hears the PCs coming, he bolts, making no attempt to be quiet. He can be spotted running away with a DC 5 Perception check.

If the PCs mention Kalesstin, he stops and comes to them warily.

A young human boy, perhaps only ten years old, approaches you, eyes darting around. He is obviously quite nervous and fearful, his posture betraying his paranoia.

A small bribe (coin or goods worth 2-4 gp) sets him at ease, and, once the PCs describe what they've just seen, he gives them his piece of the clay tablet map, imploring them to discover what's going on in his hometown and stop it. With Kalesstin present, he gives up his piece of the clay tablet map without need for a bribe.

If the PCs question Puk, he reveals the following:

- He is quite knowledgeable regarding the city and what happens in back alleys and hidden places as he spends much of his time roaming the streets, looking for information he can sell to interested parties; this is how he eeks out a living.
- He has seen strange activity in the city for a few weeks now: shady exchanges between strangers to the town, people going missing, and a small mausoleum in the graveyard which was recently burned.
- He was planning to meet Kalesstin at the abandoned playhouse to show her what he

had discovered there, but was delayed by someone to whom he owed money.

- He found his tablet piece in the graveyard while investigating the recent fire. If the PCs demonstrate that they are sincere in ending the cult threat in the city, he happily hands over his piece of the tablet.

If the PCs ask Puk to lead them to the burnt mausoleum, he does so, but leaves the party before they get too close, pointing out the mausoleum from a distance.

If the PCs ask Puk to introduce them to Thelia Ondertos, he leads them to The Leaping Hart Tavern, but then leaves them, fearing for his life should he get further involved in the PCs' quest.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

The PCs can now move on to Encounters 3 and/or 4, if they have not yet completed them.

If they have completed Encounters 2-4, they reconstruct the clay tablet map, revealing the location of further cult activity in Encounter 5.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs do not earn any XP for this encounter, and it does not count towards a milestone.

TREASURE

There is no treasure found in this encounter.

ENCOUNTER 3: A DEAD HOUSE AND SOME DEAD

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 1/3 (550/750 XP)

SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures at the low tier:

1 hobgoblin cultist watcher (W)

1 skeleton (S)

2 zombies (Z)

(Note that parentheses on the map indicate a creature that is buried just underground, covered by a thin layer of sod.)

This encounter includes the following creatures at the high tier:

1 hobgoblin cultist watcher (W)

1 skeleton (S)

2 zombies (Z)

(Note that parentheses on the map indicate a creature that is buried just underground, covered by a thin layer of sod.)

The PCs arrive at the city's graveyard, where a hobgoblin cultist watcher waits for further instructions from his superiors. He recently burned the mausoleum as a sacrifice to his fiery patron in an attempt to discern the cult's next course of action. To this end, he has been studying the ashes for signs and awaiting the arrival of other cultists to help him escort his undead servitors out under cover of darkness. The hobgoblin cultist watcher has two zombies and one skeleton under his command. Each of these undead monstrosities lies in a shallow grave, covered with a thin layer of sod.

As the adventurers enter the area, read:

This part of Harglast's graveyard is quiet, far away from the noise of the city streets. The area is dotted with icons of the grave: a series of tall standing stones, sundry tombstones of various sizes, and the burned husk of a small but ancient mausoleum. You see no people here. The only eyes that watch you are those of the dead, rotting in their graves.

Let the players arrange their characters in the "PC Start Area" on the map. Then have them roll initiative and begin taking their actions in order of initiative. All of the monsters in this encounter are delaying their

initiative and will "activate" when a specific circumstance is triggered by the PCs, as described below.

- **Zombies** - The zombies "activate" after the third PC in the initiative order has taken his full turn. The zombies rise from their graves and stand up as a minor action, immediately falling into the initiative order at this point. They then take their remaining actions.
- **Skeleton** - The skeleton "activates" as soon as a PC moves within 5 squares of his gravesite. He joins the initiative order after the PC who "activated" him, rising from his grave and standing up as a minor action, immediately falling into the initiative order at this point, after the triggering PC's turn. He then takes his remaining actions.
- **Hobgoblin Cultist Watcher** - The hobgoblin cultist watcher "activates" after the first PC in the initiative order takes his full turn, immediately falling into the initiative order at this point. He then takes his full turn. The hobgoblin cultist watcher stays near his skeleton servitor so that he might benefit from the skeleton acting as a bodyguard.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: If the PCs investigate the graveyard during the day, the entire area is well lit by the afternoon sun. If they come at night, the area is in dim light, the moon high in the sky.

Briar Patch: Located just south of the "PC Start Area", this overgrown area is difficult terrain.

Standing Stones: Eight standing stones lie just north of the "PC Start Area." These stones take up the entire space they are situated within. They are eight feet tall and flat on top.

Grave Makers: Many grave markers dot this area, most notably the grave markers where the zombies are waiting. Though they are solid obstacles, they are fairly small and do not impede movement or provide cover.

Fallen Statue: A fallen statue rests near the center of the map. Treat this 1x2 square area as difficult terrain. It has been ensorcelled with magics that allow undead within 5 squares to be able to stand up from prone as a minor action. If the PCs investigate the fallen statue at range, a successful Arcana check (detect magic) at DC 15 reveals that it is enchanted. A separate successful DC 18 Arcana check negates the enchantment, causing the zombies and skeletons to have to use a move action to stand up from within

their graves. Note that this effect enables undead creatures (within 5 squares of the statue) that have been knocked prone during combat to stand up as a minor action.

Trees: Several trees dot the map. The trunks of these trees are impassable, but the areas around the trunks are otherwise clear. The trees are twenty feet tall.

Rocky Outcroppings: Areas of rocks near the north side of the map and near the skeleton's gravesite are strewn with rocks and rubble. Treat these areas as difficult terrain.

Shrubs: Several shrub areas dot the map, including the 2x2 square area just north of the "PC Start Area" and five 1x1 square areas dotted around the map. Treat these areas as difficult terrain.

Log: A large log lies on the south end of the map. The area around this log is normal, passable terrain.

Hill: A hill lies in the northeast corner of the map. The top of this hill is 8 feet above the ground. Any creature climbing the hill treats the slope of the hill as difficult terrain. Any creature moving down the slope of the hill treats the slope as normal terrain.

Burned Mausoleum: A 2x2 square mausoleum stands on the north end of the map, where the cultist watcher starts. This mausoleum is ancient, but recently burned by cultist activities. It can only be entered from the east side of the structure. The roof of the mausoleum is completely burned away. The tile shows stairs going down, but the mausoleum actually has no stairs. The interior is a normal floor.

TACTICS

The zombies in this encounter are completely mindless, moving to and attacking the PC nearest them on any given round.

The skeleton attacks the nearest PC it can easily get to, but also falls under the sway of his hobgoblin cultist watcher, who may redirect it (see below).

The hobgoblin cultist watcher prefers to attack at range as much as possible, using its skeleton servitor as a bodyguard. It uses *force lure* and *hell's blast* to push and slide enemies toward its undead servitors. If caught in melee, it uses *fire staff*. It can use an immediate interrupt action on the skeleton's turn to mentally direct the skeleton, overriding the skeleton's normal tactics.

The zombies and skeleton fight until destroyed.

The hobgoblin cultist watcher fights to the death, believing that he will be rewarded in the afterlife should he fall while protecting the cult's secrets.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

Make the following adjustments to the combat based on the number of PCs present.

Four PCs: Remove the zombie furthest from the "PC Start Area."

Six PCs: Add a zombie located just south of the zombie nearest the "PC Start Area."

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

If the PCs subdue and question the hobgoblin cultist watcher, he ignores them, calling upon his fiery patron to forgive him for failing in his appointed role.

If the PCs search the body of the hobgoblin cultist watcher, they find a piece of the clay tablet map.

The PCs can now move on to Encounters 2 and/or 4, if they have not yet completed them.

If they have completed Encounters 2-4, they reconstruct the clay tablet map, revealing the location of further cult activity in Encounter 5.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The characters receive 110/150 experience points each for defeating the cultist watcher and his undead servants.

TREASURE

There is no treasure found in this encounter.

ENCOUNTER 3: A DEAD HOUSE AND SOME DEAD STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

| Hobgoblin Cultist Watcher | Level 3 Controller |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| Medium natural humanoid | XP 150 |
| Initiative +5 Senses Perception +4; low-light vision | |
| HP 46; Bloodied 23 | |
| AC 17; Fortitude 13, Reflex 15, Will 14 | |
| Speed 6 | |
| m Quarterstaff (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| +8 vs. AC; 1d8 + 1 damage. | |
| M Fire Staff (standard; recharge 4-5-6) ♦ Fire, Weapon | |
| Requires quarterstaff; +8 vs. AC; 2d10 + 4 fire damage, and the target is dazed until the end of the hobgoblin cultist watcher's next turn. | |
| R Force Lure (standard; recharge 5-6) ♦ Force | |
| Ranged 5; +7 vs. Fortitude; 2d6 + 4 force damage, and the target slides 3 squares. | |
| C Hell's Blast (standard; recharge 6) ♦ Fire | |
| Close blast 5; +7 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 4 fire damage, and the target is pushed 1 square and knocked prone. <i>Miss</i> : Half damage, and the target is neither pushed nor knocked prone. | |
| Hobgoblin's Resilience (Immediate reaction, when the hobgoblin cultist watcher suffers an effect that a save can end; encounter) | |
| The hobgoblin cultist watcher rolls a saving throw against the effect. | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Common, Goblin |
| Skills Arcana +10, Athletics +4, History +12 | |
| Str 13 (+2) | Dex 14 (+3) Wis 16 (+4) |
| Con 14 (+3) | Int 19 (+5) Cha 13 (+2) |
| Equipment robes, quarterstaff | |

| Skeleton | Level 3 Soldier |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| Medium natural animate (undead) | XP 150 |
| Initiative +6 Senses Perception +3; darkvision | |
| HP 45; Bloodied 22 | |
| AC 18; Fortitude 15, Reflex 16, Will 15 | |
| Immune : disease, poison; Resist 10 necrotic; Vulnerable 5 radiant | |
| Speed 5 | |
| m Longsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| +10 vs. AC; 1d8 + 2 damage, and the target is marked until the end of the skeleton's next turn; see also <i>speed of the dead</i> . | |
| Speed of the Dead | |
| When making an opportunity attack, the skeleton gains a +2 bonus to the attack roll and deals and extra 1d6 damage. | |
| Alignment Unaligned | Languages - |
| Str 15 (+3) | Dex 17 (+4) Wis 14 (+3) |
| Con 13 (+2) | Int 3 (-3) Cha 3 (-3) |
| Equipment chainmail, heavy shield, longsword | |

| Zombie | Level 2 Brute |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| Medium natural animate (undead) | XP 125 |
| Initiative -1 Senses Perception +0; darkvision | |
| HP 40; Bloodied 20 | |
| AC 13; Fortitude 13, Reflex 9, Will 10 | |
| Immune : disease, poison; Resist 10 necrotic; Vulnerable 5 radiant | |
| Speed 4 | |
| m Slam (standard; at-will) | |
| +6 vs. AC; 2d6 + 2 damage. | |
| M Zombie Grab (standard; at-will) | |
| +4 vs. Reflex; the target is grabbed (until escape). Checks made to escape the zombie's grab take a -5 penalty. | |
| Zombie Weakness | |
| Any critical hit to the zombie reduces it to 0 hit points instantly. | |
| Alignment Unaligned | Languages - |
| Str 14 (+3) | Dex 6 (-1) Wis 8 (+0) |
| Con 10 (+1) | Int 1 (-4) Cha 3 (-3) |

ENCOUNTER 3: A DEAD HOUSE AND SOME DEAD STATISTICS (HIGH LEVEL)

| Hobgoblin Cultist Watcher (Level 5) | Level 5 Controller |
|--|---|
| Medium natural humanoid | XP 200 |
| Initiative +6 | Senses Perception +5; low-light vision |
| HP 62; Bloodied 31 | |
| AC 19; Fortitude 15, Reflex 17, Will 16 | |
| Speed 6 | |
| m Quarterstaff (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| +10 vs. AC; 1d8 + 2 damage. | |
| M Fire Staff (standard; recharge 4-5-6) ♦ Fire, Weapon | |
| Requires quarterstaff; +10 vs. AC; 2d10 + 5 fire damage, and the target is dazed until the end of the hobgoblin cultist watcher's next turn. | |
| R Force Lure (standard; recharge 5-6) ♦ Force | |
| Ranged 5; +9 vs. Fortitude; 2d6 + 5 fire damage, and the target slides 3 squares. | |
| C Hell's Blast (standard; recharge 6) ♦ Fire | |
| Close blast 5; +9 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 5 fire damage, and the target is pushed 1 square and knocked prone. <i>Miss</i> : Half damage, and the target is neither pushed nor knocked prone. | |
| Hobgoblin's Resilience (Immediate reaction, when the hobgoblin cultist watcher suffers an effect that a save can end; encounter) | |
| The hobgoblin cultist watcher rolls a saving throw against the effect. | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Common, Goblin |
| Skills Arcana +11, Athletics +5, History +13 | |
| Str 13 (+3) | Dex 14 (+4) Wis 16 (+5) |
| Con 14 (+4) | Int 19 (+6) Cha 13 (+3) |
| Equipment robes, quarterstaff | |

| Skeleton (Level 5) | Level 5 Soldier |
|---|---|
| Medium natural animate (undead) | XP 200 |
| Initiative +7 | Senses Perception +4; darkvision |
| HP 61; Bloodied 30 | |
| AC 20; Fortitude 17, Reflex 18, Will 17 | |
| Immune : disease, poison; Resist 10 necrotic; Vulnerable 5 radiant | |
| Speed 5 | |
| m Longsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| +12 vs. AC; 1d8 + 3 damage, and the target is marked until the end of the skeleton's next turn; see also <i>speed of the dead</i> . | |
| Speed of the Dead | |
| When making an opportunity attack, the skeleton gains a +2 bonus to the attack roll and deals an extra 1d6 damage. | |
| Alignment Unaligned | Languages - |
| Str 15 (+4) | Dex 17 (+5) Wis 14 (+4) |
| Con 13 (+3) | Int 3 (-2) Cha 3 (-2) |
| Equipment chainmail, heavy shield, longsword | |

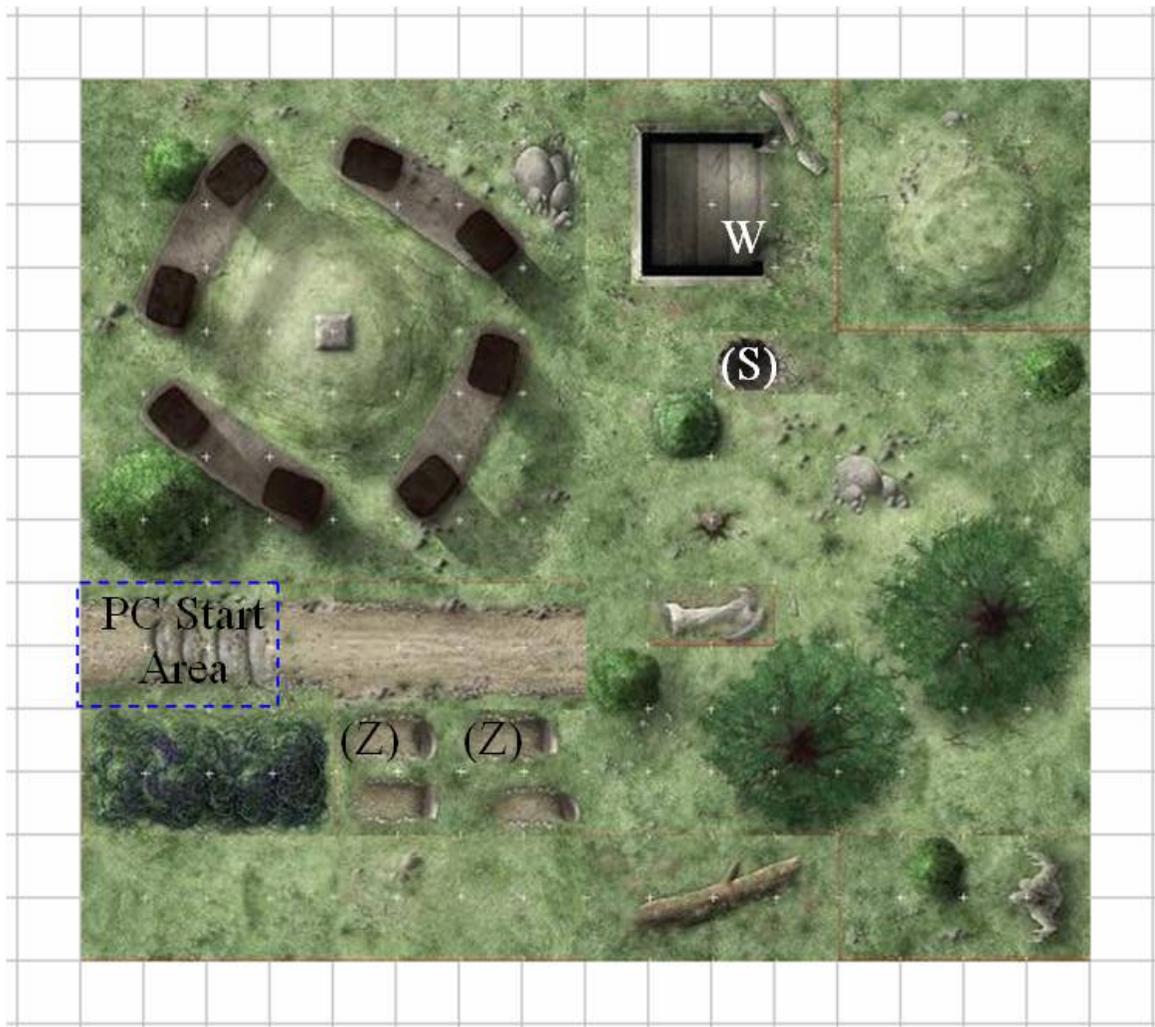
| Zombie (Level 4) | Level 4 Brute |
|---|---|
| Medium natural animate (undead) | XP 175 |
| Initiative +0 | Senses Perception +1; darkvision |
| HP 60; Bloodied 30 | |
| AC 15; Fortitude 15, Reflex 11, Will 12 | |
| Immune : disease, poison; Resist 10 necrotic; Vulnerable 5 radiant | |
| Speed 4 | |
| m Slam (standard; at-will) | |
| +8 vs. AC; 2d6 + 3 damage. | |
| M Zombie Grab (standard; at-will) | |
| +6 vs. Reflex; the target is grabbed (until escape). Checks made to escape the zombie's grab take a -5 penalty. | |
| Zombie Weakness | |
| Any critical hit to the zombie reduces it to 0 hit points instantly. | |
| Alignment Unaligned | Languages - |
| Str 14 (+4) | Dex 6 (+0) Wis 8 (+1) |
| Con 10 (+2) | Int 1 (-3) Cha 3 (-2) |

ENCOUNTER 3: A DEAD HOUSE AND SOME DEAD MAP

TILE SETS NEEDED

DT4:Ruins of the Wild

| | | |
|-------------------------------|-----|----|
| Stonehenge/Field with Pond | 8x8 | x1 |
| Ruined Tower/Field with Trees | 8x8 | x1 |
| Road/Crevasse | 2x8 | x1 |
| Graves/Briar | 2x4 | x1 |
| Mound/Hobbit Hole | 4x4 | x1 |
| Hill/Stairs Down | 4x4 | x1 |
| Ruined Wagon/Briar | 2x4 | x1 |
| Fallen Statue/Mud Puddle | 1x2 | x1 |
| Camping Gear/Hole in Ground | 1x2 | x1 |
| Covered Wagon/Field with Log | 2x4 | x1 |
| Field with Statue/Muddy Pond | 2x4 | x1 |
| Field/Road | 2x8 | x1 |



ENCOUNTER 4: THE LADY OF GOSSIP

SETUP

Thelia Ondertos (Diplomacy +7, Insight +12, Perception +5, Streetwise +7)

This is a non-challenge encounter.

The PCs arrive at the Leaping Hart Tavern, a large tavern/inn/gambling hall, and the center of gossip in Harglast. Bar matron (and owner) Thelia Ondertos tends bar with the aid of two waitresses. The tavern room is only about half full.

When the PCs enter, read:

The Leaping Hart Tavern is a large, two-story stone building, the bulk of the first floor taken up by a large tavern room with a long bar on the far side, across from the entry. Well-crafted tables and chairs dot the floor. A small, raised stage stands in one corner, currently empty. Lighting is ample, with several oil lamps strewn across the walls. The tavern room is about half-full, several and varied patrons sipping drinks, chatting, and gambling.

If the PCs survey the patrons specifically, they see the following:

- A lone, elderly human woman named Esra sips wine at a small table in a corner. If questioned, she engages the PCs, babbling about "the good old days." Given the chance, she will talk the PCs' ears off.
- Two young, male halflings named Thindel and Brindel sit at a small table, engaged in a dicing game. If the PCs approach them, the halflings ignore them or tell the PCs to go away if pressed. (These are Vlotho the Blue's halfling henchman; see Encounter 7.)
- A group of ten human men and women occupy two large tables, drinking and chatting loudly. If the PCs engage them in conversation, they are friendly, offering to buy the PCs a round of drinks. The loudest among them, a burly man named Cristos, offers to pay for the PCs' accommodations at the Leaping Hart Tavern. They are the crew members of "The Blue Drake," a trader ship that docked in Harglast that day. They are enjoying the fruits of their most recent trading voyage.

- A half-elf man, dressed entirely in blue finery, runs a dice game with two well-dressed human men and an eladrin woman dressed in hunters clothes. If the PCs approach the table, the half-elf eyes them suspiciously, but then offers the PCs the two empty seats at his gambling table. (This is Vlotho the Blue; see Encounter 7.)
- A trio of old male dwarves sits at a side table, drinking ale and talking loudly amongst themselves. One of them, Borisk, scribbles on parchment. If the PCs approach them, they discover that the dwarves are amateur musicians deep in their cups who are writing a new drinking song.

When the PCs approach Thelia Ondertos, read:

As you approach the bar, the bar matron welcomes you heartily, saying, "Welcome to the Leaping Hart Tavern, strangers. I am Thelia, purveyor of fine drinks and finer foods. What be your pleasure?"

Thelia is an affable, middle-aged, human woman dressed in a simple earth-toned chemise and skirts. She engages in idle chit-chat for free, but requires the PCs buy a round or two before she opens up to real gossip with strangers.

Once the PCs have bought some drinks, she asks them where they're from and what has brought them to Harglast. If the PCs are forthright and honest, she opens up easily. If they attempt to lie or otherwise manipulate the conversation, have the PCs make Bluff and/or Diplomacy checks (as appropriate) versus her Insight check. If the PCs fail in their checks, she grows wary (treat this as a +2 circumstance bonus to her future Insight checks).

Once the PCs have gained Thelia's trust and described the situation they are investigating, Thelia opens up considerably and leads them to a private side room to speak further.

As Thelia leads the PCs to the private room, have them make Perception checks. Any PC who succeeds at a DC 15 check notices a man with raven-black eyes, wearing robes, standing outside one of the front windows of the tavern room. This man makes eye contact with them and then ducks out of sight. If the PCs leave the tavern to pursue him, they come upon a bustling street scene; the man is gone. This man is a young human man named Revi, the cultist mage from Encounter 9. He flees at this point in order to warn his compatriots that there are adventurers closing in on the cult. If any of the PCs have the story object **MINI16 Known Description** from *MINI1-3 Building*

the Pyre, he warns the others to be on the lookout for and specifically prepare for those PCs.

In the private room, Thelia reveals the following:

- She knows that a cult has been operating in the city for at least two weeks. She knows nothing about their agenda.
- She tells the PCs that the city's leadership has long been corrupt and, even if they're not cult members, they can't be trusted.
- She knows that several townfolk have gone missing recently and is convinced that the cult is responsible.
- She knows of the burning of the mausoleum in the city's graveyard three days ago and is convinced that the cult is responsible.
- She has in her possession a piece of a clay tablet that she believes is important to the cultists. She received this tablet piece from a friend named Halagothra the Healer, whom Thelia reveals, has just recently come to Harglast to stay on top of what is happening with the cult.
- She doesn't know where Halagothra is staying, as she has gone into hiding to avoid retaliation from the cultists.

Once the PCs convince Thelia of their conviction in ending the cultist threat in the city, she hands over her piece of the clay tablet map.

As the PCs set out, read:

Thelia calls to you as you prepare to leave. "Whatever is happening here, I hope that you can stop it. If this threat survives and leaves the city, return here. I know a good many people who might be able to aid you in ending this threat. I will try to contact Halagothra and shall assemble those I can, but it will take some time."

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

The PCs can now move on to Encounters 2 and/or 3, if they have not yet completed them.

If they have completed Encounters 2-4, they reconstruct the clay tablet map, revealing the location of further cult activity in Encounter 5.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs do not earn any XP for this encounter, and it does not count towards a milestone.

TREASURE

There is no treasure found in this encounter.

ENCOUNTER 5: A FORTUNEHOUSE AND ITS FORTUNE

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 3/5 (775/1100 XP)

SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures at the low tier:

- 1 cult leader imposter (doppelganger sneak) (I)
- 1 gnome cultist fireflinger (F)
- 2 cultist acolytes (A)
- 1 krenshar blood slayer (K)

This encounter includes the following creatures at the high tier:

- 1 cult leader imposter (doppelganger sneak) (I)
- 1 gnome cultist fireflinger (F)
- 2 cultist acolytes (A)
- 1 krenshar blood slayer (K)

Once the PCs reconstruct the clay tablet they can tell that it appears to be a map of the city. Based on what the party knows, it seems like it was purposely made to be fragile and therefore easily destroyed should it be discovered. Further examination and a DC 5 Streetwise check notes that three areas seem to be marked: the playhouse, the graveyard, and a third spot that leads them to a fortunehouse called Blood and Bones. Blood and Bones is a very simple, small, wooden building with a thatched roof. The building's street front boasts a simple wooden door, but no windows. The shop appears to be recently abandoned. A short investigation of the shop interior reveals a simple antechamber, behind which sits a small parlor. The parlor sports a round, wooden table and a few chairs, but no other décor. Beyond this chamber is a small sleeping chamber, with a visible trap door and ladder leading underground.

Traveling beneath the fortunehouse, the PCs discover a series of natural caverns within which waits the cult leader imposter (actually a doppelganger hired by the cult to impersonate the cult leader), several other cultists, and their krenshar guardian. Have the players decide whether or not they are using light sources at this time.

The cult leader imposter is attempting to use magical emanations in the pit adjacent to him to

predict the future of the cult's activities. (Note that the fortuneteller, Yulis, whom the adventurers will meet in Encounter 6, uses the emanations from the pit to tell the fortunes of her clients. She hid elsewhere when she discovered that her shop had been invaded by the cultists.)

As the adventurers enter the area, read:

Leaving the ladder behind, you trek into the dark, wet caverns, deep beneath the city streets. After a short walk, you notice the distinctive odor of decaying bodies and some flickering lights ahead. You see a lean man of about 50 years old with a deep tan, garbed in ceremonial robes and holding a wickedly-sharp short sword, crouching next to a pit. This man is the cult leader you've been seeking and he does not appear to notice you!

If any of the PCs take a few moments to observe the scene from afar, have them make Perception checks with the following results:

- DC 15 - They see the krenshar blood slayer's position, but aren't able to make out exactly what it is.
- DC 25 - They see the gnome cultist fireflinger atop the cliff, but can't make out specifics of his form.

If the PCs move quietly up to the bottleneck area just in front of them, the krenshar blood slayer and gnome cultist fireflinger have a chance to see/hear them (the cult leader imposter is focused on the pit in front of him). Have the PCs make Stealth checks against the passive perception scores of the fireflinger and krenshar. If the PCs approach with light sources visible, they suffer a -5 penalty to these checks.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: The 4x4 square area around the magical pit (denoted by the red dotted line) is in bright light, due to the magical energy emanating from this pit. The area around this bright light area (borders denoted by blue dotted lines) is in dim light, with a few torches spiked into the cavern walls or driven into the ground. All areas outside of these are in darkness.

Magical Pit: The 2x2 square pit adjacent to the cult leader imposter is 20 feet deep. Climbing into or out of the pit requires a DC 13 Athletics check. Any creature that starts its turn at the bottom of this pit takes 1d6 psychic damage from the magical

emanations contained therein. PCs investigating the pit can discern that magic is emanating from the pit with a DC 12 Arcana check. A second Arcana check, at DC 18, reveals that the magical emanations are useful for prophetic readings, but that these emanations are dangerous and potentially lethal to those who don't know how to channel the magic properly.

Other Pit: This 2x2 square pit, located just south of the magical pit, is 10 feet deep. Climbing into or out of this pit requires a DC 15 Athletics check.

Rocky Ground: Several portions of the cavern are strewn with small rocky outcroppings and rubble. These squares are marked with triangles. Treat these squares as difficult terrain.

Cliffs: Several cliff areas dot the cavern. These cliffs are 10 feet tall, but fairly easy to climb. Climbing up or down these cliffs requires a DC 10 Athletics check.

Rickety Wooden Ramp: A ramshackle (and fairly unsteady) wooden ramp has been constructed on the south end of the map. Moving up or down this ramp requires a DC 15 Acrobatics check for every two squares traveled, failure resulting in the creature falling prone. The cultists (but not the krenshar) have studied the ramp and don't have to make this check, since they know where they can step safely.

Dead Bodies: 10 squares near the gnome cultist fireflinger are covered with the bodies of townfolk who have been sacrificed by the cult in attempts to learn more about the arcane properties of the magical pit. Any creature that begins its turn in one of these ten squares suffers a -2 penalty to attack rolls due to the noxious fumes of the decaying bodies. The affected squares are those that are colored reddish-brown on the map.

Pool: The pool on the eastern edge of the map is shallow, but filled with thick mud and muck. Treat this area as difficult terrain.

TACTICS

The cult leader imposter engages the nearest PC, using *shapeshifter feint* as often as possible in order to gain combat advantage. He attempts to get into flank with his allies whenever he can so that he'll have combat advantage without using his power.

The gnome cultist fireflinger uses *reactive stealth* at the beginning of the combat to remain unseen. As soon as he has multiple PCs within range, he uses *shimmering terrain* to slow the PCs' approach, allowing his allies to get into attack positions. If a PC moves adjacent to one of the pits, he uses *flame spark* in an

attempt to slide the PC into the pit; he also uses this power to move foes into better positions for his allies to flank. When he first takes damage, he uses *fade away* to reposition himself. If he needs to move up or down a cliff face, he uses *fey step* to do so. Given no other options, he uses *fiery bolt*.

The cultist acolytes work together to lock down a mobile PC by flanking and dazing their target with *dazing strike*.

The krenshar blood slayer uses *unnerving skull* every round on the strongest PC attacking it. It then uses *grabbing claws* on this foe, following up with its *bite* whenever possible.

The enemies in this encounter fight to the death.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

Make the following adjustments to the combat based on the number of PCs present.

Four PCs: Remove the cultist acolyte in the southwestern corner of the map.

Six PCs: Add one cultist acolyte next to the cultist acolyte in the southwestern corner of the map.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

When the cult leader imposter is killed, he reverts to his true doppelganger form.

If the PCs subdue and question the cult leader imposter or the gnome cultist fireflinger, they glean no pertinent information. They simply pray for forgiveness from The Raging Flame, their fiery patron, and ignore the PCs' questions. If the PCs question either of the cultist acolytes, they reveal that their leader was recently attempting to use the magical pit to discern the identities and location of the PCs so that the cult could deal with them appropriately.

Once the PCs have finished this encounter, they are free to search the caverns for treasure. While they do this, a robed figure approaches them.

As they search, read:

As you search the chamber and bodies, you hear slow footsteps from afar. Glancing around, you see the hunched form of a very old human woman approaching. She looks around, surveying the carnage, and then looks to the group of you. She speaks. "Thank you for freeing me from these foul fellows. I am Yulis the fortune teller, and this is my home."

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The characters receive 155/220 experience points each for defeating the cult leader imposter, cultists, and krenshar.

TREASURE

The cult leader imposter has 50/60 gp on his person, payment for his impersonating the cult leader. If the PCs search the area around the magical pit, they discover a *wand of ray of enfeeblement +1*, a *battlecrazed weapon +1*, and a ritual book of *silence* and *water walk*.

ENCOUNTER 5: A FORTUNEHOUSE AND ITS FORTUNE STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

| Doppelganger Sneak (Cult Leader Imposter) | | Level 5 Skirmisher |
|---|----------------------|--------------------|
| Medium natural humanoid (shapechanger) | | XP 200 |
| Initiative +6 | Senses Perception +2 | |
| HP 61; Bloodied 30 | | |
| AC 20; Fortitude 16, Reflex 18, Will 18 | | |
| Speed 6 | | |
| m Short Sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | | |
| +10 vs. AC; 1d6 + 4 damage. | | |
| M Shapeshifter Feint (minor; at-will) | | |
| +8 vs. Reflex; the cult leader imposter gains combat advantage against the target until the end of the cult leader imposter's next turn. | | |
| Combat Advantage | | |
| The cult leader imposter deals an extra 1d6 damage against any target that it has combat advantage against. | | |
| Change Shape (minor; at-will) ♦ Polymorph | | |
| The cult leader imposter can alter its physical form to take on the appearance of any Medium humanoid, including a unique individual (see Shape Change, page 280) | | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Common | |
| Skills Bluff +10, Insight +9, Stealth +9 | | |
| Str 11 (+1) | Dex 16 (+4) | Wis 12 (+2) |
| Con 13 (+2) | Int 10 (+1) | Cha 15 (+3) |
| Equipment short sword | | |

| Cultist Acolyte | | Level 2 Skirmisher |
|---|----------------------|--------------------|
| Medium natural humanoid | | XP 125 |
| Initiative +6 | Senses Perception +1 | |
| HP 37; Bloodied 18 | | |
| AC 16; Fortitude 12, Reflex 14, Will 12 | | |
| Speed 6 | | |
| m Mace (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | | |
| +4 vs. AC; 1d8 + 1 damage, and the cultist acolyte shifts 1 square. | | |
| r Dagger (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | | |
| Ranged 5/10; +6 vs. AC; 1d4 + 3 damage. | | |
| M Dazing Strike (standard; encounter) ♦ Weapon | | |
| Requires mace; +4 vs. AC; 1d8 + 1 damage, the target is <i>dazed</i> until the end of the cultist acolyte's next turn, and the cultist acolyte shifts 1 square. | | |
| Combat Advantage | | |
| The cultist acolyte deals an extra 1d6 damage on melee and ranged attacks against any target it has combat advantage against. | | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Common | |
| Skills Stealth +9, Streetwise +7, Thievery +9 | | |
| Str 12 (+2) | Dex 17 (+4) | Wis 11 (+1) |
| Con 13 (+2) | Int 10 (+1) | Cha 12 (+2) |
| Equipment leather armor, mace, 4 daggers | | |

| Gnome Cultist Fireflinger | | Level 3 Controller |
|---|--|--------------------|
| Small fey humanoid | | XP 150 |
| Initiative +1 | Senses Perception +1; low-light vision | |
| Aura of Illusion (Illusion) aura 5; the gnome cultist fireflinger and all allies in the aura gain concealment and can hide in the aura. | | |
| HP 46; Bloodied 23 | | |
| AC 16; Fortitude 13, Reflex 15, Will 13 | | |
| Speed 5; see also <i>fey step</i> | | |
| m Dagger (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | | |
| +6 vs. AC; 1d4 damage. | | |
| R Fiery Bolt (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire | | |
| Ranged 10; +6 vs. Fortitude; 1d6 + 4 fire damage, and the target is dazed (save ends). | | |
| R Flame Spark (minor; at-will) ♦ Fear, Fire | | |
| Ranged 10; +7 vs. Reflex; the target slides 1 square. | | |
| C Shimmering Terrain (standard; recharge 4-5-6) ♦ Fire | | |
| Close burst 5; targets enemies; +7 vs. Will; the target is slowed (save ends). | | |
| Fade Away (immediate reactions, when the gnome cultist fireflinger takes damage; encounter) ♦ Illusion | | |
| The gnome cultist fireflinger turns invisible until it attacks or until the end of its next turn. | | |
| Fey Step (move; encounter) ♦ Teleportation | | |
| The gnome cultist fireflinger teleports 5 squares. | | |
| Reactive Stealth | | |
| If a gnome cultist fireflinger has cover or concealment when it makes an initiative check at the start of an encounter, it can make a Stealth check to escape notice. | | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Common, Elven | |
| Skills Arcana +12, Bluff +8, Insight +6, Stealth +8 | | |
| Str 10 (+1) | Dex 10 (+1) | Wis 11 (+1) |
| Con 14 (+3) | Int 18 (+5) | Cha 15 (+3) |
| Equipment robes, dagger | | |

| Krenshar Blood Slayer | | Level 4 Brute |
|---|--|---------------|
| Medium natural beast | | XP 175 |
| Initiative +5 | Senses Perception +7; low-light vision | |
| Fearsome Visage aura 5; each enemy within the aura takes a -2 penalty to saving throws against fear effects. | | |
| HP 65; Bloodied 32 | | |
| AC 16; Fortitude 17, Reflex 16, Will 14 | | |
| Speed 8 | | |
| m Claw (standard; at-will) | | |
| +7 vs. AC; 1d6 + 4 damage. | | |
| M Grabbing Claws (standard; at-will) | | |
| The krenshar blood slayer makes two claw attacks. If both attacks hit the same target, the target is grabbed. | | |
| M Bite (standard; at-will) | | |
| Targets a creature grabbed by the krenshar blood slayer; no attack roll; 2d6 + 8 damage. | | |
| C Unnerving Skull (minor 1/round; at-will) ♦ Fear, Gaze | | |
| Close burst 5; targets one creature; +7 vs. Will; the target takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls (save ends). | | |
| Alignment Unaligned | Languages - | |
| Skills Intimidate +5 | | |
| Str 18 (+6) | Dex 16 (+5) | Wis 10 (+2) |
| Con 15 (+4) | Int 2 (-2) | Cha 13 (+3) |

ENCOUNTER 5: A FORTUNEHOUSE AND ITS FORTUNE STATISTICS (HIGH LEVEL)

| Doppelganger Sneak (Level 7) (Cult Leader Imposter) | Level 7 Skirmisher |
|---|--------------------|
| Medium natural humanoid (shapechanger) | XP 300 |
| Initiative +7 Senses Perception +3 | |
| HP 77; Bloodied 38 | |
| AC 22; Fortitude 18, Reflex 20, Will 20 | |
| Speed 6 | |
| m Short Sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| +12 vs. AC; 1d6 + 5 damage. | |
| M Shapeshifter Feint (minor; at-will) | |
| +10 vs. Reflex; the cult leader imposter gains combat advantage against the target until the end of the cult leader imposter's next turn. | |
| Combat Advantage | |
| The cult leader imposter deals an extra 1d6 damage against any target that it has combat advantage against. | |
| Change Shape (minor; at-will) ♦ Polymorph | |
| The cult leader imposter can alter its physical form to take on the appearance of any Medium humanoid, including a unique individual (see Shape Change, page 280) | |
| Alignment Evil Languages Common | |
| Skills Bluff +11, Insight +10, Stealth +10 | |
| Str 11 (+2) Dex 16 (+5) Wis 12 (+3) | |
| Con 13 (+3) Int 10 (+2) Cha 15 (+4) | |
| Equipment short sword | |

| Cultist Acolyte (Level 4) | Level 4 Skirmisher |
|---|--------------------|
| Medium natural humanoid | XP 175 |
| Initiative +7 Senses Perception +2 | |
| HP 53; Bloodied 26 | |
| AC 18; Fortitude 14, Reflex 16, Will 14 | |
| Speed 6 | |
| m Mace (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| +6 vs. AC; 1d8 + 2 damage, and the cultist acolyte shifts 1 square. | |
| r Dagger (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| Ranged 5/10; +8 vs. AC; 1d4 + 4 damage. | |
| M Dazing Strike (standard; encounter) ♦ Weapon | |
| Requires mace; +6 vs. AC; 1d8 + 2 damage, the target is <i>dazed</i> until the end of the cultist acolyte's next turn, and the cultist acolyte shifts 1 square. | |
| Combat Advantage | |
| The cultist acolyte deals an extra 1d6 damage on melee and ranged attacks against any target it has combat advantage against. | |
| Alignment Evil Languages Common | |
| Skills Stealth +10, Streetwise +8, Thievery +10 | |
| Str 12 (+3) Dex 17 (+5) Wis 11 (+2) | |
| Con 13 (+3) Int 10 (+2) Cha 12 (+3) | |
| Equipment leather armor, mace, 4 daggers | |

| Gnome Cultist Fireflinger (Level 5) | Level 5 Controller |
|---|--------------------|
| Small fey humanoid | XP 200 |
| Initiative +2 Senses Perception +2; low-light vision | |
| Aura of Illusion (Illusion) aura 5; the gnome cultist fireflinger and all allies in the aura gain concealment and can hide in the aura. | |
| HP 62; Bloodied 31 | |
| AC 18; Fortitude 15, Reflex 17, Will 15 | |
| Speed 5; see also <i>fey step</i> | |
| m Dagger (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| +8 vs. AC; 1d4 + 1 damage. | |
| R Fiery Bo(It (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire | |
| Ranged 10; +8 vs. Fortitude; 1d6 + 5 fire damage, and the target is dazed (save ends). | |
| R Flame Spark (minor; at-will) ♦ Fear, Fire | |
| Ranged 10; +9 vs. Reflex; the target slides 1 square. | |
| C Shimmering Terrain (standard; recharge 4-5-6) ♦ Fire | |
| Close burst 5; targets enemies; +9 vs. Will; the target is slowed (save ends). | |
| Fade Away (immediate reaction, when the gnome cultist fireflinger takes damage; encounter) ♦ Illusion | |
| The gnome cultist fireflinger turns invisible until it attacks or until the end of its next turn. | |
| Fey Step (move; encounter) ♦ Teleportation | |
| The gnome cultist fireflinger teleports 5 squares. | |
| Reactive Stealth | |
| If a gnome cultist fireflinger has cover or concealment when it makes an initiative check at the start of an encounter, it can make a Stealth check to escape notice. | |
| Alignment Evil Languages Common, Elven | |
| Skills Arcana +13, Bluff +9, Insight +7, Stealth +9 | |
| Str 10 (+2) Dex 10 (+2) Wis 11 (+2) | |
| Con 14 (+4) Int 18 (+6) Cha 15 (+4) | |
| Equipment robes, dagger | |

| Krenshar Blood Slayer (Level 6) | Level 6 Brute |
|---|---------------|
| Medium natural beast | XP 250 |
| Initiative +6 Senses Perception +8; low-light vision | |
| Fearsome Visage aura 5; each enemy within the aura takes a -2 penalty to saving throws against fear effects. | |
| HP 85; Bloodied 42 | |
| AC 18; Fortitude 19, Reflex 18, Will 16 | |
| Speed 8 | |
| m Claw (standard; at-will) | |
| +9 vs. AC; 1d6 + 5 damage. | |
| M Grabbing Claws (standard; at-will) | |
| The krenshar blood slayer makes two claw attacks. If both attacks hit the same target, the target is grabbed. | |
| M Bite (standard; at-will) | |
| Targets a creature grabbed by the krenshar blood slayer; no attack roll; 2d6 + 9 damage. | |
| C Unnerving Skull (minor 1/round; at-will) ♦ Fear, Gaze | |
| Close burst 5; targets one creature; +9 vs. Will; the target takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls (save ends). | |
| Alignment Unaligned Languages - | |
| Skills Intimidate +6 | |
| Str 18 (+7) Dex 16 (+6) Wis 10 (+3) | |
| Con 15 (+5) Int 2 (-1) Cha 13 (+4) | |

ENCOUNTER 5: A FORTUNEHOUSE AND ITS FORTUNE MAP

TILE SETS NEEDED

DU3:Caves of Carnage

| | | |
|----------------------------|-----|----|
| Battle Zone/River Crossing | 8x8 | x1 |
| Pit/Hides | 2x2 | x1 |
| Corner/Corner | 4x4 | x1 |
| Corner/Corner | 4x4 | x1 |
| Dry Corner/Wet Corner | 2x2 | x1 |
| Dry Corner/Dead and Wet | 2x2 | x1 |
| Cave/Stream | 4x4 | x1 |
| Corner/Corner | 4x4 | x1 |
| Pit/Waterfall | 2x4 | x1 |

| | | |
|---------------------------|-----|----|
| Large Cave/Large Stream | 4x8 | x1 |
| Waterfall/Steps | 2x4 | x1 |
| Rope Bridge/Broken Bridge | 2x4 | x1 |
| Cave/Cave | 4x8 | x1 |
| Cave and Stream/Stream | 4x4 | x1 |
| Cave/Cave | 4x4 | x1 |
| Cave/Cave | 2x4 | x1 |
| Path/Stream | 2x4 | x1 |



ENCOUNTER 6: THE FORTUNE TELLER

SETUP

Yulis the Fortune Teller (Arcana +12, Diplomacy +5, Heal +5, Insight +8, Perception +8, Streetwise +5)

This is a non-challenge encounter.

Yulis is very happy the PCs have dealt with the cultists in her shop and is willing to help them on their quest in any way she can. She is completely forthcoming in all of her dealings, believing that the PCs are here to help her and her neighbors.

"Thank you, kind people. These fell men have been in my shop for days and I was afraid that I would never be able to get rid of them. I've been hiding down here ever since they broke in." She glances around the bodies and then into the magical pit. After a moment, she nods in understanding and says, "It appears they were trying to use my magics to divine the future for themselves. Apparently, they did not realize that it takes years of study to use this." She motions to the pit.

If the PCs explain what they're doing and who the cultists are, she offers two services free of charge.

First, she offers to read their fortunes. If the PCs agree, read:

Yulis has you stand in a circle near the magical pit and join hands. Once you are relaxed, the old woman closes her eyes and falls into a trance-like state. Slowly, she motions to the pit, humming quietly. A stream of bluish energy flows from the pit into her mouth and then into your mouths. She speaks in a creaking voice. "A flaming lizard's eye watches and waits. A bird perched high oversees the eye. The man in blue holds the key in one hand and dice in the other."

Second, if the PCs seem very tired and beaten, she offers them rest and invigoration. If the PCs accept the offer, read:

Yulis goes to each of you, one at a time. She calls the bluish energy from the pit again and waves it toward your mouths. One by one, you fall asleep. Pleasant dreams fill your slumber and in just a short time, you awaken, fully refreshed.

Treat the trance as an extended rest. While only two hours have passed, the PCs regain all their healing surges, refresh their daily powers, and reset their Action Points to 1.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

After the PCs have had a chance to hear their fortune and rest, Yulis helps the PCs on their way to Encounter 7.

Yulis leads you back to the street to bid you farewell. She looks to you and says, "I read the fortune of a man called Vlotho the Blue some few days ago. I believe the "man in blue" that I mentioned in your fortune is Vlotho. He will be able to help you find the man you seek. He can often be found at the Leaping Hart Tavern. But be wary; in telling his fortune, I warned him of adventurers who will seek his knowledge. He will be expecting you."

The PCs earn the Story Object **MINI17 Gratitude of Yulis** at this point.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs do not earn any XP for this encounter, and it does not count towards a milestone.

TREASURE

There is no treasure found in this encounter.

ENCOUNTER 7: A GAMBLING HOUSE AND...

SKILL CHALLENGE LEVEL 1/3, COMPLEXITY 5 (500/750 XP)

SETUP

Vlotho the Blue (Bluff +11, Insight +8, Perception +8, Stealth +12)

Halfling Henchmen (2) (Acrobatics +11, Perception +7, Stealth +9)

The PCs engage in a skill challenge to learn the location the cult leader is using as a safehouse.

If the PCs ignore the gambling opportunity presented here, have Thelia Ondertos, the bar-matron, prompt them to dice with Vlotho. If the PCs are visiting the Inn for the first time and do not know what they are searching for, they are welcome to play, likely do not know enough to initiate the Skill Challenge.

The PCs play a dicing game called Liar's Dice with Vlotho the Blue. Each round of this dice game involves players rolling five dice in a cup and covering the dice results with the cup. Each player then peeks at their dice roll (under their cup) and wagers against the other players based on what he has rolled.

While Liar's Dice involves some random dice rolling, winning a round is largely dependent upon characters bidding on the dice under their cup, bluffing, and reading the "tells" of others at the table.

Vlotho has henchmen, two halflings named Thindel and Brindel (see Encounter 4, above) who sit at a side table and keep an eye on the PCs for signs of cheating. While the PCs may suspect that the halflings are aiding Vlotho, the half-elf gambler actually plays the game fairly; the halflings are just looking for signs of cheating.

This skill challenge involves two distinct phases.

- Phase 1: The PCs must play the game a bit and score six successes (of the twelve required for skill challenge success) to prove that they are worthy opponents. Once the PCs have scored six successes, they move to Phase 2.
- Phase 2: The PCs must get Vlotho to offer up his knowledge of the cult leader's safehouse as part of the game and win this information from him. This phase involves the final six successes of the skill challenge.

The skill use descriptions define how skills can be used during the two phases of the challenge. Most skills are used directly against Vlotho the Blue while gambling. However, some skill uses describe how skills can be used against others, both at the gaming table and away from it. These are noted as "bulleted" items below the main descriptions. Feel free to prompt the players to investigate ways to use their skills away from the gaming table to take advantage of these possibilities.

The gambling takes some time. PCs can come and go from the table to use their skills in other ways, returning to the table later in the challenge.

Important Note: The PCs MUST make at least one successful Diplomacy check during Phase 2 in order to get Vlotho the Blue to offer up his knowledge during the game.

Describe the scene in the tavern (paraphrase the descriptions of patrons provided in Encounter 4, noting that there are now five seats open at Vlotho's table). Make sure to note that Thelia Ondertos and Vlotho's halfling henchmen take a particular interest in the goings-on.

When the PCs sit down to game with Vlotho, read:

A half-elf man garbed in blue finery smiles wide and welcomes you to the table. He distributes dice and cups, saying, "Greetings, friends. The game of the day is Liar's Dice. How much do you wish to lose?"

Give the PCs the opportunity to roleplay a bit with Vlotho regarding the antes and maximum raises of the game. However, don't let this go on too long.

This skill challenge is not intended as an excuse for the PCs to win a bunch of gold. During the course of the game, everyone wins a little and loses a little. The ultimate goal is for the PCs to get Vlotho to bet his knowledge and win it from him. Make sure the players realize that the goal of this encounter is to win knowledge from Vlotho, not to win a bunch of gold.

SKILL CHALLENGE: ...A GAMBIT

Goal: Convince Vlotho the Blue to bet his knowledge of the cult leader's safehouse and win this information from him in a dicing game.

Complexity: 5 (12 successes before 3 failures)

Primary Skills: Bluff, Insight, Intimidate, Perception, Thievery

Other Skills: Diplomacy, Stealth

Victory: The PCs learn the location of the cult leader's safehouse without arousing suspicion in the tavern.

Defeat: The PCs learn the location of the cult leader's safehouse, but a cultist spy in the tavern alerts the kenku flock in Encounter 8.

The following skill uses are provided as examples. Feel free to customize them based on what the PCs do, and give hints to the PCs about what skills might be useful if they're having trouble deciding what to do. If a PC wants to use a skill that's not listed here and you think it's applicable, they need to make a DC 15/17 check with that skill to garner a success.

Bluff DC 10/12 (1 success, no maximum)

You successfully bluff Vlotho by lying about your total and win a round of betting.

- If used against the halfling henchmen, you briefly distract the halfling henchmen and provide the next PC making a check against Vlotho a +2 bonus to a Bluff, Stealth or Thievery check. The use of the Bluff skill in this manner does not count toward successes or failures of the skill challenge.

Diplomacy DC 10/12 (1 success, 1 maximum)

During Phase 2 (only) of the skill challenge, you coerce Vlotho into offering his knowledge of the cult leader's safehouse as part of his overall bet. The PCs must succeed in at least one Diplomacy check during Phase 2 of the skill challenge in order to succeed in this encounter. Only the first Diplomacy check success counts toward required successes for this skill challenge.

- If used against Thelia Ondertos, the bar-matron, she provides you with clues regarding Vlotho's "tells" while gambling. Vlotho's "tells" might involve darting his eyes side-to-side when he has a good roll, taking a sip of his drink when he has a bad roll, and the like. This provides you with a +2 bonus to Insight checks against Vlotho for the rest of the encounter. If you can secretly communicate this information to another PC during the encounter, that PC also gains a +2 bonus to Insight checks against Vlotho. This check does not count toward successes or failures of the skill challenge.

Insight DC 10/12 (1 success, no maximum)

You "read" Vlotho well enough to discover a "tell" in his gambling style, allowing you to win a round of betting.

- If used against the halfling henchmen, you realize that they are focused on looking for obvious signs of cheating, providing you with ideas on how to avoid their gaze. You gain a +2 bonus to Thievery checks for the rest of the encounter. This check does not count toward successes or failures of the skill challenge.

Intimidate DC 10/12 (trained only; 1 success, 2 maximum)

You posture strongly and cause Vlotho to shrink away from you a bit, allowing you to take control of this round of betting. If used too much, his Halfling henchmen intervene and suggest that the offending PC might want to move along before a fight starts and the guard has to be called.

Perception DC 15/17 (1 success, 3 maximum)

While Vlotho is lifting his cup to view his dice, you catch a quick glimpse of two or three of his dice, allowing you to bet strategically against him. After the PCs get a glimpse at his dice three times, he gets suspicious of their ploys and rolls his dice in such a way to insure no one sees the results.

Stealth DC 12/14 (0 successes, 2 maximum)

While away from the gaming table, you sneak behind Vlotho and get a quick glimpse of the dice under his cup. You then secretly signal to your party, providing a +2 bonus to the next PC who makes a skill check against Vlotho.

Thievery DC 10/12 (1 success, no maximum)

While looking at the dice beneath your cup, you surreptitiously flick one of the dice, turning it to a better result, thus allowing you to win a round of betting.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

The result of this encounter determines whether or not the kenku in Encounter 8 are expecting the PCs.

Success: Vlotho the Blue happily provides the PCs with the location of the cult leader's safehouse, the Drake's Eye Forge. He tells them that the Drake's Eye Forge is a medium-sized shop that houses a large forge. The purveyors of the forge worked primarily in armors and weapons and also produced simple ironwork items, but disappeared recently. He knows that cultists are using the forge as a safehouse but doesn't know anything specific regarding their plans. He wishes the PCs the best of luck in their endeavors. The PCs move on to Encounter 8 without the kenku knowing they're coming. The PCs also earn the Story Object **MINI18 Respect of Vlotho the Blue**.

Failure: Vlotho the Blue acquiesces to the PCs' wishes and provides them with the location of the cult leader's safehouse. Vlotho remarks that he wants the PCs to end the cult's work in the city, but that he felt he needed to test their skill. The PCs move on to Encounter 8, but the kenku know they're coming, negating any chance of the PCs having a surprise round. The PCs do not earn the Story Object **MINI18 Respect of Vlotho the Blue**.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The characters receive 100/150 experience points each for successfully completing the skill challenge.

TREASURE

There is no treasure found in this encounter.

ENCOUNTER 8: A CLOCK AND A FLOCK

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 1/3 (601/826 XP)

SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures at the low tier:

- 1 kenku wing mage (M)
- 1 kenku ringleader (R)
- 1 kenku warrior (W)
- 2 kenku ruffians (K)

This encounter includes the following creatures at the high tier:

- 1 kenku wing mage (M)
- 1 kenku ringleader (R)
- 1 kenku warrior (W)
- 2 kenku ruffians (K)

The cult has hired a flock of kenku to guard the entrance to the Drake's Eye Forge, a weaponsmith shop the cult has been using as a safehouse. This flock is related to the flock some of the PCs may have fought and defeated in *MINI1-3 Building the Pyre*, and they were easily convinced to work for the cult, hoping to take some revenge on those who slew their relatives and friends.

As the adventurers enter the area, read:

Arriving in a city square, you see a bustling street scene. Three groups of common townfolk are dotted around the square, talking and surveying the wares on display. Several bird-men mill about the area as well. In the middle of the square stands an ornate fountain with a magical clock perched at its top.

If the PCs take a moment to scan the area before moving forward, have them make Perception checks. A successful DC 15 check reveals the kenku wing mage watching them from atop the easternmost building. If the PCs grow wary of the number of kenku present, have them make Insight checks at DC 12. Success reveals that the kenku are obviously scanning the crowd and guarding the forge.

If the party succeeded in the skill challenge in Encounter 7, they gain a surprise round as the kenku are not specifically on the lookout for them. Each PC can take a single action while in the "PC Start Area", such as moving further into the map area or making a ranged attack from the "PC Start Area." If the PCs

don't attack immediately, they can move closer to the forge or take up other tactical positions. The kenku attack if any PC moves within 4 squares of the forge entrance.

If the party failed in Encounter 7, the kenku are ready for them and the PCs cannot gain the advantage of a surprise round.

As soon as the first combat attack is made, insert "the crowds" into the initiative order immediately after the PC or monster that made this first attack.

As combat commences, the crowds of people panic and start moving out of the city square. Generally speaking, they move away from the fountain and toward the nearest edge of the map. If melee combat breaks out near them, they instead move away from the combat. On the first round of combat, each crowd group moves 1 square as they trip over each other in a panic. On each subsequent round, they each move 2 squares until they are safely out of the map area. Refer to *Features of the Area* for rules regarding interacting with the fleeing crowds.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: The city square is well-lit, night and day.

Buildings: Three buildings surround the square. The large building on the east end of the map is the Drake's Eye Forge, a cultist safehouse. The door into the forge is located in the center of the west side of the building, right behind the bench. All of the buildings are one story tall with sloped roofs; a DC 12 Athletics check is required to climb up or down the exterior walls of the buildings. Moving up or down a roof at full speed requires an Acrobatics check at DC 10, failure resulting in the creature falling prone and sliding one square toward the nearest edge of the roof. A creature moving at half-speed up or down the roof slope doesn't have to make an Acrobatics check.

Crowds: Three areas of the map are occupied by crowds of varying sizes. The people in these crowds are common townfolk with no combat capability. Creatures can shoulder and shove their way through the crowds, but it's difficult; treat these crowd areas as difficult terrain. Any creature within a crowd space gains cover. Creatures outside the crowd space have concealment from creatures in a crowd space. If any creature is in a crowd space when the crowd's initiative comes up, they risk being pulled along with the crowd as it flees the area. Make an attack against such creatures; +5 vs. Fortitude. On a hit, the affected creature is slid the number of squares the crowd moves that turn in the direction the crowd moves.

Fountain: Treat the 2x2 square area of the fountain as difficult terrain. Any creature that makes a melee attack while in the fountain or while attacking a creature in the fountain suffers a -2 penalty to its attack rolls. A magical clock is affixed to the fountain structure, at its center, roughly ten feet above the ground. Since it is fixed to the ground, it cannot be pushed over onto a foe.

Bench: The wooden bench just east of the fountain is considered difficult terrain and can be tipped over as a minor action to provide cover.

Water Trough: The water trough in front of the southern building is difficult terrain.

Tents and Tables: Two 2x2 square areas on the map are covered with a tent and a large table displaying wares for sale. The tabletops sit three feet above the ground. Moving into a table square requires 2 squares of movement in order to climb on top of it. Additionally, the tables in these areas can be tipped over to provide cover.

Crates: The crates in front of the northern building are difficult terrain and can provide cover.

Ox and Wagon: An ox yoked to a wagon sits next to the southern building. When combat begins, the ox is asleep on its feet. On the second round of combat, it wakes up and panics, pulling its wagon and bolting toward the north. Treat it like a "crowd", moving 2 squares on its first turn and 3 squares on each subsequent turn. It takes its actions on "the crowds" turn in the initiative order. If the ox or wagon runs into a creature on its turn, it makes a trample attack; +6 vs. Reflex, dealing 1d6+4 damage on a hit and the target is knocked prone. If the attack misses, the target slides 1 square away from the ox/wagon and is not knocked prone. Note that if a hit target remains prone under the ox or wagon when the ox's turn comes up again, this creature is attacked again with a trample attack, as described above. A DC 15 Nature check can be made as a standard action to direct or slow the oxen. As it moves forward, the ox trundles over the nearby shop display table and the bench, completely destroying them in the process. It remains in the combat area until it safely exits on the north end of the map.

TACTICS

The kenku wing mage starts combat with *murder of crows*, targeting the strongest-seeming combatant, followed by *wings of the flock*, to provide it with the ability to reposition itself easily on various rooftops. On following rounds, it attempts to use *death flock* to daze multiple enemies as soon as possible, providing

its allies with the opportunity to flank dazed enemies. It saves *hurricane blast* for enemies that engage it in melee on the rooftops, hoping to slide them off the roof.

The kenku ringleader attacks the first PC that approaches it with *spiked chain*. It follows up with *press the attack* on its next turn, hoping to knock its target prone and give its allies the opportunity to gang up on the target. It uses *flock reaction* as often as possible to give its allies additional movement options.

The kenku warrior uses *fluttering attack* to keep on the move and attack. It makes attacks from flanking positions or against prone targets as often as possible, in order to use *combat advantage* to deal extra damage.

Kenku ruffians attempt to provide other kenku with flank and use *flock effect* when possible to give bonuses to their kenku flockmates.

If any of the PCs are kenku, the kenku mercenaries here will attack them, but will not kill another kenku. Instead, if a kenku mercenary reduces a kenku PC to 0 or less hit points, it will knock that PC unconscious rather than attempting to kill him.

While the kenku are not members of the cult, they are well-paid and seek revenge. They fight to the death. However, they are also a bit cowardly. If three of their number are defeated, any remaining kenku at $\frac{1}{4}$ of the maximum hit points or less flee.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

Make the following adjustments to the combat based on the number of PCs present.

Four PCs: Remove the kenku ruffians.

Six PCs: Add one kenku warrior between the bench and fountain.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

If the PCs subdue and question any of the kenku, they reveal that they were paid for their vengeful guard services and that those who paid them are inside the Drake's Eye Forge. The kenku do not know that their benefactors are members of a cult and don't know their capabilities of the people who wait inside the shop. They do, however, know that there are at least three people inside. They know one of these is a mage; this is Revi, the cultist who was spying on the PCs at the tavern and the description the kenku give can confirm this.

If the PCs capture the kenku wing mage or the kenku ringleader and press either of them for more information, the kenku being questioned reveals that he has heard the growls of a feline beast within the forge.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The characters receive 120/165 experience points each for defeating the kenku flock.

TREASURE

If the PCs search the body of the kenku ringleader, they find 30/40 gp. This gold is payment that the kenku earned for guarding the entrance to the Drake's Eye Forge.

ENCOUNTER 8: A CLOCK AND A FLOCK STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

| Kenku Wing Mage | | Level 5 Artillery | |
|---|---|-------------------------|--|
| Medium natural humanoid | | XP 200 | |
| Initiative +3 | Senses Perception +3; low-light vision | | |
| HP 50; Bloodied 25 | | | |
| AC 17; Fortitude 15, Reflex 17, Will 18 | | | |
| Speed 6; see <i>wings of the flock</i> | | | |
| m Dagger (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | | | |
| +9 vs. AC; 1d4 + 3 damage. | | | |
| r Murder of Crows (standard; at-will) ♦ Force, Implement | | | |
| Ranged 20; +10 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 4 force damage, and the target grants combat advantage to the kenku wing mage (save ends). | | | |
| C Hurricane Blast (standard; recharge 5-6) ♦ Force, Implement | | | |
| Close blast 2; +8 vs. Fortitude; 1d6 + 6 force damage, and the kenku wing mage slides the target 3 squares. | | | |
| A Death Flock (standard; encounter) ♦ Force, Implement | | | |
| Area burst 1 within 20; +8 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 6 force damage, and the target is dazed (save ends). | | | |
| Flock Effect | | | |
| A kenku wing mage gains a +3 bonus instead of +2 while flanking, and it grants a +3 bonus instead of +2 while aiding another. | | | |
| Mimicry | | | |
| A kenku wing mage can mimic sounds and voices. A successful Insight check opposed by the wing mage's Bluff check allows a listener to determine that the effect is faked. | | | |
| Wings of the Flock (minor; encounter) ♦ Force | | | |
| The kenku wing mage gains fly 6 (hover; altitude limit 4) until the end of the encounter. | | | |
| Alignment Unaligned | | Languages Common | |
| Skills Stealth +8 | | | |
| Str 9 (+1) | Dex 13 (+3) | Wis 13 (+3) | |
| Con 14 (+4) | Int 18 (+6) | Cha 15 (+4) | |
| Equipment robes, dagger, orb | | | |

| Kenku Ruffian | | Level 3 Minion Skirmisher | |
|---|---|---------------------------|--|
| Medium natural humanoid | | XP 38 | |
| Initiative +4 | Senses Perception +3; low-light vision | | |
| HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion. | | | |
| AC 17; Fortitude 15, Reflex 16, Will 15 | | | |
| Speed 6 | | | |
| m Club (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | | | |
| +8 vs. AC; 5 damage. | | | |
| Flock Effect | | | |
| A kenku ruffian gains a +3 bonus instead of +2 while flanking, and it grants a +3 bonus instead of +2 while aiding another. | | | |
| Mimicry | | | |
| A kenku ruffian can mimic sounds and voices. A successful Insight check opposed by the ruffian's Bluff check allows a listener to determine that the effect is faked. | | | |
| Alignment Unaligned | | Languages Common | |
| Skills Stealth +9 | | | |
| Str 12 (+2) | Dex 17 (+4) | Wis 14 (+3) | |
| Con 14 (+3) | Int 9 (+0) | Cha 11 (+1) | |
| Equipment leather armor, club | | | |

| Kenku Ringleader | | Level 4 Soldier (Leader) | |
|---|---|--------------------------|--|
| Medium natural humanoid | | XP 175 | |
| Initiative +8 | Senses Perception +3; low-light vision | | |
| HP 54; Bloodied 27 | | | |
| AC 20; Fortitude 16, Reflex 16, Will 15 | | | |
| Speed 6 | | | |
| m Spiked Chain (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | | | |
| Reach 2; +11 vs. AC; 2d4 + 5 damage, and the target is marked until the end of the kenku ringleader's next turn. | | | |
| r Sling (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | | | |
| Ranged 10/20; +11 vs. AC; 1d6 + 5 damage. | | | |
| M Press the Attack (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | | | |
| Reach 2; targets an enemy marked by the kenku; +11 vs. AC; 2d4 + 5 damage, and the target is knocked prone. | | | |
| C Flock Reaction (minor; recharge 4-5-6) | | | |
| Close burst 3; targets kenkus; the target shifts 1 square as a free action. | | | |
| Flock Effect | | | |
| A kenku wing mage gains a +3 bonus instead of +2 while flanking, and it grants a +3 bonus instead of +2 while aiding another. | | | |
| Mimicry | | | |
| A kenku ringleader can mimic sounds and voices. A successful Insight check opposed by the ringleader's Bluff check allows a listener to determine that the effect is faked. | | | |
| Alignment Unaligned | | Languages Common | |
| Skills Bluff +10, Intimidate +10 | | | |
| Str 13 (+3) | Dex 18 (+6) | Wis 12 (+3) | |
| Con 14 (+4) | Int 10 (+2) | Cha 16 (+5) | |
| Equipment leather armor, sling, spiked chain | | | |

| Kenku Warrior | | Level 3 Skirmisher | |
|---|---|-------------------------|--|
| Medium natural humanoid | | XP 150 | |
| Initiative +6 | Senses Perception +3; low-light vision | | |
| HP 44; Bloodied 22 | | | |
| AC 17; Fortitude 14, Reflex 15, Will 14 | | | |
| Speed 6 | | | |
| m Dagger (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | | | |
| +8 vs. AC; 1d4 + 6 damage. | | | |
| r Dagger (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | | | |
| Ranged 5/10; +8 vs. AC; 1d4 + 6 damage. | | | |
| M Fluttering Attack (standard; at-will) | | | |
| The kenku warrior shifts 4 squares and makes a basic melee attack during that movement. | | | |
| Combat Advantage | | | |
| A kenku warrior deals 1d6 extra damage on melee attacks against any target granting combat advantage to it. | | | |
| Flock Effect | | | |
| A kenku warrior gains a +3 bonus instead of +2 while flanking, and it grants a +3 bonus instead of +2 while aiding another. | | | |
| Mimicry | | | |
| A kenku warrior can mimic sounds and voices. A successful Insight check opposed by the warrior's Bluff check allows a listener to determine that the effect is faked. | | | |
| Alignment Unaligned | | Languages Common | |
| Skills Bluff +10, Intimidate +10 | | | |
| Str 14 (+3) | Dex 17 (+4) | Wis 14 (+3) | |
| Con 12 (+2) | Int 9 (+0) | Cha 11 (+1) | |
| Equipment leather armor, 6 daggers | | | |

ENCOUNTER 8: A CLOCK AND A FLOCK STATISTICS (HIGH LEVEL)

| Kenku Wing Mage (Level 7) Medium natural humanoid | Level 7 Artillery XP 300 |
|--|------------------------------------|
| Initiative +4 Senses Perception +4; low-light vision HP 62; Bloodied 31 AC 19; Fortitude 17, Reflex 19, Will 20 Speed 6; see <i>wings of the flock</i> | |
| m Dagger (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon +11 vs. AC; 1d4 + 4 damage. | |
| r Murder of Crows (standard; at-will) ♦ Force, Implement Ranged 20; +12 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 5 force damage, and the target grants combat advantage to the kenku wing mage (save ends). | |
| C Hurricane Blast (standard; recharge 5-6) ♦ Force, Implement Close blast 2; +10 vs. Fortitude; 1d6 + 7 force damage, and the kenku wing mage slides the target 3 squares. | |
| A Death Flock (standard; encounter) ♦ Force, Implement Area burst 1 within 20; +10 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 7 force damage, and the target is dazed (save ends). | |
| Flock Effect A kenku wing mage gains a +3 bonus instead of +2 while flanking, and it grants a +3 bonus instead of +2 while aiding another. | |
| Mimicry A kenku wing mage can mimic sounds and voices. A successful Insight check opposed by the wing mage's Bluff check allows a listener to determine that the effect is faked. | |
| Wings of the Flock (minor; encounter) ♦ Force The kenku wing mage gains fly 6 (hover; altitude limit 4) until the end of the encounter. | |
| Alignment Unaligned Languages Common | |
| Skills Stealth +9 | |
| Str 9 (+2) Dex 13 (+4) Wis 13 (+4) | |
| Con 14 (+5) Int 18 (+7) Cha 15 (+5) | |
| Equipment robes, dagger, orb | |

| Kenku Ruffian Medium natural humanoid | Level 3 Minion Skirmisher XP 38 |
|---|---|
| Initiative +4 Senses Perception +3; low-light vision HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion. AC 17; Fortitude 15, Reflex 16, Will 15 Speed 6 | |
| m Club (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon +8 vs. AC; 5 damage. | |
| Flock Effect A kenku ruffian gains a +3 bonus instead of +2 while flanking, and it grants a +3 bonus instead of +2 while aiding another. | |
| Mimicry A kenku ruffian can mimic sounds and voices. A successful Insight check opposed by the ruffian's Bluff check allows a listener to determine that the effect is faked. | |
| Alignment Unaligned Languages Common | |
| Skills Stealth +10 | |
| Str 12 (+3) Dex 17 (+5) Wis 14 (+4) | |
| Con 14 (+4) Int 9 (+1) Cha 11 (+2) | |
| Equipment leather armor, club | |

| Kenku Ringleader (Level 6) Medium natural humanoid | Level 6 Soldier (Leader) XP 250 |
|---|---|
| Initiative +9 Senses Perception +4; low-light vision HP 70; Bloodied 35 AC 22; Fortitude 18, Reflex 18, Will 17 Speed 6 | |
| m Spiked Chain (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon Reach 2; +13 vs. AC; 2d4 + 6 damage, and the target is marked until the end of the kenku ringleader's next turn. | |
| r Sling (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon Ranged 10/20; +13 vs. AC; 1d6 + 6 damage. | |
| M Press the Attack (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon Reach 2; targets an enemy marked by the kenku; +13 vs. AC; 2d4 + 6 damage, and the target is knocked prone. | |
| C Flock Reaction (minor; recharge 4-5-6) Close burst 3; targets kenkus; the target shifts 1 square as a free action. | |
| Flock Effect A kenku wing mage gains a +3 bonus instead of +2 while flanking, and it grants a +3 bonus instead of +2 while aiding another. | |
| Mimicry A kenku ringleader can mimic sounds and voices. A successful Insight check opposed by the ringleader's Bluff check allows a listener to determine that the effect is faked. | |
| Alignment Unaligned Languages Common | |
| Skills Bluff +11, Intimidate +11 | |
| Str 13 (+4) Dex 18 (+7) Wis 12 (+4) | |
| Con 14 (+5) Int 10 (+3) Cha 16 (+6) | |
| Equipment leather armor, sling, spiked chain | |

| Kenku Warrior (Level 5) Medium natural humanoid | Level 5 Skirmisher XP 200 |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| Initiative +7 Senses Perception +4; low-light vision HP 60; Bloodied 30 AC 19; Fortitude 16, Reflex 17, Will 16 Speed 6 | |
| m Dagger (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon +10 vs. AC; 1d4 + 7 damage. | |
| r Dagger (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon Ranged 5/10; +10 vs. AC; 1d4 + 7 damage. | |
| M Fluttering Attack (standard; at-will) The kenku warrior shifts 4 squares and makes a basic melee attack during that movement. | |
| Combat Advantage A kenku warrior deals 1d6 extra damage on melee attacks against any target granting combat advantage to it. | |
| Flock Effect A kenku warrior gains a +3 bonus instead of +2 while flanking, and it grants a +3 bonus instead of +2 while aiding another. | |
| Mimicry A kenku warrior can mimic sounds and voices. A successful Insight check opposed by the warrior's Bluff check allows a listener to determine that the effect is faked. | |
| Alignment Unaligned Languages Common | |
| Skills Bluff +11, Intimidate +11 | |
| Str 14 (+4) Dex 17 (+5) Wis 14 (+5) | |
| Con 12 (+3) Int 9 (+1) Cha 11 (+2) | |
| Equipment leather armor, 6 daggers | |

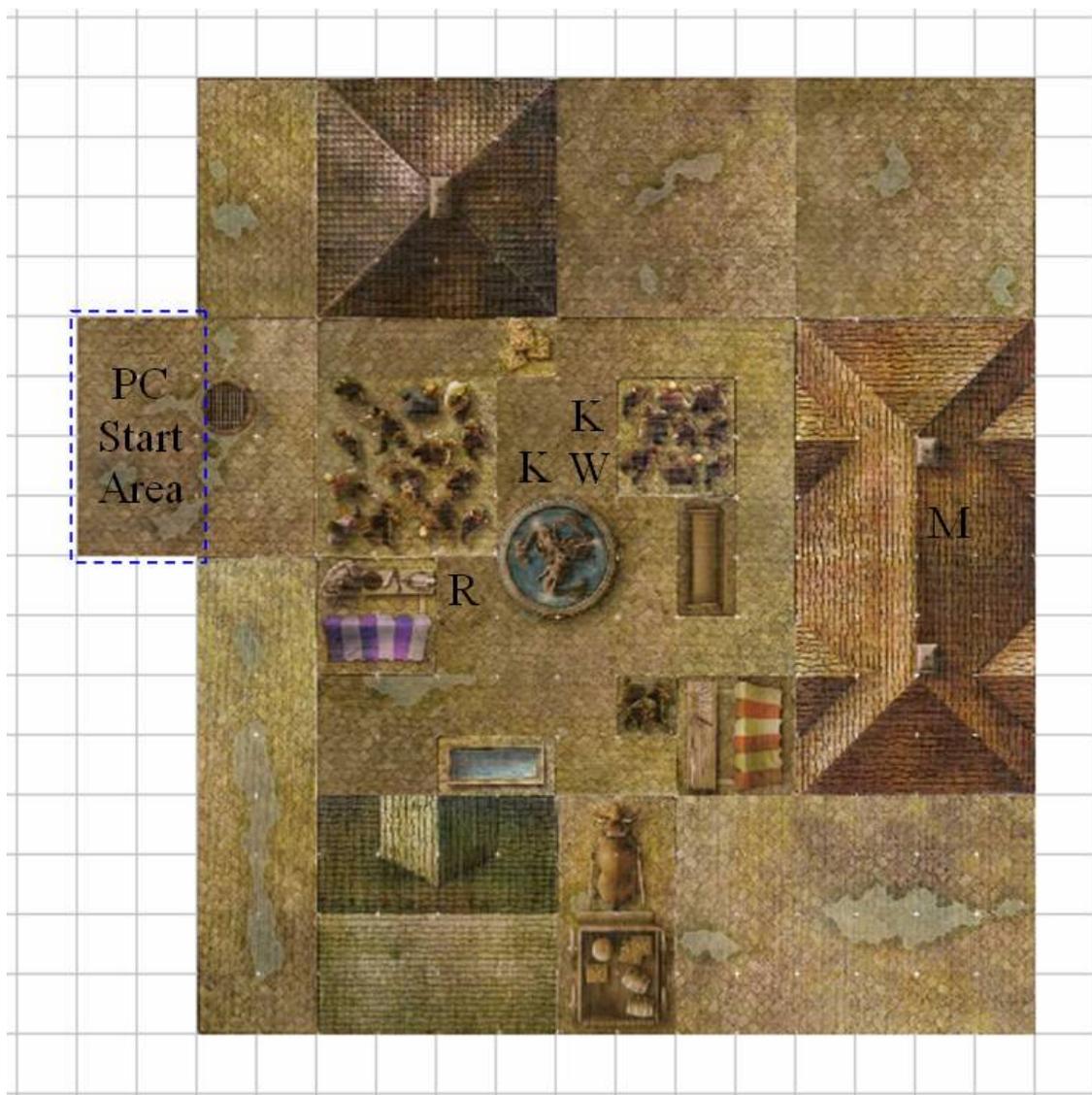
ENCOUNTER 8: A CLOCK AND A FLOCK MAP

TILE SETS NEEDED

DU2:Streets of Shadow

| | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----|----|
| Tower Square Fountain/Sewer Junction | 8x8 | x1 |
| Street with Manhole/Sewer 4-Way | 4x4 | x1 |
| Street/Sewer 3-Way | 4x4 | x1 |
| Long Street/Long Sewer | 4x8 | x1 |
| Street/Sewer | 4x4 | x1 |
| Street/Sewer Bridge | 2x4 | x1 |
| Long Street/Long Sewer | 2x8 | x1 |
| Building/Sewer T | 4x4 | x1 |
| Building/Sewer Outfall | 4x4 | x1 |
| Large Building/More Sewer | 4x8 | x1 |

| | | |
|-------------------------------|-----|----|
| Weapons Merchant/Refuse Pile | 2x2 | x1 |
| Armor Merchant/Piled Refuse | 2x2 | x1 |
| Ox Cart/Sewer Floor | 2x4 | x1 |
| Park Bench/Water Main | 1x2 | x1 |
| Water Trough/Sewer Again | 1x2 | x1 |
| Small Gang/Mud Pile | 1x1 | x1 |
| Large Group/Broken Sewer Path | 3x3 | x1 |
| People/Sewer | 2x2 | x1 |
| Stack of Crates/Toxic Rats | 1x1 | x1 |



ENCOUNTER 9: A SAFEHOUSE NOT SO SAFE

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 3/5 (800/1150 XP)

SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures at the low tier:

- 1 cult leader (L)
- 1 cultist doombringer (D)
- 1 cultist mage (M)
- 2 gnoll cultist enforcers (E)
- 1 fey panther (P)

This encounter includes the following creatures at the high tier:

- 1 cult leader (L)
- 1 cultist doombringer (D)
- 1 cultist mage (M)
- 2 gnoll cultist enforcers (E)
- 1 fey panther (P)

The PCs enter the Drake's Eye Forge.

The cult leader and his followers, along with a fey panther guardian, are finishing up their work in their safehouse. They have destroyed all evidence of their presence in the safehouse and are almost ready to flee the city. They have heard the ruckus in the city square and are ready for trouble.

As the adventurers enter the forge chamber, read:

A large workroom stands before you. A great forge stands against the wall to your left, a fire raging within it. Next to the forge, a large cooling pool is set into the floor. A statue depicting an armored dwarf stands to your right. Weapon racks, chests, and crates are strewn about the chamber. Immediately in front of you, a fire-red rune pulses on the floor. As you view the room, several people clad in dark clothing look to you and draw their weapons. At the back of the room, the cult leader you know as Pyrultimus looks to you, smiles bleakly, opens the door next to him, and quickly exits the building.

If any of the PCs noticed the man spying on them from outside the tavern in Encounter 4, they recognize him here. Read:

As the cult leader flees, you recognize one of the men in the forge as the black-eyed man you spotted outside the Leaping Hart Tavern earlier.

Combat kicks off as soon as the PCs open the door to the forge chamber. The PCs get a quick glimpse of the cult leader, but he immediately exits (he delayed his actions for the front door opening). Once the cult leader has exited, combat begins. The cultists immediately engage the PCs, attempting to give their leader as much time as possible to flee the city.

If any PCs circle around the building in an attempt to intercept the cult leader when he flees the chamber, they find him gone (several other cultists were waiting behind the forge to escort him away quickly). With a DC 12 Perception check, they see the cult leader, on horseback, rounding a corner one block away accompanied by several others.

If the PCs never enter the front door and instead search for a back door, let them enter the forge from the rear entrance. If they do this, they glimpse the cult leader galloping away on a horse and hear a ruckus inside the forge as the remaining cultists continue cleaning the chamber. If the PCs pursue the fleeing cult leader, they lose him quickly and must return to the forge in order to learn anything more about the cult's dealings in the city and beyond.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: The chamber is well lit by the forge on the north wall.

Forge: This 1x2 square area contains a blazing fire. Any character entering the forge or starting its turn in it takes 1d6+2 fire damage. Once 50% of the cultists (including the fey panther) are defeated, one of the remaining cultists goes to the forge and sweeps the burning logs onto the floor in front of the forge. This fills the two squares in front of the forge with flames which deal 1d6 fire damage to any creature that enters or starts its turn in these squares. Each round, at the top of initiative order, the flames spread to one additional adjacent square (not including Cooling Pool spaces), determined randomly. In time, this fire will consume the entire building and burn the bodies inside as a final tribute to the cult's fiery patron.

Cooling Pool: The 2x2 square just east of the forge is a shallow cooling pool. Treat it as difficult terrain.

Lever: The lever immediately to the west of the forge operates a metal safety grate that can be lowered in front of the forge. Any creature in the forge when

the grate is lowered is trapped there until someone operates the lever to lift the grate. The lever can be operated as a minor action.

Cauldron: A large metal cauldron sits in the northwest corner of the room. It is empty save for the fey panther that hides there at the start of the combat.

Bear Rug: The underside of the bear rug has been greased. Any creature that enters any square of the bear rug must make a DC 10 Acrobatics check or fall prone.

Statue: The statue on the south wall depicts an armored dwarf bearing a sword. It is eight feet tall. It is firmly affixed to the floor.

Crates: A 1x2 square area on the east wall of the room is strewn with crates and barrels. Treat this area as difficult terrain.

Chest: This large wooden chest is eight feet long, four feet wide, and three feet tall. It can be used to take cover.

Weapon Rack: The 1x2 square area just east of the statue contains a weapons rack with several weapons strewn about the floor. Treat these squares as difficult terrain. Should a PC need a new weapon for some reason, there are a collection of normal swords, axes, and maces.

Fire Rune: A 2x2 square area just inside the double door is covered with a pulsing, red flame rune recently inscribed by the cult to slow the entrance of foes. Any creature entering the rune, or beginning its turn there, takes 2d6 fire damage. Those jumping, flying, or teleporting across take no damage.

TACTICS

The cultist mage begins combat with *dancing lightning*, targeting any obvious spellcasters along with heavily armed foes. He uses *flame burst* on multiple PCs who manage to get halfway across the room. He then falls back on *magic missile*.

The cultist doombringer and gnoll cultist enforcers engage in melee as a group, the gnoll cultist enforcers seeking to gain use of *pack attack* as often as possible.

The fey panther peeks out from inside the cauldron and *fey steps* to an advantageous position, following this move with a charge attack. It shifts out of melee range after successful *bite* attacks when it can so that it can charge other opponents.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

Make the following adjustments to the combat based on the number of PCs present.

Four PCs: Remove the gnoll cultist enforcer that is adjacent to the cultist mage.

Six PCs: Add one gnoll cultist enforcer near the statue.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

The encounter ends when the cultists and their fey panther guardian are defeated.

If the PCs subdue and capture any of the cultists, they ignore the PCs and quietly pray that they will be forgiven for their failures.

Searching the cultist doombringer, the PCs discover a letter that leads the party to *MINI1-5 Pyrophobia*. Give them Handout 2.

Mixed in with the other notes, books, and parchments of the cultists belongings finely crafted but very old tome bound with copper plates for a cover. Imprinted upon the surface is the title, "*Igneus Fatum*." In slightly smaller block letters is the name Cyrild Vaftac. In archaic Common, the book describes a series of prophecies concerning the end of the world and a great conflagration that will consume all of the enemies of the faithful. The author is clearly a religious zealot, but never specifically refers to his religion. The last three pages are made of a strange silk-like material and seem to be written in an unknown language, or more likely a complicated code. At the end a drawing depicts a pair of fiery eyes surrounded by what appear to be snowflakes.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The characters receive 160/230 experience points each for defeating the cultists and fey panther.

TREASURE

Searching the bodies of the cultists, the PCs discover 50/70 gp on the body of the cultist doombringer. If the PCs search the large chest in the southeast corner of the forge chamber, they discover a suit of *battle forged armor* +1, a *cape of the mountebank* +1, and a *staff of the war mage* +1.

PCs that recover and read "*Igneus Fatum*" and who possess the In Slumber Remain Quest card may mark task one as complete.

ENCOUNTER 9: A SAFEHOUSE NOT SO SAFE STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

| Cultist Doombringer | | Level 5 Brute | |
|---|-----------------------------|--------------------|--|
| Medium natural humanoid | | XP 200 | |
| Initiative +3 | Senses Perception +2 | | |
| HP 76; Bloodied 38; see also <i>doom strike</i> | | | |
| AC 16; Fortitude 16, Reflex 15, Will 15 | | | |
| Speed 7 | | | |
| m Greataxe (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | | | |
| +8 vs. AC; 1d12 + 4 damage (crit 1d12 + 16). | | | |
| M Doom Strike (free, when first bloodied; encounter) | | | |
| The cultist doombringer makes a melee basic attack with a +4 bonus to the attack roll and deals an extra 1d6 damage on a hit. | | | |
| R Handaxe (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | | | |
| Ranged 5/10; +6 vs. AC; 1d6 + 3 damage.. | | | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Common | | |
| Skills Athletics +9, Endurance +9 | | | |
| Str 17 (+5) | Dex 12 (+3) | Wis 11 (+2) | |
| Con 16 (+5) | Int 10 (+2) | Cha 12 (+3) | |
| Equipment hide armor, greataxe, 2 handaxes | | | |

| Cultist Mage | | Level 4 Artillery | |
|---|-----------------------------|--------------------|--|
| Medium natural humanoid | | XP 175 | |
| Initiative +4 | Senses Perception +5 | | |
| HP 42; Bloodied 21 | | | |
| AC 17; Fortitude 13, Reflex 14, Will 15 | | | |
| Speed 6 | | | |
| m Quarterstaff (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | | | |
| +4 vs. AC; 1d8 damage. | | | |
| r Magic Missile (standard; at-will) ♦ Force | | | |
| Ranged 20; +7 vs. Reflex; 2d4 + 4 force damage. | | | |
| R Dancing Lightning (standard; encounter) ♦ Lightning | | | |
| The cultist mage makes a separate attack against 3 different targets; ranged 10; +7 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 4 lightning damage. | | | |
| A Flame Burst (standard; encounter) ♦ Fire | | | |
| Area burst 1 within 10; +7 vs. Fortitude; 1d8 + 4 fire damage, and the target is dazed (save ends). | | | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Common | | |
| Skills Arcana +11 | | | |
| Str 10 (+2) | Dex 14 (+4) | Wis 17 (+5) | |
| Con 12 (+3) | Int 18 (+6) | Cha 12 (+3) | |
| Equipment robes, quarterstaff, wand | | | |

| Gnoll Cultist Enforcer | | Level 2 Brute | |
|--|---|--------------------|--|
| Medium natural humanoid | | XP 125 | |
| Initiative +3 | Senses Perception +5; low-light vision | | |
| HP 44; Bloodied 22 | | | |
| AC 14; Fortitude 14, Reflex 11, Will 11 | | | |
| Speed 7 | | | |
| m Spear (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | | | |
| +6 vs. AC; 1d8 + 4 damage, or 1d8 + 6 damage while bloodied; see also <i>quick bite</i> and <i>pack attack</i> . | | | |
| M Quick Bite (free, when the gnoll cultist enforcer hits a bloodied enemy with a melee attack; at-will) | | | |
| The gnoll cultist enforcer makes a bite attack against the same target; +3 vs. AC; 1d6 damage, or 1d6 + 2 damage while bloodied. | | | |
| Pack Attack | | | |
| The gnoll cultist enforcer deals an extra 5 damage on melee attacks against an enemy that has two or more of the enforcer's allies adjacent to it. | | | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Abyssal, Common | | |
| Skills Intimidate +5, Stealth +8 | | | |
| Str 20 (+6) | Dex 14 (+3) | Wis 14 (+3) | |
| Con 14 (+3) | Int 9 (+0) | Cha 7 (-1) | |
| Equipment leather armor, light shield, spear | | | |

| Fey Panther | | Level 4 Skirmisher | |
|--|---|--------------------|--|
| Medium fey beast | | XP 175 | |
| Initiative +8 | Senses Perception +8; low-light vision | | |
| HP 54; Bloodied 27 | | | |
| AC 18; Fortitude 16, Reflex 18, Will 15 | | | |
| Speed 8, climb 6; see also <i>fey step</i> | | | |
| m Bite (standard; at-will) | | | |
| +9 vs. AC; 1d6 + 4 damage, and the fey panther shifts 1 square. | | | |
| Charging Pounce | | | |
| When the fey panther charges, it deal an extra 1d6 damage and knocks the target prone. | | | |
| Fey Step (move; encounter) ♦ Teleportation | | | |
| The fey panther teleports 5 squares. | | | |
| Alignment Unaligned | Languages - | | |
| Skills Stealth +11 | | | |
| Str 14 (+4) | Dex 18 (+6) | Wis 13 (+3) | |
| Con 14 (+4) | Int 2 (-2) | Cha 11 (+2) | |

ENCOUNTER 9: A SAFEHOUSE NOT SO SAFE STATISTICS (HIGH LEVEL)

| Cultist Doombringer (Level 7) | | Level 7 Brute |
|---|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| Medium natural humanoid | | XP 300 |
| Initiative +4 | Senses Perception +3 | |
| HP 96; Bloodied 48; see also <i>doom strike</i> | | |
| AC 18; Fortitude 18, Reflex 17, Will 17 | | |
| Speed 7 | | |
| m Greataxe (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | | |
| +10 vs. AC; 1d12 + 5 damage (crit 1d12 + 20). | | |
| M Doom Strike (free, when first bloodied; encounter) | | |
| The cultist doombringer makes a melee basic attack with a +4 bonus to the attack roll and deals an extra 1d6 damage on a hit. | | |
| R Handaxe (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | | |
| Ranged 5/10; +8 vs. AC; 1d6 + 4 damage.. | | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Common | |
| Skills Athletics +10, Endurance +10 | | |
| Str 17 (+6) | Dex 12 (+4) | Wis 11 (+3) |
| Con 16 (+6) | Int 10 (+3) | Cha 12 (+4) |
| Equipment hide armor, greataxe, 2 handaxes | | |

| Cultist Mage (Level 6) | | Level 6 Artillery |
|---|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| Medium natural humanoid | | XP 250 |
| Initiative +5 | Senses Perception +6 | |
| HP 54; Bloodied 27 | | |
| AC 19; Fortitude 15, Reflex 16, Will 17 | | |
| Speed 6 | | |
| m Quarterstaff (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | | |
| +6 vs. AC; 1d8 + 1 damage. | | |
| r Magic Missile (standard; at-will) ♦ Force | | |
| Ranged 20; +9 vs. Reflex; 2d4 + 5 force damage. | | |
| R Dancing Lightning (standard; encounter) ♦ Lightning | | |
| The cultist mage makes a separate attack against 3 different targets; ranged 10; +9 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 5 lightning damage. | | |
| A Flame Burst (standard; encounter) ♦ Fire | | |
| Area burst 1 within 10; +9 vs. Fortitude; 1d8 + 5 fire damage, and the target is dazed (save ends). | | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Common | |
| Skills Arcana +12 | | |
| Str 10 (+3) | Dex 14 (+5) | Wis 17 (+6) |
| Con 12 (+4) | Int 18 (+7) | Cha 12 (+4) |
| Equipment robes, quarterstaff, wand | | |

| Gnoll Cultist Enforcer (Level 4) | | Level 4 Brute |
|--|---|--------------------|
| Medium natural humanoid | | XP 175 |
| Initiative +4 | Senses Perception +6; low-light vision | |
| HP 64; Bloodied 32 | | |
| AC 16; Fortitude 16, Reflex 13, Will 13 | | |
| Speed 7 | | |
| m Spear (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | | |
| +8 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage, or 1d8 + 7 damage while bloodied; see also <i>quick bite</i> and <i>pack attack</i> . | | |
| M Quick Bite (free, when the gnoll cultist enforcer hits a bloodied enemy with a melee attack; at-will) | | |
| The gnoll cultist enforcer makes a bite attack against the same target; +5 vs. AC; 1d6 + 1 damage, or 1d6 + 3 damage while bloodied. | | |
| Pack Attack | | |
| The gnoll cultist enforcer deals an extra 5 damage on melee attacks against an enemy that has two or more of the enforcer's allies adjacent to it. | | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Abyssal, Common | |
| Skills Intimidate +7, Stealth +9 | | |
| Str 20 (+7) | Dex 14 (+4) | Wis 14 (+4) |
| Con 14 (+4) | Int 9 (+1) | Cha 7 (+0) |
| Equipment leather armor, light shield, spear | | |

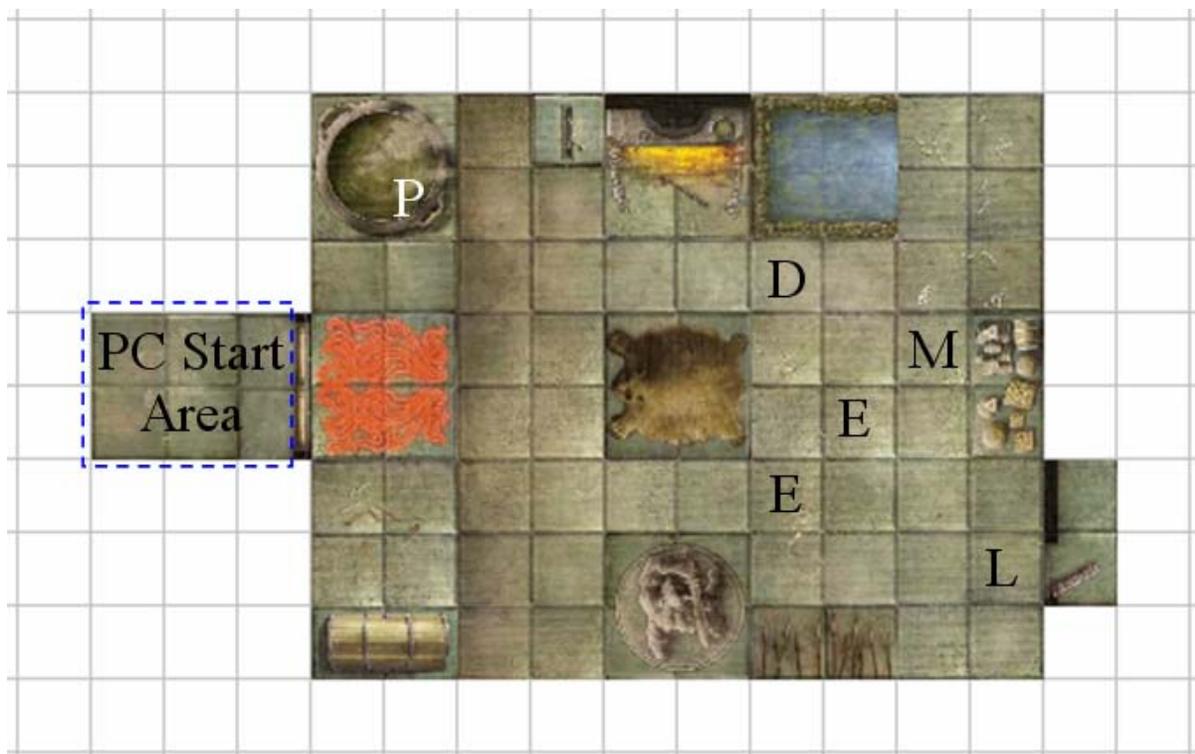
| Fey Panther (Level 6) | | Level 6 Skirmisher |
|--|---|--------------------|
| Medium fey beast | | XP 250 |
| Initiative +9 | Senses Perception +9; low-light vision | |
| HP 70; Bloodied 35 | | |
| AC 20; Fortitude 18, Reflex 20, Will 17 | | |
| Speed 8, climb 6; see also <i>fey step</i> | | |
| m Bite (standard; at-will) | | |
| +11 vs. AC; 1d6 + 5 damage, and the fey panther shifts 1 square. | | |
| Charging Pounce | | |
| When the fey panther charges, it deal an extra 1d6 damage and knocks the target prone. | | |
| Fey Step (move; encounter) ♦ Teleportation | | |
| The fey panther teleports 5 squares. | | |
| Alignment Unaligned | Languages - | |
| Skills Stealth +12 | | |
| Str 14 (+5) | Dex 18 (+7) | Wis 13 (+4) |
| Con 14 (+5) | Int 2 (-1) | Cha 11 (+3) |

ENCOUNTER 9: A SAFEHOUSE NOT SO SAFE MAP

TILE SETS NEEDED

DU1:Halls of the Giant Kings

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----|----|
| Torture Chamber/Floor | 8x8 | x1 |
| Fireplace/Floor | 2x2 | x1 |
| Cauldron/Floor | 2x2 | x1 |
| Pool/Floor | 2x4 | x1 |
| Crate and Barrel/Floor | 1x2 | x1 |
| Treasure Chest/Floor | 1x2 | x1 |
| Blue Rune/Red Sigil | 2x2 | x1 |
| Closed Wood Doors/Open Wood Doors | 1x2 | x1 |
| Bear Rug/Pit of Despair | 2x2 | x1 |
| Warrior Statue/Rubble | 2x2 | x1 |
| Closed Single Door/Open Single Door | 1x2 | x1 |
| Spike Trap/Floor | 1x2 | x1 |
| Crumbling Floor/Floor | 2x2 | x1 |
| Fence Corner/Floor | 2x2 | x1 |
| Floor/Darkness | 1x2 | x1 |
| Flaming Brazier/Lever | 1x1 | x1 |
| Floor/Darkness | 2x2 | x1 |



CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

If the PCs have completed all of the encounters in this adventure, they have ended the cultist threat in Harglast but have not ended the threat posed by the Cult of the Reborn Flame.

If the PCs did not complete Encounter 9, the cultist threat to the city is still ended, since the cult was abandoning the city anyway. If the PCs did not defeat the cultists in Encounter 9, they return to the Drake's Eye Forge a short time later and discover that the cultists, in their rush to leave the city, have left behind a letter. Give them Handout 2. (Note that if the PCs did not defeat the cultists in Encounter 9, none of the treasure available in this encounter is available to the PCs.)

Regardless of the specifics of Encounter 9, the PCs can retire to the Leaping Hart Tavern for some food, ale, and rest.

As the PCs relax, they see Thelia Ondertos talking to people sitting at several other tables. Vlotho and his halfling friends sit among them, as does Puk.

In addition to NPCs from this adventure, NPCs from previous adventures in this mini-campaign are present. They include:

- Halagothra the Healer with several rough looking men (from *MINI1-1 Stirring the Embers*)
- Myrelas the Gallant and two of his Bravos; as well as Althea Mecatoris and her son with several men-at-arms (all from *MINI1-2 The Burning Scent of Perfumed Swords*)
- Rathloff with a number of poorly dressed but strong armed miners (from *MINI1-3 Building the Pyre*)

Eventually, Yulis arrives, a stream of bluish energy trailing out the door behind her. She sits at a table alone and closes her eyes, obviously deep in concentration. If any of the PCs address her, she ignores them.

Thelia brings you another round of drinks and says, "While you are certainly capable folk, I thought you might like some aid in your future quest against this foul cult. I have called for volunteers from among my friends and have assembled these fellows for your army. They are all capable fighters or have resources we might tap, but lack leadership and focus. I believe they will serve our needs well." As she finishes speaking, you notice that the eyes of every person in the tavern is fixed upon the group of you.

Prompt the PCs to address the volunteers and explain what they know of the cult and what their next course of action will be. Give the players the opportunity to turn

this into a "rallying moment", and let them begin planning their next step with the NPCs present here. Let this planning go for a bit, in order to build up to the final revelation below.

Keep in mind that this is a chance for the PCs to feel they have really accomplished something and look to their future endeavors with confidence. Let them have their moment.

Once the PCs have rallied their "army" and begun planning, Yulis addresses the entire group:

As the tavern room settles into the welcome camaraderie of brothers-in-arms, Yulis suddenly leaps to her feet. She howls loudly and waves a hand across the room. The magical energy trailing her shoots into the mouths of everyone in the tavern. You wince in pain as magic fills your mind. Yulis yells, tears rolling down her cheeks. "Clouded eyes and sundered minds! Broken swords and shattered bones! The flame rises once again! You...are...doomed!" She then falls to the floor, unconscious.

The End.

REWARDS SUMMARY

At the conclusion of the adventure, the PCs earn experience points, treasure, and possibly story awards. All totals listed here are per PC. A number before the slash is the low-level value; after the slash is the high-level value.

IMPORTANT DM INFORMATION

It is critical that you enter the PC rewards accurately on the tracking form, and ensure that the information is reported and entered online in a timely manner. While players can and should track their character's information on paper, the online information serves as an important backup and verification of play. Ask the players for their RPGA numbers and character numbers (usually a single digit) when you begin to fill out the tracking form.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

Give PCs a full award for each encounter they successfully completed, and a half award if they were unsuccessful. Give no award if the characters did not play the encounter at all.

Encounter 1: A Playhouse and Some Players

130 / 180 XP

Encounter 3: A Dead House and Some Dead

110 / 150 XP

Encounter 5: A Fortunehouse and its Fortune

155 / 220 XP

Encounter 7: A Gambling House and...

100 / 150 XP

Encounter 8: A Clock and a Flock

120 / 165 XP

Encounter 9: A Safehouse Not So Safe

160 / 230 XP

Total Possible Experience

775 / 1095 XP

Gold per PC

150 / 200 gp

(Encounter 1: 20 / 30 gp, Encounter 5: 50 / 60 gp, Encounter 8: 30 / 40 gp, Encounter 9: 50 / 70 gp)

TREASURE

Each PC receives treasure in the form of gold pieces as well as one share from a treasure bundle. The treasure bundle may give the PC more gold, a magic item, or something else of value. Each player makes one and

only one selection for their character; players may choose the same treasure bundle. Mark the one-letter bundle ID on the tracking form next to any character that selects a bundle; note that it is possible (and likely) that some characters will not select a bundle for each session of play.

If characters buy or sell magic items or other gear during the adventure (or pay for services) add or subtract that amount from the total gold the PC receives at the end of the adventure. If a player selects an option that gives their character more gold, add that amount to that character's base gold award, and ensure you enter the total amount of gold gained (minus any expenditures) online. It is possible and permissible for a character who spends more gold than he or she earns to have a negative total for the adventure. PCs receive 20% of the item's market price when they sell any magic item or consumable. They receive 50% of the market price for ritual books and alchemical formulas.

If a player selects a magic weapon or suit of armor for their PC that is not specific on the type of item listed, they must select the exact item at the time they choose that bundle. For example, if a *duelist's weapon* +1 is listed as a choice in a bundle, a player selects the form of the weapon amongst the choices possible for that magic item (light blades). If the player selects the item as a *+1 duelist's dagger*, the player writes that information down on the PC's adventure log and the item is forever after that specific weapon.

An asterisk next to a magic item means that it is an item that appears in the **New Rules** section.

EACH PC SELECTS ONE OF THE FOLLOWING BUNDLES:

Bundle A: *belt of vigor* (2nd level; PH p. 253)

Found in Encounter 1

Bundle B: *Prison of Salzacas* (2nd level; AV2 p. 109)

Found in Encounter 1

Bundle C: *wand of ray of enfeeblement* +1 (3rd level; PH p. 244)

Found in Encounter 5

Bundle D: *battlecrazed weapon* +1 (4th level; AV p. 64)

Found in Encounter 5

Bundle E: *battle forged armor* +1 (5th level; PH p. 227)

Found in Encounter 9

Bundle F: *cape of the mountebank* +1 (5th level; AV p. 149)

Found in Encounter 9

Bundle G: *staff of the war mage* +1 (3rd level; PH p. 242)
Found in Encounter 9

Bundle H: Ritual book for *silence* and *water walk*
Found in Encounter 5

Consumable plus Gold: If a player doesn't want to select one of the bundles listed above for their character, they can choose to add a *potion of healing* plus 200 / 300 gp to their rewards from this adventure. The player should write the consumable gained on their adventure log. That character (and only that character) then receives the consumable plus the listed amount of gold (if any) instead of any other treasure bundle. Consumable items obtained in this fashion do not take up found magic item slots.

More Gold: If a player doesn't want to select one of the bundles listed above for their character, they can choose to add 250 / 350 gp to their rewards from this adventure. That character (and only that character) receives more gold instead of any other treasure bundle.

STORY AWARDS

Award these if the PC completes the condition for the award in the adventure. Pass out certificates to the players for their story awards. Normally, if a PC earns three awards, they may only have 2 of them and must pick which two they want before ending the session (exceptions to this will be noted in the story award text). Make sure to mark the story award codes next to each character that earned them on the tracking form.

MINI17 Gratitude of Yulis

When the PCs clean the cultists out of Blood and Bones, they earn the gratitude of Yulis the fortune teller. She is well-known in the city and respected by the lower-class citizens. The PCs might call upon her to read their fortunes in the future.

MINI18 Respect of Vlotho the Blue

The PCs have gained the respect of Vlotho the Blue. While primarily a gambler, he is also at the center of gossip in the city. He might be able to provide useful information in the future.

ADVENTURE QUESTIONS

Mark the answers to the following adventure questions on the tracking form.

1. How did the PCs interact with Kalesstin?

- a. They saved her, got some information from her, and sent her on her way.
- b. They saved her, got information, and asked her to help them find Puk.
- c. They saved her, got information, and asked her to lead them to the Leaping Hart Tavern.
- d. They saved her, got information, asked her to help them find Puk, and also asked them to lead them to the Leaping Hart Tavern.

2. What did the PCs do while gambling with Vlotho the Blue?

- a. They all sat at the table and gambled the entire skill challenge.
- b. One or more of the PCs took some time away from the table to make skill checks against the halflings, Thelia Ondertos, and perhaps sneaked a peek at Vlotho's dice from behind him. That is, they explored options away from the table.
- c. The PCs never spoke to him.

3. Did any of the PCs attempt to leave the forge in Encounter 9 to pursue the cult leader directly (ignoring the foes in the forge room, at least at first)?

- a. Yes.
- b. No.

4. How much "in-game" time did it take the PCs to complete the adventure?

- a. One "day." That is, no extended rests.
- b. Two "days." That is, they took advantage of Yulis' trance offer to replenish healing surges and recharge daily powers.
- c. The PCs did not complete the adventure.

5. How do you (the DM) rate this adventure?

- a. Five stars - excellent (best possible rating)
- b. Four stars - very good
- c. Three stars - average
- d. Two stars - below average
- e. One star - really awful (worst possible rating)

6. How do the players rate this adventure? (You can average their individual ratings or use any other system that is agreeable to the group.)

- a. Five stars - excellent (best possible rating)
- b. Four stars - very good
- c. Three stars - average
- d. Two stars - below average
- e. One star - really awful (worst possible rating)

New Rules

Battlecrazed Weapon

Level 4+

The weapon seeks blood where it can be found, whether among the enemy or from its wielder.

| | | | | | |
|--------|----|-----------|--------|----|--------------|
| Lvl 4 | +1 | 840 gp | Lvl 19 | +4 | 105,000 gp |
| Lvl 9 | +2 | 4,200 gp | Lvl 24 | +5 | 525,000 gp |
| Lvl 14 | +3 | 21,000 gp | Lvl 29 | +6 | 2,625,000 gp |

Weapon: Axe, Heavy Blade

Enhancement: Attack rolls and damage rolls

Critical: +1d6 per plus

Property: While you are bloodied, you deal +1d6 damage when you hit with this weapon

Level 14 or 19: +2d6 damage while bloodied

Level 24 or 29: +3d6 damage while bloodied

Power (Daily): Minor Action. Deal damage to yourself equal to half your level, ignoring any resistances. You are considered bloodied for all purposes (including beneficial effects, such as Dragonborn Fury and this weapon's property) until the end of your next turn.

Reference: *Adventurer's Vault*, page 64.

Cape of the Mountebank

Level 5+

With a flourish of this silk-hemmed garment, you transport out of harm's way.

| | | | | | |
|--------|----|-----------|--------|----|--------------|
| Lvl 5 | +1 | 1,000 gp | Lvl 20 | +4 | 125,000 gp |
| Lvl 10 | +2 | 5,000 gp | Lvl 25 | +5 | 625,000 gp |
| Lvl 15 | +3 | 25,000 gp | Lvl 30 | +6 | 3,125,000 gp |

Item Slot: Neck

Enhancement: Fortitude, Reflex, and Will

Power (Daily * Teleportation): Immediate Reaction. Use this power when you are hit by an attack. Teleport 5 squares and gain combat advantage against the attacker until the end of your next turn.

Reference: *Adventurer's Vault*, page 149.

Prison of Salzacas

Level 2

The spirit bound within this rune-scribed black metal flask manipulates objects at your command.

Wondrous Item 520 gp

Power (Encounter ♦ Conjunction): Minor Action. You conjure the spirit contained within the prison in an unoccupied space within 10 squares of you. The spirit can pick up, move, or manipulate an object adjacent to it weighing 20 pounds or less and can carry it 10 squares. If you're holding the object when you use this power, the spirit can move the object into a pack, a pouch, a sheath, or a similar container and simultaneously move any one object carried or worn anywhere on your body into your hand.

As a move action, you can move the spirit 10 squares. As a free action, you can cause the spirit to drop an object its holding. As a minor action, you can cause the spirit to pick up or manipulate a different object.

Sustain Minor: The spirit persists.

Reference: *Adventurer's Vault 2*, page 109.

APPENDIX

Handout 1: Cultist Letter #1

Most Loyal Son of the Flames,

Rumors of trouble reach my ears. While I am certain we shall succeed in our endeavors, I fear the time has come for us to leave this city for more hospitable places.

It is time to gather your fellows and leave the old playhouse. Before you do so, however, erase all evidence of our presence, as such evidence will call undue attention to our work. Once you have purged the playhouse, go to our watcher friend at the ashen house of the dead and destroy the tablet he bears. Then neutralize Mistress Ondertos by whatever means necessary.

Once you have done these things, go to your next point of contact and await further instructions.

May fire guide you and fill your heart with the dark flames of a new day,

B.

Handout 2: Cultist Letter #2

Most Loyal Son of the Flames,

The blessed time of his Hungry Awakening approaches and your presence is required to complete the ritual. Take your men to Tarmalune and seek the standing stones east of the city.

Once the ritual is complete, the people of these lands will suffer and you will be rewarded.

May the flames of His Dark Grace burn in your heart forever,

B.