



Tales of Good & Evil

As the City of a Thousand Forges perseveres in the face of threats both internal and external, the effects of the planar portal continue to make everyone uneasy. When unusual individuals are drawn to the city because of the portal's power, heroes are asked to keep the peace and ferret out anyone intending to bring harm to Melvaunt. A *D&D Adventurers League* adventure set in Melvaunt.

A 4-hour adventure for 1st-4th level characters

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Introduction

Welcome to *Tales of Good & Evil*, a D&D Adventurers League adventure, Part One of the Misaligned Trilogy.

This adventure is designed for **three to seven 1st-4th level characters**, and is optimized for **five 3rd-level characters**.

The adventure is set in the Moonsea region of the Forgotten Realms, in and around the city of Melvaunt.

The D&D Adventurers League

This adventure is official for D&D Adventurers League play. The D&D Adventurers League is the official organized play system for DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®. Players can create characters and participate in any adventure allowed as a part of the D&D Adventurers League. As they adventure, players track their characters' experience, treasure, and other rewards, and can take those characters through other adventures that continues their story.

If you're running this adventure as a part of a store event or at certain conventions, you'll need a DCI number. This number is your official Wizards of the Coast organized play identifier. If you don't have a number, you can obtain one at a store event. Check with your organizer for details.

D&D Adventurers League play is broken up into storyline seasons. When players create characters, they attach those characters to a storyline season, which determines what rules they're allowed to use to create and advance their characters. Players can continue to play their characters after the storyline season has finished, possibly participating in a second or third storyline with those same characters. A character's level is the only limitation for adventure play. A player cannot use a character of a level higher or lower than the level range of a D&D Adventurers League adventure.

For more information on playing, running games as a Dungeon Master, and organizing games for the D&D Adventurers League, please visit the D&D Adventurers League home at:

www.dndadventurersleague.org

Preparing the Adventure

Before you show up to Dungeon Master this adventure for a group of players, you should do the following to prepare.

- Make sure to have a copy of the most current version of the *D&D Basic Rules* or the *Player's Handbook*.
- Read through the adventure, taking notes of anything you'd like to highlight or remind yourself while running the adventure, such as a way you'd like to portray an NPC or a tactic you'd like to use in a combat.
- Get familiar with the monster statistics in the Appendix.
- Gather together any resources you'd like to use to aid you in running this adventure--such as notecards, a DM screen, miniatures, and battlemaps.
- If you know the composition of the group beforehand, you can make adjustments as noted throughout the adventure.

Before Play at the Table

Ask the players to provide you with relevant character information:

- Character name and level
- Character race and class
- Passive Wisdom (Perception)—the most common passive ability check
- Anything notable as specified by the adventure (such as backgrounds, traits, flaws, etc.)

Players that have characters outside the adventure's level range **cannot participate in the adventure with those characters**. Players with ineligible characters can make a new 1st-level character or use a pregenerated character. Players can play an adventure they previously played or ran as a Dungeon Master, but not with the same character.

Ensure that each player has an official adventure logsheet for his or her character (if not, get one from the organizer). The player fills out the adventure name, session number, date, and your name and DCI number. In addition, the player also fills in the starting values for experience, gold, downtime, renown, and number of permanent magic items. He or she fills in the other values and writes notes at the conclusion of the session. Each player is responsible for maintaining an accurate logsheet.

If you have time, you can do a quick scan of a player's character sheet to ensure that nothing looks out of order. If you see magic items of very high rarities or strange arrays of ability scores, you can ask players to provide documentation for the irregularities. If they cannot, feel free to restrict item use or ask them to use a standard ability score array. Point players to the *D&D Adventurers League Player's Guide* for reference.

If players wish to spend downtime days and it's the beginning of an adventure or episode, they can declare their activity and spend the days now. Alternatively, they can do so at the end of the adventure or episode. Players should select their characters' spells and other daily options prior to the start of the adventure, unless the adventure specifies otherwise. Feel free to reread the adventure description to help give players hints about what they might face.

Adjusting the Adventure

Throughout this adventure, you may see sidebars to help make adjustments for smaller/larger groups, and characters of higher/lower levels than the optimized group. Most of the time, this is used for combat encounters.

You may adjust the adventure beyond the guidelines given. For example, if you're playing with a group of inexperienced players, you might want to make the adventure a little easier; for very experienced players, you may want to make it a little harder. Therefore, five categories of party strength have been created for you to use as a guide. Feel free to use a different adjustment during the adventure if the recommended party strength feels off for the group.

This adventure is **optimized for a party of five 3rd-level characters**. To figure out whether you need to adjust the adventure, do the following:

- Add up the total levels of all the characters
- Divide the total by the number of characters
- Round fractions of .5 or greater up; round fractions of less than .5 down

You've now determined the **average party level (APL)** for the adventure. To figure out the **party strength** for the adventure, consult the following table:

Determining Party Strength

Party Composition	Party Strength
3-4 characters, APL less than	Very Weak

3-4 characters, APL equivalent	Weak
3-4 characters, APL greater than	Average
5 characters, APL less than	Weak
5 characters, APL equivalent	Average
5 characters, APL greater than	Strong
6-7 characters, APL less than	Average
6-7 characters, APL equivalent	Strong
6-7 characters, APL greater than	Very Strong

Running the Adventure

As the Dungeon Master of the session, you have the most important role in facilitating the enjoyment of the game for the players. You help guide the narrative and bring the words on these pages to life. 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. Doing so is especially important and applicable outside of combat, but feel free to adjust the adventure for groups that are having too easy or too hard of a time.
- 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 one. 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, since play loses momentum when this happens. At the same time, make sure that the players don't finish too early; provide them with a full play experience. Try to be aware of running long or short. Adjust the pacing accordingly
- Read-aloud text is just a suggestion; feel free to modify the text as you see fit, especially when dialogue is present.
- Give the players appropriate hints so they can make informed choices about how to proceed. Players should be given clues and hints when

appropriate so they can tackle puzzles, combat, and interactions without getting frustrated over lack of information. Doing so helps to encourage immersion in the adventure and gives players “little victories” for figuring out good choices from clues.

In short, being the DM isn’t about following the adventure’s text word-for-word; it’s about facilitating a fun, challenging game environment for the players. The *Dungeon Master’s Guide™* has more information on the art of running a D&D game.

Downtime and Lifestyle

At the beginning of each play session, players must declare whether or not they are spending any days of downtime. The player records the downtime spent on the adventure logsheet. The following options are available to players during downtime (see the D&D basic rules or the *D&D Adventurers League Player’s Guide* for more information):

- Catching up
- Crafting (exception: multiple characters cannot commit to crafting a single item)
- Practicing a profession
- Recuperating
- Spellcasting services
- Training

Other downtime options might be available during adventures or unlocked through play, including faction-specific activities.

In addition, whenever a character spends downtime days, that character also spends the requisite expense for his or her lifestyle. Costs are per day, so a character that spends ten days of downtime also spends ten days of expenses maintaining his or her lifestyle. Some downtime activities help with lifestyle expenses or add lifestyle expenses.

Spellcasting Services

Any settlement the size of a town or larger can provide some spellcasting services. Characters need to be able to travel to the settlement to obtain these services.

Spell services generally available include healing and recovery spells, as well as information-gathering spells. Other spell services might be available as specified in the adventure. The number of spells available to be cast as a service is limited to a **maximum of three per day total**, unless otherwise noted.

Spellcasting Services

Spell	Cost
<i>Cure wounds (1st level)</i>	10 gp
<i>Identify</i>	20 gp
<i>Lesser restoration</i>	40 gp
<i>Prayer of healing (2nd level)</i>	40 gp
<i>Remove curse</i>	90 gp
<i>Speak with dead</i>	90 gp
<i>Divination</i>	210 gp
<i>Greater restoration</i>	450 gp
<i>Raise dead</i>	1,250 gp

Acolyte Background

A character possessing the acolyte background requesting spellcasting services at a temple of his or her faith may request **one spell per day** from the Spellcasting Services table for free. The only cost paid for the spell is the base price for the consumed material component, if any.

Disease, Death, and Recovery

Sometimes bad things happen, and characters get poisoned, diseased, or are killed. Since you might not have the same characters return from session to session, here are the rules when bad things happen to characters.

Disease, Poison, and Other Debilitating Effects

A character still affected by diseases, poisons, and other similar effects at the conclusion of an adventure can spend downtime days recuperating until such time as he or she resolves the effect to its conclusion (see the recuperating activity in the *D&D Basic Rules*).

If a character doesn’t resolve the effect between sessions, that character begins the next session still affected by the debilitating effect.

Death

A character who is killed during the course of the adventure has a few options at the end of the session (or whenever arriving back in civilization) if no one in the adventuring party has immediate access to a *raise dead* or *revivify* spell, or similar magic. A character subject to a *raise dead* spell is affected negatively until all long rests have been completed during an adventure. Alternatively, each downtime day spent after *raise dead* reduces the penalty to attack rolls, saving throws, and ability checks by 1, in

addition to any other benefits the downtime activity might provide.

Create a New 1st-Level Character. If the dead character is unwilling or unable to exercise any of the other options, the player creates a new character. The new character does not have any items or rewards possessed by the dead character.

Dead Character Pays for Raise Dead. If the character's body is recoverable (it's not missing any vital organs and is mostly whole) and the player would like the character to be returned to life, the party can take the body back to civilization and use the dead character's funds to pay for a *raise dead* spell. A *raise dead* spell cast in this manner costs the character 1,250 gp.

Character's Party Pays for Raise Dead. As above, except that some or all of the 1,250 gp for the *raise dead* spell is paid for by the party at the end of the session. Other characters are under no obligation to spend their funds to bring back a dead party member.

Faction Charity. If the character is of level 1 to 4 and a member of a faction, the dead character's body can be returned to civilization and a patron from the faction ensures that he or she receives a *raise dead* spell. However, any character invoking this charity forfeits all experience and rewards from that session (both those earned prior to and after death during that session) and cannot replay that episode or adventure with that character again. Once a character reaches 5th level, this option is no longer available.

The Situation in Melvaunt

The walls of Melvaunt resemble Swiss cheese, but the city still stands. While the Orc Baron of Thar and his forces assaulted the city, a portal that was part of a modron plot to take over Melvaunt was miraculously moved outside the walls by a brave group of adventurers with the assistance of Truushee the Sage. That portal unleashed the modron legion into the orc forces just after the marauders breached the city walls in several locations. The ensuing battle between the orcs and modrons allowed the forces of Melvaunt to successfully defend the city.

In the aftermath of the battle, Melvaunt is in turmoil politically. The City Watch has been depleted, with many of their best and brightest killed in the recent events. The people of Melvaunt have hastily patched up the walls and are doing their best to repair them to their former strength. Beyond

the walls, bands of orcs and modrons still roam the area, occasionally attacking the weak spots. While the orcs and modrons are no longer a threat to the city itself, citizens and travelers in the area have been killed. Occasionally groups of modrons, trapped away from their home, still attempt to follow their last orders of taking over Melvaunt. A pentadron called "Sleepie" (SL33P13-773P) has broken away from the modron collective and is assisting the City Watch in dealing with the modrons in the area.

Then there are the Lords. Political power has a way of moving hands in the wake of disastrous events. The Lord of Keys and The Lord of Waves have declared themselves the temporary rulers of Melvaunt, but murmurs are already starting to cascade around the Merchant's Council. Is this just a temporary situation or a power play by the two Lords to wrest all the power and wealth of Melvaunt for themselves? To make matters worse, a Red Wizard of Thay was killed during the recent events, and the Red Wizards don't approve of their own being killed. An emissary of the Red Wizards has been sent to determine what happened and who might be to blame.

While Melvaunt has dodged the executioner's axe this time, the city's head still looks like it might be on the chopping block.

Adventure Background

Melvaunt, the City of a Thousand Forges, is on edge. A mysterious planar portal recently appeared in the region. While the portal is temporarily at peace, there's no telling when it could open again, exposing the Moonsea to threats from beyond this world.

At the same time, the Orc Baron of Thar decided to advance on Melvaunt. Adventurers managed to momentarily halt the advance, but Thar still poses a threat to the entire region.

Amid the chaos, various factions began to vie for power within Melvaunt. The Lord of Keys and the Lord of Waves have taken total control over the city. They do not wish to return that power to the Council of Iron. Meanwhile the various guilds in Melvaunt are having trouble moving their goods via land because there is so much danger in the region.

Many mysterious visitors recently arrived in Melvaunt. A family of hard-drinking gnomes, a group of monk scholars, a mad mage, a Mulmasterite ambassador, an influential cleric of Waukeen, and a ghost ship raise the suspicions of the city's already overworked City Watch. Are these newcomers harmless tourists? Drawn to the city by the power of the portal? Spies for the Orc Baron of Thar? Taking advantage of Melvaunt's citizens during a time of trouble? One thing is clear. Their intentions must be uncovered for the safety of Melvaunt's terrified public.

Overview

This adventure is divided into six parts. It begins with an introduction where the players meet Lieutenant Liza Tarheels, a lieutenant in the City Watch of Melvaunt, who pays them to investigate the mysterious visitors. The players can meet with the visitors in any order they choose.

Part 1. Brea Salvadine, an ambassador from Mulmaster, refuses to leave Asberyth Square with her entourage. She came to Melvaunt to convince the merchants to lower the price of their goods for the people of Mulmaster, since their city was razed during the events of the *Princes of the Apocalypse* storyline. While the characters talk with her, an angry ex-beastmaster from Mulmaster's arena attacks with his animals, seeking retribution for his unfair firing.

Part 2. Mericor Tasgaf, a con man pretending to be a cleric of Waukeen, leads expensive retreats in a seaside cave outside the city for merchants. The

characters can expose Mericor's fraud once they brave the hazards of the cave.

Part 3. Parabald the Maimed sits by the dock playing chess with his imaginary friends. The dragonborn mage challenges the adventurers to a game then reveals his true intentions. He has a score to settle with the followers of Cyric.

Part 4. The adventures investigate the Cloisternook gnomes in a camp outside a defunct diamond mine called Darkglitter Depths. The hard-drinking family loves inventing as much as their moonshine. The gnomes' patriarch explains they intend to reopen the mine, since there could still be diamonds within. While the characters talk to Fizzlebottom Cloisternook, one of his inventions, a large drill, goes haywire.

Part 5. The Order of Wandering Tales is a group of monks that records interesting stories for history. They came to Melvaunt to record accounts of recent events. Before the characters share their own tales with the monks in a popular tavern, an enraged merchant and his thugs break down the door, seeking vengeance against the order for exposing his extramarital affair.

Part 6. A ghost ship appears every night in the harbor of Melvaunt. The characters board the vessel to find it filled with skeletons who pay them no heed at all. The glass-bottomed vessel is home to a runaway Red Wizard who studies the effects of the portal on sea life.

Adventure Hooks

Adventurers Wanted. Characters looking for places where they can help or earn a copper know of Melvaunt's recent troubles and travel there. A posting from Lieutenant Tarheels promises a chance to aid the city and make money with some potentially dangerous work.

Heroes of Melvaunt. Characters who have adventured in Melvaunt and the surrounding region have ties there. They maintained their presence in or returned to the area to either keep a vigilant eye out for danger or assist with the region's recovery efforts. A posting from Lieutenant Tarheels promises any interested a chance to aid the city in a time of need.

Faction Directive. The Factions know there is much work to be done in the City of a Thousand Forges. They directed the adventurers to Melvaunt to fortify their position should the portal open or the forces of Thar become active again. This is particularly applicable to members of the Lords'

Alliance, the Order of the Gauntlet, and the Harpers. They are told to check in with Lieutenant Liza Tarheels about any work that might need to get done in the region.

Passive or Secret Wisdom (Insight) Checks

There are many NPCs in this adventure that are hiding something from the characters. Asking for a Wisdom (Insight) check can tip the players off that an NPC is hiding something. Even when Wisdom (Insight) checks fail, the players know something is up after being asked to make the check in the first place.

If you prefer to avoid asking for Wisdom (Insight) checks in such situations, here are two methods you can try.

- At the beginning of the adventure, ask for each character's passive Insight score. To calculate a character's passive Insight score simply add 10 to the character's Wisdom (Insight) modifier. Use this score as the result of a character's Wisdom (Insight) check. Share only the results of successes with the players.
- At the beginning of the adventure, ask for each character's Wisdom (Insight) modifier. Roll Wisdom (Insight) checks for the character in secret. Share only the results of successes with players.

If a player wants a character to make a Wisdom (Insight) check, allow them to do so as normal. Only use passive scores and secret rolls in situations where characters are being deceived and the players don't suspect it.

Introduction: A Lieutenant's Plea Lieutenant Liza Tarheels' Office

Expected Duration: 10-15 minutes

The adventurers find themselves in the office of Lieutenant Liza Tarheels. They came because they saw a posting in which the Lieutenant offers a chance to help the people of Melvaunt and make some money. (See **Handout 1**.)

General Features

The following general features pertain to Liza Tarheels' office:

Sounds. A murmur of activity can be heard in the halls outside the office as law enforcement officials chat about the start of the day and the end of the nightshift.

Surrounding Activity. Law enforcement officials preparing for the day suit up in armor, check equipment, and chat about what's on their agendas. Night shift officers gather their belongings, file last-minute reports, and head home.

A bright sun burns through the dusty window on the wall opposite the door in Lieutenant Liza Tarheels' cramped office in Asberyth, Melvaunt's government campus. A large desk dominates the tiny room, covered in disorganized piles of letters, warrants, and reports. A din of activity mumbles through a closed door as Melvaunt's finest start their shifts.

That din grows to a quiet roar as the door swings open. A haggard middle-aged human woman with an unkempt nest of gray-brown hair, dark skin, and bags under her eyes lurches to sit behind the desk as the door shuts behind her, quieting the noise of the hall. She is dressed in the wrinkled regalia of Melvaunt's Lieutenant. Without speaking Liza Tarheels motions for all of you to sit.

Once you're settled she says, "You here about the job?" and hands you a piece of paper that you've already seen posted throughout the streets of the city.

At this point give the players **Handout 1**. Inform the characters this is the same posting they saw that drew them to Liza's office in the first place. Once they've had time to look it over, proceed by reading the following boxed text:

The tired Lieutenant looks up at you. "Here's the deal. We're overworked. A nearby portal has everyone in Melvaunt more scared than a sun elf in a city of drow. It doesn't help that the Orc Baron of Thar decided to march on us Moonsea folk either. Even though the portal is closed and the Baron is halted, people haven't calmed down. We've got our hands full trying to keep the peace. Now all these mysterious strangers are showing up." Liza rummages through the papers on her desk, muttering about needing a second assistant, before she hands you another paper.

Give the players **Handout 2** and then continue by reading the following boxed text:

"My assistant is checking your references. Frankly we need this job done yesterday, so I don't care if your recommendations come from Asmodeus. You're hired." The Lieutenant grabs a cup of day-old tea from her desk and swigs it down before continuing.

"I need you to find out why everyone on that list is here in Melvaunt. They've done nothing illegal, but they're poking around, asking questions, demanding meetings with influential leaders, and making the city's people more paranoid than they already are. Even that weird boat isn't doing anything wrong, but it is giving folks the willies.

"I want a thorough questioning of each of these newcomers by tonight. Find out why they're here. If they're up to no good, arrest 'em. Do that and 250 pieces of gold are yours to split. Everything I know is in the document. Your first newcomer on the list is right outside."

Before you leave, Liza makes clear the exact location of all six groups she has asked you to investigate.

Liza truly doesn't know much other than what's contained within **Handout 2**. She can tell the characters the legend of the *Bloody Dawn* if they ask about it as described in Part 6, but she thinks it is a bunch of hogwash.

Roleplaying Liza Tarheels

She is overworked, assertive, and blunt. Many long hours have left her a little jaded and a lot exhausted, but she's good at what she does and has the safety of Melvaunt's people at heart. While roleplaying Liza Tarheels, you might:

- Lean back in your chair.
- Sigh before answering a question.
- Rub your face like you're tired.
- Speak in a loud, boisterous voice.

Part 1. Mulmaster

Ambassador

Expected Duration: 20-30 minutes

The adventurers talk with Brea Salvadine, an ambassador from Mulmaster, in Asberyth Square. While they chat, an angry animal wrangler with a score to settle attacks Brea and her entourage.

Asberyth Square

General Features

The following general features pertain to Asberyth Square:

Light. Sunshine or moonlight fills the area with bright light.

Smells and Sounds. Brea and her retinue of nobles chant protests in the square, demanding to be seen by the Council of Iron. The square is outdoors and smells of Melvaunt's forges and metalwork.

Surrounding Activity. Government officials and employees walk through the square on their way from one duty or meeting to another. Some citizens of Melvaunt with government business (e.g. registering a guild, filing for a marriage license, etc.) wait to be seen.

Asberyth is Melvaunt's square-shaped government center. The central plaza is a large open area called Asberyth Square. "The Unnamed Merchant," an iron statue of a trader traveling with a cart of goods, stands proudly in the middle of the square. As you enter, your nose burns with the reek of smelting and metallurgy that are a staple of the City of a Thousand Forges. The air tastes of industry.

In front of the statue, a dozen human men and women dressed in noble finery chant protests. "The council must see us! The council must see us!" they cry. A noblewoman in her thirties dressed in purple robes leads the crowd. Her auburn hair falls down her shoulders as she raises her hands to quiet the mob. She begins singing Mulmaster's city anthem in a clear voice as the rest of her group joins in.

Brea Salvadine and her eleven friends (all LN **nobles**) are from Mulmaster. If the characters start a conversation with Brea, she breaks away from the rest of the group to talk with them while her friends continue to demonstrate and protest.

Roleplaying Brea Salvadine

Brea, a human in her mid-30s, is a natural leader, but she hasn't always used her talents for good. Before the Cults of Elemental Evil exploded *devastation orbs* in Mulmaster, Brea used her talents for personal gain, climbing the ranks of Mulmaster's nobility without care for anyone else.

The destruction of the City of Danger changed her. Brea now cares for others, and her fiery passion for her people keeps her honest, energetic, and voracious. While roleplaying Brea, you might:

- Sit forward in your chair and listen to what others say intently
- Speak very quickly and passionately
- Be quick to anger when something offensive is said
- Be overly grateful for favors

Brea Salvadine

Brea freely shares the following information with the characters:

- She is an ambassador from Mulmaster. Her city still lies in ruin after the attack of the Cults of Elemental Evil.
- The citizens of Mulmaster desperately need goods from Melvaunt to rebuild. The merchants of the City of a Thousand Forges raised their prices to take advantage of Mulmaster's predicament.
- Brea and her band of nobles came to Mulmaster a tenday ago to petition the Council of Iron, Mulmaster's governing body, for cheaper goods. No one has seen them yet. They are protesting in the square until a meeting is granted.
- Brea mentions one excuse has been given for not being able to meet with the Council of Iron: many of their number are away on an inspirational retreat led by Mericor Tasgaf, a moon elf cleric of Waukeen, goddess of trade.

While interacting with Brea, a DC 13 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals she feels guilty when speaking about the current state of Mulmaster. A DC 13 Charisma (Persuasion) check convinces Brea to share why she feels this way:

- Brea didn't always have the best interest of Mulmaster at heart. She rose through the nobility by investing heavily in the city's gladiatorial arena.
- The night the Cults of Elemental Evil razed the City of Danger, Brea watched her fellow citizens perish. She remained safe behind guards and walls purchased with gold she gained from the deaths of hundreds of gladiators. She realized she was no better than the cultists razing the city.

- After the attack, Brea took her money out of the arena, gave it to survivors displaced by the destruction, and invested in a few morally sound businesses to keep funds flowing. Now she gives all she can to the rebuilding efforts but feels nothing can undo the damage she's already done.
- For that reason, Brea will stay in Asberyth Square until the Council of Iron agrees to see her.

Hecklo Prett

While or immediately after the characters speak to Brea, read or paraphrase the following boxed text:

A sudden, ear-splitting roar drowns out the chorus of protestors. An enormous tiger crouches menacingly in one of Asberyth's archways. Another throaty sound brings your attention across the square to the opposite arch where a white bear lumbers forward on its hind legs, jaw snapping. Before you have time to comprehend, bestial laughter draws your eyes to a pair of enormous orange apes climbing down the side of Asberyth.

The nobles in the square panic, running in every direction as a humanoid figure clad in leather armor painted with tiger stripes appears on top of Asberyth. He calls down to the nobles, "Brea Salvadine, you ruined my life. Now I'll take yours!"

Hecklo Prett, a male half-elf **scout** with a +6 bonus to Wisdom (Animal Handling) checks, lost his job as an animal wrangler when Brea stopped funding the arena. Hecklo and his animals started a new life in Melvaunt as street performers, but so far they have barely scraped by. He heard Brea was in town and decided this was his moment for vengeance. Hecklo attacks with his longbow from the roof while his two **apes, polar bear, and tiger** pounce. The animals are trained to go after the purple-clad Mulmaster nobles, but if a character deals damage to an animal or gets in its way, the beast attacks the character. The animals are trained to fight to the death. Hecklo Prett tries to flee if all of his animals die.

Animal Control. A character can attempt to calm an animal who can see and hear it. As an action the character chooses a beast and makes a Wisdom (Animal Handling) check and so does Hecklo (as a reaction, provided the beast can see and hear him). If the character succeeds, the animal does nothing on its next turn other than take the Dodge action.

If the animal can't see or hear Hecklo, a DC 12 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check convinces the animal to stop attacking people. The animal takes the Dodge action, backs away from the fight, and

returns to its cage out in a nearby street as Hecklo trained it to do. If the animal takes damage or is commanded to attack by Hecklo, it rejoins the fray.

Nobles. Roll initiative for the twelve nobles. At first they run in random directions, taking only the Dash action and panicking.

Walls of Asberyth. Asberyth's walls can be climbed with a DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check. Asberyth is 30 feet tall.

Adjusting the Encounter

Here are recommendations for adjusting this combat encounter. These are not cumulative.

- **Very weak party:** Remove the **apes** and **tiger** and replace the **polar bear** with a **black bear**
- **Weak party:** Replace the **tiger** with a **panther** and the **polar bear** with a **black bear**
- **Strong party:** Replace the **tiger** with a **saber-toothed tiger**
- **Very strong party:** Replace the **tiger** with a **saber-toothed tiger** and replace the **scout** with a **bandit captain**

Part 1 Interview Assessment

After speaking with Brea, it should be clear to the characters she'll do no harm to Melvaunt's citizens. Her peaceful protests will end once the Council of Iron meets with her. This report satisfies Lieutenant Tarheels.

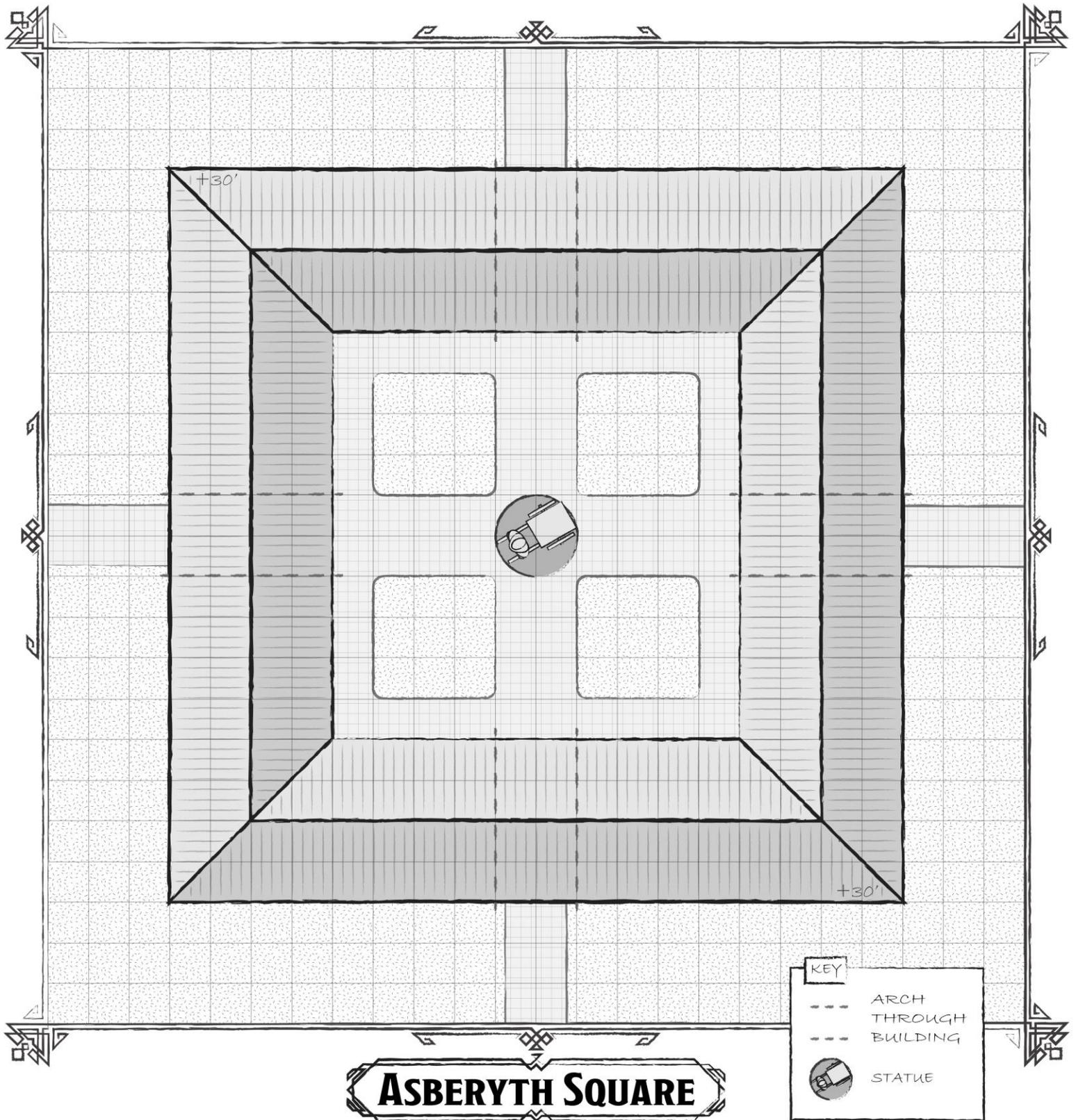
XP Awards

If Brea Salvadine survives the encounter, award each character 30 XP.

Treasure

If Brea Salvadine survives the encounter, she thanks the characters for protecting her by giving them 50 gp.

The characters could feel moved to help Brea meet with the council. Lieutenant Tarheels is their best connection to Melvaunt's governing body. If they promise Brea to convince Liza to put in a good word, Brea thanks the characters by giving them a *potion of healing* she keeps on her person in case of emergency.



ASBERYTH SQUARE

KEY	
---	ARCH THROUGH BUILDING
...	ARCH THROUGH BUILDING
	STATUE

Part 2. Waukeen's Retreat

Expected Duration: 40-50 minutes

Mericor Tasgaf leads his religious retreat in a seaside cave outside of Melvaunt. The characters must brave the cave's dangers and find out what Mericor's intentions are. If they discover the truth, that he is a con man, it is up to the characters what to do with Mericor.

C1. Seaside Cave Entrance

General Features

The following general features pertain to the seaside cave entrance:

Ceiling. The ceiling is 10 feet high.

Light. Sunshine or moonlight fills the cave entrance with bright light.

Smells and Sounds. Salty air is thick in this cave, since it is filled with seawater lapping lazily at the rocks. The smell of garbage and industrial waste is also prevalent here.

Surrounding Activity. Crabs climb on the rocks. Small fish and crustaceans swim in the water.

Water. The water is 10 feet deep and opaque. The cave is close to the City of a Thousand Forges and the industrial pollution dumped into the sea gets caught here, making it difficult to see through. Creatures submerged in the water are blinded.

This seaside cave reeks of salty spray and industrial waste. A lake of seawater and pollution fills most of the cave, with a five-foot-wide ledge of glistening black rock poking above the murk on the cavern's eastern side. At the north end of the room, a portcullis covers a narrow opening less than four feet wide, allowing the water to flow into a dark cavern where the sun cannot reach.

Mericor takes his patrons into the cave via canoe, the only boat narrow enough to navigate the opening blocked by the portcullis. Other boats, including rowboats, are too wide. Canoes can be purchased in Melvaunt for 100 gp each. A single canoe is 3 feet wide, 15 feet long, 50 pounds, can hold up to three Medium or Small creatures, has AC 11 and 30 hit points and is immune to psychic and poison damage.

Portcullis. The portcullis here is activated via a lever on the opposite side of the gate to the west of the portcullis (see area C2). The lever itself is hidden in the darkness of area C2 and can only be seen by a creature who can see in the dark or with a light source. A 10-foot pole (or similar object) can be slid

through the bars of the portcullis and used to pull the lever to raise the gate.

A character standing on the slippery rock next to the portcullis can try to lift the gate with a successful DC 20 Strength check. The portcullis has AC 19 and 27 hit points and is immune to psychic and poison damage.

The portcullis only goes 5 feet under the water. A Medium or smaller creature could swim below the portcullis, come out on the other side, and pull the lever. Any movement in the water of area C2 alerts the four **reef sharks** there, which attack.

Shark Attraction. A creature who swims in the water in this area has a 50% chance of attracting 1d4 reef sharks from area C2 each round spent in the water.

Slippery Rocks. The 5-foot-wide ledge in the cave is wet, algae-slick rock. A creature walking on the ledge must succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check or fall into the water.

Underwater Combat

Under water the following rules apply:

- When making a melee weapon attack, a creature that doesn't have a swimming speed (either natural or granted by magic) has disadvantage on the attack roll unless the weapon is a dagger, javelin, shortsword, spear, or trident.
- A ranged weapon attack automatically misses a target beyond the weapon's normal range. Even against a target within normal range, the attack roll has disadvantage unless the weapon is a crossbow, a net, or a weapon that is thrown like a javelin (including a spear, trident, or dart).
- Creatures and objects fully immersed in water have resistance to fire damage.

C2. Shark Alley

General Features

The following general features pertain to shark alley:

Ceiling. The ceiling is 30 feet high.

Light. This part of the cave is so far from the sun that it is shrouded in darkness.

Smells and Sounds. Salty air is thick in the cavern and so is the smell of garbage and industrial waste. The water laps against the boulders in this room. The occasional loud splash can be heard as a shark momentarily breaks the surface.

Surrounding Activity. Crabs climb on the rocks. Sharks hunt small fish and crustaceans in the water.

Water. The water is 10 feet deep and opaque thanks to pollution. Creatures submerged in the water are blinded.

A series of wet boulders, slick with algae, rise above the surface of the cloudy water. These rocks dot the way to a larger stone dock where three canoes painted with symbols of Waukeen are tied. Beyond the boats and platform, a 20-foot-high natural wall rises. The cave continues in the darkness above.

If the characters haven't already encountered the four **reef sharks** here, add:

Somewhere in this cavern there is a momentary, furious thrashing in the water, like a desperate animal drowning. As soon as it begins, it stops. Something is lurking beneath the surface.

Characters who are in canoes are safe from the sharks as they navigate the waters here. Characters without a vessel must either swim or try to cross the water by hopping from rock to rock. The sharks attack anyone who swims in the water.

Canoes. The three canoes tied to the stone dock at the end of this cavern belong to Mericor Tasgaf. He uses them to transport his patrons to the cave. Untying or cutting a canoe loose is an action.

Slippery Rocks. Each boulder can hold only one Medium or Small creature at a time.

Jumping from one boulder to another or onto the dock requires two ability checks. First, a Strength (Athletics) check is made to determine if the character can clear the distance between the two boulders. The DC of the check is equal to the number of feet between the boulders. You can use the map in the Appendix to determine the distance between

boulders, but if a character wants to simply hop from one boulder to the next closest to get to the dock, a DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check is required. If the character fails that check, one of their jumps lands short and they fall in the water.

After a successful Strength (Athletics) check, a character must succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check or lose their balance on the slippery surface, and fall into the water.

Slippery Wall. The 20-foot-high wall is slick with water and algae. Climbing it requires a DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check. A character who fails this check by 5 or more falls, taking 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage per 10 feet fallen (rounded down) and landing prone as normal. At the top of the wall there is a curled-up rope ladder that can be thrown down as an action. Climbing the rope ladder requires no check.

Adjusting the Encounter

Here are recommendations for adjusting this combat encounter. These are not cumulative.

- **Very weak party:** Remove two **reef sharks**
- **Weak party:** Remove one **reef shark**
- **Strong party:** Add three **reef sharks**
- **Very strong party:** Replace the four **reef sharks** with three **hunter sharks**

C3. Trapped Corridor

General Features

The following general features pertain to the trapped corridor:

Ceiling. The ceiling is 10 feet high.

Light. This part of the cave is shrouded in darkness.

Smells and Sounds. Salty air is thick in the cavern, and so is the smell of garbage and industrial waste. The indistinguishable words of a person giving an impassioned speech can be heard beyond the door at the end of the corridor.

A small natural doorway leads into this short corridor that ends in a newly installed steel door emblazoned with the side profile of the goddess of trade. Above the door the words "REMEMBER DWARVISH GOLD," are painted in bright red letters. Beyond the door, you can make out the muffled sounds of a single voice giving an impassioned speech. You can also hear the occasional chorus of cheers, jeers, and applause punctuating the speaker's performance.

Mericor's cons have been profitable. He hired a team of the city's best smith's to install the door and a cleric to cast the *glyph of warding* spell on the floor before the door. The cleric who cast the spell made some mistakes while drawing the glyph, so it isn't as powerful as normal.

Once in the hall, any character who turns around notices the phrase, "REMEMBER DWARVISH GOLD," is also painted above the doorway leading from this corridor into area C2. This phrase serves as a way of reminding retreat goers to speak the password for the *glyph of warding* before leaving or entering area C4.

Glyph of Warding. A nearly invisible, 10-foot-diameter *glyph of warding* sits directly in front of the door. The glyph can be detected with a DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check. Any character proficient in Arcana or Religion immediately recognizes the glyph for what it is, though they note it is poorly drawn.

The glyph is triggered when a creature walks over the rune without saying aloud the password, "Gorol," the Dwarvish word for gold.

When triggered, the glyph erupts with magical energy in a 20-foot-radius sphere centered on the glyph. Creatures in the area must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw. A creature takes 11 (2d10) cold damage on a failed saving throw, or half as much on a successful one. Once the glyph is triggered the spell ends.

Locked Door. The steel door leading to area C4 is locked from the other side with a deadbolt switch anyone can turn. On this side of the door a key is required to enter. A DC 15 Dexterity (thieves' tools) check picks the lock. A character trying to work around the *glyph of warding* makes this check at disadvantage. On a roll of 1, the character drops the thieves' tools into the *glyph of warding* and accidentally triggers it, if it is still active.

The door can be forced open with a DC 18 Strength check, though a character must stand on the *glyph of warding* to get the proper leverage to attempt the check. The door has AC 19 and 18 hit points and is immune to psychic and poison damage.

Mericor holds the key to this door. If the characters knock on the door, no one in area C4 can hear them over his speech. If they set off the *glyph of warding* or attack the door, Mericor calms his followers and makes a show of going to check out the disturbance himself. His actual plan is to try to bribe any potential troublemakers into going away, and failing that, be the first to get to the canoes if things get violent.

C4. Shrine of Waukeen

General Features

The following general features pertain to the shrine of Waukeen:

Ceiling. The ceiling is 20 feet high.

Light. The cavern is filled with bright light from torches in wall sconces and the fire walk.

Smells and Sounds. The smells of smoking coals and sweat permeate this chamber. Mericor's voice booms through the cavern, enhanced by his *prestidigitation* spell. The small crowd of nobles cheers and applauds him at appropriate moments.

The smells of smoke and body odor sting your eyes as you open the door to this large cavern. Torches light the room. You can see many bedrolls, chamber pots, and mess kits piled to one side. On top of a natural platform, a pale-skinned elf with a glorious pompadour and dressed in the robes of Waukeen's clergy booms with magically enhanced speech.

"If you find Waukeen's light, you can walk across the fire, just like Yenassa! Yenassa, the lessons you have learned today and the faith you have found will protect you. Cross the fire and accept Waukeen's light into your soul."

A dozen perspiring merchants cheer as a human woman walks barefoot across a long bed of low-burning. She moves quickly and when she gets to the end, the applause is thunderous. The woman's smile is genuine.

The elf continues his sermon amid the cheers. "Good business will come your way, Yenassa. The seed you've planted in Waukeen's name will grow strong and reap you a bountiful harvest."

Mericor Tasgaf is not really a cleric of Waukeen at all. He is a con man (a CN **spy**) able to cast the *prestidigitation* cantrip thanks to his high (moon) elf heritage. He has convinced the twelve merchant **nobles** in this room that his expensive retreat is a religious investment that pays back many times over. Technically, Mericor is committing fraud by taking money from his marks in return for a good or service (the blessing of Waukeen) that he is not actually providing.

When the adventurers first enter the chamber, allow any character proficient in Religion to make a DC 15 Intelligence (Religion) check. Success means the character knows fire walks aren't a normal part of Waukeen's religious rituals.

Merikor Tasgaf

If the characters ask to speak with Merikor, the merchants are annoyed at the interruption, but Merikor cheerfully chats with the adventurers out of earshot of his patrons. Merikor tells the characters he is a cleric of Waukeen who has come to Melvaunt to aid the merchants impacted by recent events. The roads are unsafe and trade is slow. This answer is enough to satisfy Lieutenant Tarheels, but there's a good chance the characters can figure out what's really going on.

When Merikor lies to the characters, he makes a Charisma (Deception) check against the characters' Wisdom (Insight) checks. Characters who succeed know that Merikor is hiding something. They can try to quiz Merikor about the religion of Waukeen by making Intelligence (Religion) checks against his Charisma (Deception) check.

Suspicious characters might demand Merikor perform magic for them. He uses *prestidigitation* to snuff out torches and create smells, sparks, and symbols of Waukeen. Any character proficient in Arcana can make a DC 10 Intelligence (Arcana) check to realize the spell being cast is not one normally available to clerics. Any character who knows the cantrip already has this knowledge.

If Merikor thinks the characters are onto him, he tries to redirect the conversation. The con man tells them he's heard the merchants mention a family of gnomes recently purchased the mines known as Darkglitter Depths. It seems odd to him since these mines have been closed and defunct for years. Merikor suggests (lies) that the gnomes could have purchased the mine for more nefarious reasons, like carrying out some strange magic ritual or to bury the bodies of the people they plan to murder inside.

If the characters confront Merikor about lying, he bribes them by offering 25 gp for them to look the other way. If the characters refuse, he increases the amount of his bribe to 50 gp.

If the characters try to arrest Merikor, he attempts to flee out of the cave, surrendering if he is reduced to 13 hit points or less. Merikor's followers are confused if he is placed under arrest, but they do not interfere if the characters make it clear the action is done with the authority of the Lieutenant of Melvaunt.

If the characters leave peacefully (either because they believe Merikor or because they take his bribe) he offers them the use of the canoes to exit the seaside cave and sends one of the merchants with them to collect the canoes when they are done.

Fire Walk. A barefoot fire walk, while an impressive visual trick, is actually a simple task of keeping your feet moving. A creature walking over the 15-foot-long, 5-foot-wide area of coals takes 1 fire damage only if it ends its movement there.

Roleplaying Merikor Tasgaf

Merikor Tasgaf oozes charisma. He's charming, attractive, and knows how to make people feel good. The con man uses his personality to seduce those susceptible to his charms and keep those suspicious of him disarmed. While roleplaying Merikor, you might:

- Wear a big, genuine smile, even when insults and accusations are slung.
- Give compliments freely and often.
- Stay cool under pressure.
- Redirect the conversation when things get uncomfortable.

Part 2 Interview Assessment

After speaking with Merikor, the characters discover he is a con man or he cons the adventurers into thinking he is a cleric of Waukeen. Either explanation satisfies Lieutenant Tarheels, provided the characters at least tried to arrest Merikor if they report the truth.

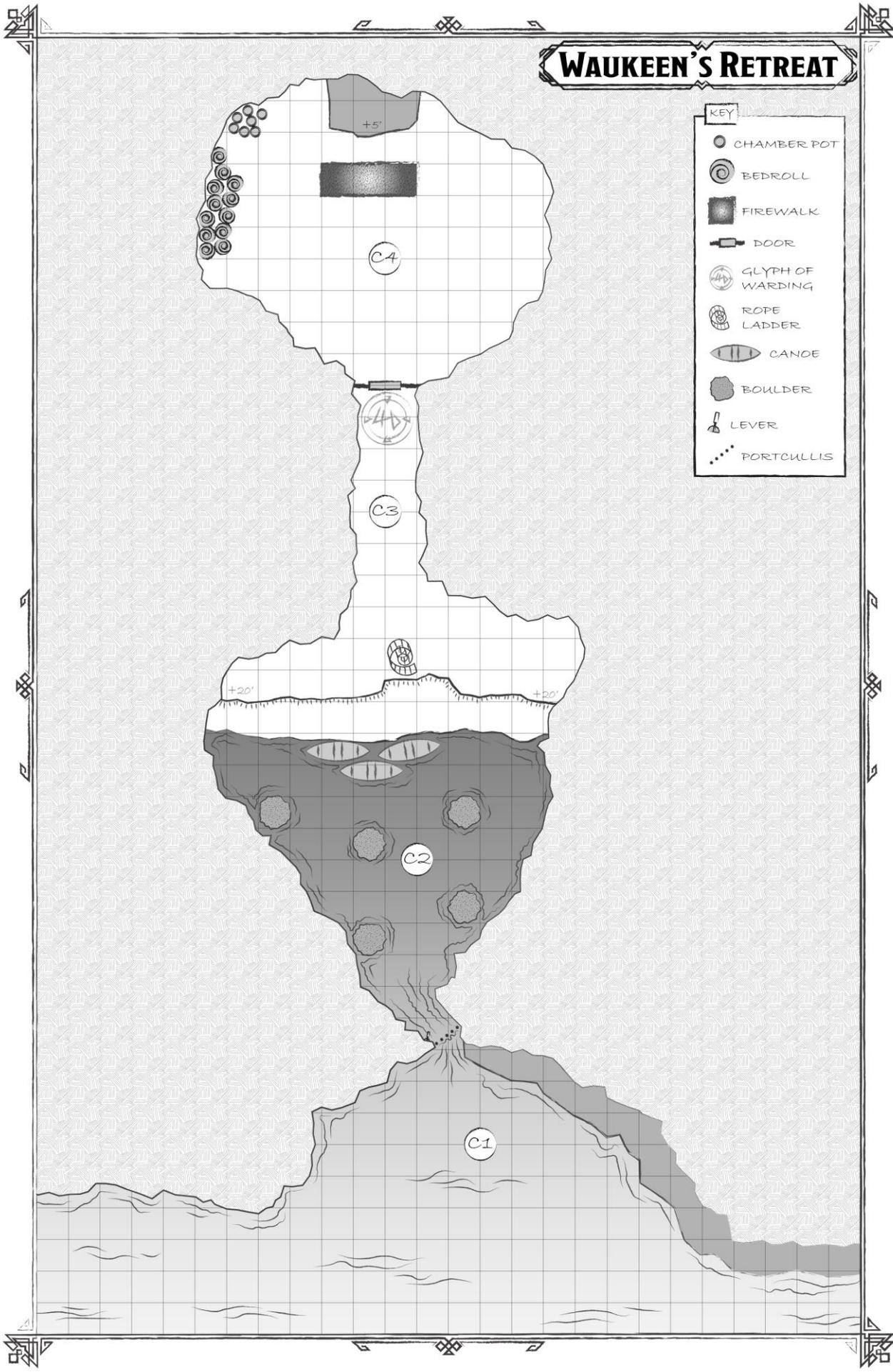
XP Awards

If the characters capture and arrest Merikor Tasgaf, award each 30 XP.

Treasure

The characters could leave the cave with a bribe from Merikor. If they arrest him and bring him to Lieutenant Tarheels, she pays the characters an extra 50 gp for helping with his arrest.

WAUKEEN'S RETREAT



KEY

-  CHAMBER POT
-  BEDROLL
-  FIREWALK
-  DOOR
-  GLYPH OF WARDING
-  ROPE LADDER
-  CANDLE
-  BOULDER
-  LEVER
-  PORTCULLIS

Part 3. The Cloisternook Clan

Expected Duration: 30-40 minutes

The Cloisternook gnomes have set up camp outside Melvaunt, near their closed diamond mine, Darkglitter Depths. The characters can speak with the hard-drinking, inventive family, discover their innocent intentions, and contend with a dangerous mining creation gone haywire.

Cloisternook Camp

General Features

The following general features pertain to the seaside cave entrance:

Light. The camp is in a small clearing filled with bright light from the sun or the moon and some small campfires, depending on the time of day.

Smells and Sounds. The smells of hard liquor and grease are readily apparent in the camp. Hammers ping and gears grind as the Cloisternooks tinker away.

Surrounding Activity. Gnomes around the camp drink moonshine, tinker with inventions, and chat with one another.

This small clearing just outside of the defunct mines known as Darkglitter Depths is utterly mundane except for the colorfully dressed gnomes sitting outside of their tents, tinkering with odd inventions and drinking clear alcohol. Many of the contraptions built by the gnomes look made to extract material from the earth.

At the center of the camp, a wheeled, cylindrical device made of iron stands fifteen feet tall and sits as big around. The behemoth invention sports arms equipped with automated drills, picks, hammers, and shovels. You have never seen anything quite so odd in an area quite so normal.

“Ah, admiring Big Billy, are ya?” says a kindly, intoxicated voice behind you. It comes from an old gnome with a pointy white goatee and long handlebar mustache. He holds two jugs in his hands. “This moonshine was for him, but seeing as you’re my guests, what do you say we pour a few glasses and get ourselves primed before we fire up my new toy?” He laughs and leads you to a table at the back of the camp.

The characters are about to sit down with Fizzlebottom Cloisternook, (a CG **commoner**) the patron of the Cloisternook clan. He leads the other twenty gnome **commoners** in the camp.

Cloisternook Gnomes

Cloisternook gnomes are **commoners** with an Intelligence of 15. Each has proficiency in at least one set of artisan’s tools (DMs choice).

Fizzlebottom Cloisternook

Fizzlebottom Cloisternook is happy to speak with the characters about what he’s up to. Any character who takes the offered moonshine (which smells like paint thinner and tastes about the same) has advantage on any Charisma checks made to influence Fizzlebottom. Characters who drink must also succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw at the end of the conversation or become poisoned for one hour. Fizzlebottom shares the following information freely:

- The Cloisternooks came to Melvaunt because they recently purchased Darkglitter Depths. The family owned the mine generations ago, then sold it to the city of Melvaunt when the diamonds ran out. The city never did anything with the mine.
- The gnomes bought the mine back because the new mining inventions they’ve created, particularly Big Billy, can dig deeper and further than ever before to find new pockets of diamonds.
- The entrance to Darkglitter Depths is collapsed. Once up and running, Big Billy can break through and open Darkglitter Depths.
- Fizzlebottom hasn’t gotten Big Billy to work, but after a conversation over a game of chess with a dragonborn mage named Parabald the Maimed down at Melvaunt’s docks, he thinks he can rig the invention to work using the gnome’s homemade moonshine, Recipe 44, as its fuel source.
- Fizzlebottom’s twin daughters, Mollo and Dollo, are working on a new moonshine, Recipe 45, that’s going to be even stronger than the stuff he’s drinking with the characters.

While interacting with Fizzlebottom, a DC 12 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals he is not saying everything he knows to the characters. A DC 12 Charisma (Persuasion) check convinces Fizzlebottom to share the following information in his drunken haze:

- Before the Cloisternooks sold Darkglitter Depths to the city of Melvaunt, they collapsed the entrance. There is an object inside the mine the gnomes wished to keep hidden.
- The Cloisternooks repurchased Darkglitter Depths to mine diamonds, but they also came to recover the object. The family is worried that the Moonsea

region's recent troubles make the mines a bad hiding spot for the object and plan to move it out of the area.

Fizzlebottom does not share more information than this with the characters. (More about this object is discussed in CORE2-2 *Songs of Law and Chaos*.)

Roleplaying Fizzlebottom Cloisternook

Fizzlebottom Cloisternook is old, kind, smart, and often intoxicated. When it comes to his family's secrets, he's rather tight-lipped, but when he's drunk, he can't resist dropping a few hints. While roleplaying Fizzlebottom, you might:

- Speak in a gravelly, slightly slurred voice.
- Tell a lot of corny jokes.
- Laugh very loud and slap your knee when something funny happens.
- Whisper conspiratorially when sharing hints about the Cloisternook family's secrets.

Big Billy

Read the following text when the conversation with Fizzlebottom ends:

Two gnome women, who look exactly alike dressed in the same blue garb, walk toward the table in perfect matching stride. They carry large jugs of moonshine. Both have their long yellow hair twisted up in intricate, matching braids and their blue eyes shine with happy intoxication. Those of you who drank with Fizzlebottom think you're seeing double, until one speaks.

"Hi! I'm Mollo. This old man's smartest daughter," says one in a high-pitched voice as she bows.

"And I'm Dollo," says the other in a huskier tone. "I'm the good-looking one," she adds with a wink. Both erupt into gales of drunken laughter before continuing.

"Father," Mollo squeaks, "we just loaded Big Billy up with Recipe 45. He's ready for a test run."

Fizzlebottom starts with excitement as he turns to you. "Come, new friends. It would be your honor to witness this test!" The old man giggles as he moves away, not waiting for an answer. "Turn on Big Billy!" he cries to another gnome standing next to the device. That gnome pulls a lever on the side of the enormous creation and suddenly all of its drills, picks, hammers, shovels, and other tools whir to life.

"It works! Look at him go... Wait! Why?..." Fizzlebottom looks concerned and then scared as the machine whirs faster, all of its dangerous weapons flying about. Whirling death spins around the camp. Gnomes drunkenly sprint-stumble out of the invention's path as it tears down tents and destroys campfires.

As Big Billy tears up the camp, Fizzlebottom calls for aid, yelling for the rest of the Cloisternooks to save his prized invention. The other gnomes panic and simply try to stay out of the way. Big Billy does the following each round on initiative count 20:

- The invention moves 15 feet in a random direction. Roll a d8 to determine the direction Big Billy moves. 1 is north, 2 is northwest, 3 is west, 4 is southwest, 5 is south, 6 is southeast, 7 is east, and 8 is northeast.
- Creatures and objects in Big Billy's path and that the invention moves within 10 feet of must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or take 3 (1d6) bludgeoning and 3 (1d6) piercing damage.
- When a creature moves within 10 feet of Big Billy for the first time, or starts its turn that close to the invention, it must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or take 3 (1d6) bludgeoning and 3 (1d6) piercing damage.

The characters can try to stop Big Billy. If they attack the invention, Fizzlebottom calls out to them, asking that they don't destroy it completely.

- A character within 5 feet of Big Billy can make a DC15 Dexterity (thieves' tools) check as an action to disable the device. The first success causes Big Billy to stop dealing bludgeoning damage as half its arms go limp. The second success shuts down the invention completely.
- Reducing Big Billy's hit points to 0 disables the device but also shuts it down. Big Billy is a Huge object with AC 19 and 39 hit points. It is immune to poison and psychic damage.
- Reducing the hit points of Big Billy's wheels to 0 disables the device so it stops moving. Its arms still spin wildly out of control, but as long as everyone stays away from the invention it can't do any harm and runs out of fuel in one hour. Big Billy's wheels have AC 15 and 27 hit points. They are immune to poison and psychic damage.

When Big Billy has been put out of commission, Fizzlebottom thanks the characters (grudgingly if they destroyed the invention). As the old gnome scratches his beard trying to figure out what went wrong, Mollo and Dollo come over and admit their mistake. Big Billy had been calibrated for Recipe 44 Cloisternook moonshine, but they loaded it with Recipe 45. Fizzlebottom berates them if any gnomes or characters died in the incident, or simply laughs if everyone survived.

Part 3 Interview Assessment

After speaking with Fizzlebottom, it should be clear to the characters the Cloisternooks are not in the area to harm Melvaunt's citizens. If anything, the gnomes are on the side of good and hope to remove an object that could attract evil forces in the area. This report satisfies Lieutenant Tarheels.

XP Awards

If the characters disable Big Billy, award each 50 XP.

Treasure

If the characters stop Big Billy without destroying it, Fizzlebottom gives them a *spell scroll* of *color spray* as thanks.

Part 4. The Maimed Mage

Expected Duration: 20-30 minutes

Parabald the Maimed, a dragonborn mage, sits by Melvaunt's dock talking to a crew of imaginary friends and playing chess with strangers. He challenges the characters to a game. If he thinks they would be strong allies, Parabald reveals his true intentions to destroy the cults of Cyric.

Melvaunt Dock District

General Features

The following general features pertain to Melvaunt's dock district:

Light. The docks are bathed in bright light by the sun or moon on this clear day.

Smells and Sounds. The air is thick and humid with salt. The sea, the barks of dockworkers, the ringing of boat bells, and calls of vendors fill all ears.

Surrounding Activity. Dockworkers go about their business loading and unloading vessels. Newcomers arrive in Melvaunt. People see loved ones off before long journeys.

At the edge of the dock a blue-scaled dragonborn in green robes grins as you approach. He sits at a large table opposite you. Fourteen chairs, seven on either side, line the table's longer edges. The thirteen chairs not being used by the dragonborn are empty. On the table between the chairs are seven chessboards.

The dragonborn turns to his right, leaning across the table to speak to an empty chair two seats away. "You're right, Baron Rebouvie... I think we have some new challengers!" The madman turns to the chair immediately to his left and laughs. "Oh no, Dutchess Reidrana Martwyth III, they don't look like much, but don't judge a book by its cover." The odd being gives a glare back to the right and scolds, "Princess Marabelle Nessia the Biting, hold your tongue." Finally, he stands and turns to regard you, the sleeve of his right arm hanging empty at his side. "You'll have to forgive her Highness," the dragonborn says. "She's still learning her manners." He glares back at the princess's empty chair before continuing.

"Oh! And I seem to have forgotten mine. I'm Parabald, and these are my good friends Lady Vanderblight, Baron Rebouvie, Princess Marabelle Nessia the Biting, Dutchess Reidrana Martwyth III, Grand Alchemist Riya Yang, and of course High Chancellor Rizmeck Gobo needs no introduction. Won't you join us for a game?"

Parabald (a one-armed CG **mage**) won't speak to the adventurers about anything else until they agree to sit down and play a game of chess. The mage yells in horror if the characters try to occupy any of the chairs on his side of the table, as that is where his imaginary friends sit.

Parabald the Maimed

When the characters sit down to play chess with Parabald, he places himself at the center board. The mage controls the pieces of other boards using *mage hand*, a spell he has mastered so well that he can cast it without verbal or somatic components. The hand Parabald conjures when he casts the spell is invisible. The mage is constantly looking around, complimenting the players and his imaginary friends on their moves.

Parabald is on a dangerous mission of revenge in Melvaunt (see **Parabald's True Intentions**), but he doesn't want his cover blown. The extremely intelligent dragonborn feigns madness, hoping it makes him seem harmless as he engages travelers fresh off the boat in games of chess. During those games, he asks questions and gauges how people treat him and his "friends."

Parabald's purpose at the docks is twofold. He hopes to find powerful, good-hearted adventurers who could serve as allies in his fight against the followers of Cyric, and he wants to keep an eye on the docks to see if he recognizes any cultists arriving in Melvaunt. During the game, Parabald asks the adventurers the following questions:

- "Yes, Riya, that is an excellent question. Where are you from?"
- "I agree High Chancellor. I'm just dying to know why you would come out to Melvaunt during such a time of trouble."
- "Princess Marabelle Nessia the Biting, I disagree. They look like very capable heroes. Please, tell the princess some of your past deeds."
- "Oh Baron Rebouvie, you are so deep. I should pose that question to our guests. When is killing another justified?"
- "Yes, yes, yes, Lady Vanderblight, you do prattle on so. I know what you did this morning already. I was there. I'd like to hear what our guests have done with themselves this fine day."
- "Goodness Dutchess! That is a personal question. But it is a delicious one. Have any of you ever treated a past lover poorly?"

- “Have you met those fantastic monk scholars in Brogan Summer Shack? If not, you should! Delightful tales they tell!”

If time permits, allow each character to answer every question, or simply direct a single question to only one or two characters. As the adventurers answer, Parabald actively makes Wisdom (Insight) checks with a +4 bonus. If he catches the characters in a lie more than once, or if what he hears makes him think the adventurers are less-than-pure-of-heart, he doesn’t call them out on it, but he doesn’t reveal his true purpose for being in Melvaunt to them (see Parabald’s True Intentions).

If asked about his own reasons for being in Melvaunt, Parabald responds that he and his “friends” travel the Moonsea region hoping to meet interesting people who love chess. A DC 13 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals that Parabald isn’t telling the entire truth, though if pressed he won’t reveal anything during the game. A DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals Parabald is more lucid than he seems.

At the end of the conversation, have each character make an opposed Intelligence check with a chess set against Parabald (the mage’s modifier for this check is +6). Characters who succeed beat Parabald and he rewards them with a blue quartz gem worth 10 gp. Creatures who fail are beaten by Parabald and get nothing.

Read or paraphrase the following text if Parabald decides he can trust the adventurers:

The dragonborn smiles wide at all of you. “Why don’t we leave my friends here to sulk in their defeats and celebrate their victories? Come with me. I want to show you something.” The mage leads you to a secluded sailing vessel that appears to be empty at the moment. The name *Admiral’s Delight* is painted on the side. He climbs aboard and uses a key to open the door to the captain’s quarters.

Admiral’s Delight Captain’s Quarters

General Features

The following general features pertain to the Admiral’s Delight captain’s quarters:

Light. The sun comes through dust-covered windows filling the room with dim light.

Sounds. All is quiet on the empty, secluded ship. Even the sounds of the dock are far behind here.

Shadow Demon Ambush

Read or paraphrase the following text when the characters enter the captain’s quarters of the *Admiral’s Delight*:

A small bed, a desk covered with a marked map of the Moonsea region, a table, and a leather bound spellbook are all the room contains.

Parabald closes the door and his entire demeanor changes. The jovial madman from the docks is gone. The dragonborn before you is serious and tired. “I hope you forgave the ruse outside, but I had to be sure you could be trusted. We’ll be safe here. The captain of this vessel is a friend of mine, and he’s loaning me the room during his time ashore.”

Before the mage can say more, a black, horned shadow with long, wicked claws flies through the cabin wall and flings Parabald against the wall. The dragonborn crumples and doesn’t move. The shadow turns towards you, grinning and throwing its incorporeal wings out wide in a challenge.

This **shadow demon** was summoned by a cult of Cyric to kill Parabald. The demon was ordered to kill the mage and any of his allies. Believing the characters are Parabald’s friends, the demon turns on them, fighting to the death with glee.

The mage lies crumpled on the floor, unconscious. Parabald wakes up and joins the fight if a character uses an action to heal him.

Door. If a character opens the door to the cabin, the cabin is bathed in bright light. This is bad for the shadow demon given its Sunlight Sensitivity feature.

Adjusting the Encounter

Here are recommendations for adjusting this combat encounter. These are not cumulative.

- **Very weak party:** Parabald does not fall unconscious and the door stays open letting bright light in
- **Weak party:** Parabald does not fall unconscious
- **Strong party:** Add one **shadow demon**
- **Very strong party:** Add one **shadow demon** and two **dretches**

Parabald's True Intentions

Once the demon is slain, if Parabald is awake and alive, he shares his story with the adventurers.

- Parabald is the oldest son of a pair of Harpers, Rella and Elandor Dresnasia, who fought against the cults of Cyric. He had a younger brother named Jalong.
- When the dragonborn was twelve, the Cyric's followers murdered his parents and brother in the same attack that cost the mage his arm.
- Parabald has dedicated his life to wiping out Cyric's cults since.
- The mage heard whispers that members of a cult are in Melvaunt. The shadow demon confirms their presence. He's not sure why they're here, but he assumes it has something to do with the portal and recent events in the region.
- He asks if the adventurers trust Lieutenant Tarheels or anyone else in the Melvaunt City Watch. If they say yes, he asks them to pass along the information about followers of Cyric.
- Parabald plans to find a new place to stay in Melvaunt immediately, since the followers of Cyric are apparently aware he's staying on the *Admiral's Delight*.

Roleplaying Parabald the Maimed

Parabald the Maimed is intelligent, crafty, and serious. Yet he is a completely different person when the adventurers first meet him, pretending to be a jovial, mad mage who thinks himself a fancy noble. While roleplaying Parabald the Maimed during the first half of this part of the adventure, you might:

- Speak in a high voice and over-enunciate your words.
- Constantly laugh at, scold, and respond to your imaginary friends.
- Take an interest in what others say, but take none of it too seriously.
- Smile constantly.

While roleplaying Parabald the Maimed during the second half of this part of the adventure, you might:

- Speak in a low voice with a gravelly tone.
- Be very cautious in your dealings with others.
- Remember your family with anger and sorrow.
- Rarely smile.

Part 4 Interview Assessment

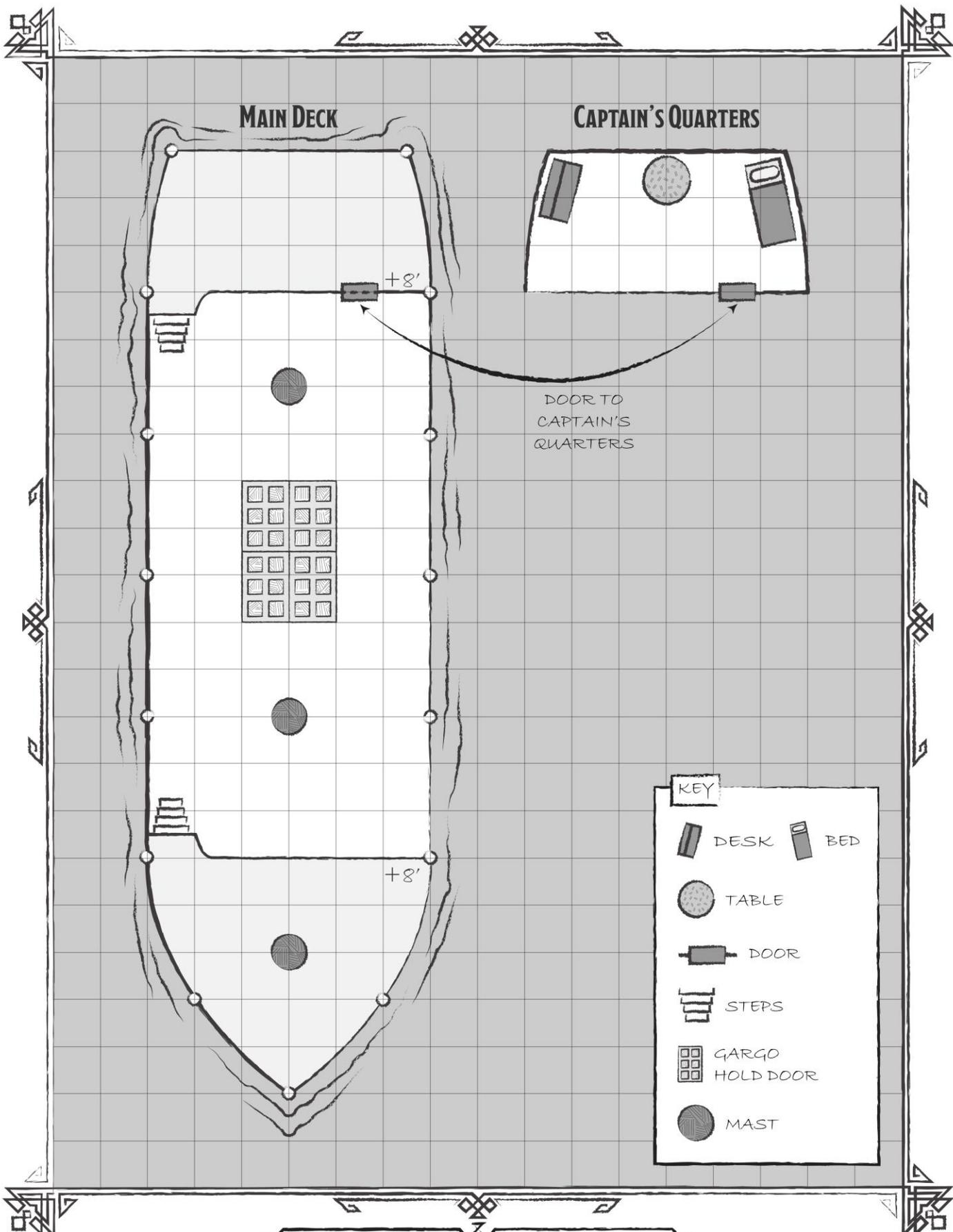
After speaking with Parabald, it should be clear to the characters the mage is not in the area to harm Melvaunt's citizens. The dragonborn is there to remove a force of evil from the city. This report satisfies Liza Tarheels, who promises to look into the cult.

XP Awards

If Parabald reveals his true self to the characters, award each character 30 XP.

Treasure

Each character who defeats Parabald at chess gains a blue quartz gem worth 10 gp.



ADMIRAL'S DELIGHT

Part 5. Order of Wandering Tales

Expected Duration: 40-50 minutes

The pacifist Order of Wandering Tales came to Melvaunt to record the story of the Moonsea's people during this time of chaos. When the characters arrive to investigate the monks, they find an angry merchant and his thugs beating the pacifists. If the adventurers deal with the thugs, the order's leader, Ara Kaitar, shares their purpose in the City of a Thousand Forges with the adventurers.

Brogan Summer Shack

General Features

The following general features pertain to Brogan Summer Shack:

Light. The inn is filled with bright light from hanging lanterns and a fireplace at night and sunlight from large windows during the day.

Smells and Sounds. At first the sounds of battle as thugs beat on the monks. Later the sounds of the fireplace crackling and monks talking in low voices to subjects as they scribble notes on parchment. The smell of Brogan's famous pulled pork is always pungent.

Surrounding Activity. The Brogan twins, Jara and Zed, stand behind the bar. Jara serves drinks while Zed obsesses over the pork. During the fight they are out of the inn, having run to get the authorities.

Order of Wandering Tales Monks

All of the Order of Wandering Tales monks are **commoners** with +2 bonuses to Intelligence (Arcana), (History), and (Investigation) checks.

Brogan Summer Shack is a cozy inn famous for the hospitality of Jara and Zed Brogan. The twins pride themselves on keeping their establishment peaceful and clean while serving the best pulled pork in the Moonsea region. The smell of meat draws you toward the seaside cabin. A sudden shout from within pulls you even closer.

"This is a warning," an angry man's voice cries. "Don't ever pry in my business again. Today you get black eyes. Come into my life once more and it's a knife in the belly. Have at 'em!"

As you get closer to the inn, a violent sight plays out through its windows. Monks in brown robes cower defenselessly as a human man in purple finery shouts for a rough group of men and women to beat the monks to a pulp.

The steel merchant Mervo Galat, a **noble**, directs his eight **thugs** to beat the eight Order of Wandering Tales monks, **commoners**. Mervo is furious at the scribes for exposing an affair that caused his husband to leave.

If left undisturbed, the thugs use their maces to hurt the monks, knocking the scribes unconscious but not killing them. Mervo prefers to give orders as his henchmen do the dirty work. Order of Wandering Tales monks are pacifists with a point to prove. They do not fight, nor do they flee. They take the Dodge action on their turns.

If the characters intervene, the thugs turn to fight them and ignore the monks, while Mervo joins the fray. If the characters use lethal force to kill one of them, the thugs and Mervo start killing too. The thugs and Mervo flee when only three of their band remain standing.

When Mervo and the thugs are defeated, Jara and Zed Brogan arrive with eight **guards**, who transport any prisoners or bodies away while the monks tend to each other's wounds. The characters are acting with the authority of Lieutenant Tarheels and that includes a license to kill.

Bar and Tables. It costs 5 feet of extra movement to get on top of or down from the bar or one of the tables in the inn. Creatures standing on top of one of these surfaces gain advantage on attacks against creatures who are standing on the floor.

A creature next to a table can flip it as an action with a DC 13 Strength check. The DC for this check is 15 if another creature stands on top of the table. Any creatures on top of a table once it is flipped must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw. Creatures who fail land prone next to the table. Creatures who succeed land on their feet next to the table. An overturned table provides half cover.

Adjusting the Encounter

Here are recommendations for adjusting this combat encounter. These are not cumulative.

- **Very weak party:** Replace the eight **thugs** with six **bandits**
- **Weak party:** Remove two **thugs**
- **Strong party:** Replace the eight **thugs** with four **berserkers**
- **Very strong party:** Replace the eight **thugs** with four **berserkers** and replace the **noble** with a **bandit captain**

Master Ara Kaitar

Read or paraphrase the following text when the fighting is over:

As the Brogan Summer Shack recovers from battle, a female dwarf with tan skin and a long red braid dressed in the brown robes of the Order of Wandering Tales approaches you. She bows deeply. "Master Ara Kaitar of the Order of Wandering Tales at your service."

If the characters defended the monks from Mervo and his thugs and killed no one, Master Ara Kaitar (a LN **commoner**) is grateful, and the characters have advantage on all Charisma ability checks while talking to her.

If the characters ask Ara about the fight or why the Order of Wandering Tales has come to Melvaunt, she shares the information -- but only after she has heard a story from each of the characters. She sits at a table, grabs a quill and ink, and says, "Each of you tell me an exciting story about yourself that none here already know. It will go on record."

Allow each character to tell a story to Ara. As they describe their tale, she scribbles furiously, jotting down every word with incredible speed. Ara might ask a question or two for clarity, but allow the characters a chance to shine as they tell their stories. Characters who do not wish to share a story can convince Ara they do not need to be heard with a DC 10 Charisma (Persuasion) check.

After each character shares a story, Ara shares the following information with them:

- The Order of Wandering Tales is a group of monk scholars who believe all stories should be shared. They observe, record, report, and archive personal stories about impactful events.
- The monks put out a free newsletter whenever they have enough information to fill it.
- They are trained to be pacifists in even the most violent situations. They do not take sides during a conflict.
- They came to Melvaunt given the recent events to gather people's stories about the portal and Thar invasion.
- During their investigations they uncovered Mervo's affair and printed the story in their latest newsletter. His husband left, and Mervo wants someone to pay.
- The story that vexes Ara the most is that of a ghost ship appearing in the harbor each night. This ship is supposedly the *Bloody Dawn* come again, but what could possibly make that happen?

Roleplaying Ara Kaitar

Ara Kaitar is a patient, inquisitive listener. She puts others at ease with a calm, welcoming attitude and encourages them to open up to her. Her interest in hearing new stories is genuine. This is more than a job. Meeting new people is a thrill for her. While roleplaying Ara, you might:

- Speak in an even tone with warm words.
- Ask pointed questions without demanding the person answer them.
- Nod along as others talk.
- Look people right in the eye when you address them.

Part 5 Interview Assessment

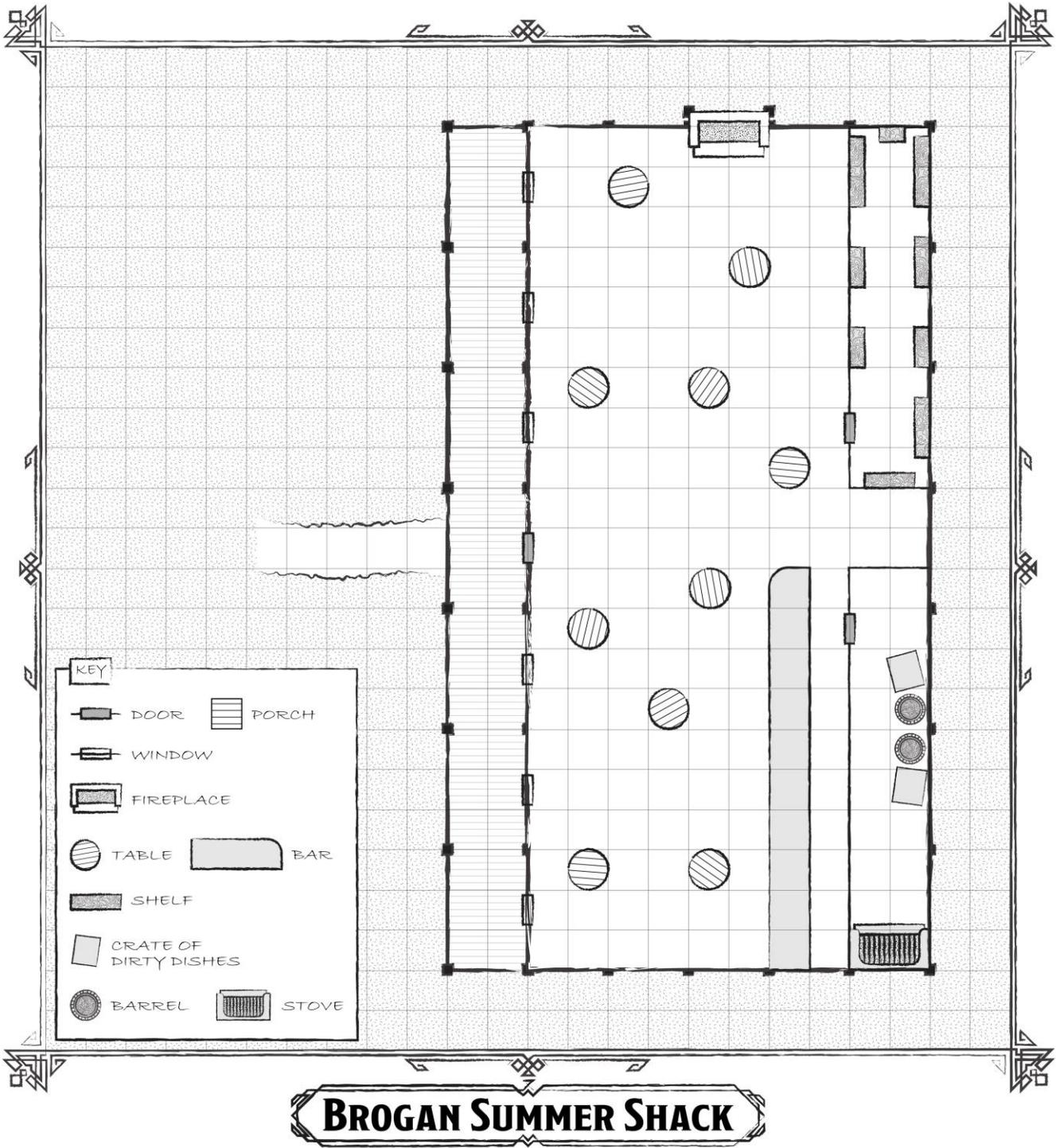
After speaking with Ara Kaitar, it should be clear to the characters that the Order of Wandering Tales is not in the area to do harm to the citizens of Melvaunt. They are pacifists who observe and report. This report satisfies Lieutenant Tarheels.

XP Awards

If the adventurers defeat Mervo Galat and his henchmen, award each character 25 XP.

Treasure

Mervo carries a coin purse with 50 gp. If the characters do not take this money, the guards pat down the prisoner and give the gold to the characters as a reward.



Part 6. Bloody Dawn

Expected Duration: 45-50 minutes

As night falls over Melvaunt, a red-sailed ship resembling the infamous *Bloody Dawn* enters the harbor each night and sails off before sunrise. The adventurers must get to the ship and discover what's happening aboard.

Legend of the *Bloody Dawn*

An old legend tells of a red-sailed pirate ship called *Bloody Dawn* that sank off the coast of Melvaunt a century ago. Its ruthless crew and captain are said to be so evil even the Nine Hells and Abyss won't take them, so their restless spirits roam the waters.

This used to be a story told to scare children, but now it seems real. The characters can learn the basics of the legend from any citizen of Melvaunt or immediately know the tale if they are proficient in History.

Getting to the Boat

Once the sun goes down, the ship appears in the harbor. Read or paraphrase the following text when the characters are in Melvaunt's dock district at night:

At the edge of the harbor, a large red-sailed ship is bathed in moonlight. The vessel is still and silent as death against the clear night sky. The small rowboats Liza Tarheels has reserved for you bob at the dock, waiting to carry you to the mysterious ship.

The City Watch loans the characters three rowboats to get to the red-sailed ship. Read or paraphrase the following text once characters arrive near the ship:

As you get closer to the ship, you can hear its hull creak. Waves gently lap against the belly of the boat. No sailors voices can be heard, but a boat this big certainly needs a crew to sail it. The words *Bloody Dawn* are painted in Common on the back of the ship. Several fish corpses float on the surface of the water near the ship.

The characters can easily climb aboard the ship, using ropes along its hull.

Bloody Dawn – Upper Deck

General Features

The following general features pertain to the upper deck of the *Bloody Dawn*:

Light. The upper deck is bathed in bright light by the moon.

Smells and Sounds. The night air is salty and cool, while the boat smells of fresh stained wood and new ropes. The creaking of the boat and gentle lapping of the sea can be heard as the skeletons go about their chores.

Surrounding Activity. The skeletons move methodically around the deck, making their rounds and doing chores.

As you climb over the side of the rail, a horrifying site greets you. Skeletons methodically walk across the deck. Long boney fingers pull ropes, check sails, and patrol the boat. All are dressed in the garb of pirates, with swords strapped to their hips and bows on their backs.

At the back of the ship, a handle for a trap door peeks out behind a skeleton in a three-cornered hat manning the wheel. Occasionally the skeleton turns the wheel too far to one side and its hand pops off. The skeleton simply grabs the appendage with its other hand and reattaches it when this happens.

The twelve **skeletons** here do not attack the characters, unless the adventurers attack first in which case the undead fight to the death. Otherwise the skeletons go about their business, even if the characters attack the trap door.

Adjusting the Encounter

Here are recommendations for adjusting this combat encounter. These are not cumulative.

- **Very weak party:** Reduce the number of **skeletons** to three
- **Weak party:** Reduce the number of **skeletons** to nine
- **Strong party:** Add three **skeletons**
- **Very strong party:** Add one **minotaur skeleton**

Skeleton at the Wheel. A character can grab the skeleton's hand when it pops off the wheel with a DC 12 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check. On a success the character has the skeleton's hand (which can be used to open the trap door). On a failure the character takes 1 point of piercing damage as the skeleton's boney fingers jab for the hand at the same time and the skeleton grabs the hand back first.

Trap Door. The five-foot-square trap door behind the skeleton driving the boat is locked with an *arcane lock* spell. A character who can cast this spell recognizes the effect immediately after interacting with the door. Only Zarabi Thar'khul, the necromancer and captain of the *Bloody Dawn*, and her skeletal crew can open the trap door.

A DC 25 Strength check is required to force open the door. Each unsuccessful attempt at forcing the door open activates the tiny shock trap (see below).

The door has AC 15 and 18 hit points and is immune to poison and psychic damage. Each time the door takes damage, the tiny shock trap is activated (see below). Skeletons do not attack characters for attacking the door.

The hand of a skeleton can be used to open the door.

Once the door is opened, a disembodied threatening female voice says, "Turn back now! You know not what horrors the crew of the *Bloody Dawn* has in store for you below! This is your last warning before we eat your entrails!" The voice is Zarabi's. The door reveals a ladder that leads down to the area B2, which stinks of dead fish.

Tiny Shock Trap. Each time the trap door is touched or takes damage, it lets out a small burst of tiny blue lightning bolts. Each creature that is not undead within 5 feet of the door must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or take 3 (1d6) points of lightning damage.

Bloody Dawn – Observation Deck

General Features

The following general features pertain to the observation deck of the *Bloody Dawn*:

Ceiling. The ceiling is 10 feet high here.

Light. The observation deck is filled with bright light by a magic orb in the ceiling.

Smells and Sounds. The smell of dead fish is strong in this chamber and the boat's wood ceiling creaks.

Surrounding Activity. Sea life swims around the boat and dead fish float by.

An orb in the ceiling glows with a soft blue light, illuminating this chamber. As you look around, the first thing you notice is that the walls and floor of the ship here are made of impenetrable blackness! A few more seconds of hard staring reveals the truth. This level of the ship is made of glass. The impenetrable blackness around you is actually the Moonsea, as evidenced by the frequent fish, squid, or jellyfish swimming by. A small desk with parchment and books spread everywhere sits opposite the ladder on the other end of this deck. A bedroll is rolled up next to the desk on one side and on the other stand two tall barrels. Caddy corner to the barrels is a long lab table that holds several surgical instruments and piles of dead fish.

Suddenly, the ceiling begins to move. Small, grey, disembodied hands that were clinging to the ceiling begin to fall around you. Their dead, humanoid digits move with surprising quickness, drawing themselves toward you with malicious, grotesque purpose.

The same female voice you heard when the door opened speaks again. "This is your last chance. You are trespassing. Turn back now or face horrors unknown!"

Zarabi Thar'khul (a CN **mage**) controls the twenty **crawling claws** surrounding the characters. The necromancer watches everything in this room transpire in an extradimensional space thanks to the *rope trick* spell she cast right before the characters came down. The undead do not attack the adventurers if they flee immediately.

If the characters make a stand, the creatures attack. Zarabi makes the claws deal only bludgeoning damage and knock characters unconscious instead of dealing a potentially lethal blow. Once the characters are defeated or the number of crawling claws is reduced to five, Zarabi comes out of the extradimensional space and demands the characters leave.

Barrels. The barrels next to the desk contain thirty gallons of fresh water each. The barrels weigh three hundred pounds.

Desk. The top of the desk has all of Zarabi's notes and research about fish dying in the Moonsea. A quick glance through the materials reveals books about marine biology, the study of portals and conjuration magic, and notes observing the number of dead fish in the Moonsea increasing once the planar portal became active.

Inside the desk's drawers are thirty days' worth of rations.

Glass Floor. The boat's smooth floor makes moving difficult. Any creature that moves more than

15 feet on its turn must succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or fall prone. Creatures with a climb speed, including the crawling claws, are immune to this effect.

Magic Orb. Zarabi also controls the magic orb in the ceiling. Before combat breaks out, the orb just gives off bright light in a 30-foot radius and dim light for an additional 30. If combat breaks out, on initiative count 0 the orb gives off a brilliant burst of light. Any creature that is not undead within 30 feet of the orb that can see must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or become blinded until the end of its next turn. The orb has an AC of 15 and 18 hit points and is immune to poison and psychic damage.

Adjusting the Encounter

Here are recommendations for adjusting this combat encounter. These are not cumulative.

- **Very weak party:** Reduce the number of **crawling claws** to eight
- **Weak party:** Reduce the number of **crawling claws** to sixteen
- **Strong party:** Add one **specter**
- **Very strong party:** Add two **specters**

Zarabi Thar'khul

Read or paraphrase the following text when the Zarabi Thar'khul leaves the extradimensional space appears:

The remaining disembodied hands fall back defensively as a small length of rope appears out of thin air, stretching from inches above the ground to the ceiling. Sliding down the perfectly vertical piece of hemp is a thin woman with dark skin wearing gray robes. Tattoos adorn her bald pate and arms.

"Excuse me, but you are trespassing! What is the meaning of this?"

Zarabi Thar'khul's Spells

Zarabi Thar'khul has these spells prepared instead of the ones in the mage's stat block:

Cantrips (at will): *chill touch*, *light*, *mage hand*, *shocking grasp*

1st level (4 slots): *detect magic*, *ray of sickness*, *mage armor*, *sleep*

2nd level (3 slots): *detect thoughts*, *rope trick*

3rd level (3 slots): *animate dead*, *dispel magic*

4th level (3 slots): *arcane eye*, *blight*

5th level (1 slot): *scrying*

If the characters attack, Zarabi defends herself, but she keeps trying to convince them to stop. She initially refuses to talk with them.

The characters can convince Zarabi to have a chat with them in several ways:

- A DC 13 Charisma (Intimidation) or (Persuasion) convinces her to have a chat with the characters.
- If the characters explain they are on official business from Melvaunt's City Watch, Zarabi talks with them.
- A DC 10 Intelligence (History) check determines Zarabi has the shaved head and tattoos of a Red Wizard of Thay. Mentioning this to her makes her feel the need to share her story.

Once the characters convince Zarabi to speak with them, she offers the following information freely:

- Zarabi, a necromancer, used to be a Red Wizard. It took the murder of her husband at the hands of a rival to realize how cruel and malicious Thayans can be. She fled the country soon after that rather than seek vengeance.
- Zarabi created all the undead aboard the ship. She harvested the materials from bandits who tried to hijack her on the road.
- The mage has come to Melvaunt to study the effects of the planar portal. When she first arrived in the port city, she noted many dead fish floating in the harbor. Wondering if this might be some side effect of the portal, she used her fortune to construct this boat to better study the marine life.
- Zarabi knows the story of the *Bloody Dawn*. She painted the *Bloody Dawn* to look like the infamous pirate vessel because she thought it would afford her some privacy during her studies. She knows that people may not trust her, given that she's a necromancer from Thay, but her intentions really are academic.
- The mage hasn't gathered much conclusive evidence about the fish yet. She knows once the portal appeared, the number of dead fish increased. This could have something to do with the portal's magic, but her theory is that many merchants didn't feel safe leaving the city to dump their waste once the portal was discovered and Thar marched, so more traders have been dumping into the harbor.

A DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals Zarabi has more to say, but is hesitant about it. A DC 15 Charisma (Intimidation) or (Persuasion) check gets her to reveal the following information:

- Zarabi tells the characters she can sense a dark force of necromancy gathering near Melvaunt. She can't pinpoint the exact location, but those who serve evil are definitely drawn to the region.
- After revealing the information above, Zarabi feels the need to protect the characters in some way. She doesn't like the idea of them getting hurt because of information she shared (now that she sees they meant no harm in trespassing). She gives them a *potion of necrotic resistance*.

Roleplaying Zarabi Thar'khul

Zarabi Thar'khul is excited, confident, and brilliant. It may take her a few moments to open up the characters, but once she does, the necromancer is more than happy to yammer on about her research and her past. While roleplaying Zarabi, you might:

- Speak slowly at first and gather steam, speaking faster and faster.
- Be confident and direct in questions and answers.
- Get excited when others share new revelations with you.
- Sit up straight and tall in your chair.

Part 6 Interview Assessment

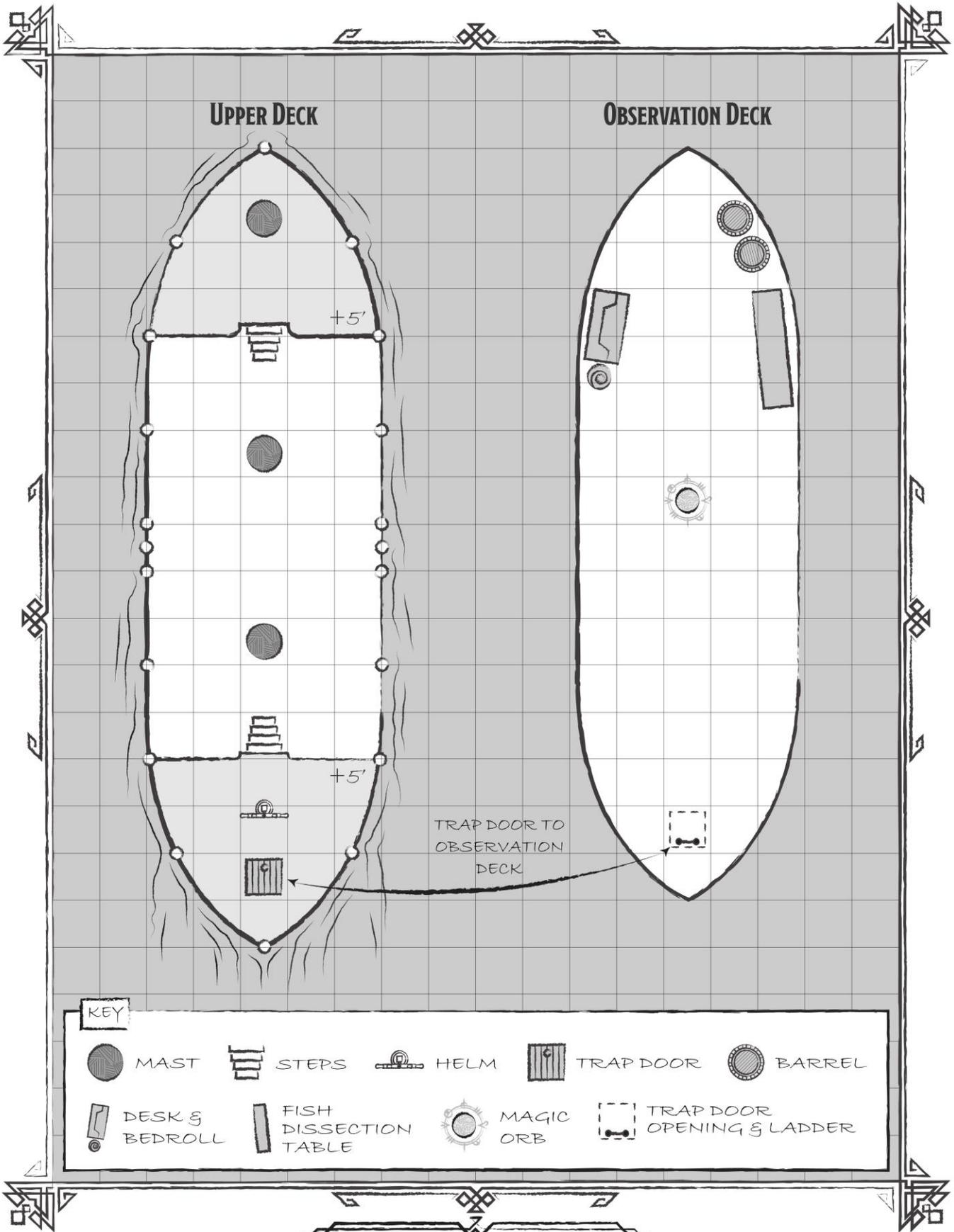
After speaking with Zarabi Thar'khul, it should be clear to the characters the necromancer is not in the area to do harm to the citizens of Melvaunt. Some characters could take issue with her use of necromantic magic, but Melvaunt has no laws against such practices. A report about the truth of what Zarabi is doing satisfies Lieutenant Tarheels.

XP Awards

If the characters can convince Zarabi to calm down and have a conversation with them, award each character 25 XP.

Treasure

If the characters convince Zarabi to tell them about the dark force gathering in Melvaunt, she gives them a *potion of necrotic resistance*.



BLOODY DUSK

Conclusion

Read or paraphrase the following when the characters return to Lieutenant Tarheels with their report:

An exhausted Liza Tarheels sits behind her desk, rubbing her face with her hands. She looks up as you enter. "Please give me some good news," she pleads.

The characters can give Liza Tarheels whatever report they'd like about their subjects. If they tell her the truth about everyone, she breathes a sigh of relief and thanks the characters while paying them.

If the characters tell her to be suspicious of any of the groups she asked them to investigate, Liza rubs her temples as she contemplates what it could mean for Melvaunt. That NPC or group winds up the subject of further investigation of Melvaunt's authorities. For most of the NPCs, Liza digging deeper into their pasts has little meaningful outcome. If investigated, Mericor Tasgaf gets arrested and Zarabi Thar'khul gets chased out of town.

This story continues in *CORE 2-2 Songs of Law & Chaos*.

XP Award

If the characters talk to every group before morning the next day, award each 50 XP.

Treasure

As promised earlier in the adventure, Lieutenant Tarheels pays the adventurers 250 gp.

Rewards

Make sure players note their rewards on their adventure logsheets. Give your name and DCI number (if applicable) so players can record who ran the session.

Experience

Total up all combat experience earned for defeated foes, and divide by the number of characters present in the combat. For non-combat experience, the rewards are listed per character. Give all characters in the party non-combat experience awards unless otherwise noted.

Combat Awards

Name of Foe	XP per Foe
Ape	100
Bandit	25
Bandit Captain	450
Berserker	450
Black Bear	100
Commoner	10
Crawling Claw	10
Guard	25
Hunter Shark	450
Mage	2,300
Minotaur Skeleton	450
Noble	25
Panther	50
Polar Bear	450
Reef Shark	100
Saber-Toothed Tiger	450
Scout	100
Shadow Demon	1,100
Skeleton	50
Specter	200
Spy	200
Tiger	200
Thug	100

Non-Combat Awards

Task or Accomplishment	XP per Character
Protect Brea Salvadine (Part 1)	30
Arrest Mericor Tasgaf (Part 2)	30
Disable Big Billy (Part 3)	50
Gain Parabald's trust (Part 4)	30
Defeat Mervo and thugs (Part 5)	25
Get Zarabi to talk (Part 6)	25
Question all groups (Conclusion)	50

The **minimum** total award for each character participating in this adventure is 900 experience points.

The **maximum** total award for each character participating in this adventure is 1,200 experience points.

Treasure

The characters receive the following treasure, divided up amongst the party. Characters should attempt to divide treasure evenly whenever possible. Gold piece values listed for sellable gear are calculated at their selling price, not their purchase price.

Consumable magic items should be divided up however the group sees fit. If more than one character is interested in a specific consumable magic item, the DM can determine who gets it randomly should the group be unable to decide.

Permanent magic items are divided according to a system. See the sidebar if the adventure awards permanent magic items.

Treasure Awards

Item Name/Location	GP Value
Asberyth Square (Part 1)	50
Seaside Cave (Part 2)	50
Melvaunt Docks (Part 4)	50
Brogan Summer Shack (Part 5)	50
Liza's Office (Conclusion)	250

Potion of Healing

Potion, common

A description of this item can be found in the *Player's Handbook* and *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Potion of Necrotic Resistance

Potion, uncommon

A description of this item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Spell Scroll of Color Spray

Scroll, common

This scroll contains a single *color spray* spell. A description of this item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Renown

Each character receives **one point of renown**.

Downtime

Each character receives **10 downtime days** at the conclusion of this adventure.

Story Awards

Characters have the opportunity to earn the following story awards during this adventure.

Criminal Punch Line. If the characters do not arrest Mericor Tasgaf, word spreads throughout Melvaunt's criminal population that they are pushovers. As a result, Melvaunt's criminals don't take them seriously. As long as you possess this story award, you have disadvantage on Charisma (Intimidation) checks made to influence any of Melvaunt's criminals. Additionally, Melvaunt's law enforcement officials learn about your soft reputation among the city's less savvy. As long as you possess this story award, you have disadvantage on Charisma (Persuasion) checks made to influence any of Melvaunt's law enforcement officials.

Friend of Mulmaster. Characters who appeal to Lieutenant Tarheels on behalf of Brea Salvadine find themselves in the good graces of the people of Mulmaster. For as long as you possess this story award, you have advantage on Charisma (Persuasion) checks made to influence people from Mulmaster. In addition, merchants from Mulmaster offer you 20% off the sale price of any mundane good or service in the *Player's Handbook* less than 500 gp.

DM Rewards

For running this adventure, you receive 300 XP, 150 gp, and ten downtime days.

DM Appendix: NPC Summary

The following NPCs appear or are mentioned in this adventure.

Liza Tarheels (LIE-zuh TAR-heels). Human female. Melvaunt's Lieutenant is overworked, assertive, and blunt. Many long hours on the job have her a little jaded and a lot exhausted, but she's good at what she does and has the best interest of Melvaunt's people at heart.

Brea Salvadine (bray-UH SAL-vah-deen). Human female. Brea is a natural leader but she hasn't always used her talents for good. The destruction of the City of Danger changed her. She has come to Melvaunt to convince the Council of Iron to lower the price of their goods as Mulmaster rebuilds.

Merikor Tasgaf (mer-eh-CORE taz-GAFF). Moon elf male. He's charming, attractive, and knows how to make people feel good. The con man pretends to be a cleric of Waukeen who leads expensive religious retreats for Melvaunt's merchants.

Fizzlebottom Cloisternook (FIZ-el-BOT-um CLOY-stir-nook). Gnome male. The old, kind, smart, and often intoxicated patriarch of the Cloisternook family. The Gond-worshipping clan has more than a few secrets and Fizzlebottom knows them all.

Mollo and Dollo Cloisternook (MO-lo, DOE-lo CLOY-stir-nook). Gnome females. Twin daughters of Fizzlebottom, they are the clan's best inventors (other than their father) and accomplished moonshiners.

Parabald the Maimed (par-uh-BALD THE MAYMDUH). Dragonborn male. A one-armed mage who feigns madness while hunting cults of Cyric.

Mervo Galat (murk-VO guh-LOT). Human male. A noble merchant who sells steel. His husband left him when the Order of Wandering Tales exposed his affair.

Ara Kaitar (AHR-uh KAY-tar). Dwarf female. The master of the Order of Wandering Tales. She puts others at ease with a calm, welcoming attitude and encourages them to open up to her.

Zarabi Thar'khul (zay-RAH-bee thar-KULL). Human female. Zarabi is an ex-Red Wizard who fled the country after her husband was murdered. She came to Melvaunt to study the effects of the planar portal on sea life.

Appendix. NPC/Monster Statistics

Ape

Medium beast, unaligned

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 19 (3d8 + 6)

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	6 (-2)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)

Skills Athletics +5, Perception +3

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages –

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Actions

Multiattack. The ape makes two fist attacks.

Fist. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

Rock. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 25/50 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

Bandit

Medium humanoid (any race), any non-lawful alignment

Armor Class 12 (leather armor)

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages –

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Actions

Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) slashing damage.

Light Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 80 ft./320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage.

Bandit Captain

Medium humanoid (any race), any non-lawful alignment

Armor Class 15 (studded leather)

Hit Points 65 (10d8 + 20)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Str +4, Dex +5, Wis +2

Skills Athletics +4, Deception +4

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any two languages

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Actions

Multiattack. The captain makes three melee attacks: two with its scimitar and one with its dagger. Or the captain makes two ranged attacks with its daggers.

Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) slashing damage.

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage.

Reactions

Parry. The captain adds 2 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, the captain must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

Berserker

Medium humanoid (any race), any chaotic alignment

Armor Class 13 (hide armor)

Hit Points 67 (9d8 + 27)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)	9 (-1)	11 (+0)	9 (-1)

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Reckless. At the start of its turn, the berserker can gain advantage on all melee weapon attack rolls during that turn, but attack rolls against it have advantage until the start of its next turn.

Actions

Greataxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d12 + 3) slashing damage.

Black Bear

Medium beast, unaligned

Armor Class 11 (natural armor)

Hit Points 19 (3d8 + 6)

Speed 40 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	2 (-4)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)

Skills Perception +3

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages —

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Keen Smell. The bear has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Actions

Multiattack. The bear makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2d4 + 2) slashing damage.

Commoner

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 10

Hit Points 4 (1d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 0 (10 XP)

Actions

Club. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 (1d4) bludgeoning damage.

Crawling Claw

Tiny undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 2 (1d4)

Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	5 (-3)	10 (+0)	4 (-3)

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, poisoned

Senses blindsight 30 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 10

Languages understands Common but can't speak

Challenge 0 (10 XP)

Turn Immunity. The claw is immune to effects that turn undead.

Actions

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) bludgeoning or slashing damage (claw's choice).

Dretch

Small fiend (demon), chaotic evil

Armor Class 11

Hit Points 18 (4d6 + 4)

Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	5 (-3)	8 (-1)	3 (-4)

Damage Resistances cold, fire, lightning

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages Abyssal, telepathy 60 ft. (works only with creatures that understand Abyssal)

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Actions

Multiattack. The dretch makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d6) piercing damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (2d4) slashing damage.

Fetid Cloud (1/Day). A 10-foot radius of disgusting green gas extends out from the dretch. The gas spreads around corners, and its area is lightly obscured. It lasts for 1 minute or until a strong wind disperses it. Any creature that starts its turn in that area must succeed on a DC 11 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the start of its next turn. While poisoned in this way, the target can take either an action or a bonus action on its turn, not both, and can't take reactions.

Guard

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 16 (chain shirt, shield)

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Perception +2

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Actions

Spear. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage.

Hunter Shark

Large beast, unaligned

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 45 (6d10 + 12)

Speed 0 ft., swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)	1 (-5)	10 (+0)	4 (-3)

Skills Perception +2

Senses blindsight 30 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages –

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Blood Frenzy. The shark has advantage on melee attack rolls against any creature that doesn't have all its hit points.

Water Breathing. The shark can breathe only underwater.

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) piercing damage.

Mage

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)

Hit Points 40 (9d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)

Saving Throws Int +6, Wis +4

Skills Arcana +6, History +6

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages any four languages

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Spellcasting. The mage is a 9th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). The mage has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *fire bolt*, *light*, *mage hand*, *prestidigitation*

1st level (4 slots): *detect magic*, *mage armor*, *magic missile*, *shield*

2nd level (3 slots): *misty step*, *suggestion*

3rd level (3 slots): *counterspell*, *fireball*, *fly*

4th level (3 slots): *greater invisibility*, *ice storm*

5th level (1 slot): *cone of cold*

Actions

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

Minotaur Skeleton

Large undead, lawful evil

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 67 (9d10 + 18)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)	6 (-2)	8 (-1)	5 (-3)

Damage Vulnerabilities bludgeoning

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages understands Abyssal but can't speak

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Charge. If the skeleton moves at least 10 feet straight toward a target and then hits it with a gore attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 9 (2d8) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw or be pushed up to 10 feet away and knocked prone.

Actions

Greataxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (2d12 + 4) slashing damage.

Gore. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) piercing damage.

Noble

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 15 (breastplate)

Hit Points 9 (2d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

Skills Deception +5, Insight +4, Persuasion +5

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any two languages

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Actions

Rapier. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage.

Reactions

Parry. The noble adds 2 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, the noble must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

Panther

Medium beast, unaligned

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 13 (3d8)

Speed 50 ft., climb 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	3 (-4)	14 (+2)	7 (-2)

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +6

Senses passive Perception 14

Languages —

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Keen Smell. The panther has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Pounce. If the panther moves at least 20 feet straight toward a creature and then hits it with a claw attack on the same turn, that target must succeed on a DC 12 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone. If the target is prone, the panther can make one bite attack against it as a bonus action.

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) slashing damage.

Polar Bear

Large beast, unaligned

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 42 (5d10 + 15)

Speed 40 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	2 (-4)	13 (+1)	7 (-2)

Skills Perception +3

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages —

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Keen Smell. The bear has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Actions

Multiattack. The bear makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 + 5) piercing damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6 + 5) slashing damage.

Reef Shark

Medium beast, unaligned

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 22 (4d8 + 4)

Speed 0 ft., swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	13 (+1)	13 (+1)	1 (-5)	10 (+0)	4 (-3)

Skills Perception +2

Senses blindsight 30 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages —

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Pack Tactics. The shark has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the shark's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

Water Breathing. The shark can breathe only underwater.

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage.

Saber-Toothed Tiger

Large beast, unaligned

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 52 (7d10 + 14)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	3 (-4)	12 (+1)	8 (-1)

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +6

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages —

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Keen Smell. The tiger has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Pounce. If the tiger moves at least 20 feet straight toward a creature and then hits it with a claw attack on the same turn, that target must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone. If the target is prone, the tiger can make one bite attack against it as a bonus action.

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d10 + 5) piercing damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6 + 5) slashing damage.

Scout

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 13 (leather armor)

Hit Points 16 (3d8 + 3)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	11 (+0)

Skills Nature +4, Perception +5, Stealth +6, Survival +5

Senses passive Perception 15

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Keen Hearing and Sight. The scout has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or sight.

Actions

Multiattack. The scout makes two melee attacks or two ranged attacks.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

Longbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, ranged 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage.

Shadow Demon

Medium fiend (demon), chaotic evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 66 (12d8 + 12)

Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
1 (-5)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Dex +5, Cha +4

Skills Stealth +7

Damage Vulnerabilities radiant

Damage Resistances acid, fire, necrotic, thunder;

bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities cold, lightning, poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Abyssal, telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Incorporeal Movement. The demon can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

Light Sensitivity. While in bright light, the demon has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Shadow Stealth. While in dim light or darkness, the demon can take the Hide action as a bonus action.

Actions

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) psychic damage or, if the demon had advantage on the attack roll, 17 (4d6 + 3) psychic damage.

Skeleton

Medium undead, lawful evil

Armor Class 13 (armor scraps)

Hit Points 13 (2d8 + 4)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	6 (-2)	8 (-1)	5 (-3)

Damage Vulnerabilities bludgeoning

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages understands all languages it knew in life but can't speak

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Actions

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

Shortbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

Spy

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 27 (6d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

Skills Deception +5, Insight +4, Investigation +5, Perception +6, Persuasion +5, Sleight of Hand +4, Stealth +4

Senses passive Perception 16

Languages any two languages

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Cunning Action. On each of its turns, the spy can use a bonus action to take the Dash, Disengage, or Hide action.

Sneak Attack (1/Turn). The spy deals an extra 7 (2d6) damage when it hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of the spy that isn't incapacitated and the spy doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

Actions

Multiattack. The spy makes two melee attacks.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

Hand Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

Tiger

Large beast, unaligned

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 37 (5d10 + 10)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)	3 (-4)	12 (+1)	8 (-1)

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +4

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages –

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Cunning Action. The tiger has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Pounce. If the tiger moves at least 20 feet straight toward a creature and then hits it with a claw attack on the same turn, that target must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone. If the target is prone, the tiger can make one bite attack against it as a bonus action.

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d10 + 3) piercing damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage.

Thug

Medium humanoid (any race), any non-good alignment

Armor Class 11 (leather armor)

Hit Points 32 (5d8 + 10)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)

Skills Intimidation +2

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Pack Tactics. The thug has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the thug's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

Actions

Multiattack. The thug makes two melee attacks.

Mace. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

Heavy Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d10) piercing damage.

Handout 1: Public Notice – Help Wanted

HELP WANTED

Lieutenant Liza Tarheels offers easy money for those who can handle themselves in a scrap. Adventurers interested in helping protect the city of Melvaunt should report to the Lieutenant's office in Asberyth at six bells tomorrow.

--Posted by the Melvaunt City Watch

Handout 2: List of Newcomers

Mysterious Newcomers

1. *Brea Salvadine* – An ambassador from Mulmaster refusing to move her entourage from the Asberyth Square until she is seen by the Council of Iron.
2. *Merikor Tasgaf* – A moon elf cleric of Waukeen providing expensive business seminars and retreats for struggling merchants in a sea cave outside Melvaunt.
3. *Cloisternook Gnomes* – A family of hard-drinking gnomes with a camp near a defunct diamond mine outside of Melvaunt.
4. *Parabald the Maimed* – A mad dragonborn mage who plays chess with imaginary friends by the docks each day.
5. *Order of Wandering Tales* – This odd group of monk scholars asks everyone probing questions and stays at Brogan Summer Shack near the docks.
6. *Ghost Ship* – A red-sailed vessel appears in the harbor every day just after dusk and sails off right before dawn. This ship appears to be the fabled ghost ship *Bloody Dawn*. Rowboats are at the dock for you.