

A PARAGON TIER ADVENTURE

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS[®]

REVENGE OF THE GIANTS[™]



AN ADVENTURE FOR CHARACTERS OF 12TH - 17TH LEVEL

Bill Slavicsek • Mike Mearls • David Noonan

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ROLEPLAYING GAME ADVENTURE

Bill Slavicsek • Mike Mearls • David Noonan





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ADVENTURE GUIDE

Giants have banded together under an alliance of three titan lords to finally get their revenge for the defeats and insults of the past. Moreover, they seek to reclaim the world that they helped create, and to achieve this lofty goal they have set a plan in motion to free one of the most powerful primordials—the master of fire, earth, and frost, Piranoth the World Mover.

Revenge of the Giants is a DUNGEON & DRAGONS® adventure for characters of 12th to 18th level. You need the *Player's Handbook*®, *Monster Manual*®, and the *Dungeon Master's Guide*® to play. *D&D™ Dungeon Tiles* and *D&D® Miniatures* can enhance your play experience and are enthusiastically recommended.

HOW TO USE THIS ADVENTURE

Revenge of the Giants, a paragon-tier adventure, consists of three parts. It takes a group of five player characters (PCs) from 12th to 18th level. Make sure to familiarize yourself with the plot of the adventure so that you can build your campaign toward the events that unfold herein.

All of the material in this book is designed for the Dungeon Master (DM). Players expecting to participate in the adventure should not read any further.

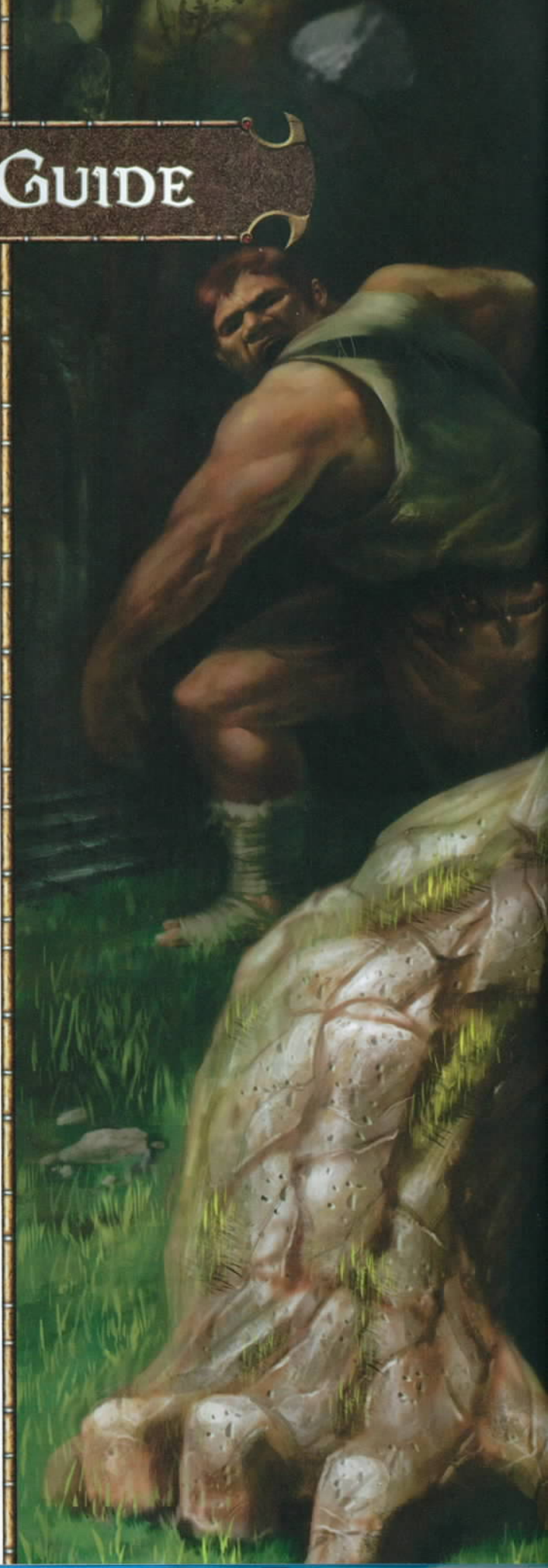
The book is broken into two sections. The first section provides an “Adventure Guide” for the DM. It contains an overview of the adventure. It also features new magic items, new monsters, and other material to help the DM run the adventure.

The second section includes the many possible encounters within the adventure. Some of these encounters can be played in any order, while other encounter areas only become available after key events occur.

A poster map, included at the back of the book, depicts three of the key encounter areas used in the adventure. These three areas are rendered in a scale that allows you to place your *D&D Miniatures* directly on the map so that you can run these key encounters.

Getting Started

Read through the rest of the “Adventure Guide” to get a sense of the scope and flow of the adventure. Provide one or more of the “Adventure Hooks” (page 8), and then proceed to **Encounter C1: Desperate Message** on page 28 to begin the adventure.





ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

Revenge of the Giants sets out to provide adventurers with a remarkable paragon-tier experience that highlights the changes in scope and world view that occur once 11th level is achieved. This section provides background information and a summary of the adventure.

BACKGROUND

As the Dawn War came to a close, some of the gods established contingencies so that the people of the world could defend themselves should threats once again appear out of the darkness at the borders of the world. One of these contingencies was the creation of the city of Argent and the establishment of the Paragon Compact. This agreement between all of the civilized people of the world put in place a mutual defense pact, with Argent as the first line of defense.

According to the compact, it was the duty of every nation and empire to provide champions to serve as guardians and agents of Argent. In practice, paragon-tier heroes volunteered or were selected through a variety of means to take their place on the walls of Argent. Vardar, Bael Turath, Arkhosia, Nerath—all these ancient empires and others regularly sent champions to serve in Argent.

The champions worked alone and in groups to investigate potential threats whenever they appeared. There were never enough champions at any given time to create more than a small strike team or two, so it wasn't like they could police the entire world. They concentrated their efforts on the most powerful, most otherworldly menaces—incursions into the world by powerful Far Realm entities, demon lords, and primordials being the most common threats that the champions attempted to investigate and deal with. But they weren't an army, and many other dangers had to be left to adventurers, nations, and ordinary people to deal with as best they could.

THE CITY OF ARGENT

The city of Argent is a walled settlement on a cloud-shrouded mountaintop overlooking the Plains of Chaos, where the barriers between the world and the Elemental Chaos are particularly thin. In ages past, it was a thriving metropolis, occupied by various races and visited by scores more. Everything was built around the needs of the guardians, the champions provided by the bastions of light to serve as Argent's agents and defenders.

As time passed by, the city began to lose status and influence. Its neutrality, once a great strength, led to its decline as the empire of Nerath took hold of the world. Nerath continued to live up to the terms of the compact, but as the empire grew stronger and more powerful, there was less call for the guardians.

Thanks to the influence and reach of Nerath, the human-controlled empire that covered much of the known land, the world became a safer place. Argent fell farther and farther from the forefront of memory, and fewer and fewer champions were sent to guard its once-hallowed walls. Because of the success of Nerath, Argent was a mere shadow of its former self when the unthinkable happened.

Nerath fell, as all empires eventually do, and the fall was long and hard. The world, so safe and stable for so many years under the wise and benevolent rule of Nerath's human kings and queens, was suddenly thrown into darkness. The monsters and other threats to the world, held at bay by the light of Nerath, surged forth like a tidal wave of darkness when that light was abruptly extinguished. Argent's guardians, few in number and frankly caught as off guard as the rest of the world, emerged to try to turn the destructive tide.

With the help of the guardians, a few dim lights winked on in the darkness, and the survivors of Nerath gathered in isolated pockets to defend themselves and live life as best they could in a more dangerous world. The guardians, however, did not fare as well.

All of the guardians that were dispatched from Argent to try to stem the raise of darkness never returned. The last guardian, the wizard Obanar, never learned what happened to his companions. He remained behind to watch over the walls of the city and to protect its ancient treasures. More over, he waited for the next batch of champions to arrive so that he could train them and pass on the mission, as it had been passed on to him.

Now, more than a century has gone by, and Obanar still waits. The city of Argent has become a shell of memories and shadows. The last guardian, ancient and alone, haunts the place like a ghost of bygone days. He never learned that Nerath fell. He doesn't know that no new kingdom or empire has risen to replace it, that civilization remains reduced to solitary points of light in the darkness that has filled in the ruins of Nerath. He doesn't understand why no new guardians have arrived in all these years to shore up Argent's defenses and take their place as the defenders of the world.

What Obanar does know is that a new threat has appeared on the horizon. It is an ancient threat, a danger with roots that stretch back to the time before Argent was established. And this threat is aimed directly at Argent, which means that it is a threat that knows about the city. A threat that knows what Argent means, what its purpose is, and what it contains within its now-silent walls.

Obanar, the last guardian of Argent, fears that he may no longer be up to the challenge before him. He doesn't believe he can win, but he knows that he can't fail. For if Argent falls, the world follows.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

Revenge of the Giants is divided into nine parts. Some parts of the adventure can only occur after other parts have been completed. Other sections are designed to occur whenever the player characters decide to explore them. Each of the sections, as well as the proposed flow of the adventure, are described below.

Part One: The City of Argent (*Encounters C1-C4, pages 28-35*): The adventure begins when the last guardian of Argent sends his one remaining aide to enlist the help of the greatest champions of the current age. The adventurers encounter the aide, a torrian named Rowthar, just as agents of the Elemental Chaos intent of doing him grave harm catch up to him. With the rescue of Rowthar, the torrian gives the adventurers Obanar's message and shows them how to get to Argent. In Argent, the adventurers meet Obanar, learn about the Paragon Compact, and help defend the city from invading giants and elementals. One villain escapes with an ancient relic from Argent's vaults, however, and Obanar asks the "champions" to take up the Silver Cloaks. "There can be only one purpose in this attack, one reason that that particular relic was taken," Obanar explains. "The giants have come together to release the primordial Piranoth back into the world."

From here, Obanar presents the adventurers with a number of options. They can seek out the remaining torrians and convince them to return to Argent to help fortify the city. They can find the materials that Obanar can use to create a set of magic items to help them eventually deal with Piranoth. They can attempt to stop the giants from recovering the items necessary to free Piranoth from his ancient prison. Or they can try to rally the scattered settlements of civilized races to create armies to defend against the marauding giants.

At some point during a return to the city, after the adventurers have completed one or more research or quest encounters, they must once again help Obanar weather a siege as earth giants and their allies attack the gates of Argent.

Part Two: Research Encounters (*Encounters R1-R3, pages 40-45*): Obanar points the adventurers at three potential research encounters that will help them acquire information and aid in the coming battles. He provides them with the means to view past events that can aid them in the battles of today.

They can observe what caused the torrians to leave Argent and determine where they have gone.

They can see where the materials that Obanar needs to create a set of magic items for the adventurers can be found.

They can view the distant events that locked Piranoth away for all time to understand what the giants might be trying to accomplish today.

Part Three: Earth Giant Encounters (*Encounters E1-E7, pages 48-63*): The first time that the adventurers return to Argent after going on a research or quest mission, they arrive right in the middle of an ongoing siege. Obanar is hard-pressed to handle the attacks that come from two different directions, but with the help of the "champions" he believes that he can re-establish Argent's own defenses to turn back the earth giants and their allies.

After the siege is broken, the adventurers can seek out the earth giants to try to recover the relic that was stolen, or they can continue with the research and quest encounters first. The rest of the encounters in this section take the adventurers to the lair of the hill giants and the earth titan Earthshaker.

Part Four: Torrian Encounters (*Encounters T1-T3, pages 64-69*): These encounters follow the quest to find the torrians and convince them to once again serve Argent. If the adventurers successfully complete this quest, they gain valuable allies.

Part Five: Implements of Argent Encounters (*Encounters I1-I4, pages 70-77*): These encounters follow the quest to find the special materials that Obanar requires to create a set of magic items to aid the adventurers against elementals and the primordial Piranoth. The quest takes the adventurers through time to steal the materials from the future lich, Acererek, before he becomes an undead monster.

Part Six: Diplomatic Encounters (*Encounters D1-D7, pages 78-89*): These encounters follow the quest to find the mysterious astral giants and convince them to provide aid in the ongoing conflict, as well as potential quests to rally key points of light against the ongoing onslaught of the combined giant armies.

Part Seven: Frost Giant Encounters (*Encounters F1-F13, pages 92-123*): The adventurers travel to Frost Spire to take on the frost giant jarl and the frost titan Glacier and to find two pieces of the divine engine.

Part Eight: Fire Giant Encounters (*Encounters G1-G11, pages 130-151*): The adventurers travel to Flamefall Tower to battle the fire giant king and the fire titan Wildfire and to stop them from using the divine engine.

Part Nine: Primordial Encounters (*Encounters P1-P3, pages 154-160*): In the Elemental Chaos, the adventurers must fight a desperate battle to defeat the primordial Piranoth and once again imprison it before it can unleash its wrath on the natural world.

If the adventurers succeed, they break the alliance of giants, defeat the titan lords, and return Piranoth to its ancient prison. They restore a measure of Argent's ancient glory and gain allies and a safe haven from which to launch future adventures. And they earn a set of powerful magic items that make them ready to take on the challenges of the epic tier—challenges fast approaching as this adventure draws to a close.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

This adventure begins with ominous rumors of war. Not just any war, understand, but a monstrous war as various accounts of armies of giants and elemental creatures spread throughout the land. Feel free to use one or more of the following adventure hooks to lead the player characters into the story line and to provide additional opportunities to gain experience as events in the adventure unfold.

Hook: Rumors of War

The adventurers discover that the town or city they have just reached is clearly in the grip of hysteria and paranoia. The walls around the settlement have been bolted tight, and nervous guards refuse to let any strangers or newcomers into the place. Already, a merchant caravan and other travelers are camped outside, waiting for the gates to open and the place to return to normal. The player characters can wander through the camp to learn the following rumors that have made those outside the walls almost as nervous as those locked within.

"I heard two of the guards talking," stammers the caravan driver. "They said that the village of Small Tower was destroyed a few days ago by an army of hill giants."

"The people of this place have sealed the wall," one of the merchant's guards says. "A runner arrived two days ago and claimed that an army of giants and elemental creatures was right behind him, destroying everything in their path."

"Giants!" shouts a man as he rides a weary horse into the camp beyond the walls of the town. "Giants are attacking the farms and villages of Summerhome, and they shall march in this direction next! Flee! Flee while you can, for nothing can stop these enormous brutes!"

"The mayor of this place is very concerned for the safety of her people," the merchant tells you. "I believe that she would be willing to hire adventurers such as yourselves to undertake a scouting mission to determine the truth of these rumors."

Quest XP: 700 (minor quest) if the adventurers scout out the area beyond the town or city to discover the truth of the tales about giants and elemental creatures, and to determine whether or not the town or city is in immediate danger. The adventurers must return to the mayor with news of their discoveries within three days to complete this quest. That will give the mayor enough time to evacuate the place before the army of giants arrive.

Once the adventurers learn about the alliance of giants, it becomes very clear that the town or city where they first heard the rumors of war cannot stand against the approaching army of giants.

Hook: Giant Hunters

The Lord Warden of Fallcrest, or the leader of whatever town or city the adventurers are known in, calls the player characters to an important meeting. In addition to the Lord Warden, the meeting chamber contains members of the town council, the captain of the Fallcrest Guard, and the local priest of Pelor when the adventurers arrive.

"You have helped Fallcrest and the Nentir Vale many times, my friends," the Lord Warden says fondly as he welcomes you into the meeting chamber. "Now a new threat has appeared that we must once again ask you to deal with so that Fallcrest and the surrounding lands do not succumb to the ever-encroaching darkness."

The captain of the guard steps forward at a sign from the Lord Warden. He bows slightly to you and says, "Someone or something has roused the giants of the Stonemarch and the lands beyond. Already, an army of these terrible creatures is preparing to march. They shall easily sweep over Winterhaven on their way toward Fallcrest."

"You must discover the cause of this act of war," the Lord Warden says. "You must find a way to stop this threat before Fallcrest and the entire vale are overrun and destroyed,"

Quest XP: 8,000 (major quest) if the adventurers take up the Lord Warden's quest and find a way to turn back the army of giants before Fallcrest is destroyed. The Lord Warden also promises the adventurers a monetary reward of 22,000 gp if they succeed in stopping the giants and saving the town from destruction.

Hook: History's Heroes

A scholar, mentor, or sage who knows one or more of the adventurers presents an interesting and potentially profitable challenge to the party. "I have recently uncovered tales of a mythical city in the ancient archives of Nerath," the scholar explains. "It seems that this city had some connection to the legendary Dawn War, and that Nerath appeared to have sent champions to the city for some unknown purpose. The texts are vague on some of these details, and in other places paragraphs and even whole pages are missing from the documents."

The scholar goes on to offer the adventurers a "magic item of great value" if they were to turn up any information on this "lost city."

"The place was called Argent," he says, "and it has not been heard of since well before the fall of the empire. Strange ... it's almost as though some unseen hand wanted me to find that text ... as if it jumped out of the stacks I was searching ... strange, indeed."

Quest XP: 700 (minor quest) and a level 15 magic item that one of the adventurers can use if they bring news and evidence of Argent to the scholar.

THE CITY OF ARGENT

Argent, one of the oldest cities still standing in the natural world, features walls that stand taller than any titan and gates as stout and thick as any cliffside. Built atop a flattened mountain peak overlooking the Plains of Chaos, the sheer side of the mountain protects three sides of the city. Signal fires shine along the city walls, illuminating the clouds that usually shroud the mountaintop on all but the clearest, crispest days.

ARGENT'S STORY

Once, crowds filled the hallowed streets of Argent, hoping to catch a glimpse of the champions from across the land. The place was magical, almost holy, designed to provide for the safety and well-being of those selected to wear the Silver Cloaks. More over, the place was imbued with supernatural defenses, portals to other places, and other arcane mechanisms that the champions found helpful in their mission to protect the natural world from threats emerging from the borderlands between civilization and the unknown.

Every five to ten years, as the guardian of Argent required, the leaders of all the bastions of civilization would send champions to take their place on Argent's walls. Some of the champions volunteered. Others were chosen through trials and tournaments. A few had no choice in the matter, but readily agreed to follow the commands of their king or queen or emperor. These champions were given the Silver

Cloaks, the traditional symbol of Argent's heroes, and they worked alone and together to deal with threats from other planes, other worlds, other realities.

So it was from the days after the Dawn War, and through each era down through the ages. Bael Turath, Vardar, Arkhosia, and more sent their champions to take a turn in the Silver Cloaks. During the amazing period of peace and tranquility that marked the height of the Nerath empire, the time between the selection of champions grew. Fifteen years, twenty-five years, fifty years ... and then the champions stopped arriving altogether. And that wasn't the only change to come to Argent.

Each year that passed, fewer caravans and travelers arrived. Each decade, more and more of Argent's citizens moved on to other, more vital places. It wasn't that Argent wasn't valued and appreciated, but the Peace of Nerath made the place seem unnecessary. That wasn't to say that darkness had vanished from the world, but it had certainly been pushed back by Nerath's stabilizing presence. Indeed, the remaining champions of Argent became a bit complacent as time went on. And so, they weren't ready for the terrible events that led to Nerath's downfall.

When disaster and danger began to spread through the empire, Obanar, guardian of Argent, sent the Silver Cloaks into the world. He remained behind, on watch at the walls of the city. He waited. The Silver Cloaks never returned. In fact, no word came back from the empire. No new champions arrived to take up the Silver Cloaks. Obanar, the last guardian, was alone.

ARGENT

Argent, one of the oldest cities in the natural world, stands mostly deserted atop a mountain overlooking the Plains of Chaos. It was established by the gods, in agreement with the mortal races, in the wake of the Dawn War to serve as the bastion of the champions and guardians of Argent, as provided for in the Paragon Compact.

Population: 2. At its height, Argent boasted a population of approximately 15,000. Representatives of nearly every race could be found somewhere in the city, and hundreds of visitors regularly streamed through the gates in the days when Argent was alive and the Nerath empire was young and vital.

Government: The human wizard Obanar serves as the last guardian and champion of Argent. His loyal seneschal Rowthar remains in his service and cares for the city as best he can. In the past, the city was administered by the Lord Proctor and a council of seneschals, and the Champions of Argent provided advice and protection as warranted.

Defense: In addition to the Champions of Argent, who numbered as many as 20 during the city's heyday, an army of volunteers drawn from both the torrians and the members of other races who pledged their lives and service to the city. Today, only Obanar and Rowthar remain, as well as the city's many arcane and divine defenses that keep the place protected from all but the more determined and powerful attacks.

Inns: None of the inns that once served visitors so well still operate within Argent's hallowed walls. Rowthar does keep guest apartments in the Hall of Champions clean and prepared should new champions appear at the gates as in days of old. The once-famous Silver Cloak Inn and the notorious Inn of the Forgotten Guardian still stand in silent readiness, awaiting the day when the city returns to life.

Taverns: Rowthar keeps one tavern open, despite the lack of clientele. The doors to the Laughing Dragon remain open, and the torrian keeps a few barrels of ale and casks of wine on hand for when Obanar requires refreshment or should new champions arrive to fulfill the requirements of the compact. Other taverns that once overflowed with revelers include the Divine Fountain, the Champion's Chalice, and the Worthy Alehouse.

Supplies: When Argent was alive and vibrant, the Wondrous Market regularly set up stalls and tents in the Gateyard. Other shops could be found in the Temple Marketplace that filled the area between the Temple of the Dawn and the Hall of Champions. Today, Rowthar maintains a small stash of supplies in the Guardian's Tower for Obanar.

Trade: Once, Argent conducted a vibrant trade with cities in the natural world, the Feywild, the Shadowfell, and Sigil. Today, no traders pass through Argent's looming gates.

Temples: The Temple of the Dawn honors all the gods that participated in the Dawn War and had a hand in the Paragon Compact.

Today, Argent sits as a ghost town atop its lonely mountain. Obanar, ancient beyond the human norm, hangs onto life fiercely so that he may pass the Silver Cloak to the next generation. With the possibility that the compact has been broken, Obanar contemplates finding champions on his own, for a new threat has appeared on the horizon ...

KEY LOCATIONS

Only a handful of places in Argent still serve a primary function. The rest of the city appears either as deserted ruins or empty buildings just waiting for people to return to fill them.

The walls of Argent are made of magically reinforced stone. They stand 50 feet high and 25 feet thick, with broad paths along the battlements and a narrow corridor running through the interior of each wall.

Gates of reinforced wood and metal provide access into the city at specific locations along the wall. Each gate is 15 feet thick and 45 feet tall. The gates slide into the walls when they open.

Signal fires burn in great braziers at the corners of the walls. These burn day and night, and can be seen as ghostly glows in the cloud-shrouded peak of the mountain.

Three wide roads lead up the mountain to the city gates, while a forth switchback path climbs the face of the northern cliff. Two landing platforms also provide access to those using flying mounts or magical flying items, as the magic protecting the city doesn't allow anyone or anything to pass over the walls. Teleportation into the city is also prohibited, unless one knows the rituals necessary to link to dedicated teleportation circles within the walls.

1. GATEYARD

The two main roads into Argent lead to the Gateyard, an inner walled area where visitors to the city first arrive. Not all visitors were permitted into the city proper, but all were welcome in the Gateyard. Here, caravans and travelers could rest, trade, and petition for entry into the city if that's where they eventually wanted to go. The Wondrous Market, located in the Gateyard, was once one of the most famed marketplaces in the natural world. Now, the Gateyard is eerily silent, with deserted tents and buildings standing empty between its high walls.

2. GRAND MALL

Statues of past champions line the walls of this open-air mall. All races appear to be represented in heroic poses: humans, dwarves, elves, halflings, tieflings, dragonborn, drow, trolls, hobgoblins, and more can be spotted among the champions. In the center of the mall, a reflecting pool shimmers with a barely perceptible glow. The statue of a female in grand robes overlooks the pool. This is a statue of Erathis in her

guise as defender of the light of civilization. Her outstretched hand glows with the light of divine power. A large teleportation circle is inscribed into the tile floor across from Erathis's statue. This is one of the dedicated teleportation circles that the Silver Cloaks could use to come and go from the city.

3. LAKE ARGENT

A hillock in the center of the city rises from a tree-lined park. On the hillock, a lake of silvery water ripples gently as rays of sunshine seem to always cut through the mountaintop clouds to illuminate the area. The fresh water of the lake once provided most of the drinking water used by the city. The lake feeds a river that turns into a waterfall as it exits the walls and drops down the mountainside. The park around the hillock remains well cared for, and it is home to birds and small mammals of all descriptions.

A solitary tower overlooks the lake from the northeastern part of the hillock. This was once known as the Quiet Tower, home to the most prominent wizard currently wearing the Silver Cloak. While Obanar once called this tower home, his role as the last guardian has forced him to abandon the place in favor of the Guardian's Tower and the Hall of Champions.

4. HALL OF CHAMPIONS

A collection of three interconnected structures stands atop a raised area in the southeast corner of the city. The Hall of Champions, which features apartments, training rooms, and meeting chambers, serves as the primary residence for the heroes who take on the Silver Cloaks. An open-air arena is connected to the Hall. This arena once held games and tournaments that tested the skills of the champions, and was even used to handle large-scale meetings. Today, while the Hall of Champions and the Arena are kept ready for occupancy, both structures stand empty and silent in the shadow of the Guardian's Tower.

5. GUARDIAN'S TOWER

The leader of the champions who wear the Silver Cloaks has always occupied this tower in the southeastern corner of the city. As the tallest structure in Argent, the Guardian's Tower extends above the height of the walls surrounding the city. In addition to apartments and workshops, the tower contains some of Argent's most potent defenses and helpful magic.

Within the tower's many levels, among its many chambers, the fabled vaults of Argent keep guard over ancient treasures, deadly weapons, and imprisoned creatures. These stasis chambers are sealed behind heavy vault doors and protective magic, and only the current guardian can access them.

Viewing chambers provide magical views of distant places, but many of these no longer operate correctly due to attacks launched from far-away locations by the powerful entities that unleashed the troubles of a century ago. Obanar has some ability to see beyond Argent's walls, but not the near-omnipresent viewing he once commanded. As often as not, the viewing chambers show blurred, half-formed images instead of the crisp, clear pictures of old, which has made it extremely difficult for the guardian to learn what has transpired in the greater world, and to track threats the way he once could.

Most of the arcane defenses that protect the city of Argent are controlled from the upper levels of the tower. Alarms, magical barriers, and even a limited ability to launch attacks directly from the city can be controlled from this area.

Finally, there are doors throughout the Guardian's Tower that open to other places. Portals to distant locations, both in the natural world and among the planes, are situated throughout the tower. While the collection of portals in no way approaches the numbers available for use in Sigil, they do provide the champions with a means for fast travel to other places. In addition to portals to distant locales, there are also doorways that can open portals through time. These are fewer in number and harder to use, and they don't always work as intended, but the champions have always had a limited ability to travel back in time when important missions required it.

6. TEMPLE OF THE DAWN

The Temple of the Dawn, dedicated to the gods that fought in the Dawn War and then established the Paragon Compact that founded the city of Argent, rises above the northeastern corner of the city. A wide landing platform connected to the temple serves as an entry point into the city. A central area of worship fills the temple, with shrines honoring each of the gods—good, evil, and unaligned alike. The temple remains in good shape, even though there hasn't been any clerics or priests in residence in more than a hundred years. Both Obanar and Rowthar occasionally visit the place to pray or meditate. Not all of the gods who helped win the Dawn War entered into the Paragon Compact, and those notably missing from this temple include Melora (who didn't want to contribute to a plan that could paint all wilderness as evil), Bane, Gruumsh, Vecna (who was not yet a god), and Zehir.

The Altar of Many Gods, consecrated to all of the gods that agreed to support the Paragon Compact, is truly a wonder to behold. Located inside the Temple of the Dawn, it sits beneath the central dome so that the light of the sun and moon always shines upon it. The worship area is built around the altar, rising in tiers so that every prayer bench provides a clear view of every ceremony and service.

A gate surrounds the temple grounds. Holy symbols of all the associated gods are worked into the wrought iron. Inside the gate, the temple grounds provided a serene escape from the once-bustling city. Now, the grounds are as silent as the rest of Argent.



7. TEMPLE MARKETPLACE

Located in the cluster of buildings between the Temple of the Dawn and the Hall of Champions, the Temple Marketplace once featured a collection of shops surrounded by ramshackle homes and apartments. Today, this area is deserted, though most of the buildings remain in good condition. In many places, it appears as though the residents simply stepped out for a stroll and might return at any moment.

8. PROCTOR HOUSE

When the city was alive and the Lord Proctor administered to its interests, he or she lived and worked in this well-adorned structure. All of the Lord Proctor's furnishings and treasures—gifts from the champions and guardians handed out throughout the ages—remain in place for the eventual day when a new administrator appears to oversee the functions of the city.

9. DIAMOND ROW

The row of well-built structures across from the Lake Argent Park was known as Diamond Row because it was where the most wealthy of the city's citizens once lived. Outside of the Hall of Champions, the Guardian's Tower, and the Temple of the Dawn, these structures are among the most lavish and well adorned in the city.

10. THE HAUNTED BRIDGE

The bridge that spans the river in the northwest corner of the city has been home to a monster for almost fifty years. The creature, an undead beast that escaped from the Necropolis (see below) has taken up residence at the bridge. Obanar, who never enters this part of the city, is completely unaware of its presence.

| Argent Haunt (Ghost) | | Level 15 Lurker |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Medium shadow humanoid (undead) | | XP 1,200 |
| Initiative +14 | | Senses Perception +14; darkvision |
| HP 77; Bloodied 38 | | |
| AC 29; Fortitude 26, Reflex 27, Will 28 | | |
| Immune disease, poison; Resist insubstantial | | |
| Speed fly 6 (hover); phasing | | |
| ⊕ Grave Touch (standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic | | +19 vs. Fortitude; 1d10 + 6 necrotic damage. |
| ⊕ Fading Strike (standard; at-will) ♦ Fear, Necrotic | | The Argent haunt turns invisible as a standard action and shifts 2 squares. On its next turn, it shifts 2 squares, turns visible, and makes an attack. +19 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 6 necrotic damage, and the target is pushed 2 squares. |
| ⚡ Frightening Moan (standard; recharge [2][3]) ♦ Fear, Necrotic | | Close blast 5; targets enemies; +19 vs. Will; 2d8 + 6 necrotic damage, the target is pushed 5 squares. |
| Alignment Unaligned | | Languages Common |
| Skills Stealth +15 | | |
| Str 14 (+9) | Dex 16 (+10) | Wis 14 (+9) |
| Con 14 (+9) | Int 10 (+7) | Cha 18 (+11) |

11. DECREPIT NEIGHBORHOOD

These run-down sections of the city, located in the southwest corner and directly west of the Hall of Champions, are little more than ruins. The buildings appear to have suffered the degradations of time and the elements much more so than the rest of the city. Some buildings have partially collapsed, while others have received so much damage as to be just walls and pieces of ceiling held up by exposed beams.

12. THE NECROPOLIS

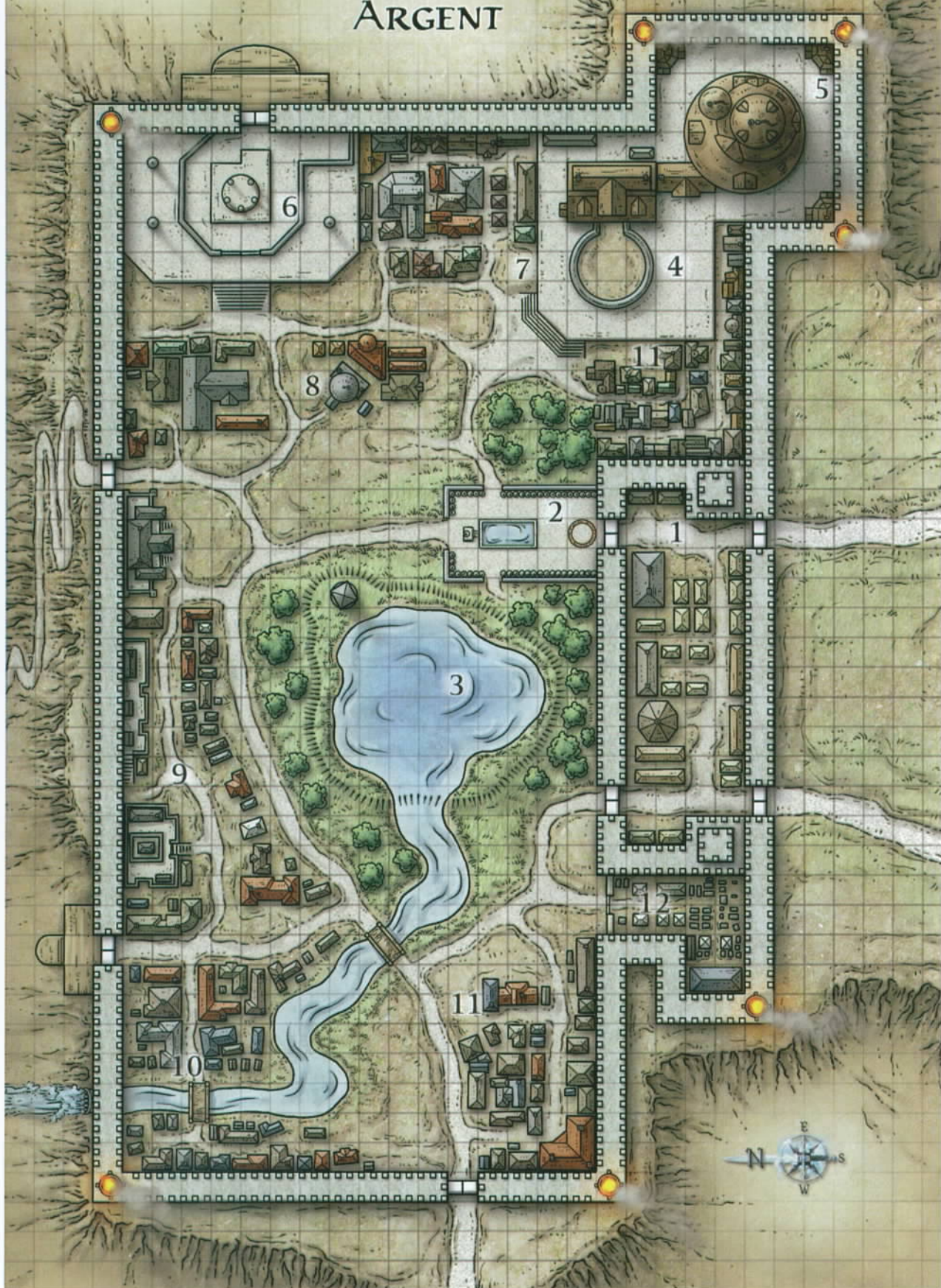
A walled portion of the city to the west of the Gateyard is the Necropolis, a cemetery that houses the remains of the fallen champions of Argent. All of the bodies are housed in elaborate mausoleums and small crypts. No new internments have occurred in more than one hundred years. A number of restless dead haunt the Necropolis, including a champion who has risen as a wight and patrols in search of nonexistent intruders.

| Champion Wight | | Level 17 Elite Soldier |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Medium natural humanoid (undead) | | XP 3,200 |
| Initiative +14 | | Senses Perception +16; darkvision |
| HP 328; Bloodied 164 | | |
| AC 33; Fortitude 31, Reflex 28, Will 29 | | |
| Saving Throws +2 | | |
| Immune disease, poison; Resist 10 necrotic; Vulnerable 5 radiant | | |
| Speed 5 | | |
| Action Points 1 | | |
| ⊕ Soul draining Longsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic, Weapon | | +28 vs. AC; 2d8 + 11 necrotic damage (crit 4d8 + 27), and the target loses a healing surge and is immobilized (save ends). |
| ⊕ Double Attack (standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic, Weapon | | The champion wight makes two soul draining longsword attacks. |
| ⚡ Soul Reaping (standard; recharge [2][3]) ♦ Healing, Necrotic | | Ranged 5; affects an immobilized target only; +22 vs. Fortitude; 3d8 + 7 necrotic damage, and the champion wight regains 25 hit points. |
| Alignment Evil | | Languages Common |
| Skills Intimidate +18 | | |
| Str 24 (+15) | Dex 18 (+12) | Wis 16 (+11) |
| Con 20 (+13) | Int 16 (+11) | Cha 20 (+13) |
| Equipment plate armor, heavy shield, longsword +4 | | |

| Ghost Worg Packmate | | Level 17 Brute Minion |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Large shadow magical beast (undead) | | XP 400 |
| Initiative +14 | | Senses Perception +10; darkvision |
| Death Mist aura 1; enemies that enter or start their turn in the aura take 10 necrotic damage. | | |
| HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion. | | |
| AC 29; Fortitude 30, Reflex 29, Will 28 | | |
| Immune disease, poison; Resist insubstantial | | |
| Speed 8, fly 6 (hover); phasing | | |
| ⊕ Ghost Bite (standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic | | +20 vs. AC; 12 necrotic damage. |
| Insubstantial Defense (free action; when hit by an attack; at-will) | | The ghost worg makes a saving throw. If the save succeeds, the attack passes harmlessly through the ghost worg's form. |
| Alignment Chaotic evil | | Languages Abyssal |
| Str 24 (+15) | Dex 22 (+14) | Wis 14 (+10) |
| Con 20 (+13) | Int 11 (+8) | Cha 20 (+13) |

One square = 25 feet

ARGENT



KEY LOCATIONS

1

INVITATION AND RITUAL

After the adventurers rescue and meet Rowthar (see **Encounter C1: Desperate Message** on page 28), the torrian seneschal gives two items to the player characters. The first item is a scroll that contains a message from Obanar. This is an invitation to take up the Silver Cloaks and come to the city of Argent. This break from tradition was hard for Obanar to do, but with the looming threat of the giant alliance and no word from any of the compact members in well over a century, the last guardian of Argent is desperate. A facsimile of the message appears below.

The second item, also a scroll, contains the Argent Portal ritual that the adventurers can use to return to the ancient city from wherever they may be.

HONOR AND INVITATION

Stand forth and be recognized! The invitation has been given, the choice has been made!

As heroes of your realm and warriors without equal, you have been chosen for the singular honor of serving the great and ancient city of Argent and becoming a champion of all that civilization encompasses. The ritual scroll provided will take you to Argent, and to your destiny.

A new threat gathers, and it has been too long since new champions last walked Argent's hallowed streets. The borderlands stretch thin, and the world stands defenseless. An ancient tradition has been set aside so that this call could go out.

Accept this honor, this duty, this privilege beyond measure. Argent needs you. The world needs you. Do not allow the foundation to fall.

—Obanar, Last Guardian of Argent

ARGENT PORTAL RITUAL

You create a glowing circle of sigils on the ground, creating a portal to the forgotten city of Argent.

Level: 10

Category: Travel

Time: 10 minutes

Duration: Special

Component Cost: 500 gp

Market Price: Not applicable

Key Skill: Arcana

You create a special portal that connects to the permanent teleportation circle in Argent's Grand Mall. When performing the ritual, you inscribe a 10-foot-diameter circle using rare chalks and special sigils. The circle disappears at the end of its duration. An Arcana check determines how long the portal remains open: 19 or lower, 1 round; 20–39, 2 rounds; 40 or higher, 3 rounds. If you are currently in the past, an Arcana check of 30 or better lets you use this ritual to return to Argent in your own time.



NEW MAGIC ITEMS

IMPLEMENTS OF ARGENT

This set of magic items, crafted specifically for the champions of Argent, provide additional benefits when multiple members in the party equip them for use and they are within 20 squares of each other. During this adventure, Obanar gives the player characters a quest to bring back the materials he needs to craft these magic items. With each implement created, the powers provided by these magic items grow stronger. If the adventurers attain all of the Implements, they gain a significant advantage in their final battles against the giants and the primordial Piranoth.

Note that Obanar will make as many as two of the same item, provided the group has more than five characters. Multiple copies of the same item count as one item for the purposes of attaining set benefits.

LORE

History DC 25: *The Implements of Argent were crafted specifically for champions who proved themselves to be worthy of the Silver Cloaks. Alone, each item provides its wielder with added power and defenses, but when linked with similar items wielded by teammates, the powers of these items truly shine.*

IMPLEMENTS OF ARGENT ITEMS

| Lvl | Name | Price (gp) | Item Slot |
|-----|------------------------|------------|-----------|
| 13+ | Controller's Implement | 17,000 | Implement |
| 14+ | Striker's Weapon | 21,000 | Weapon |
| 15+ | Defender's Armor | 25,000 | Armor |
| 16 | Leader's Helm | 45,000 | Head |
| 17 | Champion's Ring | 65,000 | Ring |

IMPLEMENTS OF ARGENT BENEFITS

| Wielders* | Benefit |
|-----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2 | A creature who wields an item from this set gains a bonus to initiative equal to the number of unique items equipped. |
| 3 | When a creature who wields an item from this set spends a healing surge, he or she regains additional hit points equal to the number of unique items equipped. |
| 4 | Each creature who wields an item from this set gains the champion's step power, described below. |

* The number of allies who wield a unique item from the set.

Champion's Step

Item Set Power

You step out of the world for a brief moment and reappear in a new location.

Daily ♦ Teleportation

Move Action Personal

Effect: You teleport 3 squares.

Controller's Implement

Level 13+

An implement of purest silver that glows with arcane light.

Lvl 13 +3 17,000 gp

Lvl 23 +5 425,000 gp

Lvl 18 +4 85,000 gp

Lvl 28 +6 2,125,000 gp

Implement (Any)

Enhancement: Attack rolls and damage rolls

Critical: +1d6 damage per plus

Power (Daily): Minor Action. Until the end of your next turn, your attacks also weaken any targets they hit (save ends).

Striker's Weapon

Level 14+

A weapon of purest silver that glows with arcane light.

Lvl 14 +3 21,000 gp

Lvl 24 +5 525,000 gp

Lvl 19 +4 1105,000 gp

Lvl 29 +6 2,625,000 gp

Weapon (Any)

Enhancement: Attack rolls and damage rolls

Critical: +1d8 damage per plus

Power (Daily): Immediate Interrupt. Trigger: An ally you can see makes an attack roll. Effect: You and the triggering ally gain combat advantage against the triggering ally's target until the end of your next turn. In addition, you both gain a bonus to damage rolls equal to 5 plus the number of unique items from this set on your next attack.

Defender's Armor

Level 15+

This armor glows with silver energy.

Lvl 15 +3 25,000 gp

Lvl 25 +5 625,000 gp

Lvl 20 +4 125,000 gp

Lvl 30 +6 3,125,000 gp

Armor (Chain, Scale, Plate)

Enhancement: AC

Property: Resist 10 cold and resist 10 fire.

Level 25 or 30: Resist 15 cold and resist 15 fire.

Power (Daily): Minor Action. Until the end of your next turn, any attack that hits and marks an enemy also dazes that enemy (save ends).

Leader's Helm

Level 16

This head gear glows with silver energy.

Item Slot: Head 25,000 gp

Property: When you use a power with the healing keyword, the target gains resist 5 cold and resist 5 fire until the end of your next turn.

Power (Daily): Minor Action. Each ally that you can see gains a bonus to their next attack roll equal to the number of unique items equipped.

Champion's Ring

Level 17

A ring of purest silver that glows with arcane light.

Item Slot: Ring 65,000 gp

Property: You gain an item bonus to AC and Reflex while you are bloodied equal to the number of unique items equipped.

Power (Daily): Minor Action. Each enemy within 2 squares of you gains vulnerable 5 acid, cold, fire, lightning, radiant, or thunder (your choice) until the end of your next turn. If you've reached at least one milestone today, this vulnerability lasts until the end of the encounter instead.

NEW MONSTERS

ASTRAL GIANTS

One group of giants switched sides during the Dawn War and took up the service of the god Erathis, forsaking the primordials. These giants left the natural world behind and migrated to the Astral Sea, where they eventually became known as astral giants.

Few among the people of the natural world have even the slightest idea that the astral giants exist. They rarely return to the world, and even in the Astral Sea they are a rare sight to see. They continue to serve Erathis, operating as agents and pacifying troops in places where the god of civilization has a vested interest. One such location is the astral dominion of Shom, the White Desert. Here, a force of astral giants has established a beachhead among the deserted temples in order to launch strikes against demons, devils, and other foul creatures that have taken up residence in this place once known as a center of knowledge.

ASTRAL GIANT LORE

A character knows the following information about astral giants with a successful Religion check.

DC 25: You remember half-formed legends and snippets of folklore concerning a race of giants that worked with the gods and mortal races to save the world during the Dawn War. One reference from the Book of Mystrak suggests that these giants migrated to the Astral Sea as the Dawn War came to a close.

DC 27: Astral giants serve Erathis and can be found in select locations in the Astral Sea, including Shom, where they operate as pacifying troops trying to bring peace and stability to the embattled dominion.

| Astral Giant | | Level 16 Soldier |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| Large immortal humanoid (giant) | | XP 1,400 |
| Initiative +14 | Senses Perception +19 | |
| HP 160; Bloodied 80 | | |
| AC 32; Fortitude 31, Reflex 27, Will 28 | | |
| Resist 10 radiant | | |
| Speed 8; see also <i>astral leap</i> | | |
| ⚔ Spear (standard; at-will) ♦ Radiant, Weapon | | |
| Reach 2; +23 vs. AC; 2d8 + 7 radiant damage. The target is marked until the end of the astral giant's next turn. | | |
| Astral Resonance | | |
| As long as the astral giant has an unbloodied astral giant ally within 10 squares, it receives a +2 bonus to attack rolls. | | |
| Astral Leap (move; encounter; only within the Astral Sea; recharges when first bloodied) | | |
| The astral giant can fly up to 10 squares. | | |
| Alignment Unaligned | | Languages Giant, Supernal |
| Skills Athletics +21, Religion +16 | | |
| Str 26 (+16) | Dex 18 (+12) | Wis 22 (+14) |
| Con 24 (+15) | Int 16 (+11) | Cha 18 (+12) |
| Equipment plate armor, spear, shield | | |

| Astral Giant Warpsword | | Level 16 Skirmisher |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| Large immortal humanoid (giant) | | XP 1,400 |
| Initiative +15 | Senses Perception +13 | |
| HP 158; Bloodied 79 | | |
| AC 30; Fortitude 28, Reflex 26, Will 26 | | |
| Resist 10 radiant | | |
| Speed 8; see also <i>astral leap</i> | | |
| ④ Warpsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Radiant, Weapon | | |
| Reach 2; +21 vs. AC; 2d10 + 7 damage, plus ongoing 5 radiant damage (save ends). | | |
| ④ Dimensional Blow (standard; recharge ☞☞☞☞) ♦ Radiant, Teleportation, Weapon | | |
| Reach 2; +21 vs. AC; 2d10 +10 radiant damage, the target is teleported 5 squares, and the target is dazed until the end of its next turn. | | |
| Astral Retreat (immediate reaction when damaged by an attack; at-will) ♦ Teleportation | | |
| The astral giant teleports 2 squares. | | |
| Astral Resonance | | |
| As long as the astral giant has an unbloodied astral giant ally within 10 squares, it receives a +2 bonus to attack rolls. | | |
| Astral Leap (move; encounter; only within the Astral Sea; recharges when first bloodied) | | |
| The astral giant can fly up to 10 squares. | | |
| Alignment Unaligned | | Languages Giant, Supernal |
| Skills Athletics +21, Religion +16 | | |
| Str 24 (+15) | Dex 20 (+13) | Wis 20 (+13) |
| Con 22 (+14) | Int 16 (+11) | Cha 17 (+11) |
| Equipment chain armor, greatsword | | |

| Astral Giant Star-strider | | Level 17 Lurker |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| Large immortal humanoid (giant) | | XP 1,600 |
| Initiative +18 | Senses Perception +19 | |
| HP 128; Bloodied 64 | | |
| AC 31; Fortitude 29, Reflex 29, Will 30 | | |
| Resist 10 radiant | | |
| Speed 8; see also <i>astral leap</i> | | |
| ⚔ Longsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Radiant, Weapon | | |
| Reach 2; +22 vs. AC; 2d8 + 7 radiant damage. | | |
| ⚔ Crossbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Radiant, Weapon | | |
| Ranged 15/30; +22 vs. AC; 2d8 + 7 radiant damage. | | |
| ⚔ Astral Shadows (standard; recharge ☞☞☞☞) ♦ Radiant | | |
| Close burst 5; +20 vs. Will; enemies only; 1d8 + 7 radiant damage, and the astral giant becomes invisible until the end of its next turn. | | |
| ⚔ Star-stride (standard; encounter) ♦ Radiant, Teleportation | | |
| Close burst 3; +20 vs. Reflex; 3d8 + 7 radiant damage, and the astral giant teleports 3 squares and gains combat advantage against all enemies until the end of its next turn. | | |
| Combat Advantage | | |
| The astral giant deals an extra 2d6 damage against any target it has combat advantage against. | | |
| Astral Resonance | | |
| As long as the astral giant has an unbloodied astral giant ally within 10 squares, it receives a +2 bonus to attack rolls. | | |
| Astral Leap (move; encounter; only within the Astral Sea; recharges when first bloodied) | | |
| The astral giant can fly up to 10 squares. | | |
| Alignment Unaligned | | Languages Giant, Supernal |
| Str 21 (+14) | Dex 20 (+14) | Wis 22 (+15) |
| Con 20 (+14) | Int 18 (+13) | Cha 19 (+13) |
| Equipment longsword, crossbow | | |

Astral Giant Lightpriest Level 17 Controller (Leader)

Large immortal humanoid (giant)

XP 1,600

Initiative +13

Senses Perception +13

HP 164; Bloodied 82

AC 31; Fortitude 30, Reflex 28, Will 28

Resist 10 radiant

Speed 8; see also *astral leap*① **Quarterstaff** (standard; at-will) ♦ Radiant, Weapon

Reach 2; +22 vs. AC; 2d6 + 7 radiant damage.

⊖ **Lightwave** (standard; at-will) ♦ Radiant

Close blast 5; +21 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 7 radiant damage, and the target is pushed 3 squares.

➤ **Blinding Light** (standard; recharge [Ⓜ][Ⓜ][Ⓜ]) ♦ Radiant

Ranged 10; +21 vs. Fortitude; 2d8 + 7 radiant damage, and the target is blinded until the end of the astral giant's next turn.

↵ **Life-Absorbing Burst** (standard; recharge [Ⓜ]) ♦ Healing, Radiant

Close burst 5; +19 vs. Fortitude; 1d8 + 7 radiant damage, and the astral giant and all allies in the burst regain 20 hit points.

✱ **Lighttrap** (standard; encounter) ♦ RadiantArea burst 1 within 20; +20 vs. Reflex; 3d6 + 7 radiant damage, and the target is slowed (save ends). *First failed save:* Target takes 5 radiant damage and is immobilized (save ends). *Second failed save:* Target takes 10 radiant damage and is restrained (save ends).**Astral Resonance**

As long as the astral giant has an unbloodied astral giant ally within 10 squares, it receives a +2 bonus to attack rolls.

Astral Leap (move; encounter; only within the Astral Sea; recharges when first bloodied)

The astral giant can fly up to 10 squares.

Alignment Unaligned

Languages Giant, Supernal

Str 22 (+15)

Dex 18 (+13)

Wis 20 (+13)

Con 20 (+14)

Int 20 (+11)

Cha 24 (+11)

Equipment quarterstaff, holy symbol

ASTRAL GIANT ENCOUNTERS

Astral giants are most often encountered in embattled dominions within the Astral Sea. In the natural world, they sometimes undertake clandestine missions of extremely short duration.

Astral Giant Scouting Party, Level 16 Encounter (XP 7,350)

- ♦ 2 astral giants (level 16 soldiers)
- ♦ 2 astral giant warpsword (level 16 skirmishers)
- ♦ 5 angel of valor veterans (level 16 minions)

Astral Giant Combat Squad, Level 18 Encounter (XP 10,200)

- ♦ 1 astral giant lightpriest (level 17 controller [leader])
- ♦ 3 astral giants (level 16 soldiers)
- ♦ 2 astral giant warpsword (level 16 skirmishers)
- ♦ 1 astral giant star-strider (level 17 lurker)

Astral Giant Pacifiers, Level 17 Encounter (XP 8,800)

- ♦ 1 astral giant lightpriest (level 17 controller [leader])
- ♦ 2 astral giant warpsword (level 16 skirmishers)
- ♦ 1 astral giant star-strider (level 17 lurker)
- ♦ 1 sphinx (level 16 elite soldier)



EARTH GIANTS

Earth giants, which include the types of giants known as hill giants and earth giants, live in places where stone and rock hold sway. These territorial creatures often enslave smaller, weaker creatures to perform menial tasks and shore up their offensive and defensive capabilities.

Hill giants appear more or less as large, primitive humans. They have crude toolmaking skills, a modicum of primal and elemental magic, and a need to take and hold territory. They live among rolling hills and rocky barrens.

Earth giants, on the other hand, appear to be smaller versions of earth titans, composed of living earth and stone. Earth giants tend to be smarter and more organized than their hill giant cousins, and they like to live in mountain caves, valleys, and easily defended canyons.

| Hill Giant Grunt | | Level 13 Minion |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| Large natural humanoid (giant) | | XP 200 |
| Initiative +5 | Senses Perception +7 | |
| HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion. | | |
| AC 25; Fortitude 27, Reflex 21, Will 23 | | |
| Speed 8 | | |
| ⚔ Greatclub (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | | |
| Reach 2; +15 vs. AC; 9 damage and the target is pushed 1 square. | | |
| ➤ Hurl Rock (standard; at-will) | | |
| Ranged 8/16; +15 vs. AC; 9 damage. | | |
| Alignment Chaotic evil | | Languages Giant |
| Skills Athletics +15 | | |
| Str 19 (+10) | Dex 8 (+5) | Wis 12 (+7) |
| Con 18 (+10) | Int 7 (+4) | Cha 9 (+5) |
| Equipment hide armor, greatclub | | |

| Hill Giant Battlechief | | Level 14 Skirmisher (Leader) |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| Large natural humanoid (giant) | | XP 1,000 |
| Initiative +13 | Senses Perception +15 | |
| HP 144; Bloodied 72 | | |
| AC 28; Fortitude 28, Reflex 26, Will 25 | | |
| Speed 8 | | |
| ⚔ Battleaxe (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | | |
| Reach 2; +19 vs. AC; 2d10 + 8 damage. | | |
| ⚔ Inspiring Attack (standard; recharge ⏏ ⏏) ♦ Healing, Weapon | | |
| Reach 2; +21 vs. AC; 3d10 + 8 damage, and all allies within 10 squares heal 15 hit points. | | |
| Frenzied Advance (minor; at-will) | | |
| Close burst 10; allies within the burst shift 3 squares. | | |
| Battle Weave (immediate reaction; when an attack hits or misses the hill giant; at-will) | | |
| The hill giant battlechief shifts up to 3 squares and gains combat advantage against all enemies until the end of his next turn. | | |
| Combat Advantage | | |
| The hill giant battlechief deals an extra 2d6 damage against any target it has combat advantage against. | | |
| Alignment Chaotic evil | | Languages Common, Giant |
| Skills Athletics +18, Intimidate +14, Stealth +16 | | |
| Str 22 (+13) | Dex 19 (+11) | Wis 17 (+10) |
| Con 24 (+14) | Int 16 (+10) | Cha 15 (+9) |
| Equipment hide armor, battleaxe | | |

| Hill Giant Shaman | | Level 13 Controller |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Large natural humanoid (giant) | | XP 800 |
| Initiative +9 | Senses Perception +13 | |
| HP 131; Bloodied 65 | | |
| AC 27; Fortitude 25, Reflex 23, Will 23 | | |
| Speed 8 | | |
| ⚔ Quarterstaff (standard; at-will) ♦ Implement, Weapon | | |
| Reach 2; +18 vs. AC; 2d8 + 5 damage. | | |
| ⚡ Earthstorm (standard; recharge 5 6) ♦ Implement, Weapon | | |
| Requires quarterstaff. Close blast 5; +15 vs. Fortitude; 3d10 + 6 damage, and the target is pushed 1 square and blinded (save ends). | | |
| ➤ Volcanic Blast (standard; at-will) ♦ Implement, Weapon | | |
| Ranged 10; +17 vs. Reflex; 1d10 + 6 damage, and target gains vulnerable 5 fire (save ends). | | |
| Alignment Chaotic evil | Languages Common, Giant | |
| Skills Arcana +13, Nature +13 | | |
| Str 21 (+11) | Dex 16 (+9) | Wis 14 (+8) |
| Con 19 (+10) | Int 14 (+8) | Cha 16 (+9) |
| Equipment hide armor, stone quarterstaff | | |

| Hill Giant Slinger | | Level 14 Artillery |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Large natural humanoid (giant) | | XP 1,000 |
| Initiative +12 | Senses Perception +15 | |
| HP 112; Bloodied 56 | | |
| AC 26; Fortitude 26, Reflex 25, Will 23 | | |
| Speed 8 | | |
| ⚔ Slam (standard; at-will) | | |
| Reach 2; +21 vs. AC; 1d10 + 6 damage. | | |
| 🏹 Sling (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | | |
| Ranged 15/30; +21 vs. AC; 2d8 + 6 damage. | | |
| 🔫 Special Shot (standard; recharge ⏏ ⏏) ♦ Weapon | | |
| Ranged 15/30; +19 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 6 damage, and target is slowed and takes ongoing 5 acid damage (save ends both). | | |
| Alignment Chaotic evil | | Languages Giant |
| Skills Acrobatics +17, Nature +15, Stealth +17 | | |
| Str 19 (+11) | Dex 20 (+12) | Wis 16 (+10) |
| Con 22 (+13) | Int 9 (+6) | Cha 11 (+7) |
| Equipment hide armor, sling | | |

| Earth Giant | | Level 14 Brute |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|
| Large elemental humanoid (giant) | | XP 1,000 |
| Initiative +6 | Senses Perception +8 | |
| HP 170; Bloodied 85 | | |
| AC 26; Fortitude 28, Reflex 22, Will 24 | | |
| Speed 6, see also earth step | | |
| ⚔ Slam (standard; at-will) | | |
| Reach 2; +17 vs. AC; 2d6 + 6 damage. | | |
| ➤ Hurl Rock (standard; at-will) | | |
| Ranged 20; +15 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 6 damage. | | |
| Earth Step | | |
| The earth giant ignores difficult terrain when it shifts. | | |
| Alignment Chaotic evil | Languages Giant, Primordial | |
| Skills Athletics +17 | | |
| Str 20 (+12) | Dex 8 (+6) | Wis 12 (+8) |
| Con 20 (+12) | Int 9 (+6) | Cha 12 (+8) |

| Earth Giant Stalker | | Level 14 Lurker |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------|
| Large elemental humanoid (giant) | | XP 1,000 |
| Initiative +18 Senses Perception +14 | | |
| HP 108; Bloodied 54 | | |
| AC 28; Fortitude 26, Reflex 24, Will 24 | | |
| Speed 6, see also earth step | | |
| ⚡ Slam (standard; at-will) | | |
| Reach 2; +19 vs. AC; 2d6 + 4 damage. | | |
| ⌛ Stone Merge (standard; at-will) | | |
| The earth giant stalker shifts 3 squares and merges into the ground or a stone wall, disappearing from view. When the earth giant merges, it causes a thunderous shockwave. Close burst 1; +17 vs. Fortitude; enemies only; the target is dazed (save ends). | | |
| ⚡ Deadly Eruption (standard; at-will) | | |
| Can only be used if the earth giant used stone merge in the previous round. The earth giant stalker shifts 3 squares and erupts from the ground or a stone wall, rejoining the battle. Close burst 1; +17 vs. Reflex; 3d6 + 6 damage. | | |
| Earth Step | | |
| The earth giant ignores difficult terrain when it shifts. | | |
| Alignment Chaotic evil | | Languages Giant, Primordial |
| Skills Stealth +14 | | |
| Str 18 (+11) | Dex 14 (+9) | Wis 14 (+9) |
| Con 18 (+11) | Int 9 (+6) | Cha 12 (+8) |

| Earth Giant Soldier | | Level 15 Soldier |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------|
| Large elemental humanoid (giant) | | XP 1,200 |
| Initiative +12 Senses Perception +14 | | |
| HP 150; Bloodied 75 | | |
| AC 31; Fortitude 30, Reflex 27, Will 26 | | |
| Speed 6, see also earth step | | |
| ⚡ Thunder Maul (standard; at-will) ⚡ Thunder, Weapon | | |
| Reach 2; +22 vs. AC; 2d10 + 4 thunder damage. | | |
| ⚡ Thunder Strike (standard; recharge ⌛ ⌛) ⚡ Thunder, Weapon | | |
| Close burst 1; +20 vs. AC; 3d10 + 6 thunder damage, and the target is dazed (save ends). | | |
| Battle Focus (immediate reaction, when an enemy leaves an adjacent square; at-will) ⚡ Weapon | | |
| The earth giant soldier makes a melee basic attack against the enemy, even if the enemy is shifting. | | |
| Threatening Reach | | |
| The earth giant soldier can make opportunity attacks against all enemies within its reach (2 squares). | | |
| Earth Step | | |
| The earth giant ignores difficult terrain when it shifts. | | |
| Alignment Chaotic evil | | Languages Giant, Primordial |
| Skills Intimidate +13 | | |
| Str 20 (+12) | Dex 16 (+10) | Wis 14 (+9) |
| Con 22 (+13) | Int 12 (+8) | Cha 12 (+8) |

EARTH GIANT ENCOUNTERS

Earth giants tend to be encountered in groups, with a mix of giants and other servitor creatures. These groups hunt, raid, and otherwise cause trouble wherever they are encountered.

Earth Giant Marauders, Level 14 Encounter (XP 5,200)

- ♦ 3 hill giants (level 13 brutes)
- ♦ 1 hill giant shaman (level 13 controller)
- ♦ 1 hill giant slinger (level 14 artillery)
- ♦ 1 hill giant battlechief (level 14 skirmisher)



FIRE GIANTS

Fire giants are militaristic by nature and competitive in spirit. Wherever the fires of creation stir, whether in a volcano, a desert, or the flames of the Elemental Chaos itself, the fire giants carve out domains that have a tendency to spread like wildfire in a summer wind. Fire giants often enslave lesser creatures related to flame, including azers, hell hounds, salamanders, and elementals.

Fire giant artisans and crafters are second only to dwarves when it comes to working metal into tools, armor, and weapons. This means that most fire giants carry well-crafted armor and weapons into battle, including magic items that can be enchanted to only operate in the hands of a fire giant.

| Fire Giant | Level 18 Soldier |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Large elemental humanoid (giant) | XP 2,000 |
| Initiative +11 | Senses Perception +14 |
| HP 174; Bloodied 87 | |
| AC 34; Fortitude 34, Reflex 28, Will 28 | |
| Resist 15 fire | |
| Speed 7 | |
| ⚔ Searing Greatsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire, Weapon | |
| Reach 2; +23 vs. AC; 1d12 + 6 damage plus 2d8 fire damage, and the target is marked until the end of the fire giant's next turn. | |
| ⚔ Sweeping Sword (standard; encounter) ♦ Fire, Weapon | |
| Requires greatsword; close blast 2; +21 vs. AC; 1d12 + 6 damage plus 2d8 fire damage, and the target is marked until the end of the fire giant's next turn. | |
| 🏹 Iron Javelin (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| Ranged 15/30; +21 vs. AC; 1d10 + 6 damage, and the target is slowed until the end of the fire giant's next turn. | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Giant |
| Skills Intimidate +14 | |
| Str 23 (+15) | Dex 11 (+9) Wis 10 (+9) |
| Con 22 (+15) | Int 10 (+9) Cha 11 (+9) |
| Equipment plate armor, greatsword, 4 javelins | |

| Fire Giant Flamecrusher | Level 17 Brute |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Large elemental humanoid (giant) | XP 1,600 |
| Initiative +11 | Senses Perception +10 |
| HP 204; Bloodied 102 | |
| AC 29; Fortitude 30, Reflex 25, Will 28 | |
| Resist 15 fire | |
| Speed 7 | |
| ⚔ Searing Maul (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire, Weapon | |
| Reach 2; +20 vs. AC; 2d8 + 8 damage plus 2d8 fire damage. | |
| ⚔ Overhead Smash (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire, Weapon | |
| Requires maul; reach 2; +18 vs. AC; 2d8 + 14 damage plus 2d8 fire damage, and the target is knocked prone. | |
| ⚔ Battering Blows (standard; usable only when bloodied; encounter) ♦ Fire, Weapon | |
| Requires maul; close burst 2; +20 vs. AC; 2d8 + 8 damage plus 2d8 fire damage, and the target is pushed 2 squares and knocked prone. | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Giant |
| Skills Endurance +20 | |
| Str 27 (+16) | Dex 17 (+11) Wis 15 (+10) |
| Con 24 (+15) | Int 8 (+7) Cha 22 (+14) |
| Equipment plate armor, maul | |

FIRE GIANT FLAMECRUSHER TACTICS

A fire giant flamecrusher is a straightforward combatant, attacking with its maul and using its reach to keep smaller enemies at a distance. A fire giant flamecrusher prefers *overhead smash*, resorting to *searing maul* attacks (with a higher attack bonus) only if it misses two rounds in a row. When a flamecrusher becomes bloodied, it becomes much more dangerous. It uses *battering blows* as soon as it can.

| Fire Giant Icefist | Level 19 Elite Brute |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Large elemental humanoid (giant) | XP 4,800 |
| Initiative +15 | Senses Perception +12 |
| HP 454; Bloodied 227 | |
| AC 31; Fortitude 31, Reflex 28, Will 28 | |
| Saving Throws +2 | |
| Resist 15 fire | |
| Speed 7 | |
| Action Points 1 | |
| ⚔ Ice Punch (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold, Weapon | |
| Requires frigid gauntlets; reach 2; +22 vs. AC; 1d8 + 18 damage plus 2d8 cold damage. | |
| ⚔ Blizzard of Blows (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold, Weapon | |
| The fire giant icefist makes three <i>ice punch</i> attacks. If all three attacks hit, make an immediate <i>freezing grasp</i> attack as a free action. This attack can't be used while the icefist has a grabbed target. | |
| ⚔ Freezing Grasp (standard; recharge ⏏ ⏏) ♦ Cold, Weapon | |
| Requires frigid gauntlets; +20 vs. Reflex; 1d8 + 18 damage plus 2d8 cold damage, and the target is grabbed. | |
| Coldsnap | |
| At the start of a grabbed target's turn, the grabbed target takes 10 cold damage. | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Giant |
| Skills Intimidate +20 | |
| Str 29 (+18) | Dex 23 (+15) Wis 16 (+12) |
| Con 27 (+17) | Int 17 (+12) Cha 23 (+15) |
| Equipment chain armor, frigid gauntlets | |

FIRE GIANT ICEFIST TACTICS

The icefist punches with its glowing frigid gauntlets, enjoying using *blizzard of blows* on a single target to take it down quickly. It attempts a *freezing grasp* attack every so often, but prefers to allow this attack to occur naturally after landing three consecutive hits with *blizzard of blows*. The icefist fights to the death.

| Fire Giant Trooper | Level 18 Minion |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Large natural humanoid (giant) | XP 500 |
| Initiative +11 | Senses Perception +9 |
| HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion. | |
| AC 34; Fortitude 34, Reflex 28, Will 28 | |
| Speed 7 | |
| ⚔ Searing Longsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire, Weapon | |
| Reach 2; +23 vs. AC; 10 damage plus 1d8 fire damage. | |
| 🏹 Iron Javelin (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| Ranged 15/30; +21 vs. AC; 10 damage, and the target is slowed until the end of the fire giant trooper's next turn. | |
| Alignment Chaotic evil | Languages Giant |
| Str 22 (+15) | Dex 10 (+9) Wis 10 (+9) |
| Con 20 (+14) | Int 8 (+8) Cha 9 (+8) |
| Equipment chain armor, longsword | |

Fire Giant Element Handler **Level 18 Controller**

Large elemental humanoid (giant)

XP 2,000

Initiative +13 Senses Perception +18

HP 175; Bloodied 87

AC 32; Fortitude 30, Reflex 29, Will 30

Resist 15 fire

Speed 7

⚔ **Fiery Quarterstaff** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Fire, Weapon**

Reach 2; +23 vs. AC; 1d8 + 7 damage plus 2d8 fire damage.

➤ **Fire Bolt** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Fire**

Ranged 20; +22 vs. Reflex; 2d10 + 4 fire damage, and the target is dazed until the end of the fire giant's next turn.

➤ **Searing Wind** (minor 1/round; at-will)

Ranged 10; +22 vs. Fortitude; the fire giant slides the target 3 squares.

⚡ **Boiling Wave** (standard; at-will)

Close blast 3; +20 vs. Fortitude; 1d10 + 7 damage, and the target is pushed 3 squares.

✳ **Earthen Spikes** (standard; recharge [1])

Area burst 1 within 20; spikes of stone burst from the ground; +21 vs. Reflex; 4d10 + 7 damage; the affected area becomes difficult terrain for the rest of the encounter.

☄ **Fire Shroud** (minor; recharge [1]) ♦ **Fire**

One ally within 10 squares of the fire giant gains resist 10 to all damage until the end of the fire giant's next turn. In addition, any enemy that starts its turn adjacent to the ally while the fire shroud is in effect takes 15 fire damage.

Alignment Evil **Languages** Common, Giant**Skills** Arcana +18, Diplomacy +19, Dungeoneering +18**Str** 21 (+14) **Dex** 17 (+13) **Wis** 17 (+13)**Con** 23 (+15) **Int** 17 (+13) **Cha** 18 (+14)**Equipment** quarterstaff**FIRE GIANT ENCOUNTERS**

Fire giants tend to be encountered in groups, with a mix of giants and other servitor creatures. These groups always have a specific purpose, as fire giants are among the most militaristic and organized of all the giant types.

Fire Giant Bravados, Level 17 Encounter
(XP 8,800)

- ♦ 2 fire giants (level 18 soldiers)
- ♦ 1 fire giant icefist (level 19 elite brute)

Fire Giant Strike Team, Level 18 Encounter
(XP 10,000)

- ♦ 1 fire giant icefist (level 19 elite brute)
- ♦ 2 fire giant flamecrushers (level 17 brutes)
- ♦ 1 cambion hellfire magus (level 18 artillery)

Fire Giant Command Group, Level 18 Encounter
(XP 10,900)

- ♦ 1 fire giant element handler (level 18 controller)
- ♦ 5 fire giant troopers (level 18 minions)
- ♦ 1 fire giant flamecrusher (level 17 brute)
- ♦ 3 firebred hell hounds (level 17 brutes)



FROST GIANTS

Frost giants are cruel raiders and marauders who ply the seas of the Elemental Chaos aboard longships crafted from ice. In the natural world, they descend from glacier-covered mountains in small raiding parties to kill, burn, and destroy anything that crosses their path. They tend to be a brutal and superstitious lot, led by the strongest members of their clans.

The leader of a frost giant clan is called a jarl. On rare occasions, when multiple clans come together to form war parties for the express purpose of raiding and plundering strong, fortified settlements, one jarl rises to take the position of overjarl of the united clans. Such gatherings rarely last long, as few jarls can long stand taking orders from others.

FROST GIANT LORE

A character knows the following information about frost giants with a successful Arcana check.

DC 22: In their arctic lands, frost giants dwell in glacial caves or crude fortresses carved of stone and ice. From these holds, frost giants hunt game and raid for slaves and plunder. The mightiest frost giant in a clan, called a jarl, leads weaker giants through intimidation and violence.

DC 27: A few frost giants have magical powers and can use runes, sorcery, and foul rituals. Such powers give a giant influence in its clan, if not outright leadership.

DC 29: There have been times in the past when disparate clans of frost giants came together under a single overjarl to attack the civilized nations.

| Frost Giant | | Level 17 Brute |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| Large elemental humanoid (cold, giant) | | XP 1,600 |
| Initiative +11 | Senses Perception +13 | |
| HP 201; Bloodied 100; see also <i>dying swipe</i> | | |
| AC 29; Fortitude 32, Reflex 27, Will 28 | | |
| Resist 15 cold | | |
| Speed 8 (ice walk) | | |
| ⚔ Icy Greataxe (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold, Weapon | | |
| Reach 2; +20 vs. AC; 4d6 + 7 (crit 8d6 + 31) cold damage. | | |
| † Dying Swipe (when the frost giant drops to 0 hit points) | | |
| The frost giant makes an <i>icy greataxe</i> attack. | | |
| † Chilling Strike (standard; recharge ⏏ ⏏) ♦ Cold, Weapon | | |
| Reach 2; +20 vs. AC; 2d6 + 7 cold damage, and the target gains vulnerable 10 cold (save ends). | | |
| ✂ Icy Handaxe (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold, Weapon | | |
| Ranged 5/10; +20 vs. AC; 2d8 + 7 cold damage. | | |
| Icebound Footing | | |
| When an effect pulls, pushes, or slides a frost giant, the giant moves 2 squares less than the effect specifies. Also, a frost giant can make a saving throw to avoid being knocked prone. | | |
| Alignment Evil | | Languages Giant |
| Skills Athletics +19 | | |
| Str 23 (+14) | Dex 16 (+11) | Wis 20 (+13) |
| Con 21 (+13) | Int 10 (+8) | Cha 12 (+9) |
| Equipment hide armor, greataxe, 3 handaxes | | |

| Frost Giant Hunter | | Level 15 Artillery |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| Large elemental humanoid (cold, giant) | | XP 1,200 |
| Initiative +16 | Senses Perception +13 | |
| HP 114; Bloodied 57 | | |
| AC 27; Fortitude 27, Reflex 26, Will 28 | | |
| Resist 15 cold | | |
| Speed 8 (ice walk) | | |
| ⚔ Icy Harpoon (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold, Weapon | | |
| Reach 3; +22 vs. AC; 2d10 + 5 cold damage. | | |
| ⚔ Icy Crossbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold, Weapon | | |
| Ranged 15/30; +22 vs. AC; 3d6 + 5 cold damage. | | |
| † Skewering Strike (standard; recharge ⏏ ⏏) ♦ Cold, Weapon | | |
| Reach 3; +20 vs. Reflex; 3d10 + 5 cold damage, and the target slides 3 squares and is slowed (save ends). | | |
| Opening Strike | | |
| The frost giant gains combat advantage against enemies that have not yet acted during an encounter. | | |
| Combat Advantage | | |
| The frost giant deals an extra 1d10 damage against any target it has combat advantage against. | | |
| Icebound Footing | | |
| When an effect pulls, pushes, or slides a frost giant, the giant moves 2 squares less than the effect specifies. Also, a frost giant can make a saving throw to avoid being knocked prone. | | |
| Alignment Evil | | Languages Common, Giant |
| Skills Athletics +17, Endurance +16, Stealth +16 | | |
| Str 21 (+12) | Dex 19 (+11) | Wis 22 (+13) |
| Con 18 (+11) | Int 12 (+8) | Cha 12 (+8) |
| Equipment hide armor, harpoon, crossbow | | |

FROST GIANT HUNTER TACTICS

Frost giant hunters keep to the edge of a battle, picking off their enemies with crossbow bolts. They concentrate their fire on spellcasters and ranged attackers that harass their more melee-oriented allies.

The hunter's harpoon is his deadliest weapon, though he patiently waits for the right moment to employ his *skewering strike*. He prefers to target bloodied enemies with it, using the slide effect to set them up for total destruction.

| Frost Giant Raider | | Level 17 Minion |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| Large elemental humanoid (cold, giant) | | XP 400 |
| Initiative +11 | Senses Perception +13 | |
| HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion; see also <i>dying swipe</i> | | |
| AC 29; Fortitude 32, Reflex 27, Will 28 | | |
| Resist 15 cold | | |
| Speed 8 (ice walk) | | |
| ⚔ Icy Greataxe (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold, Weapon | | |
| Reach 2; +20 vs. AC; 10 cold damage. | | |
| † Dying Swipe (when the frost giant drops to 0 hit points) | | |
| The frost giant makes an <i>icy greataxe</i> attack. | | |
| ✂ Icy Handaxe (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold, Weapon | | |
| Ranged 5/10; +20 vs. AC; 9 cold damage. | | |
| Icebound Footing | | |
| When an effect pulls, pushes, or slides a frost giant, the giant moves 2 squares less than the effect specifies. Also, a frost giant can make a saving throw to avoid being knocked prone. | | |
| Alignment Evil | | Languages Giant |
| Skills Athletics +19 | | |
| Str 23 (+14) | Dex 16 (+11) | Wis 20 (+13) |
| Con 21 (+13) | Int 10 (+8) | Cha 12 (+9) |
| Equipment hide armor, greataxe, 3 handaxes | | |

Frost Giant Marauder Level 17 Skirmisher

Large elemental humanoid (cold, giant) XP 1,600

Initiative +14 Senses Perception +11

HP 168; Bloodied 84

AC 31; Fortitude 30, Reflex 27, Will 26

Resist 15 cold

Speed 8 (ice walk)

⚔ **Icy Handaxe** (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold, Weapon

Reach 2; +22 vs. AC; 2d8 + 8 cold damage; hit or miss, the frost giant may shift 2 squares after the attack.

⚔ **Icy Handaxe** (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold, Weapon

Ranged 5/10; +22 vs. AC; 2d6 + 6 cold damage; hit or miss, the frost giant may shift 2 squares after the attack.

➤ **Hurling Charge** (standard; encounter) ♦ Cold, Weapon

Ranged 5/10; +21 vs. Reflex; 1d8 + 8 cold damage; hit or miss, the frost giant then makes a charge against the target.

⚔ **Twin Strike** (standard; recharge [2]) ♦ Cold, Weapon

The frost giant makes two icy handaxe attacks; the frost giant may shift 2 squares after the first attack.

Icebound Footing

When an effect pulls, pushes, or slides a frost giant, the giant moves 2 squares less than the effect specifies. Also, a frost giant can make a saving throw to avoid being knocked prone.

Threatening Reach

The frost giant can make opportunity attacks against all enemies within its reach (2 squares).

Alignment Evil Languages Giant

Skills Athletics +19

Str 21 (+13) Dex 19 (+12) Wis 17 (+11)

Con 24 (+15) Int 10 (+8) Cha 12 (+9)

Equipment hide armor, 4 handaxes

Frost Giant Windkeeper Level 16 Controller (Leader)

Large elemental humanoid (cold, giant) XP 1,400

Initiative +13 Senses Perception +20

HP 158; Bloodied 79

AC 30; Fortitude 31, Reflex 30, Will 32

Resist 15 cold

Speed 8 (ice walk)

⚔ **Spear of Storms** (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold, Weapon

Reach 3; +21 vs. AC; 2d10 + 5 cold damage, and the target slides 3 squares.

❄ **Arctic Vortex** (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold

Area burst 1 within 20; +20 vs. Fortitude; 2d6 + 5 cold damage, and the target slides 3 squares.

❄ **Driving Blizzard** (standard; recharge [2]) ♦ Cold

Area burst 2 within 20; +20 vs. Reflex; 3d6 + 5 cold damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends). Until the end of the encounter, the area becomes difficult terrain for creatures smaller than Large size.

❄ **Gale of the North Wind** (standard; encounter) ♦ Cold

Close blast 5; targets enemies only; +20 vs. Fortitude; 4d10 + 5 cold damage, and the target is pushed 2 squares and knocked prone. Miss: Half damage and push 1 square.

❄ **Drums of the North** (standard; at-will) ♦ Fear, Implement

Close burst 10; targets enemies; +20 vs. Will; the target is pushed 2 squares and slowed until the end of the frost giant's next turn. Allies in the burst immediately shift 3 squares. The frost giant must sheath his longspear to play the drum.

Alignment Evil

Languages Common, Giant

Skills Arcana +17, Nature +20, Religion +17

Str 20 (+13) Dex 21 (+13) Wis 24 (+15)

Con 22 (+14) Int 19 (+12) Cha 21 (+13)

Equipment hide armor, longspear, drum



PRIMORDIALS

Primordials, the lords of the Elemental Chaos, once battled the gods over the fate of the natural world. By the end of the Dawn War, all but a handful of primordial were either imprisoned or destroyed.

Various cults and other followers revere specific primordials. Some of these devotees seek to return their revered primordial to the world, while others prefer to make use of the primordial in order to gain power or influence of their own.

The primordial known as Piranoth was the creator and master of the giants before and during the Dawn War. Specifically, earth, frost, and fire giants looked to Piranoth as creator and master. Piranoth was imprisoned in the Elemental Chaos in the waning days of the Dawn War. When Piranoth is freed, he spends some time in a state of diminished power as he regains strength and energy.

Piranoth (Diminished State) Level 19 Solo Skirmisher Huge elemental beast (primordial) XP 12,000

Initiative see *triple mind* **Senses** Perception +21; darkvision
Cloud of Elemental Chaos aura 3; each enemy that starts its turn in the aura takes damage; roll 1d6: 1-3, 10 fire damage; 4-5, 10 cold damage; 6, 15 cold and fire damage.

HP 752; **Bloodied** 376

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

Saving Throws +5

Immune attacks by characters below level 15; **Resist** 10 cold, 10 fire

Speed 6

Action Points 2

① **Magma Strike** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Fire**
Reach 4; +24 vs. AC; 3d6 + 8 fire damage.

② **Arctic Whip** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Cold**
Ranged 30; +22 vs. Fortitude; 2d6 +7 cold damage, and the target is slowed (save ends).

← **Earthen Storm** (standard; at-will)
Close blast 5; +20 vs. Reflex; 1d10 + 8 damage, and the target is pushed 3 squares.

‡ **Icefire Slash** (immediate reaction, when an attack misses Piranoth; at-will) ♦ **Cold, Fire**
Reach 4; +24 vs. AC; 1d10 + 8 cold and fire damage.

✱ **Elemental Torrent** (standard; recharges each time Piranoth spends an action point) ♦ **Cold, Fire**
Area burst 3 within 20; +20 vs. Fortitude; 4d8 +7 cold and fire damage, and the target slides 2 squares and is immobilized (save ends).

Chaos Jump (move; at-will)
Piranoth teleports 10 squares. Any enemies adjacent to Piranoth when he teleports are dazed (save ends).

Earth Shift (minor; at-will)
Piranoth shifts 3 squares. Any enemies adjacent to Piranoth when he shifts are knocked prone.

Triple Mind
Piranoth acts three times in a round, on initiative counts 35, 25, and 15. It cannot delay or ready actions. On each turn, it can use one action, either a minor, a move, or a standard. It can use one immediate action between each turn.

| | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Alignment Chaotic Evil | Languages Primordial |
| Str 26 (+17) | Dex 28 (+18) |
| Con 28 (+18) | Int 14 (+10) |
| | Wis 25 (+16) |
| | Cha 19 (+13) |



TORRIANS

Torrians are a race of lionid humanoids that once served as seneschals and major domos to the champions and guardians of Argent. As the city of Argent slid into the dim recollections of history, the remaining torrians migrated to other places. A small number of torrians survive to this day, living in hidden vales far from the centers of civilization.

| Torrian | Level 12 Lurker |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Large natural humanoid | XP 700 |
| Initiative +14 Senses Perception +13 | |
| HP 94; Bloodied 47 | |
| AC 26; Fortitude 24, Reflex 25, Will 23 | |
| Speed 8 | |
| ⚔ Claw (standard; at-will) | |
| Reach 2; +17 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage. | |
| † Strike from Hiding (standard; the torrian must be invisible; recharge ☞ ☞ ☞ ☞ ☞) | |
| Reach 2; +15 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 3 damage, and the target is dazed (save ends). | |
| Stealthy Step (move; at-will) | |
| The torrian shifts 4 squares and becomes invisible until the end of its next turn. | |
| Primal Focus (standard; encounter) | |
| The torrian regains 10 hit points and gains a +2 bonus to all defenses until the end of its next turn. | |
| Combat Advantage | |
| The torrian deals an extra 1d8 damage against any target it has combat advantage against. | |
| Alignment Unaligned | Languages Common |
| Skills Stealth +15 | |
| Str 17 (+9) Dex 18 (+10) Wis 15 (+8) | |
| Con 16 (+9) Int 10 (+6) Cha 12 (+7) | |

| Torrian Seneschal | Level 13 Controller (Leader) |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Large natural humanoid | XP 800 |
| Initiative +9 Senses Perception +8 | |
| HP 128; Bloodied 64 | |
| AC 27; Fortitude 25, Reflex 26, Will 25 | |
| Speed 8 | |
| ⚔ Claw (standard; at-will) | |
| Reach 2; +18 vs. AC; 1d8 + 6 damage. | |
| † Torrian's Roar (standard; encounter) ♦ Healing | |
| Reach 2; +18 vs. AC; 2d8 + 6 damage, and (hit or miss) all allies within 5 squares regain 10 hit points and gain a +2 bonus to attacks until the end of the torrian's next turn. | |
| ☜ Cause Fear (standard; recharge ☞ ☞ ☞ ☞ ☞) ♦ Fear | |
| Close burst 2; targets enemies; +15 vs. Will; the target is pushed 3 squares and is immobilized (save ends). | |
| Healing Word (minor, 1/round; encounter; recharges when first bloodied) ♦ Healing | |
| Close burst 10; targets one ally; the target can spend a healing surge and regain an additional 3d6 hit points. | |
| Primal Focus (standard; encounter) | |
| The torrian regains 10 hit points and gains a +2 bonus to all defenses until the end of its next turn. | |
| Alignment Unaligned | Languages Common |
| Skills Arcana +15, Diplomacy +14, Nature +13, Religion +15 | |
| Str 15 (+8) Dex 17 (+9) Wis 15 (+8) | |
| Con 16 (+9) Int 18 (+10) Cha 16 (+9) | |

| Torrian Guard | Level 13 Soldier |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Large natural humanoid | XP 800 |
| Initiative +11 Senses Perception +13 | |
| HP 132; Bloodied 66 | |
| AC 29; Fortitude 28, Reflex 26, Will 25 | |
| Speed 8 | |
| ⚔ Claw (standard; at-will) | |
| Reach 2; +20 vs. AC; 2d8 + 6 damage. | |
| ☜ Torrian's Challenge (standard; recharge ☞ ☞ ☞ ☞ ☞) | |
| Close burst 3; targets enemies; the torrian pulls each target 2 squares to an adjacent square and then makes a close attack against each adjacent enemy; +20 vs. AC; 1d10 + 6 damage. | |
| † Rending Claw (standard; encounter; recharges when first bloodied) | |
| Reach 2; +20 vs. AC; 3d6 + 6 damage, and the target takes a -2 penalty to all defenses until the end of the torrian's next turn. | |
| † Sudden Strike (immediate reaction, when an enemy moves or shifts out of a square adjacent to the torrian; at-will) | |
| The torrian makes an immediate claw attack against the triggering target. | |
| Primal Focus (standard; encounter) | |
| The torrian regains 10 hit points and gains a +2 bonus to all defenses until the end of its next turn. | |
| Alignment Unaligned | Languages Common |
| Skills Athletics +15, Endurance +16, Intimidate +12 | |
| Str 18 (+10) Dex 16 (+9) Wis 14 (+8) | |
| Con 20 (+11) Int 10 (+6) Cha 12 (+7) | |



ADVENTURE ENCOUNTERS

The rest of the material in this book presents the encounters that make up the adventure. Parts Two, Four, Five, and Six can take place whenever the adventurers decide to deal with them.

- ◆ **Part One: The City of Argent** (*Encounters C1-C4, pages 28-35*). These encounters introduce the adventure and help bring the player characters into the story of Argent, its history, and the danger facing it and the rest of the world.
- ◆ **Part Two: Research Encounters** (*Encounters R1-R3, pages 40-45*). These encounters provide clues and information concerning quests the adventurers can undertake over the course of the story. These take place any time after Part One is completed.
- ◆ **Part Three: Earth Giant Encounters** (*Encounters E1-E7, pages 48-63*). These encounters allow the adventurers to face the challenge of the earth giants and their titan lord, Earthshaker.
- ◆ **Part Four: Torrian Encounters** (*Encounters T1-T3, pages 64-69*). These encounters follow the quest to find and recruit the torrians. These take place any time after Part One is completed.
- ◆ **Part Five: Implements of Argent Encounters** (*Encounters I1-I4, pages 70-77*). These encounters follow the quest to find the material needed to craft the Implements of Argent. These take place any time after Part One is completed.
- ◆ **Part Six: Diplomatic Encounters** (*Encounters D1-D7, pages 78-89*). These encounters follow the quest to rally different points of light against the giant uprising.
- ◆ **Part Seven: Frost Giant Encounters** (*Encounters F1-F13, pages 92-123*). These encounters pit the adventurers against the frost giants and their titan lord, Glacier.
- ◆ **Part Eight: Fire Giant Encounters** (*Encounters G1-G11, pages 130-151*). These encounters follow the action as the adventurers take the battle to the fire giants and their titan lord, Wildfire.
- ◆ **Part Nine: Primordial Encounters** (*Encounters P1-P3, pages 154-160*). These encounters take the adventurers into the Elemental Chaos where they must confront the freed primordial, Piranoth.





ENCOUNTER CI: DESPERATE MESSAGE

Encounter Level 12 (3,875 XP)

SETUP

- 1 fire archon flameshield (A)
- 2 earth elemental quakes (E)
- 2 fire elemental firestorms (F)
- 5 fire elemental sparks (S)
- 1 torrian seneschal (T)

Use one or more of the adventure hooks (see page 8) to get the adventurers to this strangely deserted portion of the forest. Here, they encounter Rowthar, the torrian seneschal that has left the hallowed city of Argent behind in order to locate paragon-tier heroes to come to the aid of the city's last guardian. Unfortunately, agents of the Elemental Chaos, intent on destroying the hallowed city and releasing a primordial into the world, have reached Rowthar first.

The adventurers approach the location shown on the map from the south.

As the adventurers approach, read:

The thick, close-packed trees and underbrush give way to a large clearing. A rocky protrusion blocks your view into the clearing, but a few scattered trees can be seen rising above the obstacle. The trees, however, appear as anything but normal. They are ablaze, burning with a supernatural fire that doesn't seem to consume the trees or set the surrounding countryside ablaze.

Don't place any of the monsters until the adventurers move into a position from which they can see them. The fire archon flameshield leads this elemental hunting party. When they broke into the natural world, they brought a piece of the Elemental Chaos with them, hence the strange and fiery properties present in the clearing.

When adventurers see into the clearing, read:

A large, lion-like humanoid with wild, manelike locks and a carved bone headpiece stands near one of the burning trees. Five sparks of fire dance around the burned and wounded creature, darting in to slash with tendrils of flame and darting back out before the obviously weakened lion-man can strike back.

Between you and the creature, larger elementals form a barrier, including two pillars of fire and two piles of ambulatory rock. To one side, you see a fiery humanoid form dressed in pieces of bronzed plate armor and carrying a scimitar and shield. It speaks in a voice like the roar of an inferno, in a language as alien as the creature itself, and the elementals begin to move toward the lion-man with savage intent.

Perception Check

DC 16: *The lion-man clutches a singed scroll in one massive paw, holding it protectively against its chest.*

| Fire Archon Flameshield (A) | Level 11 Soldier |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Medium elemental humanoid (fire) | XP 600 |
| Initiative +13 | Senses Perception +14 |
| Ember Cloud (Fire) aura 1; each creature that begins its turn in the aura takes 5 fire damage and is marked by the flameshield until the end of the flameshield's next turn. | |
| HP 116; Bloodied 58 | |
| AC 27; Fortitude 23, Reflex 24, Will 22 | |
| Immune disease, poison; Resist 30 fire | |
| Speed 8 | |
| ⚔ Scimitar (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire, Weapon | |
| +18 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage (crit 2d8 + 13) plus 1d8 fire damage, and target is marked until the end of the flameshield's next turn. | |
| ⚡ Flameshield Enticement (standard; recharge 2) ♦ Fire | |
| The fire archon's flameshield flares brightly; Close burst 3; +16 vs. Fortitude; 2d6 + 5 fire damage, the target is pulled 2 squares, and the target takes ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends). | |
| Flame Mark ♦ Fire | |
| The flameshield deals an extra 1d8 fire damage against any enemy that is marked by it. | |
| Alignment Chaotic evil | Languages Primordial |
| Str 16 (+8) | Dex 22 (+11) Wis 18 (+9) |
| Con 20 (+10) | Int 16 (+8) Cha 14 (+7) |
| Equipment plate armor, light shield, scimitar | |

| 2 Fire Elemental Firestorms (F) | Level 12 Controller |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Large elemental magical beast (fire) | XP 700 each |
| Initiative +12 | Senses Perception +7 |
| Blazing Heat (Fire) aura 1; any creature that enters or starts its turn in the aura takes 5 fire damage. | |
| HP 122; Bloodied 61 | |
| AC 26; Fortitude 23, Reflex 25, Will 22 | |
| Immune disease, petrification, poison; Resist 30 fire | |
| Speed 6 | |
| ⚡ Fire Slam (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire | |
| Reach 2; +17 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 fire damage, and target is pushed 3 squares. | |
| ⚡ Firestorm (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire, Zone | |
| Area burst 1 within 10; +14 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 5 fire damage and the target is immobilized (save ends). The zone is filled with fire and is considered difficult terrain until the end of the encounter. Any creature that enters or starts its turn in the zone takes 5 fire damage. | |
| Alignment Unaligned | Languages Primordial |
| Str 13 (+7) | Dex 22 (+12) Wis 12 (+7) |
| Con 18 (+10) | Int 4 (+5) Cha 16 (+9) |

TACTICS

The fire archon orders the elementals to finish off the wounded torrian, shouting out orders in Primordial. As soon as the fire archon becomes aware of the adventurers, he turns his attention to them and directs the earth elementals and fire elementals to do the same. He leaves the sparks to kill Rowthar. The

| 5 Fire Elemental Sparks (S) | | Level 12 Minion |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Medium elemental magical beast (fire) | | XP 175 each |
| Initiative +13 | Senses Perception +7 | |
| HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion. | | |
| AC 26; Fortitude 24, Reflex 26, Will 22 | | |
| Resist 30 fire | | |
| Speed 7 | | |
| ⚡ Fire Claw (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire | | |
| The fire elemental spark shifts 1 square and attacks. +17 vs. AC; 8 fire damage (crit 12 fire damage). | | |
| ⚡ Fire Burst (immediate reaction, when reduced to 0 hit points; at-will) ♦ Fire | | |
| The fire elemental spark shifts 1 square and explodes. Close burst 1; +15 vs. Reflex; 8 fire damage. Fire elementals in the burst gain a +2 bonus to defenses until the end of their next turn. | | |
| Alignment Unaligned | | Languages Primordial |
| Str 15 (+8) | Dex 21 (+11) | Wis 12 (+7) |
| Con 16 (+9) | Int 3 (+2) | Cha 8 (+5) |

fire archon happily wades into the *inferno cloud* zones to engage the enemy, using his mark and *flameshield enticement* to corral the adventurers into the surrounding fires.

The fire elementals set up a few *firestorm* zones before the adventurers get close. They use this power whenever they can, falling back to *fire slam* only when enemies are adjacent to them.

The earth elementals stand back, attempting to place themselves between the adventurers and the fire elementals while doing their best to avoid any of the fires raging around them. They engage any adventurers that try to break through to reach Rowthar, pummeling them with *granite punches*.

The fire elemental sparks attack Rowthar unless an adventurer moves up to engage them. Rowthar has the same statistics as a torrian seneschal (see page 25). He has already been bloodied; he has 64 hit points remaining when the encounter begins. The sparks continue to attack even after the torrian falls. If he is reduced to -64 hit points, he dies. When defeated, the sparks shift to try to get as many enemies as they can with their *fire bursts*, always trying to include Rowthar in the area.

All of the elementals fight to the death.

Rowthar attacks once per round, at the end of the round. He uses *cause fear* whenever it is available, and will heal nearby adventurers if he can.

DEVELOPMENT

With the defeat of the last elemental, the forest returns to normal. If Rowthar survives, he presents the adventurers with two sheets of vellum rolled tightly together: an Argent Portal ritual scroll and the "Honor and Invitation" letter from Obanar (see page 14). If he dies, then the scroll is damaged by the flames and must be repaired using a *Make Whole* ritual before it can be used.

| 2 Earth Elemental Quakes (E) | | Level 10 Brute |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Large elemental magical beast (earth) | | XP 500 each |
| Initiative +7 | Senses Perception +11 | |
| HP 125; Bloodied 62 | | |
| AC 22; Fortitude 24, Reflex 21, Will 21 | | |
| Immune disease, petrification, poison | | |
| Speed 5 | | |
| ⚡ Granite Punch (standard; at-will) | | |
| Reach 2; +13 vs. AC; 2d10 + 6 damage. | | |
| Earthquake (standard; recharge ☞ ☞) | | |
| The ground around the earth elemental shakes violently. Close burst 2; +11 vs. Fortitude; 3d8 + 5 damage, and the target is pushed 2 squares. | | |
| Alignment Unaligned | | Languages Primordial |
| Str 21 (+10) | Dex 15 (+7) | Wis 12 (+6) |
| Con 15 (+7) | Int 4 (+2) | Cha 15 (+7) |

When the adventurers use the ritual scroll, they are transported to the city of Argent. Go on to **Encounter C2: The Ancient City** on page 30.

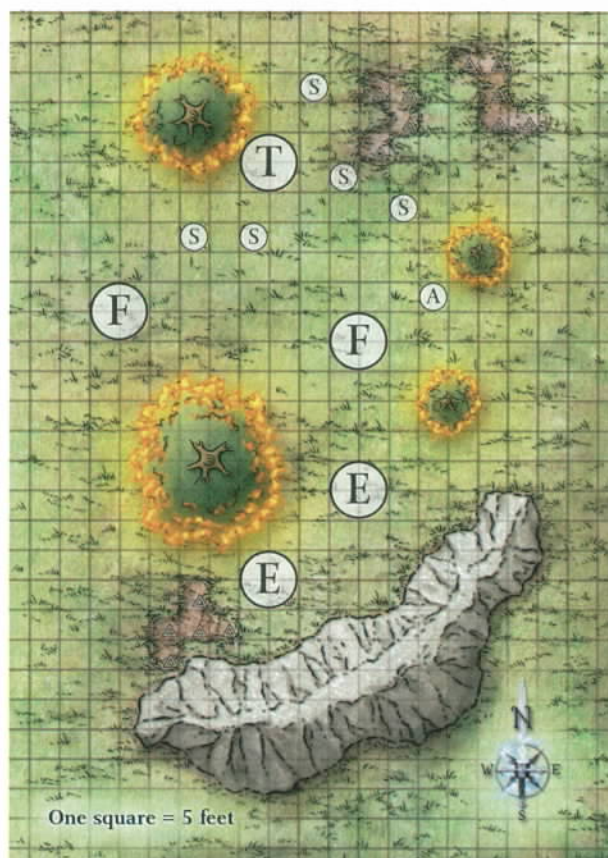
FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Bright light from the burning trees.

Broken Ground: The broken ground that litters the area is difficult terrain.

Everburning Trees: The flames burning on and around the trees give off great amounts of heat (aura 1). Any creature that enters or starts its turn in the aura takes 5 fire damage.

Rock Outcropping: The rocky protrusion is 20 feet high. It can be climbed with a DC 21 Athletics check. A fall from the rock deals 2d10 damage.



ENCOUNTER C2: THE ANCIENT CITY

Encounter Level 12 (3,800 XP)

SETUP

2 bulettes (B)
3 galeb duhr stoneshaper
1 stone-eye basilisk
Guardian Obanar (G)

Place only Obanar in view when the adventurers arrive in the city of Argent. The other monsters don't appear until later in the encounter, as described below.

ARRIVAL

The adventurers appear in the teleportation circle just in front of the gate when they use the Argent Portal ritual provided by Rowthar in **Encounter C1: Desperate Message** (see page 28). When the adventurers arrive, read:

You appear within a glowing circle, its runes inscribed into the stone tiles beneath your feet. You are standing in a courtyard of sorts, surrounded by marble statues of humans and humanoids. A reflecting pool shimmers ahead of you, its glow barely perceptible. A statue of a female dressed in grand robes overlooks the pool, her outstretched hand glowing with a calming light.

A human in robes and a silver cloak, ancient by all appearances, leans heavily on a great staff. "Welcome, champions," he says in a strong voice, "welcome to Argent."

At that moment, everything in the open mall shakes as a great pounding resounds from somewhere beyond the gate behind you. With each powerful strike, the old man seems to shudder. "It will hold," the old man says, "it will hold."

DEVELOPMENT

The old man is Obanar, the last guardian of Argent. If Rowthar survived the battle in the forest, he accompanies the adventurers through the portal and introduces them to Obanar. "You have selected well, old friend," Obanar says after introductions are made.

Throughout the conversation, the sound of stone and metal striking wood and stone resonates from beyond the grand mall's gate. Obanar asks the adventurers to hold their questions until they reach a place more conducive to polite conversation. Then the ground explodes upward, and two bulettes burrow into the mall.

Place the bulettes as shown on the map. The other monsters arrive on their turns in the next round, entering the city through the tunnels the bulettes created when they appeared.

| Obanar, the Last Guardian | | Level 20 Controller |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|
| Medium natural humanoid, human | | XP 2,800 |
| Initiative +13 | Senses Perception +22 | |
| HP 186; Bloodied 93 | | |
| AC 34; Fortitude 32, Reflex 34, Will 35 | | |
| Speed 6 | | |
| ⚡ Thunder Strike (standard; at-will) ♦ Implement, Thunder +25 vs. AC; 2d8 + 7 thunder damage, and the target is pushed 3 squares. | | |
| ✂ Far Touch (standard; at-will) ♦ Implement, Psychic Ranged 20; +24 vs. Will; 2d6 + 7 psychic damage, and until the end of Obanar's next turn, the target is slowed and takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls and saving throws. | | |
| ❄ Blast of Cold (standard; recharge 1) ♦ Cold, Implement Close blast 5; targets enemies; +22 vs. Reflex; 4d10 + 7 cold damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends). Miss: Half damage and the target is slowed (save ends). | | |
| Arcane Shield (immediate reaction, when Obanar is hit by an attack; encounter) Obanar gains a +4 power bonus to AC and Reflex defense until the end of his next turn. | | |
| Fly (standard; encounter) Obanar gains a speed of fly 8 until the end of his next turn. | | |
| Alignment Good | Languages Common, Supernal | |
| Skills Arcana +21, Insight +22, Religion +21 | | |
| Str 12 (+11) | Dex 16 (+13) | Wis 24 (+17) |
| Con 18 (+14) | Int 22 (+16) | Cha 15 (+12) |
| Equipment robes, quarterstaff | | |

| 2 Bulettes (B) | | Level 9 Elite Skirmisher |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Large natural beast | | XP 800 each |
| Initiative +7 | Senses Perception +5; darkvision, tremorsense 20 | |
| HP 204; Bloodied 102; see also <i>second wind</i> | | |
| AC 27; Fortitude 26, Reflex 21, Will 21 | | |
| Saving Throws +2 | | |
| Speed 6, burrow 6; see also <i>earth furrow</i> | | |
| Action Points 1 | | |
| ⚡ Bite (standard; at-will) | | |
| Before it bites, the bulette can make a standing long jump (as a free action) without provoking opportunity attacks; +14 vs. AC; 2d6 + 7 damage, or 4d6 + 7 damage against a prone target. | | |
| ❄ Rising Burst (standard; at-will) | | |
| Close burst 2; the bulette sprays rock and dirt into the air when it rises out of the ground; +13 vs. AC; 1d6 + 7 damage. | | |
| ⚡ Earth Furrow (move; at-will) | | |
| The bulette moves up to its burrow speed just below the surface of the ground, avoiding opportunity attacks as it passes underneath other creatures' squares. As it burrows beneath the space of a Medium or smaller creature on the ground, the bulette makes an attack against the creature: +8 vs. Fortitude; on a hit, the target is knocked prone. | | |
| Ground Eruption | | |
| The squares into which a bulette surfaces and the squares it leaves when it burrows underground become difficult terrain. | | |
| Second Wind (standard; encounter) ♦ Healing | | |
| The bulette spends a healing surge and regains 51 hit points. It gains a +2 bonus to all defenses until the start of its next turn. | | |
| Alignment Unaligned | | Languages – |
| Skills Athletics +16, Endurance +15 | | |
| Str 24 (+11) | Dex 13 (+5) | Wis 12 (+5) |
| Con 22 (+10) | Int 2 (+0) | Cha 8 (+3) |

Stone-Eye Basilisk**Level 12 Soldier**

Large natural beast (reptile)

XP 700

Initiative +9

Senses Perception +13

Baleful Gaze Any creature within 5 squares of the stone-eye basilisk that attacks the basilisk is slowed until the end of its next turn. This effect doesn't rely on the target seeing the basilisk.

HP 126; Bloodied 63

AC 28; Fortitude 26, Reflex 22, Will 22

Immune petrification

Speed 4

Ⓢ **Bite** (standard; at-will)

+17 vs. AC; 2d8 + 5 damage.

⚡ **Petrifying Gaze** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Gaze**

Close blast 3; +17 vs. Fortitude; the target is slowed (save ends).

First Failed Saving Throw: The target is immobilized (save ends).

Second Failed Saving Throw: The target is petrified (no save).

Alignment Unaligned

Languages –

Skills Stealth +12

Str 20 (+11)

Dex 12 (+7)

Wis 14 (+8)

Con 22 (+12)

Int 2 (+2)

Cha 8 (+5)

3 Galeb Duhr Stoneshapers**Level 10 Artillery**

Medium elemental humanoid (earth)

XP 500 each

Initiative +8

Senses Perception +14; tremorsense 10

HP 86; Bloodied 43

AC 22; Fortitude 23, Reflex 20, Will 21

Immune petrification, poison

Speed 4 (earth walk), burrow 6

Ⓢ **Slam** (standard; at-will)

+17 vs. AC; 1d8 + 6 damage.

⚡ **Stone Shard** (standard; at-will)

Ranged 20; +15 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 5 damage. The stoneshaper can create shards to hurl when none are present.

⚡ **Stone Wall** (standard; recharge Ⓜ; Ⓜ)

The stoneshaper calls forth a wall of stone. Close burst 2; +13 vs. Fortitude; 1d10 + 6 damage, and the target is pushed 1 square and knocked prone. The stoneshaper gains +2 to all defenses until the beginning of its next turn.

Alignment Unaligned

Languages Dwarven, Giant

Skills Stealth +13

Str 23 (+11)

Dex 16 (+8)

Wis 18 (+9)

Con 20 (+10)

Int 12 (+6)

Cha 12 (+6)

TACTICS

When the bulettes burst from the ground, Obanar moves toward the statue of Erathis overlooking the pool to use its magic against the invaders. Once he reaches the statue, he uses a standard action each round to make a DC 27 Arcana check. He needs four successes to restore the defenses in this part of the city. When he achieves the four successes, a wave of energy radiates from the statue's hand. It seals the bulette tunnels and rushes out to push back the invaders at the outer walls. Obanar defends himself as necessary as he makes his way to the statue.

Rowthar rushes to help Obanar, providing healing as warranted to first Obanar and then to the adventurers.

The basilisk attempts to stop Obanar, while the bulettes and the galeb duhrs take on the adventurers.

NEXT

When the battle ends, Obanar explains that Argent is under attack. He waves a hand over the reflecting pool and the water shimmers to show a top-down view of the city. A red dot pulsates angrily over what appears to be a great tower and among a nearby collection of smaller buildings.

"Other invaders have made it into the city,"

Obanar explains as he studies the view in the water.

"I must go to the highest level of the Guardian's Tower to restore the protective wards. Rowthar shall lead you to the intruders so that you can deal with them."

Go on to **Encounter C3: Street Battle**, on page 32.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

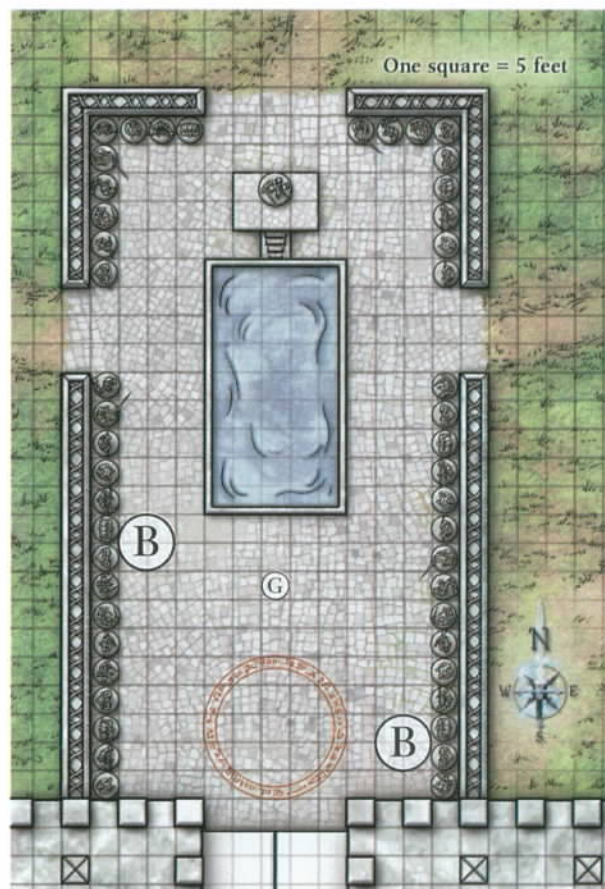
Illumination: Bright light; even at night, the reflecting pool glows brightly.

Gate: The gate is made of metal-bound wood. It is 45 feet tall.

Magic Circle: This teleportation circle is linked to the Argent Portal ritual.

Reflecting Pool: The pool is 10 feet deep. Obanar can use it to scry on the city.

Statues: The statues represent adventurers of all classes and races. The statue overlooking the pool is a representation of Erathis, the god of civilization. A character can identify Erathis with a DC 16 Religion check.



ENCOUNTER C3: STREET BATTLE

Encounter Level 13 (4,275 XP)

SETUP

- 2 magma striders (S)
- 2 magma brutes (B)
- 1 hill giant shaman (H)
- 5 earth elemental gravelshards (E)

Rowthar leads the adventurers out of the Grand Mall, through a narrow copse of trees, and into a crowded, decrepit part of the city (area 11 on the Argent map; see page 13). If Rowthar isn't with the adventurers, then Obanar shows them where to go on the image of the city projected in the reflecting pool.

The adventurers enter the area shown on the tactical map from the west. Don't place any of the monsters until the adventurers can spot them. Read:

As you follow Rowthar through the city, you notice that the place is as silent as a tomb. You see no other people, even though there are buildings everywhere. Then you enter a section of the city where the buildings are stacked closer together. This area is more run down than what you've seen previously, and as you move deeper into the area the structures become more decrepit. Walls are crumbled in places, and some buildings are little more than collapsed husks.

From somewhere up ahead, you hear a rough voice call out, "You are not the old, annoying one. I don't know who you are, but it doesn't matter. You are too late, for our task here has been completed."

Perception Check

DC 18: You notice a large hole in the air above the street, a rift of some sort. It pulses with elemental energy.

| Hill Giant Shaman (H) | | Level 13 Controller |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| Large natural humanoid (giant) | | XP 800 |
| Initiative +9 | Senses Perception +13 | |
| HP 131; Bloodied 65 | | |
| AC 27; Fortitude 25, Reflex 23, Will 23 | | |
| Speed 8 | | |
| ⚔ Quarterstaff (standard; at-will) ♦ Implement, Weapon | | |
| Reach 2; +18 vs. AC; 2d8 + 5 damage. | | |
| ⚡ Earthstorm (standard; recharge ⏏ ⏏) ♦ Implement, Weapon | | |
| Requires quarterstaff. Close blast 5; +15 vs. Fortitude; 3d10 + 6 damage, and the target is pushed 1 square and blinded (save ends). | | |
| 🔥 Volcanic Blast (standard; at-will) ♦ Implement, Weapon | | |
| Ranged 10; +17 vs. Reflex; 1d10 + 6 damage, and target gains vulnerable 5 fire (save ends). | | |
| Alignment Chaotic evil | | Languages Common, Giant |
| Skills Arcana +13, Nature +13 | | |
| Str 21 (+11) | Dex 16 (+9) | Wis 14 (+8) |
| Con 19 (+10) | Int 14 (+8) | Cha 16 (+9) |
| Equipment hide armor, stone quarterstaff | | |

TACTICS

The hill giant shaman steps out from around the ruined building to unleash ranged *volcanic blasts* at the adventurers. He waits to use *earthstorm* until two or more enemies move within range of his blast. If the hill giant is bloodied, he tries to flee deeper into the city. If that fails, he fights to the death.

The magma brutes emerge from the ruined buildings to set up a flank with the most convenient target.

The magma striders rush into the fray to deliver bite attacks against the adventurers. If the bite attack succeeds, a magma strider uses *burn across the battlefield* to charge a different enemy.

In the middle of this carnage, the earth elemental gravelshards slam into the adventurers. Whenever an attack misses a gravelshard, it uses *gravelshard collision* to ricochet from target to target, granting temporary hit points to elemental allies along the way.

The elementals have no desire to escape or flee; they fight to the death.

| 2 Magma Striders (S) | | Level 10 Skirmisher |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Large elemental magical beast (earth, fire) | | XP 500 each |
| Initiative +12 | Senses Perception +7 | |
| Blazing Heat (Fire) aura 2; enemies in the aura at the start of their turns take 5 fire damage. | | |
| HP 105; Bloodied 52 | | |
| AC 24; Fortitude 20, Reflex 22, Will 19 | | |
| Immune petrification; Resist 10 fire; Vulnerable cold (slowed until the end of the magma strider's next turn) | | |
| Speed 6, climb 6 | | |
| ⚔ Bite (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire | | |
| Reach 2; +15 vs. AC; 1d6 + 5 damage, and ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends). | | |
| ⚡ Burn Across the Battlefield (free, when the magma strider hits with its bite attack; recharge ⏏ ⏏ ⏏ ⏏) | | |
| The magma strider can charge another target up to 6 squares away and make another bite attack. | | |
| Burning Mobility ♦ Fire | | |
| Any creature that makes an opportunity attack against the magma strider takes ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends). | | |
| Alignment Unaligned | | Languages Primordial |
| Skills Endurance +13 | | |
| Str 16 (+8) | Dex 21 (+10) | Wis 14 (+7) |
| Con 17 (+8) | Int 2 (+1) | Cha 10 (+5) |

2 Magma Brutes (B)**Level 13 Brute**

Large elemental humanoid (earth, fire)

XP 800 each

Initiative +9**Senses** Perception +7**HP** 156; **Bloodied** 78**AC** 25; **Fortitude** 26, **Reflex** 23, **Will** 21**Immune** petrification; **Resist** 20 fire; **Vulnerable** cold (slowed until the end of the magma brute's next turn)**Speed** 4Ⓢ **Slam** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Fire**

Reach 2; +17 vs. AC; 1d8 + 6 damage, and ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends).

Alignment Unaligned**Languages** Primordial**Skills** Endurance +14**Str** 22 (+12)**Dex** 16 (+9)**Wis** 13 (+7)**Con** 16 (+9)**Int** 5 (+3)**Cha** 8 (+5)**5 Earth Elemental Gravelshards (E)****Level 12 Minion**

Medium elemental magical beast (earth)

XP 175 each

Initiative +9**Senses** Perception +5**HP** 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.**AC** 26; **Fortitude** 24, **Reflex** 25, **Will** 23**Speed** 6, earthwalkⓈ **Slam** (standard; at-will)

+17 vs. AC; 8 damage.

† **Gravelshard Collision** (immediate reaction, when an attack misses the gravelshard; at-will)

The gravelshard shifts up to 3 squares to move adjacent to another elemental with the earth keyword, granting that elemental 10 temporary hit points. Then it charges the nearest enemy. +17 vs. Reflex; 9 damage and the target is knocked prone.

Alignment Unaligned**Languages** Primordial**Str** 15 (+8)**Dex** 16 (+9)**Wis** 9 (+5)**Con** 15 (+8)**Int** 11 (+6)**Cha** 13 (+7)

ELEMENTAL RIFT

This group of elementals, led by a hill giant shaman, entered the city when the wards briefly weakened. This was the same time that the bulettes broke into the Grand Mall and another strike force started for the vaults beneath the Guardian's Tower.

The purpose that the hill giant eludes to as the adventurers arrive relates to the ritual the shaman concluded just moment's before. He has opened an elemental rift (marked "R" on the map) that further works to weaken and disrupt the wards and other arcane defenses protecting the city.

Every round on initiative count 20, the elemental rift releases a burst of elemental energy: close burst 2; elementals are immune; +16 vs. Fortitude; 1d8 + 3 cold, fire, and lightning damage.

The adventurers can attempt to close the rift by reversing the ritual, a copy of which the hill giant shaman carries in a belt pouch. To reverse the ritual, a character must make four successful DC 23 Arcana checks (standard action). Each time the check fails, the rift unleashes a larger burst of elemental energy: close burst 20; +17 vs. Fortitude; 3d8 + 3 cold, fire, and lightning damage.

If the character gains three failures before earning four successes, the rift remains open and permanently weakens and disrupts Argent's web of arcane defenses.

DEVELOPMENT

After the adventurers defeat the hill giant and its elemental allies, they can try to close the elemental rift. Whether the attempt to close the rift succeeds or fails, Rowthar suggests that the adventurers follow him to the Guardian's Tower so that they can join up with Obanar. If Rowthar isn't with the adventurers, then Obanar appears as a ghostly image before them. "Champions, I could use your assistance," the projected image says. "Follow this glowing light to the Guardian's Tower."

FEATURES OF THE AREA

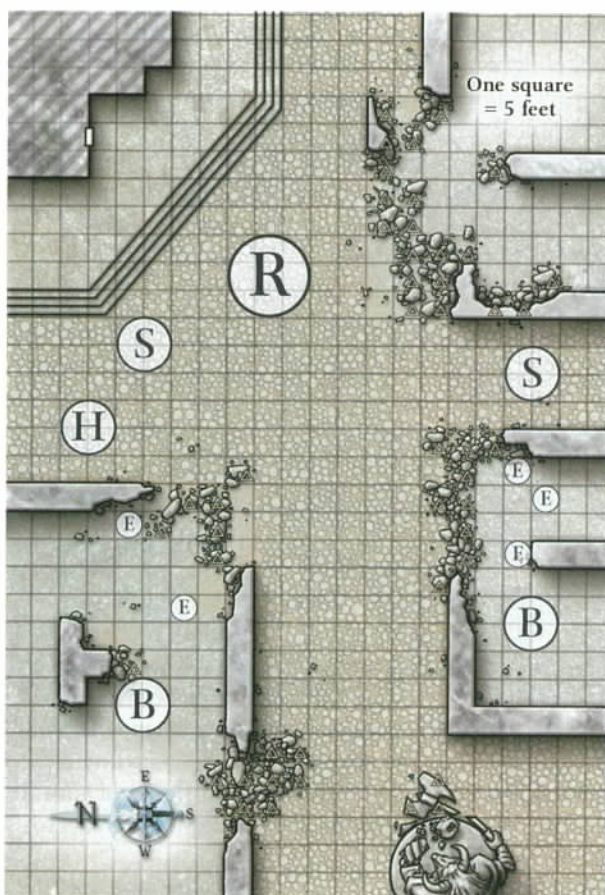
Illumination: Dim light; the close-packed buildings don't allow much sun to filter down to the decrepit streets. At night, the area is in darkness.

Buildings: The buildings are in various states of disrepair. Except for rubble, the buildings in this area are empty.

Elemental Rift: Marked "R" on the map; see the section in the adjacent column for additional details on this feature.

Rubble: The rubble where building walls and ceilings have collapsed is difficult terrain.

Treasure: The hill giant carries a number of treasures upon his person, including the scroll with the ritual he used to open the elemental rift, three 1,000 gp gems, 400 gp, and a *potion of vitality*.



ENCOUNTER C4: THE HIDDEN VAULT

Encounter Level 15 (6,200 XP)

SETUP

Breven Foss, element master (B)
2 fire archon flameshields (A)
1 earth elemental battlemur (E)
12 frostfell harriers (F)

Obanar waits at the entrance to the tower. Read:

"I know that you must have a multitude of questions to ask me, and I shall give you every opportunity to quench your curiosity," Obanar says, "but I must ask you to remain patient a while longer. Know that this is the city of Argent, and I am its last guardian. Right now, the city is under siege by hill giants and elemental creatures, and even as we speak, a force of hostile combatants is making its way to the vaults beneath this tower. I must complete the rituals necessary to restore and re-establish the city's magical defenses, so I must ask you to stop the intruders before they can penetrate the vaults. Soon, we shall speak of the mysteries of Argent, the destiny of champions, and the fate of a multitude of worlds. But first, we must keep Argent safe."

THE VAULTS

Rowthar leads the adventurers to the vaults beneath the Guardian's Tower, or Obanar sends an arcane ball of light to guide them to the location of the intruders if Rowthar isn't with them. They reach the vault level to find that the outer door in the corridor is slightly ajar, revealing a group of elementals in the entry chamber. Beyond the entry chamber, a trap room serves to slow or even stop intruders from reaching the actual vault.

When the adventurers arrive, the elementals guarding the entry chamber move to attack.

TACTICS

The enemy has already breached the hidden vault. The tactics indicate how the monsters guarding each chamber approach the battle at hand.

ENTRY CHAMBER

This group of elementals, an earth elemental battlemur and three frostfell harriers, attempts to keep the adventurers from moving deeper into the vault. The battlemur rumbles into the midst of the adventurers, making *earthen strikes* and using *earthstorm* whenever it recharges. The harriers stay close to keep any enemies attacking the battlemur in their *frostfield* aura. If the harriers are destroyed, the battlemur retreats to the next chamber.

2 Fire Archon Flameshields (A)

Medium elemental humanoid (fire)

Level 11 Soldier

XP 600 each

Initiative +13

Senses Perception +14

Ember Cloud (Fire) aura 1; each creature that begins its turn in the aura takes 5 fire damage and is marked by the flameshield until the end of the flameshield's next turn.

HP 116; Bloodied 58

AC 27; Fortitude 23, Reflex 24, Will 22

Immune disease, poison; Resist 30 fire

Speed 8

⚔ **Scimitar** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Fire, Weapon**

+18 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage (crit 2d8 + 13) plus 1d8 fire damage, and the target is marked until the end of the flameshield's next turn.

⚡ **Flameshield Enticement** (standard; recharge ⚡ ⚡ ⚡) ♦ **Fire**

The fire archon's flameshield flares brightly; Close burst 3; +16 vs. Fortitude; 2d6 + 5 fire damage, the target is pulled 2 squares, and ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends).

Flame Mark ♦ **Fire**

The flameshield deals an extra 1d8 fire damage against any enemy that is marked by it.

Alignment Chaotic evil

Languages Primordial

Str 16 (+8)

Dex 22 (+11)

Wis 18 (+9)

Con 20 (+10)

Int 16 (+8)

Cha 14 (+7)

Equipment plate armor, light shield, scimitar

Earth Elemental Battlemur (E)

Large elemental magical beast (earth)

Level 14 Brute

XP 1,000 each

Initiative +9

Senses Perception +8

Battlemur aura 2; each ally in the aura and touching the ground receives a +2 bonus to AC and Fortitude defenses.

HP 168; Bloodied 84

AC 26; Fortitude 26, Reflex 22, Will 22

Immune disease, petrification, poison

Speed 5

⚔ **Earthen Strike** (standard; at-will)

Reach 2; +17 vs. AC; 2d12 + 8 damage, and if the target is bloodied, it is knocked prone.

⚡ **Earthstorm** (standard; recharge ⚡ ⚡)

The ground around the earth elemental churns and explodes. Close burst 2; +15 vs. Fortitude; 3d10 + 8 damage, and the target is pushed 2 squares.

Alignment Unaligned

Languages Primordial

Str 22 (+13)

Dex 15 (+9)

Wis 12 (+8)

Con 18 (+11)

Int 4 (+4)

Cha 15 (+9)

TRAP ROOM

The section chamber in this vault complex has a permanent slow effect enchanted upon it. Any creatures in the room are slowed.

Barely perceptible sigils inscribed upon the floor (DC 23 Perception check to notice) are part of the room's trap. Whenever a character enters a square containing a sigil (marked as an "X" on the map), that character takes 10 damage and slides 3 squares. The trap always slides a character either away from the door to the final chamber, or toward either of the glowing walls of energy on each side of the room.

Any creature that touches a wall of energy is immediately pulled into the cell beyond the wall. Two of the harriers have been trapped in this fashion.

Breven Foss (B) Level 13 Elite Controller (Leader)
Medium natural humanoid, human XP 1,600

Initiative +7 Senses Perception +18

Elemental Energy aura 10; each elemental ally within the aura regenerates 10 hp at the start of its turn.

HP 264; Bloodied 132

AC 27; Fortitude 25, Reflex 26, Will 27

Saving Throws +2

Speed 6

Action Points 1

⚡ **Fire Touch** (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire

+17 vs. Reflex; 1d10 + 6 fire damage, and the target takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls until the end of Foss's next turn.

➔ **Frost Bolt** (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold

Ranged 10; +17 vs. Fortitude; 2d8 + 6 cold damage, and until the end of Foss's next turn, the target is slowed and takes a -2 penalty to all defenses.

⚡ **Elemental Burst** (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold, Fire

Close burst 5; targets enemies; +16 vs. Fortitude; 1d10 + 6 cold and fire damage, Foss slides the target 3 squares, and the target is dazed (save ends).

Elemental Recall (immediate reaction, when Foss is reduced to 132 hp or fewer; encounter)

Foss teleports away to a predetermined location; close burst 5; +16 vs. Reflex; 3d10 + 6 cold and fire damage.

Alignment Unaligned Languages Common, Primordial

Skills Arcana +17, Insight +18, Religion +17

Str 12 (+7) Dex 12 (+7) Wis 24 (+13)

Con 20 (+11) Int 22 (+12) Cha 15 (+8)

As the adventurers attempt to cross the room, the frostfell harriers attack them.

VAULT

Two fire archons and a trio of frostfell harriers guard the entrance to the vault. They fight to the death to give the elemental master Breven Foss time to finish acquiring the vault's treasure.

Breven Foss is in the process of forcing open the magical curtain designed to store and protect a piece of the divine engine that was used to trap the primordial Piranoth at the end of the Dawn War. He needs to make three more DC 25 Arcana checks (minor action, one per round) to open the curtain of energy.

Once the curtain falls, Foss grabs the large chunk of silver and gold and places it in a *bag of holding*. He uses *elemental burst* whenever enemies get too close. Otherwise, he targets enemies that he can see with *frost bolts*. When he becomes bloodied, Foss immediately teleports to a predetermined location outside the city, taking the piece of the divine engine with him.

DEVELOPMENT

After Breven Foss escapes, Obanar appears in the vault to help wrap up the battle with the elementals. He can release any of the adventurers who may have been trapped in a cell, and then he invites the adventurers to join him for food and drink. "Argent's defenses are once again in place," Obanar explains. "We can afford a few moments to relax and talk of the day's events."

12 Frostfell Harriers (F) Level 13 Minion Skirmisher
Medium elemental magical beast (cold) XP 200 each

Initiative +14 Senses Perception +10

Frostfield aura 1; each enemy within the aura takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls.

HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.

AC 27; Fortitude 24, Reflex 26, Will 24

Immune disease, poison

Speed 5, fly 8 (hover)

⚡ **Ice Claw** (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold

+16 vs. Fortitude; 9 cold damage.

Ice Slide (immediate reaction, when a melee attack misses the frostfell harrier; at-will) ♦ Cold

The attacker takes 4 cold damage and slides 3 squares.

Alignment Unaligned Languages Primordial

Str 11 (+6) Dex 22 (+12) Wis 19 (+10)

Con 19 (+10) Int 5 (+3) Cha 6 (+4)

FEATURES OF THE AREA

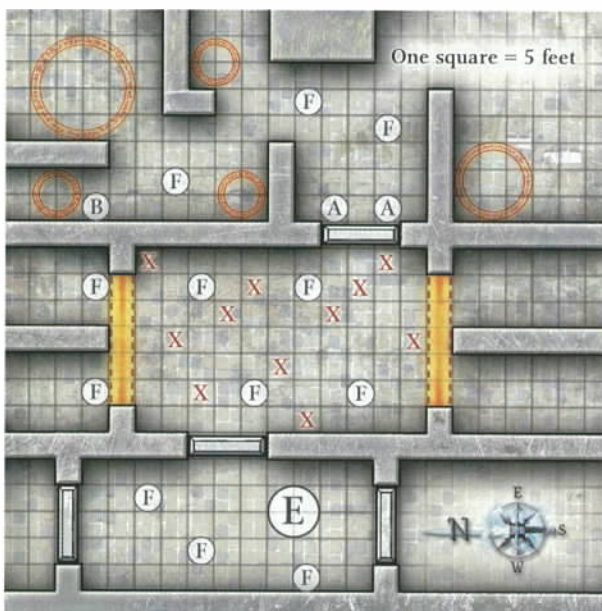
Illumination: Bright light.

Energy Walls: The walls of glowing energy in the central chamber are trapped. Only Obanar can release a character trapped by the energy walls.

Magic Circles: The magic circles in the vault chamber to the east represent "safe deposit drawers" of a sort. A glowing curtain of arcane force surrounds the item stored safely within each circle.

The small circle to the north contains the piece of the divine engine that Breven Foss has come to steal. The circles contain items of either historical significance or that are dangerous, including a stone golem and a level 16 magic implement.

Trapped Sigils: Marked "X" on the map.



INTERLUDE: THE LAST GUARDIAN

After the adventurers help defeat the invaders that were able to breach the defenses of Argent and slip inside the city, Obanar invites them to a comfortable sitting room high within the Guardian's Tower. Obanar (and Rrowthar, if he survived and returned to the city with the adventurers) offers the adventurers food and drink, and once refreshments have been served, he turns to them and says, "I have called you here to become the new champions of Argent. Ask your questions. I shall do my best to provide you with the answers you seek."

Q: Who are you?

"I am Obanar, last guardian of Argent. More than one hundred and twenty-five years ago, the empire of Nerath sent me here as a champion. Nerath, as all empires before it, supplied Argent with champions to honor its obligations to the Paragon Compact."

Q: What's the Paragon Compact?

"As the Dawn War ended, many of the gods set up the Paragon Compact with the leaders of the civilized people of the world to provide for the defense of the world against threats that go beyond the usual fare of brigands and uprisings. Threats that could destroy the world, such as demons, aberrations, and rampaging primordials. Every civilized nation has always provided champions to serve in Argent and take up the Silver Cloaks. But the compact has been broken. No one has come to Argent to stand by my side or take my place for well over a century. Nerath has forgotten its oaths, and I am ashamed for my ancient homeland."

Q: Don't you know that Nerath no longer exists?

"Nerath has fallen? And no other kingdom or empire has arisen to take its place? I see. That explains much. And it makes what I must ask you to do even more dangerous and important."

Q: What is this place?

"This is Argent, the city of valor and headquarters of the Champions of the Silver Cloaks. Once it was a bustling metropolis, full of life and energy. Today, it is a pale shadow of its days of glory, a ghost town that is all but deserted. And I, my friends, I am its ghost."

Q: Why have you called us to help you?

"I sent my seneschal, Rrowthar, to scour the land for champions worthy of the honor of the Silver Cloaks. If Nerath wasn't going to uphold its commitments and provide a new generation of champions to stand atop Argent's eternal walls, then I had to take action. I did this because the compact must be honored, and my time grows ever shorter. More over, because a new threat has arisen that must be dealt with before all is lost."

Q: What is this threat?

"The giants have begun to come together in such numbers as has not been seen since the time of the Dawn War. Earth giants have already struck here at Argent, and I believe that they are also marching on other key locations throughout the land. I fear that the giants and their elemental allies have conspired to free a primordial from its ancient prison. This cannot be allowed to come to pass."

Q: What was taken from the vault?

"The intruders knew exactly what they were after. They stole a piece of the divine engine that the gods used to imprison the primordial called Piranoth. It appears that the giants have teamed up with a group of elementals with the express purpose of setting Piranoth free."

Q: What can we do?

"Instead you should ask, what can you not do? You are worthy champions, powerful and noble. It is time for you to put aside other needs and aspirations, for Argent has need of you in this time of peril. If the giants rampage freely, thousands of innocents shall die. And if the primordial is set free, then the cost in life shall increase a hundredfold. More over, the primordial has the power and ability to organize the scattered forces of the Elemental Chaos into an army capable of starting a new Dawn War. We cannot allow that to happen."

Q: What are the duties and responsibilities of the Champions of the Silver Cloaks?

"I wish there were a list I could give you, but things are never that clear cut. For now, consider yourselves to be honorary champions. You have come to Argent to help me understand and defeat the threat of the giants and the primordial. After that is done, then we can talk about the fate of Argent, the future, and whether or not you take up the mantle of the Silver Cloaks."

Q: What happens next?

"There are many ways to approach the peril before us. There are quests to undertake, research to engage in, and battles to launch before we can even hope to win this war. For now, rest and recover your strength. On the morrow, I shall endeavor to advise you on the next steps you may want to take. Thank you for answering my call, champions. I know that you can succeed and save us all."

EXTENDED REST

Obanar offers the hospitality of Argent to the adventurers, and Rrowthar shows them to apartments in the Hall of Champions where they can rest and refresh themselves. This is a good time for an extended rest.

The adventurers can also return to Argent, using the Argent Portal ritual, whenever they need a safe place to rest and recuperate.

TRAVEL

There are a number of far-off places the player characters must go over the course of this adventure. Some of these places are in the natural world, others are in various parallel planes of existence. A few even require that the adventurers travel through time. Obanar can send them to each of these locations in a variety of ways, and they can use the Argent Portal ritual to return to Argent whenever they choose.

THE GUARDIAN'S QUESTS

After a good night's sleep, the adventurers meet with Obanar again in the morning. He gets right to the point. "There are a number of options as to your next actions in this situation," Obanar explains. "I shall remain here, watching over Argent and making whatever preparations I can that will aid you in the coming battles. But I am too old to follow where you must dare to thread." Obanar outlines the options, as he sees them, in any order you choose.

Later in the adventure, Obanar will also suggest that the adventurers take on a few diplomatic missions to rally the people of the world against the marauding giants. This opens another quest chain during an interlude later in the adventure.

LOCATE THE TORRIANS QUEST

"Rowthar's people, the torrians, once gladly served the city of Argent and the Champions of the Silver Cloaks. They departed long ago, and today they are lost somewhere in the world. They have forgotten their oaths and their honor. Find the torrians. Make sure they are safe and convince them to return to Argent so that the city can live again."

To complete this quest, the adventurers must first conduct some research to discover what happened to the torrians and where they have gone. Obanar prepares a vial of potion for each of the adventurers and tells them to go to the open field to the west of the proctor's house (location 8 on the map of Argent on page 14). "When you are ready, drink these potions," Obanar says. "They shall open a window to the past so that you can see what transpired on the day the torrians departed the walls of Argent for the last time."

Go to **Encounter R1: Researching the Torrians** on page 40 when the adventurers are ready to conduct this research.

Go to **Encounter T1: River Ambush** on page 64 when the adventurers are ready to use the results of their research to find the torrians.

Quest XP: 3,500 (major quest) for successfully researching what happened to the torrians, completing the torrian encounters (T1-T3), and convincing the torrians to return to Argent.

IMPLEMENTS OF ARGENT QUEST

"The Champions of the Silver Cloaks have a variety of magical aid at their disposal, not the least of which is Argent itself. As the last guardian, I know the secret for crafting a special set of magic items that will prove to be invaluable in your battles against the giants and their elemental allies. These Implements of Argent are not only powerful on their own, but the magic of the items increases when each of you wield one. I can craft this set of connected magic items for you, but you must acquire the sky metal I need for the crafting."

To complete this quest, the adventurers must first conduct some research to discover where the sky metal can be found. "I learned the secret of the crafting from Guardian Qwor, but he died before he could tell me where the sky metal could be found," Obanar explains. "Qwor haunts the Necropolis (location 12 on the map of Argent on page 14). Seek him out and see if he will tell you how to find the sky metal. Then, you will need to acquire enough of the metal for me so that I can do the crafting."

Go to **Encounter R2: Researching the Sky Metal** on page 42 when the adventurers are ready to conduct this research.

Go to **Encounters I1-I4** starting on page 70 when the adventurers are ready to track down the sky metal. Note that they can go after the metal at any point during the adventure.

Quest XP: 1,400 (minor quest) for each unique item in the set that the adventurers acquire.

UNDERSTANDING THE DIVINE ENGINE QUEST

"When the gods defeated Piranoth, they used a powerful artifact of divine magic to imprison the primordial for all time. This artifact is called a divine engine, and it is just one type of many that were constructed for various uses during the Dawn War. We must determine where the other pieces are hidden so that we can gather them before our enemy can get his hands on them."

To complete this quest, the adventurers must first conduct some research to discover where the pieces of the divine engine are hidden. Obanar suggests that the adventurers start their research in either the library within the Guardian's Tower or by praying to the gods in the Temple of the Dawn (location 6 on the map of Argent on page 14).

Go to **Encounter R3: Researching the Divine Engine** on page 44 when the adventurers are ready to conduct this research.

The research leads the adventurers on a diplomatic mission to the Astral Sea, as well as to other encounters throughout the adventure.

Quest XP: 8,000 (major quest) for successfully stopping the threat of Piranoth and breaking the alliance of the giants.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

As the adventurers travel around the world and among the planes to complete quests and otherwise deal with the threat of the allied giants, they might run into any number of creatures outside the listed encounters. Use these random encounters to provide opportunities for additional experience, to challenge parties that are having an easy time with the adventure, or to fill in gaps in the story as appropriate.

ELEMENTAL STRIKE TEAM

Level 12 Encounter (XP 3,800)

- ◆ 2 fire archon emberguards (level 12 brutes, *Monster Manual* page 18)
- ◆ 4 firelashers (level 11 skirmishers, *Monster Manual* page 104)

The moment the adventurers leave Argent the first time, a strike team of elementals follows them to see what they are up to and to report back to their superiors. If the adventurers spot the elementals, or if the elementals see an opportunity for an ambush, a battle breaks out.

HILL GIANT RAIDERS

Level 13 Encounter (XP 4,750)

- ◆ 2 hill giants (level 13 brutes, *Monster Manual* page 121)
- ◆ 2 ogre warhulks (level 11 elite brutes, *Monster Manual* page 199)
- ◆ 5 ogre thugs (level 11 minions, *Monster Manual* page 198)

Two hill giants lead a raiding team of enslaved ogres to cause trouble in the world. The ogres appreciate the amount of destruction they have been allowed to engage in since the hill giants enslaved their tribe, and they are more or less willing allies in the giants' plan for revenge.

ASTRAL SEA ENCOUNTER

Level 13 Encounter (XP 4,500)

- ◆ 3 githyanki warriors (level 12 soldiers, *Monster Manual* page 128)
- ◆ 2 githyanki mindslicers (level 13 artillery, *Monster Manual* page 128)
- ◆ 1 gray slaad (level 13 skirmisher, *Monster Manual* page 238)

As the adventurers travel the Astral Sea in search of the astral giants, they can encounter this band of githyanki.

WILDERNESS ENCOUNTER

Level 13 Encounter (XP 4,500)

- ◆ 1 adult green dragon (level 12 solo controller, *Monster Manual* page 80)
- ◆ 4 cyclops guards (level 14 minions, *Monster Manual* page 46)

A green dragon and its cyclops guards, on the run from an approaching army of giants, encounter the adventurers while they are on one of their quests for Obanar. The party can try to talk the green dragon into helping to protect the region, or they can simply fight the creature and its servants in the hope of driving it away or killing it before the giants are attracted to the commotion.

TIME LOST ENCOUNTER

Level 13 Encounter (XP 4,600)

- ◆ 3 ghost legionnaires (level 13 soldier, *Monster Manual* 2 page 119)
- ◆ 2 direguard assassins (level 11 skirmishers, *Monster Manual* 2 page 70)
- ◆ 5 horde ghouls (level 13 minion, *Monster Manual* page 118)

These undead servants of Acererek can be encountered within Acererek's tower when the adventurers travel into the past to recover the sky metal needed to craft the Implements of Argent.

ELEMENTAL MARAUDERS

Level 14 Encounter (XP 5,000)

- ◆ 1 earth giant (level 14 brute, page 18)
- ◆ 2 chillfire destroyers (level 14 brutes, *Monster Manual* 2 page 98)
- ◆ 2 sandstorm furies (level 14 artillery, *Monster Manual* 2 page 101)

An earth giant has gathered a few elemental allies and sets out to plunder a settlement or attack the mettlesome adventurers before they can complete one of the quests that Obanar has set them on. The earth giant is particularly brutal, and the aggressive elementals happily follow its lead.

EARTH GIANT ASSAULT SQUAD

Level 14 Encounter (XP 5,200)

- ◆ 1 earth giant soldier (level 15 soldier, page 19)
- ◆ 2 earth giant stalkers (level 14 lurkers, page 19)
- ◆ 1 sandstorm fury (level 14 artillery, *Monster Manual 2* page 101)
- ◆ 5 sandstorm vortex funnelclouds (level 13 minion skirmisher, *Monster Manual 2* page 101)

This assault squad runs at the front of any earth giant army, scouting the territory and making first strikes against enemy fortifications. Such a squad can also be assembled to hunt down specific targets, such as a group of troublesome adventurers.

FEYWILD ENCOUNTER

Level 15 Encounter (XP 6,200)

- ◆ 1 fey-knight vestige (level 16 lurker, *Monster Manual 2* page 106)
- ◆ 1 fey-incanter vestige (level 18 lurker, *Monster Manual 2* page 107)
- ◆ 2 centaur hunter (level 12 artillery, *Monster Manual 2* page 30)
- ◆ 2 centaur ravagers (level 12 brutes, *Monster Manual 2* page 30)

While traveling in the Feywild on a diplomatic mission, the adventurers run into a group of centaurs already on edge due to the increasingly violent attacks by giants and elementals. The fey lingerers, lurking in the area when the encounter begins, join the fray to re-create the battle that originally led to their deaths.

FROST GIANT HUNTING PARTY

Level 15 Encounter (XP 6,400)

- ◆ 1 frost giant (level 17 brute, *Monster Manual 2* page 122)
- ◆ 2 frost giant hunters (level 15 artillery, page 22)
- ◆ 1 chillfire destroyer (level 14 brute, *Monster Manual 2* page 98)
- ◆ 2 windfiend fury (level 12 controller, *Monster Manual 2* page 102)

This hunting party combines frost giants and their elemental allies into an effective team of deadly stalkers. This group can be encountered anywhere the frost giants are active, including the frost giant enclave at Frost Spire.

EARTH TITAN ENTOURAGE

Level 16 Encounter (XP 7,600)

- ◆ 1 earth titan (level 16 elite brute, *Monster Manual* page 122)
- ◆ 2 earth giant soldiers (level 15 soldiers, page 19)
- ◆ 3 magma brutes (level 13 brutes, *Monster Manual* page 183)

The earth titan Earthshaker might appear at any time, accompanied by its guardians and servants. The earth titan is extremely arrogant and headstrong, but it retreats if the adventurers get the upper hand in a battle or if they are able to bloody the earth titan.

FIRE GIANT PATROL

Level 17 Encounter (XP 9,200)

- ◆ 2 fire giants (level 18 soldiers, *Monster Manual* page 123)
- ◆ 1 fire giant forgecaller (level 18 artillery, *Monster Manual* page 123)
- ◆ 3 firebred hell hounds (level 17 brutes, *Monster Manual* page 160)

This patrol is typical of the roaming guards within Flamefall Tower, but it can also be used as a patrol wherever the fire giants or their allies are operating.



ENCOUNTER R1: RESEARCHING THE TORRIANS

Encounter Level 10 (2,800 XP)

SETUP

Obanar provides the adventurers with vials of a strange liquid, one vial for each member of the party. When the adventurers go to the open field just west of the proctor's house (location 8 on the Argent city map on page 14), they find a flat expanse of grass. They have two possible approaches to this research encounter: they can search the proctor's house and they can drink the potions provided by Obanar. Both involve skill challenges, as described below.

SEARCHING THE HOUSE SKILL CHALLENGE

This ancient structure was once the home and office of the torrian who served as the proctor of Argent. If the adventurers decide to search the place, use this skill challenge.

Each round represents one hour of searching. Each round, every member of the party within the house must make a separate check as directed by the challenge. Add up the number of successes and failures the party attains each round. More successes gains them 1 success for the round, more failures earns 1 failure toward the completion of the challenge.

Level: 12

Complexity: 1 (4 successes before 3 failures).

Skills Used in this Challenge: Arcana, History, Insight, Perception, Thievery.

Hour 1, Perception (DC 10, standard action): The characters search the house and discover a hidden room. The door to this room is trapped and locked.

Hour 2, Thievery (DC 23 or 10, standard action): One character takes the lead (DC 23), while the other characters attempt to aid that character (DC 10, success provides the lead character with a +2 bonus). If the party succeeds, the door to the hidden room opens safely. If the party fails, the door opens but a trap goes off; each member of the party loses 1 healing surge. The surge returns after the party completes two extended rests.

Hour 3, Perception (DC 16, standard action): The characters discover hidden records from the time of the last proctor, just before the torrians left Argent.

Hour 4, History (DC 16, minor action): The characters rifle through the scrolls and ledgers to discover that the proctor, a torrian named Thrór, was accepting payments of gold from someone identified as "Physandos."

Hour 5, Insight (DC 21, standard action): The characters realize that these records indicate that the proctor was planning something in secret, hidden

from the champions, the guardian, and even the rest of the torrians. These secret dealings were making the proctor very, very wealthy.

Hour 6, Arcana (DC 21, standard action): The characters discover the lingering presence of arcane magic, still evident on the scrolls and ledgers after all these decades. The magic has the taint of dark influence and mind control, as though the proctor was enticed through magic to leave Argent and take the torrians with him.

Success: If the characters earn 4 successes, they learn that the proctor was enticed through dark magic to accept gold and other wealth in exchange for convincing the torrians to leave Argent and take up service to the mysterious "Physandos." The dark magic has a definitive demonic taint about it.

Failure: If the characters get 3 failures, they earn no XP and learn only what they uncovered up to that point in the skill challenge. More over, a magical trap left behind unleashes a terrible force that immediately attacks them. The magic gives form to a creature of anger and destructive rage, a demon furor that appears as a dark cloud of deadly energy, with whipping tendrils and multiple maws of hungry darkness.

| Demon Furor | Level 12 Solo Skirmisher |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Large elemental magical beast (demon, shadow) | XP 3,500 |
| Initiative +17 | Senses Perception +14 |
| Hungry Darkness aura 1; all creatures that enter or start their turn in the aura take 5 damage. | |
| HP 488; Bloodied 244 | |
| AC 26; Fortitude 24, Reflex 24, Will 23 | |
| Saving Throws +5 | |
| Speed 4, fly 4 (hover) | |
| Action Points 2 | |
| ④ Angry Tendril Strike (standard; at-will) | |
| Reach 3; +17 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage, and the target is pulled 2 squares. | |
| ⬇ Flurry of Tendril Strikes (standard; at-will) | |
| The demon furor makes three <i>angry tendril strike</i> attacks. | |
| ➤ Debilitating Anger (minor, 1/round; at-will) | |
| Ranged 10; +15 vs. Will; the target takes a -2 penalty to AC and Reflex defenses (save ends). | |
| ⬅ Blinding Fear (standard; recharge ☐ ☐ ☐) ♦ Fear | |
| Close burst 3; +15 vs. Will; 1d8 + 5 damage, the target is pushed 3 squares, and the target is blind (save ends). | |
| ✱ Infectious Rage (standard; encounter; recharges when first bloodied) | |
| Area burst 3 within 20; +15 vs. Will; 1d8 + 5 damage, and the target makes an immediate basic melee or basic ranged attack against its closest ally. | |
| Bloodied Fury | |
| While bloodied, the demon furor gains a +2 bonus to attacks, an additional +1d6 to all damage rolls, and it takes a -2 penalty to AC and Reflex defenses. | |
| Alignment Chaotic Evil | Languages Abyssal, Common |
| Str 17 (+9) | Dex 19 (+10) Wis 16 (+9) |
| Con 18 (+10) | Int 2 (+2) Cha 15 (+8) |

OBSERVING THE PAST SKILL CHALLENGE

The potions provided by Obanar open a window to the past if the adventurers consume them while standing in the grass to the west of the proctor's house. When the adventurers drink the potions in the appropriate location, use this skill challenge. Note that if the potions are consumed at any other location, nothing happens. Also note that if any characters in the vicinity don't consume the potion, they see their companions become still as statues and turn into ghostly versions of themselves for the duration of the vision.

Each round represents one minute in the vision, though the characters might perceive that time is moving faster or slower in any given round. Each round, every member of the party in the vision must make a separate check as directed by the challenge. Add up the number of successes and failures each round. More successes gains 1 success for the round, more failures earns 1 failure toward the completion of the challenge. When they consume their potions, read:

The potion tastes bitter and dusty on your tongue, and suddenly a thick mist rises from the ground around you. You seem to have become part of the mist, and you look out through the haze of yesterdays to see Argent as it once was. Torrians by the dozens gather in the grassy field outside the proctor's house, each looking anxiously toward the proctor's front door. It opens, and a figure you know is Thror, proctor of Argent, steps out to greet the crowd.

Level: 12

Complexity: 2 (6 successes before 3 failures).

Skills Used in this Challenge: Arcana, Endurance, History, Insight, Perception.

Round 1, Perception (DC 10, standard action): The characters notice that not all of the torrians seem comfortable with this gathering, and they hear more than one whisper wondering where the guardian is.

If the group fails this round, they notice nothing unusual with the crowd.

Round 2, Endurance (DC 16, standard action): The rigors of the time vision try to overwhelm the characters. Any character that fails loses 1 healing surge. The surge returns after the party takes two extended rests.

Round 3, History (DC 16, standard action): The characters watch as this historic event plays out. Read:

Thror the proctor strides forth to address the crowd. "My friends," he says in a loud voice, "we have watched as Argent has slipped away, as if devastated by a withering disease. Where are the champions, in this our darkest hour? Where is the guardian? Where is the seneschal? We are alone, and the time has come to examine our options."

If the group succeeds at this check, they notice that Thror wears a ring bearing the signet of an ancient cult tied to Oublivae, the demon queen of ruin and destruction. This provides a +2 bonus to each character's Arcana check in the next round.

If the group fails this check, they receive no additional information.

Round 4, Arcana (DC 16, standard action): The characters watch as more of the event unfolds. Read:

"Argent is all but deserted, its champions are gone," Thror continues. "We can remain and slowly fade away as the city deteriorates, or we can decide our own fate. It is time for the torrians to become masters of their own destiny, and Physandos has offered us a place where we can prosper."

If the group succeeds at this check, they notice that Thror makes gestures as he addresses the crowd, subtle patterns with his fingers and hands. He is casting some kind of spell without the crowd's knowledge.

If the group fails this check, they receive no additional information.

Round 5, Endurance (DC 16, standard action): The mist around the characters grows darker, as though something else has entered the vision with them. Any character that fails loses 1 healing surge. The surge returns after the party takes three extended rests.

Round 6, Arcana (DC 21, standard action): The characters watch as more of the event unfolds. Read:

"Let us accept this generous offer from Physandos," Thror says. "Let us take our families and our hopes and our dreams and settle the Sheltered Woods, far to the west of the Plains of Chaos. Further, let us agree to the few obligations that Physandos has asked of us." The crowd cheers.

If the group succeeds at this check, they realize that Thror is casting a spell of influence on the crowd.

If the group fails this check, they receive no additional information.

Round 7, Insight (DC 16, standard action): The characters notice that the crowd has become glassy eyed and has entered a trance state, nodding and cheering every word that Thror imparts.

If the group fails this check, they receive no additional information.

Round 8, Perception (DC 21, standard action): The characters notice a barely perceptible cloud of darkness hovering near the proctor's head. The dark cloud has a demonic taint to it that feels unclean. He finishes his speech, the crowd hanging on every word and ready to follow him wherever he decides to lead them.

If the group fails this check, they receive no additional information.

Success: If the characters earn 6 successes, they learn everything presented above.

Failure: If the characters get 3 failures, they earn no XP and learn only what they uncovered up to that point in the skill challenge. If they did not learn the location of the new torrian settlement, they must use other means to determine that information. The Consult Mystic Sages ritual will provide the location, for example, and Obanar can consult his own sources if the characters fail the skill challenge.

ENCOUNTER R2: RESEARCHING THE SKY METAL

Encounter Level 12 (3,800 XP)

SETUP

Obanar points the adventurers to an undead guardian named Qwor, who haunts Argent's Necropolis (location 12 on the map of Argent on page 14). "Seek him out and see if he will tell you how to find the sky metal," Obanar says. Rowthar digs a large key out of a pouch on his belt and hands it to one of the characters. The adventurers must successfully complete a skill challenge to learn about the sky metal.

THE NECROPOLIS

The key provided by Rowthar unlocks the massive gate surrounding the Necropolis. When the adventurers enter the grounds of the Necropolis, read:

Beyond the gate, the Necropolis is even more silent and still than the rest of the near-empty city, and a sense of hushed reverence hangs in the air. A cobblestone path winds between crypts and large, elaborate mausoleums. As you search for some indication of where Guardian Qwor is interred, an undead creature with a longsword, its blade glowing with dark energy, appears from around one of the ancient tombs.

"What business does the living have in this land of the dead?," the creature asks, pointing its sword toward you.

This question begins the skill challenge.

NECROPOLIS SKILL CHALLENGE, PART ONE

The Necropolis skill challenge requires the adventurers to negotiate with two separate undead creatures—a champion wight, and Qwor, the ghost of the guardian who once trained Obanar. Each negotiation includes various tests to determine the mettle and might of the adventurers, as both creatures refuse to pass on their knowledge to those they deem to be unworthy.

The champion wight has become tainted by evil due to its transformation, but it still retains enough of its honor and memories as a Champion of the Silver Cloaks to want to deal honorably with the adventurers. Should the adventurers fail to impress the wight, however, they will have a battle on their hands.

The negotiation with the champion wight depends on the adventurer's ability to convince the creature that they are champions or that they are working in the interest of the champions. Establish an initiative order, then allow each character in turn to attempt any of the listed skill checks.

The champion wight asks the following questions over the course of this challenge:

"What business does the living have in this land of the dead?"

"Prove that you are worthy to wear the Silver Cloak."

"What do you know of the honor of the Champions of Argent?"

Level: 12

Complexity: 1 (4 successes before 3 failures).

Skills Used in this Challenge: Athletics, Diplomacy, History, Insight, Intimidate.

Athletics (DC 16, standard action): The character makes an amazing show of athletic power, proving that he or she is physically worthy of the Silver Cloak.

If a character fails this check, the wight laughs and insults the character. "Worthy? Not even close."

This skill can be used to gain up to 2 successes.

Diplomacy (DC 16, standard action): The character presses the urgency of the situation and the need that the group has to talk to Qwor about matters of grave importance.

If a character fails this check, the wight becomes more distrustful. The next Diplomacy check increases to DC 18.

This skill can be used to gain up to 2 successes.

History (DC 21, standard action): The character uses historical precedent from the time when the champion wight was alive to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how the past impacts the present.

If the character fails this check, the wight grows angry at the lack of respect the party has for history.

This skill can be used to gain 1 success.

Insight (DC 16, standard action): The character gets a true sense of how honor and dedication remain integral to the champion's sense of self.

Use of this skill doesn't count as a success or failure toward the completion of this challenge. Instead, it provides either a +2 bonus or -2 penalty to the next Diplomacy or Intimidate check the characters make.

This skill can be attempted once during the challenge.

Intimidate (DC 21, standard action): The character uses bravado, presence, and force of will to make the champion wight acquiesce to their need to find Qwor.

If the character fails this check, the wight becomes more angry and feels personally insulted. All DCs for the remaining skill checks in this challenge increase by +2.

This skill can be used to gain 1 success.

Success: If the characters earn 4 successes, the champion wight bows to them and points them toward the mausoleum where they can find the ghost of Qwor.

Failure: If the characters get 3 failures, they earn no XP and the champion wight grows violently angry. The undead creature calls forth five ghost worg pack-mates, and then the group of creatures attack.

Find the statistics for these creatures on page 12.

NECROPOLIS SKILL CHALLENGE, PART TWO

Whether the champion wight points the way, or they find it after defeating him, the adventurers eventually locate the mausoleum that Qwor haunts. This challenge combines negotiation with puzzle solving as the adventurers must navigate the twists and turns of the tomb to converse with Qwor's ghost.

Each round represents one obstacle in the mausoleum, either a physical obstacle or the general obstacle presented by the ghost. Each round, one member of the party makes a check as directed by the challenge. Other members of the party can assist with the check.

Level: 13

Complexity: 3 (8 successes before 3 failures).

Skills Used in this Challenge: Arcana, Athletics, Diplomacy, Dungeoneering, Insight, Perception, Religion, Thievery.

First Obstacle, Athletics (DC 23), Diplomacy (DC 23), or Thievery (DC 18); (standard action): The locked mausoleum door presents the first obstacle. A character can attempt to bash open the door (Athletics), convince Qwor's ghost to open it (Diplomacy), or try to unlock it (Thievery). Up to two other characters can assist with the check, using the same skill as the lead character.

If the character fails this check, the party can make up to two more checks (using the same or a different skill) to overcome this obstacle.

A success opens the way into the mausoleum.

Second Obstacle, Arcana (DC 23), Dungeoneering (DC 18), or Perception (DC 25); (standard action): The Corridor of Many Chambers presents the second obstacle in this challenge. The tomb is larger on the inside than it appeared to be from the outside. To overcome this obstacle, the characters must earn 2 successes as they attempt to find the correct path through the maze.

A character can attempt to find a pattern in the arcane construction and magic inherent in the place (Arcana). Or a character can use innate or trained underground tracking skill to find the correct path (Dungeoneering). If all else fails, sheer observation power can help navigate the maze of chambers (Perception). Up to two other characters can assist.

A failed check indicates that the characters become lost in the maze for a round. Every character must make a DC 18 Endurance check or lose one healing surge.

After the party attains 2 successes against this obstacle, they find their way into a grand burial chamber.

Third Obstacle, Religion (DC 18), Thievery (DC 18), or Perception (DC 23); (standard action): The third obstacle takes the form of an elaborate burial chamber that contains a series of traps. To overcome this obstacle, the characters must earn 2 successes by disabling or circumnavigating the traps.

A character can use a Religion check to discern that the chamber is laid out in the pattern of Erathis's Grand Bastion in Nerathum, the capital city of ancient Nerath. Recognizing this pattern allows the character to find a safe path through the chamber.

Or, a character can use Thievery to disable the traps to create a safe passage through the chamber.

Or, a character can use Perception to instinctively locate a safe path to the other side of the chamber.

A failed check indicates that the characters set off a trap. Every character must make a DC 18 Endurance check or lose one healing surge.

After the party attains 2 successes against this obstacle, they leave the burial chamber and enter Qwor's Inner Sanctum.

Fourth Obstacle, Diplomacy (DC 18), Insight (DC 18), or Thievery (DC 23); (standard action): Within Qwor's Inner Sanctum, the adventurers face the final obstacles they must overcome to gain information from the ghost of the dead guardian. Using Diplomacy and Insight, the characters convince Qwor to help them. Then a Thievery check is needed to access Qwor's sarcophagus without setting off a trap.

The interaction with Qwor requires 2 successful Diplomacy checks to gain his help and trust. A successful Insight check provides a +4 bonus to the next Diplomacy check.

Starting Interaction: "Why do you disturb my rest? Why should I aid you? Are you worthy of the Silver Cloak? What danger requires gear as powerful as the *Implements of Argent*?"

After 2 Diplomacy Successes: "I can see how the *Implements of Argent* can aid you in this dangerous situation. Unfortunately, rare metal that falls from the sky is required to craft the *Implements*. The only set I know of was lost when a group of champions disappeared into the Abyss more than a century ago. The only option is to go to the last place where the metal was known to be—Bael Turath, approximately 600 years ago. Within my sarcophagus, you shall find a gem. Be careful of the trap, however."

Finally, a successful Thievery check reveals the hiding place of a fist-sized, dark-blue gem.

Success: If the characters earn 8 successes, they overcome the obstacles and gain Qwor's help. "Good luck, champions," Qwor says as he opens a path out of the mausoleum. "Take the gem to Obanar and he shall be able to use it to send you where you need to go."

Failure: If the characters get 3 failures, they earn no XP and they lose out on the chance to gain the *Implements of Argent*.

ENCOUNTER R3: RESEARCHING THE DIVINE ENGINE

Encounter Level 16 (7,000 XP)

SETUP

Obanar tells the adventurers the story of Piranoth as he remembers it, how the divine engine was used to imprison the primordial, and then how the artifact was broken into pieces and hidden. "One piece was interred here, in the vaults, but it is now in the hands of the enemy," Obanar explains. "We must determine the location of the other pieces and get to them before the enemy does."

Obanar suggests two methods for uncovering this secret information. "You can look for information in the library here in the Guardian's Tower, or you can go to the Temple of the Dawn and pray to the gods for guidance and revelation."

Both of these approaches are handled by skill challenges. If the party attempts to use both methods, the total experience awarded should not exceed 7,000 XP.

THE LIBRARY SKILL CHALLENGE

The skill challenge in the library is a bit different from other skill challenges in this adventure. Failure isn't really a factor in the challenge per se, as the characters have more or less all the time in the world to conduct their research. Instead, the number of successes the party achieves determines the amount of information they can uncover from the collection of scrolls and books in the library based on their scholarly skills and ability to find pertinent information among the stacks and stacks of scrolls and books.

Each round represents one hour of searching and reading ancient texts. Each round, every member of the party makes a separate skill check as directed by the challenge. Add up the number of successes the characters achieve each round. After two rounds of searching and perusing documents (three if certain conditions are met), the party has learned everything it can from the texts stored here.

Award experience for this skill challenge based on the number of successes the characters achieve:

| Number of Successes | XP Award |
|---------------------|----------|
| 1-3 | No XP |
| 4-5 | 1,400 XP |
| 6-8 | 2,800 XP |
| 9-10 | 4,200 XP |
| 11-13 | 5,600 XP |
| 14+ | 7,000 XP |

When the adventurers enter the library, read:

Tall, ornate double doors swing open to reveal a huge library. Shelves full of books and scrolls cases fill the room, reaching from the ground level to the ceiling some three levels overhead. Work tables and comfortable chairs are spaced around the area, and spiral staircases lead to the shelves above you. Glowing orbs of soft light hover in different locations around the room, providing illumination. The place smells of leather, dust, and ancient parchment.

Level: 16

Skills Used in this Challenge: Arcana, History, Perception, Religion, Thievery.

Round 1, Perception (DC 25, standard action): Each character starts the search for information by making a Perception check. This represents the time needed to get a sense of the library's layout and to seek out obvious scrolls and books related to the Dawn War, artifacts of the gods, primordials, and Piranoth in specific.

If the characters achieve 3 or 4 successes, they each get a +2 bonus on the check made in the next round of the challenge. If the characters achieve 5 successes, they get a +4 bonus on the next check.

Round 2, Arcana (DC 25), History (DC 20), or Religion (DC 25); (standard action): In this round, each character grabs a selection of the materials they found in the previous round and spends time reading and researching. Each character can employ the skill listed above that they feel most comfortable using.

If the characters achieve 3 or more successes in this round, one or more of them determine that there are additional, hidden texts somewhere within the library, as many of the passages they are reading refer to other works not among the materials collected in the first round. This opens up the use of the Perception and Thievery skills to locate any hidden tomes.

Bonus Round, Perception (DC 25) or Thievery (DC 20); (standard action): With hints that hidden works may be available, the characters spend time searching for secret rooms and hidden compartments within the library. Successes this round don't count toward the completion of the challenge, but they do provide the opportunity for one last round of research.

If the characters earn 2 or fewer successes, they find no additional texts and the challenge ends. If they earn 3 or more successes, they find more texts and earn a +2 bonus on checks made in the next round.

Round 3, Arcana (DC 25), History (DC 20), or Religion (DC 25); (standard action): In this round, each character spends time reading and researching the newly discovered texts. Each character can employ the skill listed above that they feel most comfortable using.

This ends the challenge. Add up the number of successes earned to determine what the characters learn.

1-3 Successes: A divine engine is a type of artifact, although one of godlike power and origin. At least a dozen divine engines were known to have been crafted during the Dawn War. Piranoth's Bane is one such artifact.

4-5 Successes: As the Dawn War was drawing to a close, the gods crafted a divine engine with the specific purpose of defeating and imprisoning the primordial known as Piranoth. It was successful in its use, and Piranoth was banished for all eternity.

6-8 Successes: Piranoth's Bane, a divine engine also called Klar'ekku, was designed by Erathis, the god of invention, and Torog, the god of imprisonment. Moradin, god of creation and artisans, constructed the artifact and gave it form and substance. It had to be used after Piranoth was defeated, while he was in an unconscious state. After it was used, Kord, the god of strength and battle, shattered the divine engine into five pieces, each of which flew off to a different corner of the multiverse.

9-10 Successes: One piece of Piranoth's Bane was found by a champion named Deekon, who gave it to the guardian of Argent for safekeeping. This piece is stored in the vaults beneath the Guardian's Tower. [This last bit of information is no longer true.]

11-13 Successes: The mysterious astral giants have been known to keep track of the whereabouts of divine engines. The giants of the Temple of Inchoate Mysteries, in the Astral Sea, are known as the foremost experts on Piranoth's Bane. It is rumored that they, along with select exarchs of Moradin (such as the exarch Torugar), know the ritual necessary to restore Piranoth's Bane to working order.

14+ Successes: It is believed that Piranoth can be freed with only a partially intact divine engine. With at least three pieces of the engine and the added assistance of a god, Piranoth's Bane can be used to unlock Piranoth's prison. In such a case, Piranoth would return to the world in a diminished state.

THE TEMPLE OF THE DAWN SKILL CHALLENGE

Another approach to learning about the divine engine is to petition the gods at the Temple of the Dawn. The characters can use this method instead of conducting research in the library, or they can come to the temple to round out their research.

Each round represents time to reflect and meditate on the god or gods of each character's choice. Each round, every member of the party must make a separate check as directed by the challenge. Add up the number of successes and failures each round. More successes gains 1 success for the round, more failures earns 1 failure toward the completion of the challenge. When the adventurers enter the temple, read:

The temple doors open upon a grand space. A dome overhead allows sunlight to shine into the center of the circular chamber, where it illuminates the impressive Altar of Many Gods. Prayer benches encircle the altar, rising in seven tiers so that the view is unhindered for all worshippers. Shrines honoring a multitude of gods encircle the main altar, and the place has a reverence and a presence that calms even the most turbulent soul.

Level: 16

Complexity: 1 (3 successes before 3 failures).

Skills Used in this Challenge: Endurance, Insight, Religion.

Round 1, Religion (DC 20, standard action): The characters begin to pray and meditate.

If the group fails this round, nothing happens.

Round 2, Religion (DC 13, standard action): The characters get into a rhythm and their prayers begin to calm them and put them into a susceptible state.

If the group fails this check, nothing happens.

If the group succeeds this round, a dark presence tries to disrupt their prayers. Use the "Dark Presence Round" below.

Dark Presence Round, Endurance (DC 13, free action): A dark presence strikes at the characters, sending a terrifying vision of darkness and crawling horrors into their minds. Every character must make an Endurance check. This check doesn't count as a success or failure for completing the mission. If a character fails this check, he or she loses 1 healing surge.

Round 3, Religion (DC 13, standard action): The characters pray and meditate, and their minds become clear and focused.

If the group fails this check, nothing happens.

If the group succeeds this round, use the "Dark Presence Round" below.

Dark Presence Round, Endurance (DC 20, free action): A dark presence strikes at the characters, sending tendrils of dark energy into their bodies. Every character must make an Endurance check. This check doesn't count as a success or failure for completing the mission. If a character fails this check, he or she loses 1 healing surge.

Round 4, Insight (DC 20, standard action): The characters get the distinct impression that the dark presence trying to disrupt them is related to spiders and shadows.

If the group fails this check, they gain no information.

Round 5, Religion (DC 13, standard action): The characters feel safe and at peace as a comforting presence fills the temple.

Success: If the characters earn 3 successes, an exarch of Erathis appears to provide them with the information available in the Library skill challenge.

Failure: If the characters get 3 failures, they earn no XP and get no information.

INTERLUDES: RETURNING TO ARGENT

Each time the adventurers return to Argent to rest or consult with Obanar or Rrowthar, events within the story progress to the next stage. Use the information below as a guideline for what occurs when and how your version of the adventure might unfold, depending upon the actions and choices of the player characters.

RETURN TO ARGENT

The first time the adventurers return to speak to Obanar, probably after completing one or more research encounters in other parts of Argent, they arrive to find the city once again under siege. Read:

You find Obanar on an observation balcony high atop the Guardian's Tower. You can hear angry shouts in the distance, getting closer and closer with every passing moment. "The hill giants have laid siege to the city," Obanar tells you in a quiet voice. "The defenses shall hold, at least for a short while. Perhaps you can strike at the enemy while I prepare a more powerful offensive solution."

Obanar asks the adventurers to defend two locations. They can decide to tackle these locations in either order, but he tells them that they must make sure that neither location is breached before he can complete his preparations.

The two locations are the landing platform at the walls of the Temple of the Dawn and the main gate to the Gateyard.

Go to **Encounter E1: The Siege, Part One** and **Encounter E2: The Siege, Part Two**, starting on page 48, when the player characters are ready.

EARTH GIANTS ON THE MARCH

The first time the adventurers return to speak to Obanar after their initial encounter, they arrive in time to help defend Argent from a siege by earth giants and their allies. Breaking the siege is only the beginning of this sequence in the adventure. While the earth giant army marches on Argent and other nearby settlements, the adventurers decide (through their own analysis or thanks to strategic suggestions made by Obanar) that the best way to break the march of the earth giants is to follow their supply lines back to their main camp and take out their leaders.

The adventurers follow the supply lines back to a hill giant steading nestled among rocky hills. Here, the adventurers can take the battle to the earth giant commanders while the raiding force marches on the settlements of the natural world. If the adventurers defeat the hill giant battle chief and his earth titan master, they effectively take the earth giants out of the equation. See **Encounters E1-E7**, starting on page 48, for details.

BRINGING BACK THE TORRIANS

If the adventurers successfully free the torrians from the influence of the demon Physandos and get them to agree to return to Argent, this interlude takes place. The adventurers can bring the torrian leaders with them using the Argent Portal ritual, but the rest of the clan must use more mundane travel methods to get to the city. Obanar thanks the player characters for their efforts and welcomes the torrian leaders back into the city. He appoints their leader, Gruthow, to be proctor of the city, and then tells Rrowthar to help the torrians, who are beginning to arrive on foot, get settled. "Argent is a happier and brighter place now that the torrians have returned," Obanar proclaims.

After the torrians are made welcome and head off to get settled in, Obanar brings the adventurers up to speed on the current situation. Read:

"Now that the torrians have returned, we can work on restoring the city's ancient glory and commerce," Obanar says. "In the meantime, what information have you to share with me about the giants, their allies, or our progress on finding the pieces of the divine engine and the sky metal needed to craft the Implements of Argent?"

The adventurers can use this time to take an extended rest, and to conduct any research they have not already completed in regards to the other quests that Obanar has made available to them.

GATHERING THE SKY METAL

If the adventurers travel into the past to collect some or all of the sky metal needed to make the *Implements of Argent*, the ritual scroll that Obanar provided them with before they left returns them to this time when they are ready to cast it. Note that the gem and the scroll are both one-use-only items, so the trip into and back from the past can only be taken once in each direction.

Once the adventurers return, Obanar gathers whatever sky metal they collected and sets to work on crafting the *Implements of Argent*. If the characters spend an extended rest in the city, when they awaken Obanar has completed two of the magic items for the group. "I shall continue to work on the other items as time permits," Obanar says, though he appears weaker and more tired than at any other time the characters have encountered him. The magic needed for the crafting is taking a toll on the ancient wizard.

The third item will be completed following the next extended rest the party takes.

The fourth item will be completed after two additional extended rests are taken.

The fifth and final item will be completed after two additional extended rests are taken.

So, if the party could afford to sit in the city and wait, it would take a total of six days for the items to be made. However, Obanar won't allow them to lounge around the city while the threat of the giants hangs over the world. "I shall do my work," the ancient wizard tells them. "You go and do your work in the meantime, and perhaps the world won't come to an end because we were taking a short break."

Note that if there are more than five player characters in the group, any extra magic items in the set are created at the same time. For example, if there are six player characters in the group and they decided to double up on the *leader's helm*, then both *leader's helms* are crafted during the same extended rest.

FROST GIANTS ON THE MARCH

The frost giants begin to send raiding parties to attack peaceful settlements along the coast during the height of the earth giant march. The adventurers go to help defend against the attacks, or to locate a piece of the divine engine, or both as the giants become more and more aggressive. Rumors of larger, more organized giant armies appearing throughout the land might trigger the player characters to engage in one or more diplomatic missions to rally the defenses of the natural world. Along the way, the adventurers discover that a force of frost giants has gone to Frost Spire in the Elemental Chaos to accomplish a task that will aid the giant alliance—and be detrimental to Argent and the natural world.

To put a stop to the frost giants, the adventurers must enter the Elemental Chaos and travel to Frost Spire. If the adventurers defeat the frost giant jarl and his frost titan master, they win a telling victory in the increasing deadly war. See **Encounters F1-F13**, starting on page 92, for details.

DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS

As time passes, Obanar provides the adventurers with additional quests of a diplomatic nature. The astral giants encounters (**Encounters D1-D4**, starting on page 78), part of the quest to learn more about the divine engine, are part of these diplomatic missions. After the adventurers have dealt with the hill giants, Obanar asks them to undertake two other diplomatic missions.

One diplomatic mission takes the adventurers to the Court of Fallen Leaves to rally an eladrin point of light (**Encounters D5-D6**, starting on page 82).

Quest XP: 1,400 (minor quest) for successfully convincing the eladrins to provide troops and support to aid the settlements of the natural world from the giant onslaught.

Another diplomatic mission sends the adventurers to three closely situated settlements—one human, one dwarf, and one tribe of goblins led by the hobgoblin warlord Skruk (**Encounter D7**, starting on page 88)—to convince them to join together to withstand a giant attack force.

Quest XP: 1,600 (minor quest) for successfully negotiating an alliance of the three settlements so they can adequately defend themselves against the approaching army of giants.

Completing any of these quests buys the adventurers time, rallies local forces to defend themselves more effectively against the invading giants, and provides additional aid in the climactic battles to come.

LOCATING TORUGAR

If the adventurers learned about the divine engine and its history, they know that the exarch of Moradin named Torugar knows the ritual required to mend the broken artifact. As time goes on, Obanar learns that Torugar has been captured by the fire giants. "You must rescue the exarch before the fire giants are able to pry the ritual from him," Obanar explains. "I believe he is being held at Flamefall Tower. It isn't inconceivable that the fire giant forgers might be able to figure it out on their own, but they will be greatly hindered without the knowledge that the exarch possesses."

Quest XP: 2,400 (minor quest) for locating Torugar and rescuing him from the fire giants.

FIRE GIANTS ON THE MARCH

The fire giants are hard at work trying to accomplish two tasks—they need to gather the pieces of the divine engine and then put it back together so it can be used to unlock Piranoth's prison. The adventurers go to Flamefall Tower, in a part of the natural world where the connection to the Elemental Chaos is particularly strong, as they follow the trail of the divine engine or they go in search of the missing exarch of Moradin, Torugar.

The adventurers arrive at Flamefall Tower and infiltrate the fire giant stronghold. At this point in the adventure, depending on the prior actions of the player characters, the giant armies are wrecking havoc in the natural world or are being held in check or even forced into a retreat by the rallied settlements of the area. Whatever the case, the fact that the fire giants are close to attempting to free the primordial means that the danger is far from over. Indeed, it's about to get worse. If the adventurers defeat the fire giant king and his fire titan master, they need to only step into the Elemental Chaos in order to find the titan lords who want to make one last try at releasing Piranoth. See **Encounters G1-G11**, starting on page 130, and **Encounters P1-P3**, starting on page 154, for details.

ENCOUNTER EI: THE SIEGE, PART ONE

Encounter Level 14 (5,200 XP)

The first time the adventurers return to speak to Obanar, they discover that the city of Argent is once again under attack. Obanar consults a scrying mirror in his chambers within the Guardian's Tower to get a sense of the progress the invaders are making. Note that while Argent's ability to see far beyond its walls has eroded over time, Obanar can still see what transpires in and around the city. Read:

"The defenses are holding the bulk of the invading force at bay, but two strike teams have broken through," Obanar says. "You must make sure that neither of the strike teams enter the city while I prepare the offensive capabilities of the city's magic."

"They attempt to breach our defenses at two locations," Obanar continues. "They try to pierce the walls at the landing platform at the Temple of the Dawn, and they try to storm the main gate leading from the road to the Gateway. Rocs and raiders have already made it to the landing platform, so I recommend you start the defense of the city there."

THE LANDING PLATFORM

A landing platform provides access to the city from the eastern face of the mountain. In days of old, visitors and champions alike could reach the city atop flying mounts, using the landing platforms to gain entry. The magic of the city prevents any creatures from flying over the walls and into the city directly, but the landing platforms were open to public use.

With the current attacks, Obanar has extended the city's defenses. The magical barriers keep the bulk of the invading army at bay for the time being, but some rocs and their riders have made it as far as the landing platform and are now ready to scale Argent's walls.

Place the monsters as shown on the tactical map. The adventurers can open the gate (not recommended) or use interior ladders to get atop the walls.

SETUP

- 1 roc (R)
- 3 hill giants (H)
- 1 hill giant shaman (S)

ROLEPLAYING

As soon as the hill giant shaman notices the player characters, he shouts a challenge. Read:

"How can creatures so small have brains enough to think? Destroy them!"

Roc (R) Level 14 Elite Skirmisher

Huge natural beast

XP 2,000

Initiative +16 Senses Perception +15

HP 288; Bloodied 144

AC 30; Fortitude 30, Reflex 30, Will 26

Saving Throws +2

Speed 4, fly 10 (clumsy), overland flight 15; see also *claw snatch*

Action Points 1

⚔ **Bite** (standard; at-will)

Reach 2; +19 vs. AC; 2d6 + 7 damage.

✋ **Claw Snatch** (standard; at-will)

The roc moves up to its fly speed and makes an attack against a Medium or smaller target at any point during its move; +17 vs. Reflex; 1d10 + 7 damage, and the target is grabbed, carried the rest of the roc's move, released, and knocked prone in a space adjacent to the roc.

Alignment Unaligned

Languages —

Str 25 (+14)

Dex 25 (+14)

Wis 16 (+10)

Con 24 (+14)

Int 2 (+3)

Cha 12 (+8)

3 Hill Giants (H)

Level 13 Brute

Large natural humanoid (giant)

XP 800 each

Initiative +5 Senses Perception +7

HP 159; Bloodied 79

AC 25; Fortitude 27, Reflex 21, Will 23

Speed 8

⚔ **Greatclub** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

Reach 2; +15 vs. AC; 2d10 + 7 damage.

✋ **Sweeping Club** (standard; encounter) ♦ **Weapon**

The hill giant makes a greatclub attack against two Medium or smaller targets; on a hit, the target is pushed 2 squares and knocked prone.

➤ **Hurl Rock** (standard; at-will)

Ranged 8/16; +15 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage.

Alignment Chaotic evil

Languages Giant

Skills Athletics +16

Str 21 (+11)

Dex 8 (+5)

Wis 12 (+7)

Con 19 (+10)

Int 7 (+4)

Cha 9 (+5)

Equipment hide armor, greatclub

Hill Giant Shaman (S)

Level 13 Controller

Large natural humanoid (giant)

XP 800

Initiative +9 Senses Perception +13

HP 131; Bloodied 65

AC 27; Fortitude 25, Reflex 23, Will 23

Speed 8

⚔ **Quarterstaff** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Implement, Weapon**

Reach 2; +18 vs. AC; 2d8 + 5 damage.

⚡ **Earthstorm** (standard; recharge ☐ ☐ ☐) ♦ **Implement, Weapon**

Requires quarterstaff. Close blast 5; +15 vs. Fortitude; 3d10 + 6 damage, and the target is pushed 1 square and blinded (save ends).

➤ **Volcanic Blast** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Implement, Weapon**

Ranged 10; +17 vs. Reflex; 1d10 + 6 damage, and target gains vulnerable 5 fire (save ends).

Alignment Chaotic evil

Languages Common, Giant

Skills Arcana +13, Nature +13

Str 21 (+11)

Dex 16 (+9)

Wis 14 (+8)

Con 19 (+10)

Int 14 (+8)

Cha 16 (+9)

Equipment hide armor, stone quarterstaff

TACTICS

Four rocs dropped their riders onto the landing platform. Three of the rocs swooped around and found themselves once more beyond the defensive barrier surrounding the city. The fourth roc, however, was able to stay close enough to offer support to the giants on the landing platform.

The roc swoops over the landing platform, making attempts to *claw snatch* the most convenient player characters. If it successfully grabs an opponent, it carries it the rest of its movement and drops it. It tries to relocate opponents into positions more favorable to the hill giants, but it will try to release an opponent so that it falls from the landing platform, if the opportunity presents itself.

The roc cannot hover. Every round, it must either fly or land. If it lands, it makes bite attacks against any opponents within reach.

The hill giants rush toward the gate. They attack the gate each round, attempting to bash their way inside and opening a breach for the rest of the giant army to take advantage of.

If opponents present themselves, two of the hill giants break off from the gate to deal with them. They either *hurl rocks* (especially if any characters attack from the top of the wall), or position themselves to make *greatclub* or *sweeping club* attacks. They try to use flanking maneuvers if they can set them up.

One hill giant continues to attack the gate, as long as other hill giants are available to engage the characters.

The hill giant shaman leads this assault on the landing platform. He orders the other giants around, directing them to attack the gate or the player characters as the situation demands. He also uses whistles and hand signals to command the roc, sending it after specific targets as the battle continues.

On its turn, the hill giant shaman uses *volcanic blast* to attack enemy targets from a distance. He uses *earthstorm* whenever it recharges and there are two or more enemies within range of the blast. The hill giant shaman resorts to quarterstaff attacks as a last resort, when an enemy is too close to make a ranged attack against and when his close blast isn't available.

These giants fight to the death to try to open the gates of Argent.

DEVELOPMENT

If the hill giants breach the gate, the rest of the invading army can enter through the disrupted magical barrier. Use one of the random encounters on pages 38-39 to immediately send more enemies into the breach. Any of these encounters would be appropriate: Elemental Strike Team, Hill Giant Raiders, Elemental Marauders, or Earth Giant Assault Squad. The adventurers can close the gate and reestablish the barrier once they defeat the random encounter.

When the adventurers finish defending the landing platform, Obanar sends a ghostly vision of himself to urge the player characters to head to the main gate (**Encounter E2** on the next page).

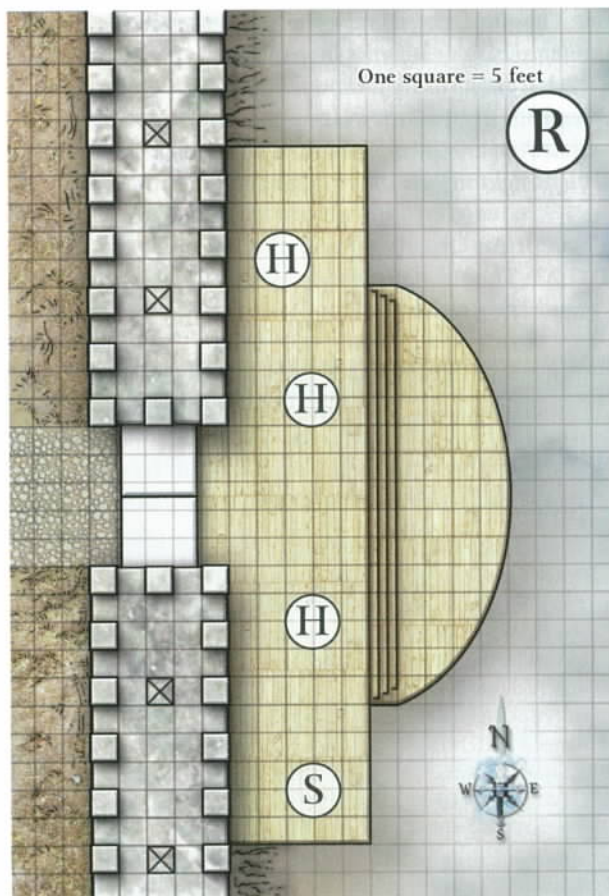
FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Bright light. This battle occurs during the day.

Battlement Walls: The walls rise 50 feet above the landing platform. The battlements provide cover to anyone adjacent to them. Trap doors atop the battlements lead to ladders and an open space inside the walls. Enemies of Argent cannot fly over or climb up the walls of the city unless the gate in the wall is open (thereby disrupting the magical barrier protecting the city in that area).

Gate: The gate is 45 feet tall. It opens by sliding into the walls. It is locked and barred from the inside. The gate can be attacked: AC 2, Reflex 2, Fortitude 20, 400 hit points. Rocks hurled by the giants on their approach to the landing platform have already reduced the gate's hit points to 225.

Landing Platform: The landing platform is made of solid wood, anchored to the side of the cliff. The split-level platform features wide stairs. Anyone falling from the landing platform lands on a jutting rock ledge 200 feet below (20d10 damage).



ENCOUNTER E2: THE SIEGE, PART TWO

Encounter Level 14 (5,300 XP)

SETUP

- 1 behir young adult (B)
- 1 hill giant (H)
- 1 earth archon ground rager (E)

A huge force of hill giants and their allies march toward the walls of Argent, approaching from the south. Most of the invading army stops about 600 feet from the walls, where a barrier of magical energy keeps them at bay. The hill giants attack the barrier with ferocity, both physically and magically, and the barrier is beginning to crack and splinter in places. This allows the first strike team to break through. When the adventurers reach the walls above the main entry point to the Gateyard, read:

A huge force of giants stands in a long, deep line some 600 feet away from the Gateyard wall. You can see hill giants, elementals, and great beasts of all descriptions among the invading force. A shimmering curtain of energy holds them at bay, but the giants strike at the curtain with clubs, rocks, fists, and waves of magical attacks of their own. As you watch, a portion of the curtain crackles and briefly sputters out. The giants cheer, and a few attackers move through the damaged barrier before it snaps back into place.

A hill giant rushes toward the gate, shouting triumphantly as it approaches. It is accompanied by an armored warrior apparently made of rock, and a huge lizard with six legs, lightning crackling around it as it charges forward.

Perception Check

DC 23: The hill giant carries a large earthen sphere strapped to his back.

| Hill Giant (H) | | Level 13 Brute |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| Large natural humanoid (giant) | | XP 800 |
| Initiative +5 | Senses Perception +7 | |
| HP 159; Bloodied 79 | | |
| AC 25; Fortitude 27, Reflex 21, Will 23 | | |
| Speed 8 | | |
| ⚔ Greatclub (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | | |
| Reach 2; +15 vs. AC; 2d10 + 7 damage. | | |
| † Sweeping Club (standard; encounter) ♦ Weapon | | |
| The hill giant makes a greatclub attack against two Medium or smaller targets; on a hit, the target is pushed 2 squares and knocked prone. | | |
| 🗑 Hurl Rock (standard; at-will) | | |
| Ranged 8/16; +15 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage. | | |
| Alignment Chaotic evil | | Languages Giant |
| Skills Athletics +16 | | |
| Str 21 (+11) | Dex 8 (+5) | Wis 12 (+7) |
| Con 19 (+10) | Int 7 (+4) | Cha 9 (+5) |
| Equipment hide armor, greatclub | | |

Behir Young Adult (B) Level 12 Solo Soldier
Huge natural magical beast XP 3,500

| | | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|--------|-----------------------------------|
| Initiative | see lightning reflexes | Senses | Perception +12; tremorsense 10 |
| Lightning Storm aura 5; an enemy that starts its turn in the aura takes 5 lightning damage. | | | |
| HP 500; Bloodied 250 | | | |
| AC 28; Fortitude 25, Reflex 24, Will 24 | | | |
| Resist 15 lightning | | | |
| Saving Throws +5 | | | |
| Speed 7, climb 5 | | | |
| Action Points 2 | | | |
| ⚔ Claw (standard; at-will) | | | |
| Reach 3; +19 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage. | | | |
| † Bite (standard; at-will) ♦ Lightning | | | |
| Reach 3; +19 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage plus 1d8 lightning damage. | | | |
| † Devour (standard; recharges when no creature is affected by this power) | | | |
| Reach 3; +17 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 5 damage, and a Medium or smaller target is swallowed. A swallowed target is grabbed and restrained (escape ends both). A swallowed creature has line of sight and line of effect only to the behir, and no creature has line of sight or line of effect to it. A creature that escapes the grab is no longer swallowed and appears in a space adjacent to the behir. A behir can move normally and use other attacks against other targets while it has a target grabbed in this way. When the behir dies, the target can escape as a move action, appearing adjacent to the behir's former space. | | | |
| † Devouring Damage (free. 1/turn; affects target grabbed by devour only) | | | |
| The target takes 5 damage. | | | |
| ⚡ Lightning Breath (standard; recharge ☐ ☐) ♦ Lightning | | | |
| Close blast 5; +15 vs. Reflex; 3d8 + 5 lightning damage and the target is dazed. Miss: Half damage. | | | |
| ⚡ Thunderleg Stomp (standard; at-will) | | | |
| Close burst 3; +15 vs. Fortitude; 1d8 + 5 damage, and the target is knocked prone. | | | |
| Lightning Reflexes | | | |
| The behir acts three times in a round, on initiative counts 30, 20, and 10. It cannot delay or ready actions. On each turn in the round, it has a standard action to use. It can turn a standard action into a move action if it wants. It can use one immediate action between each turn. | | | |
| Alignment | Unaligned | | |
| Languages | Common, Draconic | | |
| Str | 23 (+12) | Dex | 20 (+11) |
| Wis | 21 (+11) | Int | 7 (+4) |
| Con | 21 (+11) | Cha | 13 (+7) |

TACTICS

The hill giant seeks to open the gate so that the rest of the army can enter the city once the barrier collapses.

The hill giant carries an elemental weapon created by a powerful earth giant shaman. A large earthen sphere, hollow and filled with reagents, acts as a bomb. The hill giant can hurl it like a rock. His orders are to throw it at the gate when he gets within 8 squares of the wall. On impact, the elemental weapon unleashes a close burst 3; +17 vs. Reflex; 4d12 + 7 fire damage.

After hurling the elemental weapon, the hill giant rushes forward to continue to attack the gate. He ignores other opponents if he can, leaving them for his allies to deal with.

Earth Archon Ground Rager (E) **Level 14 Controller**
Medium elemental humanoid (earth) XP 1,000

Initiative +9 **Senses** Perception +13; tremorsense 20

Earth Liquefaction aura 5; each creature without the earth keyword that ends its turn within the aura and did not move during its turn is slowed until the end of its next turn.

HP 143; **Bloodied** 71

AC 28; **Fortitude** 27, **Reflex** 25, **Will** 26

Immune disease, petrification, poison

Speed 6 (earth walk)

⚡ **Slam** (standard; at-will)

+19 vs. AC; 2d8 + 6 damage.

⚡ **Raging Earth** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Thunder**

Ranged 20; +17 (+20 against slowed creatures) vs. Reflex; 1d8 + 6 thunder damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends).

⬇ **Shove** (standard; at-will)

+19 vs. AC; 1d10+6 damage, and the target is pushed 4 squares and knocked prone.

⚡ **Ground Eruption** (standard; recharge ⏏; ⏏) ♦ **Thunder**

Area burst 1 within 10; +18 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 6 thunder damage, and the target is knocked prone. *Miss:* Half damage, and the target is knocked prone.

Alignment Chaotic evil

Languages Primordial

Str 20 (+12)

Dex 14 (+9)

Wis 23 (+13)

Con 23 (+13)

Int 19 (+11)

Cha 17 (+10)

Equipment chainmail

The earth archon runs interference for the hill giant, seeking to protect it so that it can hurl the elemental weapon and then open the gate. It uses *raging earth* to attack distant opponents, and employs *shove* against targets that get too close. It uses *ground eruption* when the opportunity to catch two or more enemies in the burst presents itself.

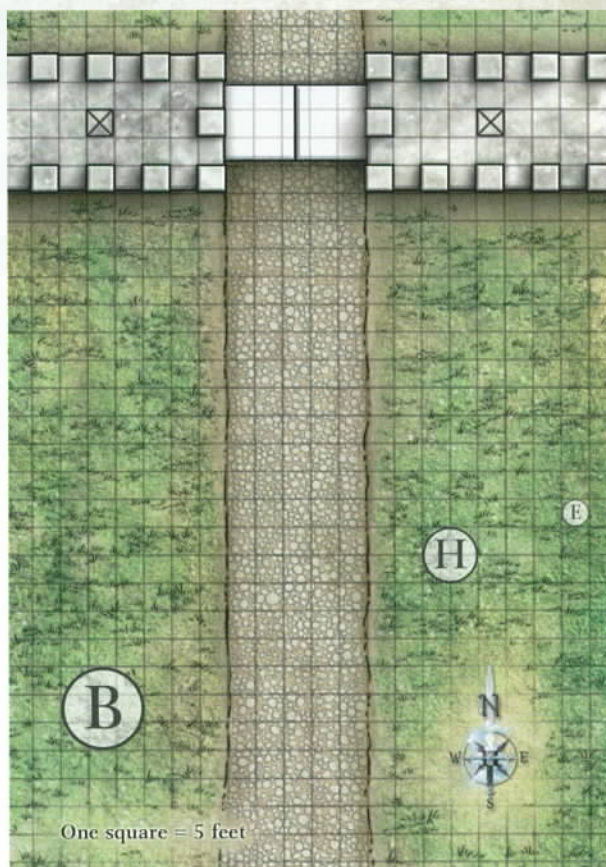
The young behir, aligned with the giants and ready to deal destruction on a massive scale, initially wants to get close enough to the gate to attack it with *lightning breath*. However, once the adventurers make themselves known, especially by attacking the behir, the creature flies into a rage and seeks to destroy them. It tries to *devour* the closest target, using its free action every turn to deal 5 damage. It can use its other attacks while it devours a target, sending *lightning breath* blasts and *thunderleg stomps* at other opponents in the area.

These monsters, on a suicide mission to breach the gate, fight to the death.

DEVELOPMENT

Time proves to be a factor in this battle. Not only must the adventurers provide Obanar with enough time to finish preparing Argent's magical offenses, they must defeat the first invading strike team before the giants can once again break through the defensive barrier.

At the start of the third round of combat in this encounter, and at the start of every round thereafter, roll 1d20. On a roll of 1–2, the giants once again



ENCOUNTER E2: THE SIEGE, PART TWO

breach the defensive barrier. Each time this occurs, four hill giant grunts (see page 18) appear at the southern edge of the map and join this battle.

On a roll of 19–20, Obanar finishes his preparations. The defensive barrier glows with more power, and bolts of arcane fire fly from the top of the Guardian's Tower to smash into the invading army. Within moments, the giants turn and run. Any monsters close to the wall continue to fight, regardless of how events play out beyond the barrier.

When the battle ends, Obanar sends a ghostly vision of himself to urge the player characters to follow the invading army's supply lines back to wherever its commanders can be found. "You must find the piece of the divine engine and determine who has instigated these attacks," Obanar tells them. Go to **Encounter E3** on page 54 when the player characters are ready.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Bright light. This battle occurs during the day.

Battlement Walls: The walls rise 50 feet. The battlements provide cover to anyone adjacent to them. Trap doors atop the battlements lead to ladders and an open space inside the walls.

Gate: The gate is 45 feet tall. It opens by sliding into the walls. It is locked and barred from the inside. The gate can be attacked: AC 2, Reflex 2, Fortitude 20, 400 hit points.

HILL GIANT COMPOUND OVERVIEW

The hill giants have a massive camp in the rocky hills about 10 miles south of Argent. This steading consists of tents, hastily erected mud and stone huts, and a wooden compound built into the side of a large hill. The compound consists of the wooden outer building and chambers hollowed out of the inside of the hill.

COMPOUND KEY

The overview map on the facing page shows several notable locations in the hill giant steading's main compound. Detailed encounters for these areas follow.

The compound's wooden walls are 5 feet thick and 20 feet tall. Gates in the wall provide entry into the compound, and two smoke holes on the roof allow smoke from the fires inside to escape.

1. MAIN ROAD

A crude path winds through the camp and up into the hills toward the main compound.

See **Encounter E3: Infiltrating the Compound** on page 54.

2. ENTRY HALL

The main entrance into the hill giant compound leads to a gatehouse of sorts, where hill giants and a rage drake ravager serve as guards.

See **Encounter E3: Infiltrating the Compound** on page 54.

3. TRAPPED GATE

A crude path winds around the back of the hill toward this alternate entrance into the hill giant compound. A trap in the small entry hall serves as both a deterrent and a warning for those inside the compound.

See **Encounter E4: Shaman Offensive** on page 56.

4. RITUAL CHAMBER

One of the main chambers within the compound, this area is dominated by a magic circle inscribed on the stone floor. Braziers provide light, as does the smoke hole in the ceiling. The hill giant high shaman performs rituals here to help the current offensive.

See **Encounter E4: Shaman Offensive** on page 56.

5. HIGH SHAMAN'S CHAMBER

A heavy curtain separates this enclosed space from the larger ritual chamber. This is the chamber of the hill giant high shaman. Sleeping furs and a work table full of reagents and components can be found here.

See **Encounter E4: Shaman Offensive** on page 56.

6. COMMON HALL

The long hall is the common area for the compound. Giants and their servants work and eat in this area. A font of bubbling magma fills the center of the hillside wall, and two stone doors lead into the interior chambers. A smoke hole in the ceiling lets in some light.

See **Encounter E5: Common Hall** on page 58.

7. STONEWORK CORRIDOR

A stonework corridor connects the chambers within the hillside.

See **Encounter E6: Hill Giant Battlechief** on page 60.

8. WAR ROOM

This chamber, used as a war room by the hill giant battlechief, is locked. Crude maps and documents on a table in this room provides clues to the giants' plans.

See **Encounter E6: Hill Giant Battlechief** on page 60.

9. BATTLECHIEF'S CHAMBER

This is the personal chamber of the hill giant battlechief. It features sleeping furs and a hearth.

10. ORC MERCENARIES

Orc mercenaries in service to the hill giant battlechief use this chamber to rest and store their gear.

11. BARRACKS

Sleeping furs in this common room are used by hill giants to rest. A hearth provides light and heat.

12. BACK CORRIDOR

This stonework corridor leads to other chambers deeper within the hill, as well as to stairs that lead to the natural caves below the area.

See **Encounter E7: Cave of the Earth Titan** on page 62.

13. THRONE ROOM

The battlechief's throne room features a crude throne on a dais, blazing braziers, and a font of bubbling magma. The floor is trapped in two locations.

See **Encounter E6: Hill Giant Battlechief** on page 60.

14. HIDDEN TREASURE CHAMBER

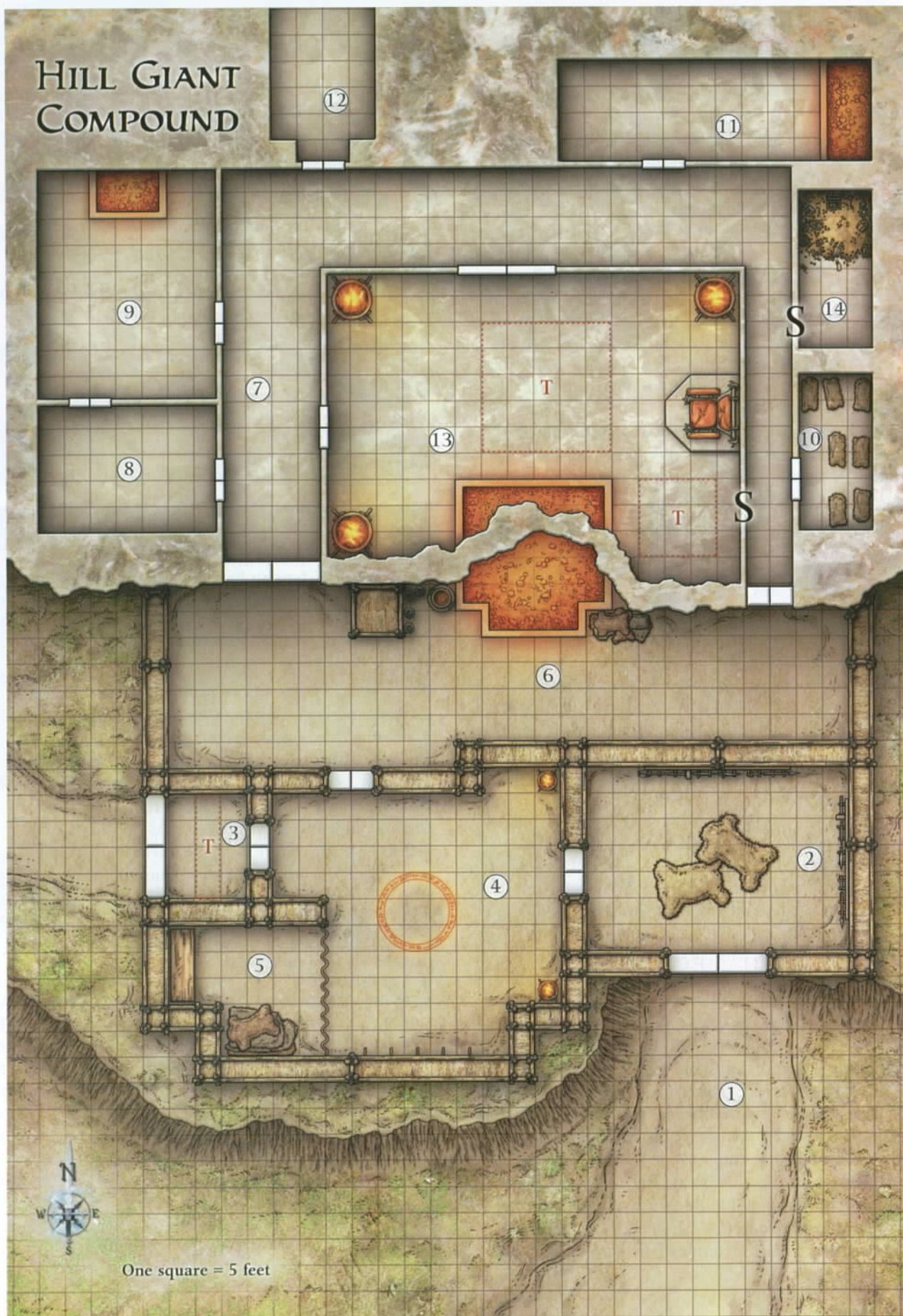
The hill giants' treasure is stored here.

See **Encounter E6: Hill Giant Battlechief** on page 60.

HILL GIANT COMPOUND

HILL GIANT COMPOUND OVERVIEW

2



ENCOUNTER E3: INFILTRATING THE COMPOUND

Encounter Level 11 (3,200 XP)

This encounter comes in two parts, each part worth at least 3,200 XP. The first part involves a skill challenge as the adventurers sneak through the hill giant camp toward the compound. The second part features a battle at the compound's main gate.

INFILTRATION SKILL CHALLENGE

The adventurers engage in a skill challenge to follow the supply lines of the hill giant army back to its main camp, and then to sneak through the camp to reach the battlechief's compound.

Each round represents time to track, sneak, and observe giant encampments along the way. Each round, every member of the party must make a separate check as directed by the challenge. Add up the number of successes and failures each round. More successes gains 1 success for the round, more failures earns 1 failure toward the completion of the challenge and indicates that the party has triggered a random encounter.

Level: 11

Complexity: 1 (4 successes before 3 failures).

Skills Used in this Challenge: Bluff, Intimidate, Nature, Perception, Stealth.

Round 1, Perception (DC 16, standard action): The characters follow the trail of the hill giant army back along its supply lines.

If the group fails this round, they run into an Elemental Strike Team (see page 38).

Round 2, Bluff (DC 16, standard action): The characters run into a patrol of Hill Giant Raiders (see page 38). If they successfully bluff the patrol, the hill giants let them pass by.

If the group fails this check, the patrol attacks.

Round 3, Nature (DC 16, standard action): The characters look for signs of the giants' passing. If they succeed, they find the fastest path to the main camp.

If the group fails this check, they spend an hour lost in the wilderness and must re-do this round.

Round 4, Perception (DC 10, standard action): The characters reach the main camp and discern that the main compound is farther in, built into the side of a hill overlooking the camp.

If the group fails this check, they are noticed and attacked by Elemental Marauders (see page 38).

Round 5, Intimidate (DC 21, standard action): The characters convince a couple of orc slaves to let them pass quietly.

If the group fails this check, the orc slaves sound the alarm and an Earth Giant Assault Squad rushes over to engage the adventurers (see page 38).

Round 6, Stealth (DC 16, standard action): The characters sneak the rest of the way through the camp to reach the path leading up to the compound's gate.

Success: If the characters earn 4 successes, they reach the compound without drawing undue attention to themselves.

Failure: If the characters get 3 failures, they reach the compound but are followed by an Earth Giant Assault Squad (see page 38).

SETUP

1 rage drake ravager (R)

1 hill giant (H)

2 ogre warriors (O)

The path up to the compound's main gate runs along the bottom of the escarpment upon which the compound is built upon. If the adventurers failed the skill challenge, they face an Earth Giant Assault Squad in addition to the compound's usual guardians.

As the adventurers approach the compound gate, read:

The compound is constructed of thick logs, with solid walls and a slanted roof. The gate ahead looks strong and sturdy. A hill giant is yelling at a pair of ogres as you approach, and none of them have appeared to notice you as yet.

Note that if the adventurers failed the skill challenge, the hill giant and ogres are ready as they approach. In this case, they work with the Earth Giant Assault Squad to defend the compound from the intruders.

| Hill Giant (H) | | Level 13 Brute |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| Large natural humanoid (giant) | | XP 800 |
| Initiative +5 | Senses Perception +7 | |
| HP 159; Bloodied 79 | | |
| AC 25; Fortitude 27, Reflex 21, Will 23 | | |
| Speed 8 | | |
| ⚔ Greatclub (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | | |
| Reach 2; +15 vs. AC; 2d10 + 7 damage. | | |
| ⚔ Sweeping Club (standard; encounter) ♦ Weapon | | |
| The hill giant makes a greatclub attack against two Medium or smaller targets; on a hit, the target is pushed 2 squares and knocked prone. | | |
| ✂ Hurl Rock (standard; at-will) | | |
| Ranged 8/16; +15 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage. | | |
| Alignment Chaotic evil | | Languages Giant |
| Skills Athletics +16 | | |
| Str 21 (+11) | Dex 8 (+5) | Wis 12 (+7) |
| Con 19 (+10) | Int 7 (+4) | Cha 9 (+5) |
| Equipment hide armor, greatclub | | |

Rage Drake Ravager (R)**Level 15 Brute**

Large natural beast (mount, reptile)

XP 1,200

Initiative +10

Senses Perception +10

HP 178; Bloodied 89; see also *bloodied rage*

AC 27; Fortitude 28, Reflex 26, Will 26

Immune fear (while bloodied only)

Speed 8

⚔ **Bite** (standard; at-will)+18 vs. AC; 2d8 + 6 damage; see also *bloodied rage*.⚔ **Claw** (standard; at-will)+18 vs. AC; 1d10 + 6 damage; see also *bloodied rage*.⚔ **Raking Leap** (standard; at-will)

The rage drake leaps up to 8 squares, making four claw attacks against a single target as it lands.

Bloodied Rage (while bloodied)

The rage drake gains a +2 bonus to attack rolls and deals an extra 10 damage per attack.

Raging Mount (while bloodied and mounted by a friendly rider of 15th level or higher; at-will) ♦ **Mount**

The rage drake grants its rider a +2 bonus to attack rolls and damage rolls with melee attacks.

Alignment Unaligned Languages –

Str 20 (+12)

Dex 14 (+10)

Wis 14 (+10)

Con 18 (+11)

Int 4 (+4)

Cha 13 (+9)

2 Ogre Warriors (O)**Level 11 Skirmishers**

Large natural humanoid

XP 350 each

Initiative +10

Senses Perception +7

HP 115; Bloodied 57

AC 25; Fortitude 24, Reflex 22, Will 21

Speed 8

⚔ **Club** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**Reach 2; +16 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage; see also *skirmish*.✈ **Javelin** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**Ranged 10/20; +16 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage; see also *skirmish*.⚔ **Hurling Charge** (standard; encounter) ♦ **Weapon**

The ogre warrior makes a javelin attack followed by a charge attack.

Skirmish +1d10

If, on its turn, the ogre warrior ends its move at least 4 squares away from its starting point, it deals an extra 1d10 damage on its melee attacks until the start of its next turn.

Alignment Chaotic evil Languages Common, Giant

Str 20 (+10)

Dex 16 (+8)

Wis 14 (+7)

Con 19 (+9)

Int 4 (+2)

Cha 6 (+3)

Equipment hide armor, club, quiver of 6 javelins

TACTICS

As soon as the hill giant becomes aware of the adventurers, he orders the ogre warriors to attack. Then he spends a minor action to open the gate and call forth the rage drake ravager. The hill giant hurls rocks for as long as he isn't in melee combat. If the rage drake or both ogres fall, then the hill giant attempts to flee into the compound and raise the alarm.

The ogre warriors use javelins initially, hoping to get in a *hurling charge* before engaging in close combat.

The rage drake devourer, a meaner, more powerful version of the typical rage drake, tries to surprise opponents with a *raking leap* before switching to bite and claw attacks.

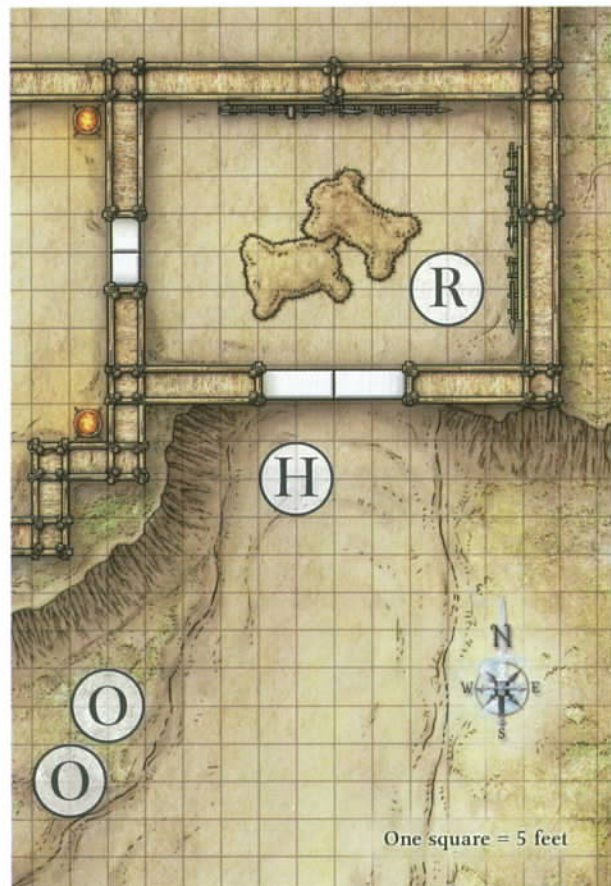
FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Bright light. If the adventurers approach the compound at night, dim light is provided by fires situated throughout the camp.

Compound Walls: The walls of the compound are 20 feet high. The roof above is slanted.

Gate: The gate is unlocked at the start of the encounter. If the hill giant flees into the compound, he tries to use a minor action to close the gate and a standard action to lock it. AC/Reflex 4; Fortitude 12; 40 hit points. A DC 23 Strength check can also be used to force open the door.

Escarpment: The escarpment is 15 feet high and very steep; DC 21 Athletics check to climb.



ENCOUNTER E4: SHAMAN OFFENSIVE

Encounter Level 14 (5,000 XP)

SETUP

- 1 hill giant high shaman (G)
- 1 hill giant slinger (S)
- 2 hill giant grunts (M)
- 1 rage drake ravager (R)
- Steel maw trap (T)

The adventurers can approach this encounter from three directions. They can enter through the Entry Hall after dealing with **Encounter E3**. They can approach through the Trapped Gate. Or they can climb to the roof and drop through the smoke hole directly into the Ritual Chamber.

If the characters don't alert the compound to their presence, when they view the Ritual Chamber, read:

Two large braziers illuminate this chamber, and muted light also enters from the smoke hole in the roof. The light reveals three hill giants and a large reptile milling around the room. A glowing circle is inscribed into the floor of this chamber, and a heavy curtain completely covers the southwest wall.

If the adventurers make their presence known, perhaps by setting off the Trapped Gate or allowing the hill giant from Encounter E3 to sound the alarm, then the giants are ready for action (and the hill giant is among the defenders here). If not, then give the PCs a +2 bonus to initiative checks for this encounter.

| Rage Drake Ravager (R) | | Level 15 Brute |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Large natural beast (mount, reptile) | | XP 1,200 |
| Initiative +10 | Senses Perception +10 | |
| HP 178; Bloodied 89; see also <i>bloodied rage</i> | | |
| AC 27; Fortitude 28, Reflex 26, Will 26 | | |
| Immune fear (while bloodied only) | | |
| Speed 8 | | |
| ⚔ Bite (standard; at-will) | | |
| +18 vs. AC; 2d8 + 6 damage; see also <i>bloodied rage</i> . | | |
| ⚔ Claw (standard; at-will) | | |
| +18 vs. AC; 1d10 + 6 damage; see also <i>bloodied rage</i> . | | |
| ⚔ Raking Leap (standard; at-will) | | |
| The rage drake leaps up to 8 squares, making four claw attacks against a single target as it lands. | | |
| Bloodied Rage (while bloodied) | | |
| The rage drake gains a +2 bonus to attack rolls and deals an extra 10 damage per attack. | | |
| Raging Mount (while bloodied and mounted by a friendly rider of 15th level or higher; at-will) ♦ Mount | | |
| The rage drake grants its rider a +2 bonus to attack rolls and damage rolls with melee attacks. | | |
| Alignment Unaligned | Languages – | |
| Str 20 (+12) | Dex 14 (+10) | Wis 14 (+10) |
| Con 18 (+11) | Int 4 (+4) | Cha 13 (+9) |

| 2 Hill Giant Grunts (M) | | Level 13 Minion |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| Large natural humanoid (giant) | | XP 200 each |
| Initiative +5 | Senses Perception +7 | |
| HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion. | | |
| AC 25; Fortitude 27, Reflex 21, Will 23 | | |
| Speed 8 | | |
| ⚔ Greatclub (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | | |
| Reach 2; +15 vs. AC; 9 damage and the target is pushed 1 square. | | |
| 🗜 Hurl Rock (standard; at-will) | | |
| Ranged 8/16; +15 vs. AC; 9 damage. | | |
| Alignment Chaotic evil | | Languages Giant |
| Skills Athletics +15 | | |
| Str 19 (+10) | Dex 8 (+5) | Wis 12 (+7) |
| Con 18 (+10) | Int 7 (+4) | Cha 9 (+5) |
| Equipment hide armor, greatclub | | |

| Hill Giant High Shaman (G) | | Level 13 Elite Controller |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| Large natural humanoid (giant) | | XP 1,600 |
| Initiative +9 | Senses Perception +13 | |
| HP 262; Bloodied 131 | | |
| AC 27; Fortitude 25, Reflex 23, Will 23 | | |
| Saving Throws +2 | | |
| Speed 8 | | |
| Action Points 1 | | |
| ⚔ Quarterstaff (standard; at-will) ♦ Implement, Weapon | | |
| Reach 2; +18 vs. AC; 2d8 + 5 damage. | | |
| ✂ Whisper of Pain (standard; at-will) | | |
| Ranged 10; +17 vs. Will; 1d10 + 6 damage, and the hill giant shaman and his allies gain a +1 bonus to attack rolls against the target until the end of the hill giant shaman's next turn. | | |
| ⚔ Earthrage (standard; at-will) ♦ Implement, Weapon | | |
| Close burst 3; targets enemies only; +17 vs. Reflex; 1d10 + 6 damage, and target is knocked prone. | | |
| ⚔ Earthstorm (standard; recharge ☹ ☹) ♦ Implement, Weapon | | |
| Requires quarterstaff. Close blast 5; +15 vs. Fortitude; 3d10 + 6 damage, and the target is pushed 1 square and blinded (save ends). | | |
| Alignment Chaotic evil | | Languages Common, Giant |
| Skills Arcana +13, Nature +13 | | |
| Str 21 (+11) | Dex 16 (+9) | Wis 14 (+8) |
| Con 19 (+10) | Int 14 (+8) | Cha 16 (+9) |
| Equipment hide armor, stone quarterstaff | | |

TACTICS

The giants in this area react in one of two ways, depending on how the adventurers approach this encounter. If the adventurers set off the trap, then the giants move to engage the intruders at the doorway between the Trapped Gate and the Ritual Chamber. If the adventurers enter through the Entry Hall or the smoke hole, the giants try to surround them in the Ritual Chamber.

The rage drake ravager hates intruders, especially creatures that aren't hill or earth giants. It makes a *raking leap* to get into the middle of the intruders' line or even behind it to attack the weakest members.

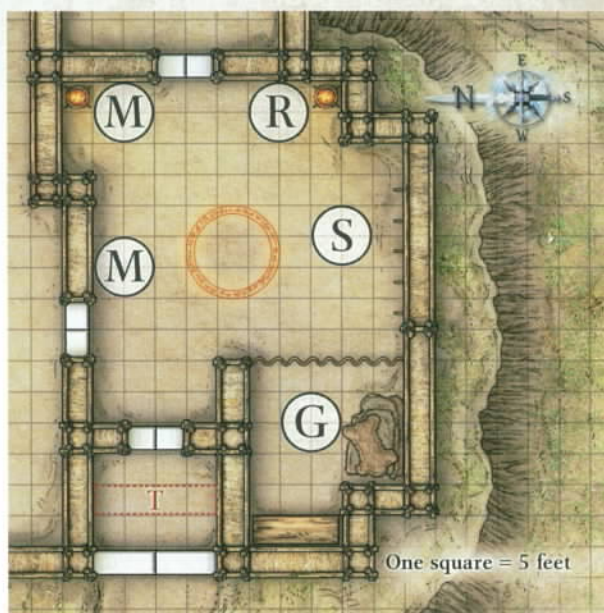
The hill giant slinger stays back or moves away from the enemy in order to make use of her ranged attacks.

The hill giant grunts start out by hurling rocks if they have the opportunity, and then they wade in for close combat action.

The hill giant high shaman starts the encounter in his room, behind the heavy curtain. As soon as he becomes aware of trouble in the compound, he uses a prepared ritual to teleport (as a minor action) into the magic circle and use *earthrage*. Then he teleports back behind the curtain with his final prepared ritual (another minor action). After that, he emerges to aid his servants against the intruders.

If the high shaman's servants fall, or if the high shaman is bloodied, he retreats to the Common Hall at the first opportunity. The other creatures in this encounter fight to the death.

| Hill Giant Slinger (S) | Level 14 Artillery |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Large natural humanoid (giant) | XP 1,000 |
| Initiative +12 | Senses Perception +15 |
| HP 112; Bloodied 56 | |
| AC 26; Fortitude 26, Reflex 25, Will 23 | |
| Speed 8 | |
| ⚔ Slam (standard; at-will) | |
| Reach 2; +21 vs. AC; 1d10 + 6 damage. | |
| 🏹 Sling (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| Ranged 15/30; +21 vs. AC; 2d8 + 6 damage. | |
| 🏹 Special Shot (standard; recharge [2]) ♦ Weapon | |
| Ranged 15/30; +19 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 6 damage, and target is slowed and takes ongoing 5 acid damage (save ends both). | |
| Alignment Chaotic evil | Languages Giant |
| Skills Acrobatics +17, Nature +15, Stealth +17 | |
| Str 19 (+11) | Dex 20 (+12) Wis 16 (+10) |
| Con 22 (+13) | Int 9 (+6) Cha 11 (+7) |
| Equipment hide armor, sling | |



ENCOUNTER E4: SHAMAN OFFENSIVE

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Bright light from the braziers.

Braziers: These flame-filled bowls provide light for the chamber.

Curtain: A curtain of heavy furs hangs from floor to ceiling, blocking the entrance to the high shaman's private chamber.

Magic Circle: This inscribed circle is used by the high shaman for various rituals and other magical conjurations and summonings.

Shaman's Private Chamber: The high shaman's private chamber features sleeping furs, a work table, and a stool. Hidden within the furs (DC 23 Perception check) is a pouch containing 2,000 gp. The table contains various tools and reagents, parchment sheets with strange notes, and a *potion of vitality*.

Smoke Hole: The smoke hole in the ceiling is 20 feet above the ground. It is directly over the northeast corner of the Ritual Chamber.

Trapped Hall: A steel maw trap guards the western entry hall. See the stat block on this page for details.

| Steel Maw | Level 13 Lurker |
|-----------|-----------------|
| Trap | XP 800 |

Without warning, a jagged steel brace, its pointed edges looking like the teeth of some great beast, slams down from the ceiling, smashes into the ground, and then snaps back up and out of sight.

Trap: When a character steps into or otherwise attempts to cross a trapped square, the steel maw drops like a toothed guillotine and then retracts back into the ceiling.

Perception

♦ DC 23: An open groove in the ceiling above barely hides jagged metal points within its dark recesses.

Additional Skill: Dungeoneering

♦ DC 16: Same as for Perception, above.

Trigger

When a creature enters, crosses through, or starts its turn in a trapped square, the steel maw drops, strikes, and retracts.

Attack

Standard Action **Melee 1**

Target: All creatures in a trapped square

Attack: +16 vs. Reflex

Hit: 2d8 + 6 damage, and the target is knocked prone and dazed (save ends).

Countermeasures

♦ A character can attempt to disable the trap from an adjacent square. This requires a DC 25 Thievery check.

♦ A character leaping over a trapped square still sets off the steel maw. However, a leaping character receives a +2 bonus to Reflex as he or she flies through the space beneath the steel maw.

ENCOUNTER E5: COMMON HALL

Encounter Level 14 (5,300 XP)

SETUP

- 1 earth giant (E)
- 2 hill giant slingers (S)
- 2 hill giants (H)
- 1 fire elemental firestorm(F)

Heavy double doors open upon the Common Hall, where a number of giants work or rest. If the giants are alerted to the presence of the adventurers, then they lock and bar the double doors. The high shaman from **Encounter 4** may be here to help defend the hall if he retreated at the end of the previous encounter.

THE LOCKED AND BARRED DOORS

If the double doors to the Common Hall are locked and barred, the adventurers must get them open to proceed deeper into the compound.

The first option is to break down the barred doors. This requires a DC 24 Strength check. One other character can aid the character making the check.

The second option is to unlock and unbar the doors from the outside. This requires a DC 16 Thievery check to unlock the doors, and then a DC 23 Thievery check to unbar the doors from the outside.

Either way, the giants are ready to defend themselves when the adventurers open the doors.

Perception Check

DC 16: In addition to the giants in this long hall, you spot a creature of fire dancing within the font of bubbling magma in the center of the far wall.

| 2 Hill Giant Slingers (S) | Level 14 Artillery |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Large natural humanoid (giant) | XP 1,000 each |
| Initiative +12 | Senses Perception +15 |
| HP 112; Bloodied 56 | |
| AC 26; Fortitude 26, Reflex 25, Will 23 | |
| Speed 8 | |
| ⚔ Slam (standard; at-will) | |
| Reach 2; +21 vs. AC; 1d10 + 6 damage. | |
| 🏹 Sling (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| Ranged 15/30; +21 vs. AC; 2d8 + 6 damage. | |
| 🔥 Special Shot (standard; recharge 5) ♦ Weapon | |
| Ranged 15/30; +19 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 6 damage, and target is slowed and takes ongoing 5 acid damage (save ends both). | |
| Alignment Chaotic evil | Languages Giant |
| Skills Acrobatics +17, Nature +15, Stealth +17 | |
| Str 19 (+11) | Dex 20 (+12) |
| Con 22 (+13) | Int 9 (+6) |
| | Wis 16 (+10) |
| | Cha 11 (+7) |
| Equipment hide armor, sling | |

| 2 Hill Giants (H) | Level 13 Brute |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Large natural humanoid (giant) | XP 800 each |
| Initiative +5 | Senses Perception +7 |
| HP 159; Bloodied 79 | |
| AC 25; Fortitude 27, Reflex 21, Will 23 | |
| Speed 8 | |
| 👊 Greatclub (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| Reach 2; +15 vs. AC; 2d10 + 7 damage. | |
| 👊 Sweeping Club (standard; encounter) ♦ Weapon | |
| The hill giant makes a greatclub attack against two Medium or smaller targets; on a hit, the target is pushed 2 squares and knocked prone. | |
| 🔥 Hurl Rock (standard; at-will) | |
| Ranged 8/16; +15 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage. | |
| Alignment Chaotic evil | Languages Giant |
| Skills Athletics +16 | |
| Str 21 (+11) | Dex 8 (+5) |
| Con 19 (+10) | Int 7 (+4) |
| | Wis 12 (+7) |
| | Cha 9 (+5) |
| Equipment hide armor, greatclub | |

| Fire Elemental Firestorm (F) | Level 12 Controller |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Large elemental magical beast (fire) | XP 700 |
| Initiative +12 | Senses Perception +7 |
| Blazing Heat (Fire) aura 1; any creature that enters or starts its turn in the aura takes 5 fire damage. | |
| HP 122; Bloodied 61 | |
| AC 26; Fortitude 23, Reflex 25, Will 22 | |
| Immune disease, petrification, poison; Resist 30 fire | |
| Speed 6 | |
| 🔥 Fire Slam (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire | |
| Reach 2; +17 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 fire damage, and target is pushed 3 squares. | |
| 🔥 Firestorm (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire, Zone | |
| Area burst 1 within 10; +14 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 5 fire damage and the target is immobilized (save ends). The zone is filled with fire and is considered difficult terrain until the end of the encounter. Any creature that enters or starts its turn in the zone takes 5 fire damage. | |
| Alignment Unaligned | Languages Primordial |
| Str 13 (+7) | Dex 22 (+12) |
| Con 18 (+10) | Int 4 (+5) |
| | Wis 12 (+7) |
| | Cha 16 (+9) |

| Earth Giant | Level 14 Brute |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Large elemental humanoid (giant) | XP 1,000 |
| Initiative +6 | Senses Perception +8 |
| HP 170; Bloodied 85 | |
| AC 26; Fortitude 28, Reflex 22, Will 24 | |
| Speed 6, see also earth step | |
| 👊 Slam (standard; at-will) | |
| Reach 2; +17 vs. AC; 2d6 + 6 damage. | |
| 🔥 Hurl Rock (standard; at-will) | |
| Ranged 20; +15 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 6 damage. | |
| Earth Step | |
| The earth giant ignores difficult terrain when it shifts. | |
| Alignment Chaotic evil | Languages Giant, Primordial |
| Skills Athletics +17 | |
| Str 20 (+12) | Dex 8 (+6) |
| Con 20 (+12) | Int 9 (+6) |
| | Wis 12 (+8) |
| | Cha 12 (+8) |

TACTICS

Assuming that the adventurers have revealed their presence by this point and that the giants are now on alert, the giants guarding the Common Hall lock and bar the double doors to the Ritual Chamber and then prepare for battle.

The hill giant slingers take up positions far from the doors to take full advantage of their ranged attacks. They begin the battle using *special shot*, then resort to sling attacks as long as they can maintain some distance from the intruders.

The earth giant leads the hill giants into close combat to keep the adventurers from moving into the Common Hall. If some of the adventurers make it through the line of defense, then the earth giant orders the hill giants to help it flank with the enemy.

The fire elemental starts by hurling a *firestorm* into the midst of the adventurers. It doesn't really care if it catches any of the giants in this attack. Then it slips out of the font of bubbling magma and moves in to make *fire slam* attacks against any enemies that made it past the line of giants.

If the hill giant high shaman retreated to this area, he uses his attacks to help defend the Common Hall. He does everything in his power to keep the adventurers from getting to the doors that lead into the hillside and the chambers within.

DEVELOPMENT

If the adventurers search the high shaman after defeating him, they uncover a small box with a hinged lid within the shaman's belt pouch. When the adventurers open the box, read:

The small metal box opens with a snap, and a tiny spark of fire floats out. The spark immediately begins to move through the air, writing flaming words in a strange language that remain visible for a few moments before they sizzle out.

If any of the characters can read giant, they know that the message says:

"Why are you contacting me now? What is wrong? Has something unexpected occurred?"

The letters sizzle out, and then the spark begins to write again. Read:

"You again. Impressive. Come, then. Let us see if champions of Argent still scream when they die."

The spark of fire is a gift from Breven Foss, the element master working to free Piranoth. He provided this communications device to the high shaman. He is with the earth titan, waiting for the adventurers in Encounter E7 (see page 62).

FEATURES OF THE AREA

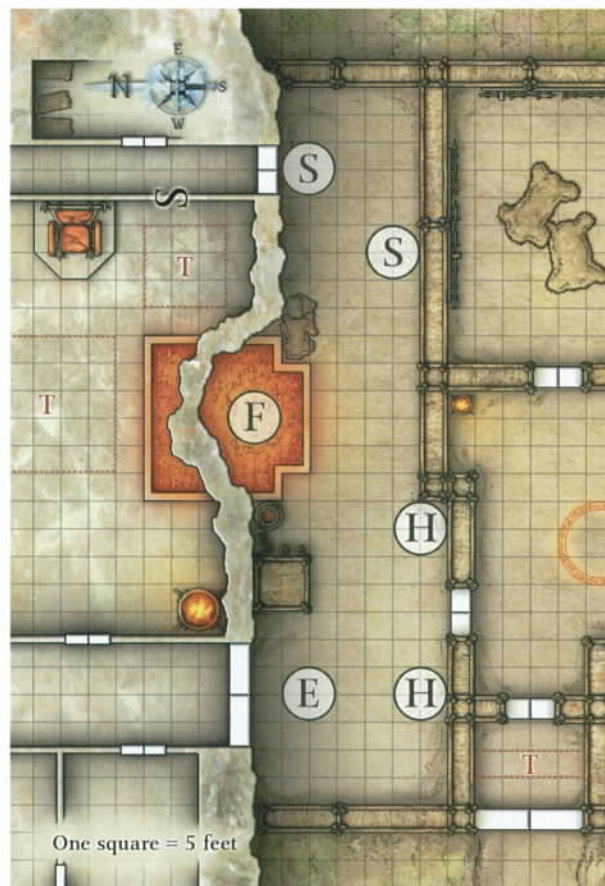
Illumination: Bright light from the font of bubbling magma, the fire elemental, and the smoke hole in the ceiling.

Magma Font: A font of bubbling magma fills the center of the hillside wall. Carved into the very rock of the hill, the font connects to a similar font in the Throne Room. Any creature that enters or starts its turn in the font takes 15 fire damage.

Large Double Doors: Large double doors block the main entry into the chambers built within the hill. A DC 23 Strength check is required to open the heavy stone doors.

Small Double Doors: Small double doors to the east of the magma font appear to be closer to human sized than the other doors in this compound. These doors lead to the servants' corridor and to the rooms used by the orc mercenaries working for the giants. The doors are locked, requiring a DC 16 Thievery check to open.

ENCOUNTER E5: COMMON HALL



ENCOUNTER E6: HILL GIANT BATTLECHIEF

Encounter Level 15 (6,300 XP)

SETUP

- 1 hill giant battlechief (B)
- 1 hill giant shaman (S)
- 5 hill giant grunts (G)
- 5 orc mercenaries (O)

Great double doors open upon a wide hallway with doors on each side. The hallway surrounds the hill giant battlechief's throne room. A set of smaller double doors leads into the servants' portion of the hallway, where the corridor is more narrow.

Depending on how the adventurers enter the portion of the compound inside the hill, there are different ways that this encounter might play out. These are covered below.

THROUGH THE GREAT DOORS

If the adventurers enter the inner compound through the great double doors on the west, they have access to the War Room and Battlechief's Chamber on the western side of the corridor, and to the Throne Room on the eastern side, as well as to the Back Corridor that leads down to **Encounter E7** (on page 62).

The War Room and the Battlechief's Chamber are currently unoccupied. If the adventurers go in to explore these rooms, the orc mercenaries wait in the corridor for them to emerge before they attack.

The battlechief, now aware of the intruders, orders all of his defenders to remain in the Throne Room. He sends the orc mercenaries around the corridor to try to drive the adventurers into the Throne Room and the trap that awaits them therein.

THROUGH THE SMALLER DOORS

If the adventurers enter the inner compound through the smaller double doors on the east, they run into the orc mercenaries first. Once a battle begins here, the battlechief orders a couple of the grunts to enter the corridor through the north door to draw the intruders up into the wider section of the hallway. Then he sends the shaman through the secret door to attack them from the rear. The battlechief remains in the Throne Room, hoping to catch the adventurers in the trap should they defeat his defenders in the corridor.

Perception Check

DC 25: You notice the telltale sign of a secret door on the western side of the corridor.

DC 27: You notice the telltale sign of a secret door on the eastern side of the corridor.

5 Hill Giant Grunts (G)

Level 13 Minion

Large natural humanoid (giant)

XP 200 each

Initiative +5 Senses Perception +7
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.
AC 25; Fortitude 27, Reflex 21, Will 23
Speed 8

④ Greatclub (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon

Reach 2; +15 vs. AC; 9 damage and the target is pushed 1 square.

➤ Hurl Rock (standard; at-will)

Ranged 8/16; +15 vs. AC; 9 damage.

Alignment Chaotic evil

Languages Giant

Skills Athletics +15

Str 19 (+10)

Dex 8 (+5)

Wis 12 (+7)

Con 18 (+10)

Int 7 (+4)

Cha 9 (+5)

Equipment hide armor, greatclub

Hill Giant Shaman (S)

Level 13 Controller

Large natural humanoid (giant)

XP 800

Initiative +9 Senses Perception +13
HP 131; Bloodied 65
AC 27; Fortitude 25, Reflex 23, Will 23
Speed 8

④ Quarterstaff (standard; at-will) ♦ Implement, Weapon

Reach 2; +18 vs. AC; 2d8 + 5 damage.

⚡ Earthstorm (standard; recharge [2][2]) ♦ Implement, Weapon

Requires quarterstaff. Close blast 5; +15 vs. Fortitude; 3d10 + 6 damage, and the target is pushed 1 square and blinded (save ends).

➤ Volcanic Blast (standard; at-will) ♦ Implement, Weapon

Ranged 10; +17 vs. Reflex; 1d10 + 6 damage, and target gains vulnerable 5 fire (save ends).

Alignment Chaotic evil

Languages Common, Giant

Skills Arcana +13, Nature +13

Str 21 (+11)

Dex 16 (+9)

Wis 14 (+8)

Con 19 (+10)

Int 14 (+8)

Cha 16 (+9)

Equipment hide armor, stone quarterstaff

5 Orc Mercenaries (O)

Level 12 Skirmisher

Medium natural humanoid

XP 700 each

Initiative +11 Senses Perception +8; low-light vision
HP 120; Bloodied 60; see also warrior's surge
AC 26; Fortitude 25, Reflex 24, Will 23
Speed 6 (8 while charging)

④ Greataxe (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon

+17 vs. AC; 1d12 + 5 damage (crit 1d12 + 17).

➤ Handaxe (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon

Ranged 5/10; +17 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage; see also killer's eye.

⚡ Warrior's Surge (standard, usable only while bloodied; encounter) ♦ Healing, Weapon

The orc mercenary makes a melee basic attack and regains 30 hit points.

Killer's Eye

When making a ranged attack, the orc mercenary ignores cover and concealment (but not total concealment) if the target is within 5 squares of it.

Alignment Chaotic evil

Languages Common, Giant

Skills Endurance +14, Intimidate +9

Str 19 (+10)

Dex 17 (+9)

Wis 14 (+8)

Con 16 (+9)

Int 11 (+6)

Cha 11 (+6)

Equipment leather armor, greataxe, 4 handaxes

Hill Giant Battlechief Level 14 Skirmisher (Leader)

Large natural humanoid (giant)

XP 1,000

Initiative +13

Senses Perception +15

HP 144; Bloodied 72

AC 28; Fortitude 28, Reflex 26, Will 25

Speed 8

⚔ **Battleaxe** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

Reach 2; +19 vs. AC; 2d10 + 8 damage.

⚔ **Inspiring Attack** (standard; recharge [5][5]) ♦ **Healing, Weapon**

Reach 2; +21 vs. AC; 3d10 + 8 damage, and all allies within 10 squares heal 15 hit points.

Frenzied Advance (minor; at-will)

Close burst 10; allies within the burst shift 3 squares.

Battle Weave (immediate reaction; when an attack hits or misses the hill giant; at-will)

The hill giant battlechief shifts up to 3 squares and gains combat advantage against all enemies until the end of his next turn.

Combat Advantage

The hill giant battlechief deals an extra 2d6 damage against any target it has combat advantage against.

Alignment Chaotic evil

Languages Common, Giant

Skills Athletics +18, Intimidate +14, Stealth +16

Str 22 (+13)

Dex 19 (+11)

Wis 17 (+10)

Con 24 (+14)

Int 16 (+10)

Cha 15 (+9)

Equipment hide armor, battleaxe

TACTICS

Assuming that the adventurers enter the Throne Room, the giants try to direct the battle so as to draw the characters toward one of the trapped sections of the floor.

The hill giant grunts stay to the outside of the room, trying to push enemies onto the trapped areas.

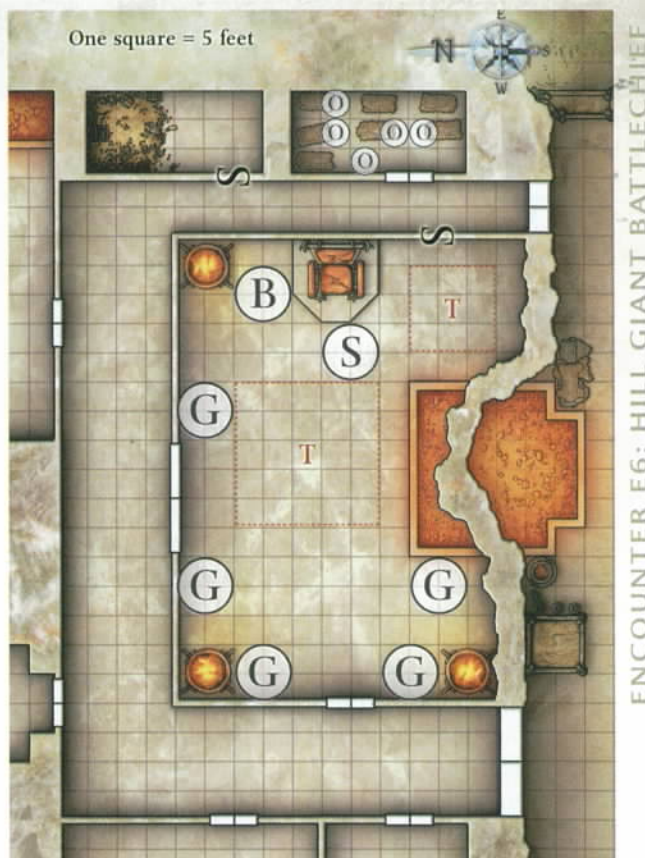
The hill giant shaman stays near the battlechief to defend his leader. He tries to attract the attention of one or more melee characters to get them to cross onto the trapped section of the floor.

The battlechief stands back and also attempts to draw the characters closer. He saves *inspiring attack* to heal the shaman and the orc mercenaries.

The orc mercenaries could engage the adventurers in the corridor, but if the characters enter the Throne Room, the orcs use the corridor to move around to attack the adventurers from behind.

DEVELOPMENT

If the adventurers are caught in the trap, they fall into the chamber beneath the hill. Now they must contend with the creatures in **Encounter E7** (on page 62) as well as any of the defenders remaining in this encounter.



FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Bright light in all of the chambers. Dim light in the corridor.

Magma Font: A font of bubbling magma fills the center of the Throne Room's southern wall. Any creature that enters or starts its turn in the font takes 15 fire damage.

8. War Room: This chamber is locked (DC 18 Thievery check to open). Crude maps and documents on a table here show that the giants are marching on three locations: earth giants march on Argent and the human farms and settlements in the area; frost giants march on the coastal towns of Andor and Flotsam; fire giants march on the Nentir Vale. There is also a letter from the frost giant jarl that hints at a special mission to a place called Frost Spire.

9. Battlechief's Chamber: The personal sleeping chamber of the hill giant battlechief. A level 14 magic item is stored here.

14. Hidden Treasure Chamber: If the adventurers discover the secret door, they can unlock it with the key that the battlechief carries or with a DC 27 Thievery check. The chamber contains 7,200 gp, seven 1,000 gp gems, and a level 15 magic item.

Trap: The battlechief or the shaman can activate the trapped floor sections at any time by triggering a switch on the throne (minor action). When activated, the floor collapses and drops anyone standing within the marked area 50 feet (5d10 damage) to the chamber below.

ENCOUNTER E7: CAVE OF THE EARTH TITAN

Encounter Level 16 (7,200 XP)

SETUP

- 1 earth titan (E)
- 2 earth giant stalkers (G)
- 2 earth giant soldiers (S)
- Breven Foss, element master (B)

The adventurers more than likely enter this encounter by falling through the trapped floor in the Throne Room (see **Encounter E6** on page 60). The tactics and other information are presented with this assumption. If the adventurers somehow manage to make it through the upper compound without alerting all of the giants, then they could approach this underground chamber by descending the stairs off of the Back Corridor. They would then approach this chamber from the northern passage.

If the adventurers do fall into the chamber, they drop 50 feet and take 5d10 points of damage as the encounter begins. If any of the defenders in **Encounter E6** are still alive, they shout and jeer at the adventurers from above, and then make their way down the stairs to join this final battle.

When the adventurers reach this area, place the earth titan and the earth soldiers. The stalkers and Breven Foss are hiding in the shadows at the start of the encounter. Read:

Pools of bubbling magma and a river of flowing lava cast dim light into this subterranean chamber. Three great creatures of earth and rock, including one that resembles a walking hillside, occupy this chamber.

Perception Check

DC 20: The human who stole the piece of the divine engine from Argent's vault stands in the shadows near the earth titan.

DC 24: You notice two additional earth giants hiding in the shadows.

BREVEN FOSS

The element master has no intention of sticking around for this battle. He has reported in to Earthshaker the earth titan, sent the piece of the divine engine on to the fire giants, and now wants to head off to help the frost giants with their mission to Frost Spire. He smiles at the adventurers, then says:

"Ah, the champions of Argent. How predictable. They are yours to destroy, Earthshaker. Enjoy yourself. I shall give your regards to the frost giant jarl."

He teleports away, using a prepared ritual scroll.

| Earth Titan (E) | Level 16 Elite Brute |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Huge elemental humanoid (earth, giant) | XP 2,800 |
| Initiative +7 | Senses Perception +9 |
| HP 384; Bloodied 192 | |
| AC 31; Fortitude 33, Reflex 27, Will 28 | |
| Immune petrification | |
| Saving Throws +2 | |
| Speed 6 | |
| Action Points 1 | |
| ⚡ Slam (standard; at-will) | |
| Reach 3; +20 vs. AC; 2d10 + 6 damage. | |
| ⚡ Double Attack (standard; at-will) | |
| The earth titan makes two slam attacks. | |
| 🗑 Hurl Rock (standard; at-will) | |
| Ranged 20; +18 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 6 damage, and the target is dazed (save ends). | |
| ⚡ Earth Shock (standard; encounter) | |
| Close burst 2; +18 vs. Fortitude; 2d10 + 6 damage, and the target is stunned until the end of the earth titan's next turn. | |
| Miss: Half damage, and the target is not stunned. | |
| Alignment Chaotic evil | Languages Giant, Primordial |
| Skills Athletics +19 | |
| Str 23 (+14) | Dex 8 (+7) Wis 12 (+9) |
| Con 22 (+14) | Int 11 (+8) Cha 13 (+9) |

| 2 Earth Giant Stalkers (G) | Level 14 Lurker |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Large elemental humanoid (giant) | XP 1,000 each |
| Initiative +13 | Senses Perception +14 |
| HP 108; Bloodied 54 | |
| AC 28; Fortitude 26, Reflex 24, Will 24 | |
| Speed 6, see also earth step | |
| ⚡ Slam (standard; at-will) | |
| Reach 2; +19 vs. AC; 2d6 + 4 damage. | |
| ⚡ Stone Merge (standard; at-will) | |
| The earth giant stalker shifts 3 squares and merges into the ground or a stone wall, disappearing from view. When the earth giant merges, it causes a thunderous shockwave. Close burst 1; +17 vs. Fortitude; enemies only; the target is dazed (save ends). | |
| ⚡ Deadly Eruption (standard; at-will) | |
| Can only be used if the earth giant used stone merge in the previous round. The earth giant stalker shifts 3 squares and erupts from the ground or a stone wall, rejoining the battle. Close burst 1; +17 vs. Reflex; 3d6 + 6 damage. | |
| Earth Step | |
| The earth giant ignores difficult terrain when it shifts. | |
| Alignment Chaotic evil | Languages Giant, Primordial |
| Skills Stealth +14 | |
| Str 18 (+11) | Dex 14 (+9) Wis 14 (+9) |
| Con 18 (+11) | Int 9 (+6) Cha 12 (+8) |

TACTICS

The earth giant soldiers move in to attack first, attempting to immediately set the pace of the battle. They fight side-by-side if possible, alternating between *thunder strike* attacks when that power is available.

The earth giant stalkers like to use *stone merge*, followed by *deadly eruption* to slip around the enemy and take them by surprise. They alternate this tactic, so that one stalker is always in play and one is always merged.

The earth giants fight for the glory and honor of the earth titan, battling to the death to protect Earthshaker and advance the plans of the giants.

| 2 Earth Giant Soldiers (S) | | Level 15 Soldier |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Large elemental humanoid (giant) | | XP 1,200 each |
| Initiative +12 | Senses Perception +14 | |
| HP 150; Bloodied 75 | | |
| AC 31; Fortitude 30, Reflex 27, Will 26 | | |
| Speed 6, see also <i>earth step</i> | | |
| ⚡ Thunder Maul (standard; at-will) ⚡ Thunder, Weapon | | |
| Reach 2; +22 vs. AC; 2d10 + 4 thunder damage. | | |
| ⚡ Thunder Strike (standard; recharge ⏏ ⏏) ⚡ Thunder, Weapon | | |
| Close burst 1; +20 vs. AC; 3d10 + 6 thunder damage, and the target is dazed (save ends). | | |
| Battle Focus (immediate reaction, when an enemy leaves an adjacent square; at-will) ⚡ Weapon | | |
| The earth giant soldier makes a melee basic attack against the enemy, even if the enemy is shifting. | | |
| Threatening Reach | | |
| The earth giant soldier can make opportunity attacks against all enemies within its reach (2 squares). | | |
| Earth Step | | |
| The earth giant ignores difficult terrain when it shifts. | | |
| Alignment Chaotic evil | | Languages Giant, Primordial |
| Skills Intimidate +13 | | |
| Str 20 (+12) | Dex 16 (+10) | Wis 14 (+9) |
| Con 22 (+13) | Int 12 (+8) | Cha 12 (+8) |

EARTHSHAKER

The earth titan Earthshaker rumbles when he speaks. Confident and cruel, he commands the hill giants and earth giants with solid direction and brute force. He has agreed to team up with the other titans for the express purpose of releasing Piranoth and claiming the power that the primordial will provide.

The earth titan uses *earth shock* when he can catch the majority of the adventurers in the burst. Otherwise, he makes double attacks each round, focusing on the strongest member of the enemy party.

Earthshaker is very condescending to “inferior creatures” such as the adventurers. He gloats about the alliance of giants and the imminent return of Piranoth. “At long last,” Earthshaker rumbles, “the giants shall have their revenge!”

DEVELOPMENT

Any creatures that survived the battle in **Encounter E6** (see page 60) descend the stairs to join this final battle in the hill giant stading. They begin arriving from the northern passage at the beginning of Round 3. First the hill giant grunts arrive. Then in Round 4, any surviving orc mercenaries arrive. Finally, in Round 5, the hill giant battlechief and the hill giant shaman show up to bolster the earth titan’s forces.

If the adventurers reduce the earth titan to 0 hit points, Earthshaker cries out in fury and then explodes into hundreds of chunks of earth and stone. All of the titans have prepared for such an event, and Earthshaker’s life force immediately flies to the

Elemental Chaos, where it flows into an obelisk so that he can be reconstituted later (see **Encounter P1** on page 154 for details).

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Dim light.

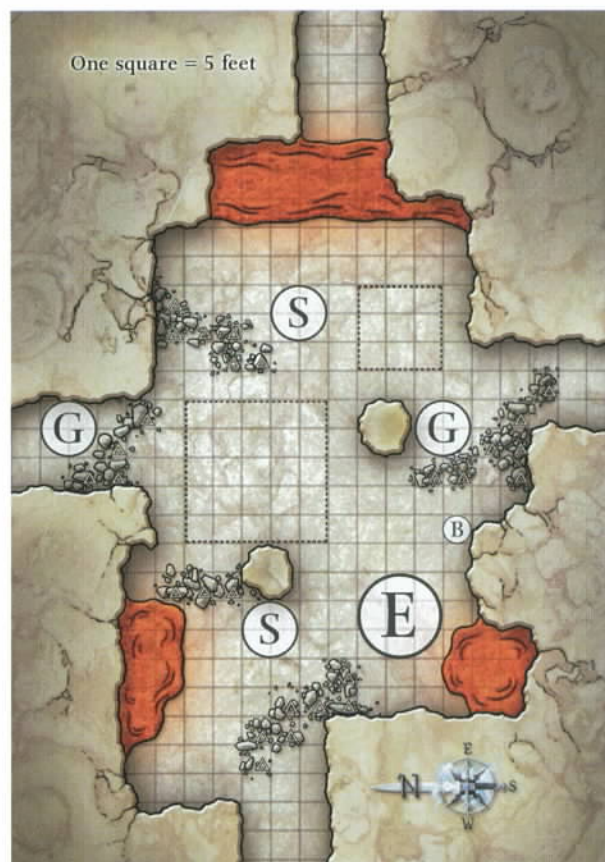
Columns: Columns of solid rock extend to the ceiling of the chamber some 40 feet overhead. The columns provide cover to any creatures adjacent to them.

Lava Flow: A river of lava flows from north to south in the eastern part of the chamber. Any creature that enters a square adjacent to the flow, or that starts its turn in such a square, takes 5 fire damage from the intense heat. Any creature that enters or starts its turn within the flow takes 25 fire damage.

Magma Pools: Two pools of bubbling magma by the north and south walls provide dim light to the chamber. Any creature that enters or starts its turn in a magma pool takes 15 fire damage.

Rubble: Sections of crumbled rock create difficult terrain in a number of locations within the chamber. A DC 25 Perception check reveals that there are 4,400 gp worth of small gems scattered among the broken rocks in the western section of rubble.

Ceiling Openings: The area above the dotted lines on the map correspond to the trap doors in the floor of the Throne Room. These openings are carved into the ceiling, reaching 10 feet up through the rock to the Throne Room 50 feet above.



ENCOUNTER T1: RIVER AMBUSH

Encounter Level 13 (4,200 XP)

SETUP

2 torrians (T)
2 torrian hurlers (H)
1 torrian guard (G)
River trap [T]

This encounter begins a series of three linked encounters to find the torrians and free them from their years of enforced bondage by the adamantite dragon and its demon master, Physandos. The adventurers can approach these encounters after completing Part One of the adventure (Encounters C1-C4, starting on page 28) and Encounter R1: Researching the Torrians, on page 40.

Once the adventurers learn that the torrians followed Physandos to the Sheltered Woods, far to the west of the Plains of Chaos, Obanar can use his magic to teleport them to that location. They must use the Argent Portal ritual to return to the city when they complete this series of encounters. Rowthar won't accompany them on this quest. He decides that he must stay in Argent to help Obanar and watch over the ancient guardian.

ARRIVING NEAR THE RIVER

Obanar sends the adventurers to a magic circle in the Sheltered Woods. They appear in the northwest corner of the map, inside an ancient magic circle that was much more active during the height of the Nerath empire. Don't place any of the torrians until the adventurers notice them or the torrians make themselves known. When the adventurers arrive, read:

You appear in a clearing in a thick and ancient forest, standing in the midst of an inscribed circle that looks to be as old as the tall trees around you. Somewhere nearby, you can hear the sound of rushing water, and you notice a swift-moving river to the east. Beyond the river, rising from behind a thick curtain of trees, you see the smoke of cooking fires wafting into the sky and hear the sounds of a settlement engaging in the business of the day.

Perception Check

DC 18: The river appears to be running fast and deep. It flows from north to south.

DC 25: You spot a large shape hiding in the shadows behind a nearby boulder.

Torrian Guard (G)

Large natural humanoid

Level 13 Soldier

XP 800

Initiative +11 Senses Perception +13

HP 132; Bloodied 66

AC 29; Fortitude 28, Reflex 26, Will 25

Speed 8

⚔ **Claw** (standard; at-will)

Reach 2; +20 vs. AC; 2d8 + 6 damage.

⚔ **Torrian's Challenge** (standard; recharge ⏏ ⏏)

Close burst 3; targets enemies; the torrian pulls each target 2 squares to an adjacent square and then makes a close attack against each adjacent enemy; +20 vs. AC; 1d10 + 6 damage.

⚔ **Rending Claw** (standard; encounter; recharges when first bloodied)

Reach 2; +20 vs. AC; 3d6 + 6 damage, and the target takes a -2 penalty to all defenses until the end of the torrian's next turn.

⚔ **Sudden Strike** (immediate reaction, when an enemy moves or shifts out of a square adjacent to the torrian; at-will)

The torrian makes an immediate claw attack against the triggering target.

Primal Focus (standard; encounter)

The torrian regains 10 hit points and gains a +2 bonus to all defenses until the end of its next turn.

Alignment Unaligned

Languages Common

Skills Athletics +15, Endurance +16, Intimidate +12

Str 18 (+10)

Dex 16 (+9)

Wis 14 (+8)

Con 20 (+11)

Int 10 (+6)

Cha 12 (+7)

TORRIAN WATCHERS

The torrians watching this approach to the settlement remain hidden until they can determine who the adventurers are and what they want. They have been under the influence of Physandos for so long that they are naturally suspicious and fearful of all strangers. If the adventurers perform any hostile actions, or if they become embroiled in the river trap, the torrians see this as a sign to defend themselves.

2 Torrian Hurlers (H)

Large natural humanoid

Level 13 Artillery

XP 800 each

Initiative +11 Senses Perception +13

HP 100; Bloodied 50

AC 25; Fortitude 25, Reflex 27, Will 25

Speed 8

⚔ **Claw** (standard; at-will)

Reach 2; +20 vs. AC; 1d8 + 6 damage.

⚔ **Torrian Sling** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

Ranged 10/20; +20 vs. AC; 1d8 + 8 damage.

⚔ **Double Shot** (standard; recharge ⏏ ⏏) ♦ **Weapon**

Ranged 10/20; targets one or two creatures; +20 vs. AC; 2d8 + 8 damage.

Primal Focus (standard; encounter)

The torrian regains 10 hit points and gains a +2 bonus to all defenses until the end of its next turn.

Alignment Unaligned

Languages Common

Skills Nature +13, Stealth +16

Str 15 (+8)

Dex 20 (+11)

Wis 15 (+8)

Con 16 (+9)

Int 18 (+10)

Cha 16 (+9)

| 2 Torrians (T) | Level 12 Lurker |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Large natural humanoid | XP 700 each |
| Initiative +14 | Senses Perception +13 |
| HP 94; Bloodied 47 | |
| AC 26; Fortitude 24, Reflex 25, Will 23 | |
| Speed 8 | |
| ⚔ Claw (standard; at-will) | |
| Reach 2; +17 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage. | |
| ⚔ Strike from Hiding (standard; the torrian must be invisible; recharge ⏏⏏⏏⏏) | |
| Reach 2; +15 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 3 damage, and the target is dazed (save ends). | |
| Stealthy Step (move; at-will) | |
| The torrian shifts 4 squares and becomes invisible until the end of its next turn. | |
| Primal Focus (standard; encounter) | |
| The torrian regains 10 hit points and gains a +2 bonus to all defenses until the end of its next turn. | |
| Combat Advantage | |
| The torrian deals an extra 1d8 damage against any target it has combat advantage against. | |
| Alignment Unaligned | Languages Common |
| Skills Stealth +15 | |
| Str 17 (+9) | Dex 18 (+10) Wis 15 (+8) |
| Con 16 (+9) | Int 10 (+6) Cha 12 (+7) |

River Trap Level 13 Obstacle

Trap XP 800

Suddenly a strip of ground just beyond the far edge of the river explodes into a curtain of dazzling energy, and you are pushed back into the deep, cold water of the rushing river.

Trap: When a character steps into or otherwise attempts to cross a trapped square, a wall of dazzling force shoots up and pushes the character into the fast-moving water.

Perception

◆ DC 25: You notice that the grass in a narrow strip of ground on the other side of the river appears to be lower, less overgrown than the grass around it.

Additional Skill: Arcana

◆ DC 23: You sense arcane energy stored within a narrow strip of ground on the other side of the river.

Trigger

When a creature enters or crosses through a trapped square, the wall of dazzling force springs up to a height of 15 feet and attacks.

Attack

Standard Action Melee 1

Target: All creatures in a trapped square

Attack: +20 vs. Reflex

Hit: 1d10 + 6 damage, and the target is pushed 4 squares.

Countermeasures

- ◆ A character can attempt to cross the river at a spot not covered by the trap.
- ◆ A character can attempt to disable the arcane trap from an adjacent square. This requires either a DC 23 Arcana check or a DC 18 Thievery check. A success disables one trapped square for one hour. A failure causes the trap to trigger, and it attacks the character that failed the disable attempt.

TACTICS

As soon as the adventurers perform a hostile action or set off the river trap, the torrians move to defend themselves. The torrians slip out of the shadows to strike from hiding, then use stealthy step to disappear.

The hurlers start out with *double shot*, making ranged attacks from the far side of the river. The guard waits for any intruders to get past the trap, and then he engages them with *rending claw*.

DEVELOPMENT

If the characters attempt to peacefully talk their way past the watchers, they discover that something isn't quite right with these torrians. Read:

"The whispers," one of the torrians says. "I hear them, brother," another responds. "Physandos says they must not be allowed to cross the river," says a third. "For Physandos, for Physandos, for Physandos," they all begin to chant as they move toward you.

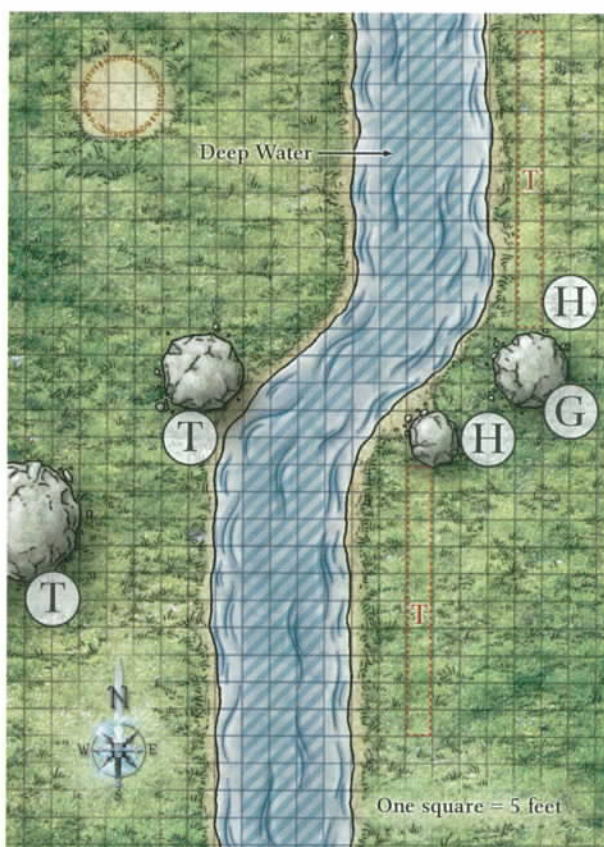
FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Bright light during the day, darkness at night.

Deep Water: Any creature that enters or starts its turn in the river's deep water is pushed 3 squares down the river (south) and is dazed (save ends). Creatures in the deep water must make a DC 18 Athletics check to swim at half their movement speed.

River: The river consists of shallow water (2 feet deep) and fast-moving deep water (10 feet deep). A character can attempt to leap across the river with a running jump and a DC 30 Athletics check. Otherwise, the character must swim across (see "Deep Water," above).

Trap: The two strips of trapped squares activate the river trap. See the stat block for more information.



ENCOUNTER T2: DEMON'S PLAYTHINGS

Encounter Level 14 (5,000 XP)

After the adventurers get past the river trap and the torrian watchers (see **Encounter T1** on page 64), they can follow the sounds to the torrian settlement hidden deep in the Shelter Woods. As the adventurers emerge from the forest into the settlement's clearing, read:

A small town has been constructed deep in this ancient forest. Made up of wood-framed buildings, thatched huts, and a couple of structures made of stone and brick, the place looks like any town or village you have ever visited. Except that all of the people of this town are torrians, and all of the torrians go about their work in complete silence.

Torrians cook. Torrians clean. Torrians make repairs on the town's buildings. Males, females, and children share in the various tasks equally, without any complaints or questions or even conversation.

One torrian notices you, and suddenly, as one, the entire town stops what it is doing and turns to look at you.

WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?

If the adventurers successfully completed **Encounter R1: Researching the Torrians** (see page 40), they learned where the torrians went after they left Argent; that the then-proctor of Argent, a torrian named Thrór, was enticed by gold and dark magic to take up service to a mysterious individual named Physandos; and that Thrór used a spell of influence to convince the rest of the torrians to follow him to the Sheltered Woods.

What they will figure out as this encounter unfolds is that Physandos is a demon loyal to Oubli-vae the demon queen that exists to manipulate and control other creatures. It has a good thing going here, with its mental claws firmly buried in the torrians and Urthix, the adamantite dragon it uses when it needs to inflict mayhem and destruction. This encounter takes the form of a skill challenge.

The nominal leader of this community is the torrian named Gruthow. He steps forward to meet the adventurers. This begins the skill challenge.

EXORCISING PHYSANDOS SKILL CHALLENGE

The adventurers engage in a skill challenge to learn what is truly going on in this torrian town, to coax Physandos from hiding, and to free the torrians from Physandos's demonic influence.

Each round represents time spent conversing with the torrians and the demonic entity. Each round, every member of the party must make a separate

check as directed by the challenge. Add up the number of successes and failures each round. More successes gains 1 success for the round, more failures earns 1 failure toward the completion of the challenge and indicates that Physandos is growing stronger.

Level: 14

Complexity: 3 (8 successes before 3 failures).

Skills Used in this Challenge: Arcana, Diplomacy, Endurance, Heal, Insight, Religion, Streetwise.

ROUND 1: INTRODUCTIONS

A large torrian with gray-tinged fur warily approaches, his dark eyes focused intently upon you. He appears to be timid, or maybe frightened, but not necessarily of you and your companions. "I am Gruthow," he says. "Who are you?"

Diplomacy (DC 11, standard action): The characters each make a check to introduce themselves in the friendliest, most nonthreatening manner possible.

If the group fails this round, Gruthow and the torrians initially don't like the adventurers. The next check made by each character receives a -2 penalty.

ROUND 2: THE PAST

Gruthow and the rest of the torrians listen to your words with great intensity. "Why have you come to this place?" he asks. "Why do you bring back memories of distant times?"

History (DC 11, standard action): The characters recount the glory of Argent and how the torrians forgot their oath and their honor when they abandoned the city of the champions.

If the group fails this round, the torrians grow agitated and confused. The next check made by each character receives a -2 penalty.

ROUND 3: READING THE CROWD

Gruthow and his people appear confused and conflicted. The situation isn't all that it appears to be.

Each character can choose to use either Insight or Streetwise this round.

Insight (DC 18, standard action): The characters get a sense that the torrians are deeply frightened, and not by the adventurers. The torrians in the crowd constantly shift their eyes to each side, as though looking for someone or waiting for something to happen. Gruthow chooses his words carefully, as though someone else was listening to this exchange.

Streetwise (DC 23, standard action): The characters use their understanding of life in a town or city to determine that the torrians are acting like a people who have been threatened, mistreated, and intimidated. In some ways, they behave as slaves might.

If the group fails this round, they have no real clue that things in this town are worse than they imagined. The next check made by each character receives a -2 penalty.

ROUND 4: MEETING PHYSANDOS

Gruthow suddenly grows tense, as though every muscle in his body has turned to steel. An uncharacteristic smile spreads across his lionid face, and he says in a higher, more shrill voice, "Champions, huh? They'll let anyone wear those dusty old cloaks these days, won't they? Tell me, is Old Obanar, that weakling wizard, still alive?"

Diplomacy (DC 18, standard action): The characters try to keep Gruthow talking as they attempt to figure out what is actually going on here.

If the group succeeds this round, Physandos introduces itself to the adventurers, speaking through Gruthow. "I am Physandos, and these are my happy followers. Perhaps you'd care to join us? I could have a lot of fun with the likes of you."

If the group fails this round, Physandos feels insulted and grows angry. "I am Physandos! You dare enter my domain? You dare speak to my property? The audacity!" Physandos sends a wave of dark energy into the adventurers. Each character must succeed on a DC 18 Endurance check or lose 1 healing surge.

ROUND 5: WHAT IS PHYSANDOS?

The voice that has identified itself as Physandos jumps from torrian to torrian as it talks to you. First it emerges from Gruthow, then from a torrian female to your right, then from a torrian child three rows back. "You have come to my home, threatened to take my property, and you expect me to welcome you? No, no, that is not the way I work, you arrogant gnats! Lay down your weapons, listen to my whispers, and perhaps you will see that the life I offer is not so terrible."

Each character can choose to use either Arcana or Insight this round.

Arcana (DC 18, standard action): The characters use their knowledge of Arcana to identify what kind of creature Physandos might be. A success, in addition to counting toward the completion of the challenge, identifies Physandos as a demon of some kind.

Insight (DC 18, standard action): The characters use intuition to get a better sense of Physandos. A success, in addition to counting toward the completion of the challenge, recognizes that Physandos is manipulative, possessive, evil, and possibly insane.

If the group fails this round, Physandos sends out a wave of dark energy to punish them for attempting to learn its secrets. Each character must succeed on a DC 18 Endurance check or lose 1 healing surge.

The characters must repeat this round if they fail, trying to determine what Physandos is until they succeed or gain 3 failures to end the challenge.

ROUNDS 6-10: FIGHTING PHYSANDOS

Physandos, some kind of manipulative and maybe even possessing demon, has insinuated itself into these torrians. They are possessions to the demon, playthings that it amuses itself with. And it won't relinquish control easily.

"The torrians are mine! I will destroy them before I let you release them from my will! Hear me well and understand, arrogant gnats, I am Physandos, and I am power beyond your feeble understanding!"

Each of the remaining rounds in the challenge, the characters work together to oppose Physandos's will and force the demon to abandon the torrians. This requires each character to use Diplomacy, Heal, or Religion each round.

Diplomacy (DC 23, standard action): The characters reach out to the torrians and try to convince them to resist Physandos's will.

Heal (DC 18, standard action): The characters use the positive energy of the healing arts to confound and hurt Physandos.

Religion (DC 18, standard action): The characters use religious ceremony and faith to drive off the demon.

If the group succeeds in one of these rounds, Physandos experiences pain and anguish as the demon is slowly expelled from the torrians. "You hurt me! Why would you want to hurt me like that? How dare you hurt me like that! I am Physandos!"

If the group fails in one of these rounds, Physandos insults the characters and hurls dark energy at them. "I am Physandos! Your weakness is evident! You are not worthy to even bow in my presence, let alone try to challenge me. I would not even accept you as a blood sacrifice, you pathetic dredges!" Physandos sends a wave of dark energy into the adventurers. Each character must succeed on a DC 18 Endurance check or lose 1 healing surge.

Success: If the characters earn 8 successes, they reveal Physandos for what it truly is. Read:

A dark cloud of malevolence rises out of the collected torrians and roils above them. "You hurt me!" cries the voice of Physandos from the dark cloud. "I shall never forget this injury, this insult! I shall find you one day, and I shall make you pay!" With that, the cloud drifts north, into the hills deeper within the forest.

The torrians come out of their trance as Physandos flees to Urthix's cave to heal itself and plan revenge.

Failure: If the characters get 3 failures, Physandos grows in power and confidence. Read:

A dark cloud of malevolence rises out of the collected torrians and roils above them. "You are pitiful creatures," Physandos says from the depths of the cloud. "Let us finish this! I await you in Urthix's cave!" With that, the cloud drifts north, toward the distant hills.

The torrians come out of their trance, but they remain truly terrified. "The demon has gone to the cave," Gruthow says. "Physandos goes to wake Urthix!"

Succeed or fail, the adventurers must proceed to **Encounter T3: Urthix's Cave** on page 68.

ENCOUNTER T3: URTHIX'S CAVE

Encounter Level 17 (8,000 XP)

SETUP

Urthix, adult adamantine dragon (A)
Physandos, demon manipulator (D)
8 demonic manifestations (M)

The final battle against Physandos to free the torrians takes place in and around a cave to the north of the settlement. How this encounter begins depends on whether or not the adventurers succeeded or failed at the skill challenge in **Encounter T2** (see page 66).

SKILL CHALLENGE SUCCESS

If the adventurers successfully completed the skill challenge, Physandos is hurt and driven out of the torrians. It flees to this cave to heal and plan its revenge. In this case, use the statistics for Physandos as they are presented here. Note that the demon starts this encounter bloodied (224 hp) due to the characters' victory in the skill challenge.

SKILL CHALLENGE FAILURE

If the adventurers failed the skill challenge, Physandos gains power and confidence for the coming battle. The demon purposefully withdraws from the torrians to return to its physical form, which is guarded by the enthralled adamantine dragon. With the help of the dragon and its newfound confidence, it plans to totally destroy the adventurers.

The demon gains a +2 bonus to all defenses, a +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls, and an extra action point to use in the battle. Its demonic manifestations gain a +2 bonus to all defenses, and a +2 bonus to attack rolls and damage.

As the adventurers approach the cave, read:

A dark maw in the hillside ahead reeks of despair and desolation. The place just feels ... wrong ... and it isn't just because of the foul smell emerging from the darkness.

At the start of this encounter, whether the adventurers succeeded or failed the skill challenge, Physandos and its allies hide within the utter darkness of the cave. They don't emerge from the cave, instead preferring to wait for the adventurers to come to them.

Inside the cave, Physandos has returned to its physical form and hides among the bones that the adamantine dragon uses as a nest. The demon has positioned its demonic manifestations on the dark ceiling so that they can attack from hiding.

Adult Adamantine Dragon (A) **Level 14 Solo Soldier**
Large natural magical beast (dragon) XP 5,000

Initiative +14 Senses Perception +16; darkvision

HP 564; Bloodied 282; see also bloodied breath

AC 30; Fortitude 28, Reflex 27, Will 26

Resist 20 thunder

Saving Throws +5

Speed 8, fly 10 (hover), overland flight 15

Action Points 2

⬇ **Bite** (standard; at-will)

Reach 2; +19 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 6 damage, and ongoing 5 damage (save ends).

⬇ **Claw** (standard; at-will)

Reach 2; +19 vs. Reflex; 1d10 + 6 damage.

⬇ **Draconic Fury** (standard; at-will)

The adult adamantine dragon makes three claw attacks and then makes a bite attack against a different target.

⬇ **Wing Buffet** (immediate reaction, when an enemy enters or leaves an adjacent square; at-will)

Reach 2; +19 vs. Fortitude; 1d8 + 6 damage, and the target is knocked prone.

⬇ **Breath Weapon** (standard; recharge ⓧ ⓧ) ⬇ **Thunder**

Close blast 5; +17 vs. Fortitude; 2d10 + 6 thunder damage, and the target is knocked prone. Miss: Half damage. Effect: At the start of the adult adamantine dragon's next turn, it gives a thunderous roar: close burst 3; no attack roll; 15 thunder damage.

⬇ **Bloodied Breath** (free, when first bloodied; encounter)

Breath weapon recharges, and the adult adamantine dragon uses it.

⬇ **Frightful Presence** (standard; encounter) ⬇ **Fear**

Close burst 5; targets enemies; +17 vs. Will; the target is stunned until the end of the adult adamantine dragon's next turn. Aftereffect: The target takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls (save ends).

Alignment Unaligned Languages Common, Draconic
Skills Insight +15, Intimidate +13

Str 23 (+13) Dex 21 (+12) Wis 18 (+11)

Con 21 (+12) Int 11 (+7) Cha 12 (+8)

8 Demonic Manifestations (M) **Level 11 Minion**
Medium elemental humanoid (demon) XP 0

Initiative +12 Senses Perception +6; darkvision

HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.

AC 25; Fortitude 23, Reflex 23, Will 21

Speed 4, fly 8

⬇ **Claws** (standard; at-will)

+16 vs. AC; 9 damage.

⬇ **Sudden Strike** (standard; encounter)

The manifestation flies up to 8 squares, avoiding opportunity attacks along the way. It attacks once at any time during its movement; +15 vs. Reflex; 9 damage.

⬇ **Demonic Persuasion** (standard; encounter)

Close burst 3; targets enemies; +14 vs. Will; the target is pulled 2 squares toward the manifestation. Then the manifestation explodes, dealing 9 damage to every enemy that is adjacent to it. This destroys the manifestation.

Alignment Chaotic evil Languages —

Str 16 (+8) Dex 17 (+8) Wis 13 (+6)

Con 14 (+7) Int 2 (+1) Cha 12 (+6)

Demon Manipulator (D) **Level 11 Solo Controller**
Medium elemental humanoid (demon) XP 3,000

Initiative +9 Senses Perception +15; darkvision
HP 448; Bloodied 224
AC 25; Fortitude 23, Reflex 24, Will 26
Resist 15 fire, 15 radiant
Saving Throws +5
Speed 6

Action Points 2

① **Claws** (standard; at-will)

+16 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage.

☞ **Ray of Manipulation** (standard; at-will)

Ranged 20; +15 vs. Will; 1d8 + 5 damage, and the target is dominated (save ends).

☞ **Deceptive Attack** (standard; at-will)

The demon manipulator makes either two claw attacks or two ray of manipulation attacks.

✱ **Whispers of Manipulation** (standard; at-will)

Area burst 1 within 10; +13 vs. Will; 2d6 + 5 damage, and the target slides 3 squares and is dazed (save ends).

◀ **Demonic Suggestion** (standard; at-will)

Close blast 5; targets enemies; +13 vs. Will; 1d8 + 5 damage, and the target is pushed 2 squares and immobilized (save ends).

Demonic Manifestation (minor, 1/round, when bloodied only; recharge [E])

The demon manipulator spawns a demonic manifestation in an adjacent square.

Alignment Chaotic evil **Languages** Abyssal, Common

Skills Arcana +13, Bluff +16, Insight +15, Streetwise +16

Str 15 (+7) **Dex** 18 (+9) **Wis** 21 (+10)

Con 16 (+8) **Int** 16 (+8) **Cha** 23 (+11)

When the characters enter the cave and can see, read:

The stench grows worse the closer you get to the cave's entrance. It's a mix of sweat and fear and rotting meat. A pile of bones, mostly picked clean, carpets the cave floor just inside the entrance. The bones appear to come from animals and humanoids alike. In the darkness beyond, the cave seems to stretch forever into the depths beneath the hill.

Perception Check

DC 20: You have the sense that you are being watched, and you see something large move atop the pile of bones beyond the column of stone ahead of you.

DC 25: Something moves in the darkness overhead.

TACTICS

The adamantine dragon, Urthix, fell under Physandos's control almost two hundred years ago. It leaps out of the shadows, uses *frightful presence*, then spends an action point to unleash its *breath weapon* on as many enemy targets as possible. It cannot break the demon's hold on its own, so it fights to the death. If the demon dies first, it is freed and immediately stops attacking.

The demon manipulator hangs back, using ranged attacks to pepper the party. Once it becomes bloodied, it adds new demonic manifestations to the battle as often as possible. Whether overconfident or hurt and angry, Physandos fights to the death to keep control of the dragon and the torrians.

The demonic manifestations try to get close to multiple targets and use *demonic persuasion*. If it can't target multiple enemies, it uses *sudden strike*.

DEVELOPMENT

If the characters defeat Physandos, Urthix is freed from the demon's control and influence. It immediately stops fighting and asks to parley with the adventurers. If the adventurers agree, the dragon thanks them for freeing it and offers them the contents of its meager treasure horde (see below). If they refuse, the dragon fights to the death.

After the battle, the torrians also thank the adventurers and agree to return to Argent. Gruthow and two other influential torrians follow the adventurers through their Argent Portal ritual, while the rest of the clan sets out to make the trip in a more conventional manner. They load up carts and wagons, striking out on foot for the journey back to Argent.

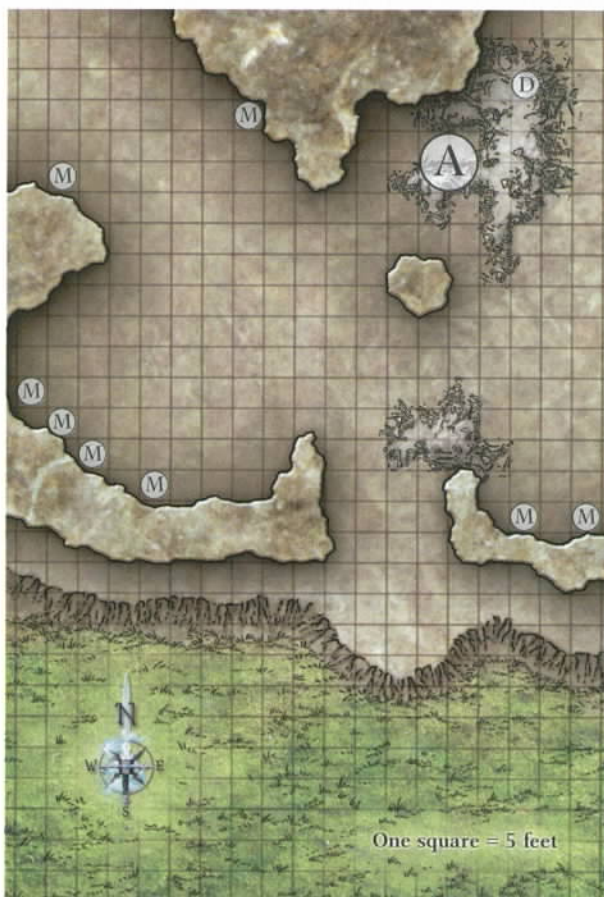
FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Bright light outside the cave, darkness inside the cave.

Bones: The piles of bones are difficult terrain.

Stone Column: A column of stone extends from the floor of the cave to the ceiling some 30 feet overhead. It provides cover to any creature adjacent to it.

Treasure: Gems and gold scattered among the larger bone pile total 9,300 gp. If the characters search the bone pile and make a DC 25 Perception check, they also discover two *potions of vitality*.



ENCOUNTER II: INTO THE PAST

Encounter Level 15 (6,000 XP)

After the adventurers complete **Encounter R2: Researching the Sky Metal**, on page 42, Obanar can use the dark-blue gem to send them 600 years into the past to collect the sky metal necessary to craft the *Implements of Argent*. One piece is required for each item they wish to have crafted for them.

THE RITUAL

Obanar gestures for the adventurers to take their places within the magic circle. He begins the ritual, using the blue gem as a focus. Half way through the ritual, the gem begins to glow. Obanar gestures, and the gem floats to one of the characters. Read:

"Remember that the gem shall guide you to where the sky metal is stored," Obanar explains. "When you are ready, use the gem as the focus of your Argent Portal ritual, and you shall return here, to this time, within minutes of when you departed. But be warned, the past is not a place for you to linger, and you shall not be able to range beyond the place where the sky metal waits. Defend yourselves, but do not try to change that which has already occurred."

With those last words of wisdom, Obanar completes the ritual, and the circle around you flares with arcane brilliance. When the light fades, you find yourself standing in a grand hallway lined with statues.

SETUP

2 warforged knights (K)
2 warforged destroyers (D)
2 warforged flamepriests (F)
Lightning traps [T]

This is the manor house of the wizard Acererak, located somewhere in the heart of the empire of Bael-Turath, 600 years before the current age. The adventurers have traveled here by magic, with the help of an ancient dark-blue gem that is somehow in tune with the rare sky metal they have come to find.

Acererak is not yet evil or undead, though the adventurers will see evidence of the demi-lich he is destined to become during their visit to this place. The wizard's manor house is protected by traps and guardians, and the adventurers will need to overcome these to recover the sky metal necessary to create the magic items that Obanar has promised them.

Note that Acererak cannot be convinced to give up his sky metal. He covets rare things, such as this special material, and he has no desire to negotiate with thieves from some distant future.

The warforged mercenaries in Acererak's employ hide among the statues in this grand hall. Unless the adventurers notice them, the warforged remain hidden until one of the lightning traps are triggered.

Perception Check

DC 26: One of the statues turns slightly as you walk by, as though adjusting itself to watch you.

Lightning Trap

Trap

Level 14 Obstacle

XP 1,000

The floor ahead features glowing blue tiles. When you make the wrong step, a storm of lightning fills the room.

Trap: When a character enters a trapped square, bolts of lightning spread out in a burst.

Perception

◆ **DC 23:** You notice which part of the floor is trapped.

Trigger

When a creature enters or begins its turn in a trapped square, lightning attacks from that square.

Attack

Standard Action Close burst 1

Target: All creatures in burst

Attack: +17 vs. Fortitude

Hit: 2d8 + 6 lightning damage, and the target is dazed (save ends). On a critical hit, the target is stunned (save ends).

Miss: Half damage, and the target is not dazed.

Countermeasures

◆ An adjacent character can disable a tile (DC 25 Thievery check).

2 Warforged Flamepriests (F)

Level 13 Controller

Medium natural humanoid (living construct)

XP 800 each

Initiative +7

Senses Perception +11

HP 129; **Bloodied** 64

AC 27; **Fortitude** 25, **Reflex** 25, **Will** 27

Saving Throws +2 against ongoing damage

Speed 5

⚔ **Fiery Warhammer** (standard; at-will) ◆ **Fire, Weapon**

+18 vs. AC; 1d10 + 6 damage plus 1d8 fire damage, and the target takes a -2 penalty to AC until the end of the warforged flamepriest's next turn.

⚔ **Heat of Battle** (standard; recharge ⏏ ⏏ ⏏) ◆ **Fire, Weapon**

+18 vs. AC; 1d10 + 6 damage plus 1d8 fire damage, and ongoing 5 fire damage until the target ends its turn in a space that isn't adjacent to the warforged flamepriest.

⚔ **Mending Flash Fire** (standard; encounter) ◆ **Fire, Implement**

Close burst 5; targets enemies; +17 vs. Reflex; 1d8 + 6 fire damage. **Effect:** The warforged flamepriest and each ally within the burst gain 10 temporary hit points. Each warforged ally within the burst uses *warforged resolve* as an immediate reaction.

⚔ **Blunted Mind** (standard; encounter) ◆ **Implement, Psychic**

Area burst 3 within 10; targets enemies; +17 vs. Will; 2d8 + 6 psychic damage, and the target takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls and a -4 penalty to damage rolls (save ends both).

Warforged Resolve (minor; encounter) ◆ **Healing**

The warforged flamepriest gains 9 temporary hit points and can make a saving throw against an ongoing damage effect. If it uses this power while bloodied, it also regains 9 hit points.

Alignment Unaligned

Languages Common

Skills Heal +16, Religion +14

Str 15 (+8)

Dex 12 (+7)

Wis 20 (+11)

Con 17 (+9)

Int 17 (+9)

Cha 14 (+8)

Equipment chainmail, warhammer, holy symbol

| 2 Warforged Destroyers (D) | | Level 14 Artillery |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------------|
| Medium natural humanoid (living construct) | | XP 1,000 each |
| Initiative +11 Senses Perception +9 | | |
| HP 105; Bloodied 52 | | |
| AC 26; Fortitude 26, Reflex 27, Will 25 | | |
| Saving Throws +2 against ongoing damage | | |
| Speed 6 | | |
| ⚔ Quarterstaff (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | | |
| +21 vs. AC; 1d8 + 8 damage. | | |
| ⚡ Rumble Staff (standard; encounter) ♦ Force, Implement | | |
| +19 vs. Fortitude; 2d8 + 6 force damage, and the target is pushed 2 squares and knocked prone. | | |
| ⚡ Collision Bolt (standard; encounter) ♦ Force, Implement | | |
| Ranged 10; +19 vs. Fortitude; 1d8 + 6 force damage, and the warforged destroyer makes a secondary attack against one or two targets within 3 squares of the primary target. <i>Secondary Attack</i> : +19 vs. Fortitude; 1d8 + 6 force damage, and the destroyer slides the target 3 squares toward the primary target. <i>Effect</i> : After all attacks are resolved, any target hit by an attack is knocked prone if it is adjacent to another target. | | |
| ⚡ Thunder Orb (standard; at-will) ♦ Implement, Thunder | | |
| Ranged 10; +19 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 6 thunder damage, and the warforger destroyer pushes the target 2 squares. | | |
| 💣 Destruction Sphere (standard; encounter) ♦ Implement, Thunder | | |
| Area burst 3 within 10; +18 vs. Reflex; 3d8 + 6 thunder damage, and the target is knocked prone. <i>Miss</i> : Half damage. | | |
| Warforged Resolve (minor; encounter) ♦ Healing | | |
| The warforged destroyer gains 9 temporary hit points and can make a saving throw against an ongoing damage effect. If it uses this power while bloodied, it also regains 9 hit points. | | |
| Alignment Unaligned Languages Common | | |
| Skills Arcana +15, Nature +14, Stealth +16 | | |
| Str 17 (+10) | Dex 18 (+11) | Wis 15 (+9) |
| Con 15 (+9) | Int 16 (+10) | Cha 12 (+8) |
| Equipment robes, quarterstaff | | |

| 2 Warforged Knights (K) | | Level 12 Soldier |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|------------------|
| Medium natural humanoid (living construct) | | XP 700 each |
| Initiative +11 Senses Perception +10 | | |
| HP 122; Bloodied 61; see also warforged resolve | | |
| AC 28; Fortitude 26, Reflex 24, Will 25 | | |
| Saving Throws +2 against ongoing damage | | |
| Speed 5 | | |
| ⚔ Longsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | | |
| +19 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage, and the target is marked until the end of the warforged knight's next turn; see also <i>battlefield tactics</i> . | | |
| ⚡ Knight's Honor (standard; recharge ⚡⚡⚡⚡⚡⚡) ♦ Weapon | | |
| Close burst 1; targets enemies; +19 vs. AC; 2d8 + 5 damage, and ongoing 5 damage until the target attacks the warforged knight. | | |
| Battlefield Tactics | | |
| The warforged knight gains a +2 bonus to melee attacks if it has an ally adjacent to the target. | | |
| Warforged Resolve (minor; encounter) ♦ Healing | | |
| The warforged knight gains 10 temporary hit points and can make a saving throw against an ongoing damage effect. If it uses this power while bloodied, it also regains 10 hit points. | | |
| Alignment Unaligned Languages Common | | |
| Skills Endurance +14, Intimidate +12 | | |
| Str 20 (+11) | Dex 16 (+9) | Wis 18 (+10) |
| Con 18 (+10) | Int 10 (+6) | Cha 12 (+7) |
| Equipment plate armor, heavy shield, longsword | | |

TACTICS

The warforged mercenaries engage the intruders when they are spotted or when a character enters a secret room or sets off a lightning trap. They have no interest in rushing off to warn anyone; they know that Acererak sees everything that occurs within the manor. The knights move in to engage targets up close, as do the flamepriests. The destroyers hang back to make ranged attacks as long as that opportunity is available. They fight to the death.

DEVELOPMENT

When the adventurers move into the area between the secret doors, the gem glows brightly and the character carrying it feels it tug to either side of the corridor.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

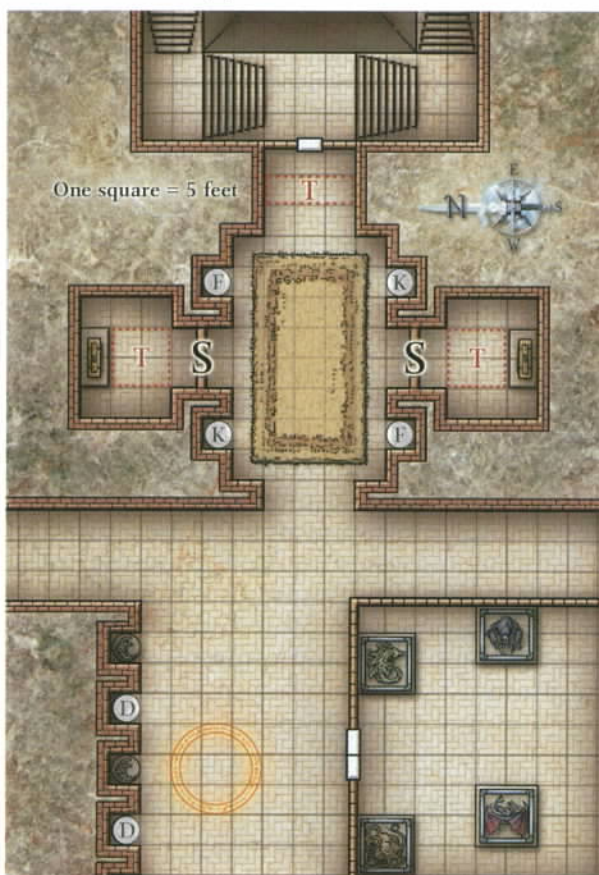
Illumination: Bright light.

Lightning Traps: Three lightning traps defend this area; one in each secret room and one in front of the eastern door.

Magic Circle: Inscribed in the floor, this is where the adventurers appear when they arrive.

Secret Rooms: A DC 23 Perception check is needed to spot a secret door, and a DC 18 Thievery check opens one. One piece of sky metal sits on a pedestal in each room.

Statues: The alcoves contain statues of warforged heroes. The alcoves where the actual warforged hide are otherwise empty.



ENCOUNTER 12: WIZARD'S WORKSHOP

Encounter Level 14 (5,600 XP)

SETUP

2 boneclaws (B)

3 skeletal arcane guardians (S)

This level of Acererak's tower is divided between two encounters: **Encounter I2** and **Encounter I3**. This encounter features events and creatures in the northern rooms and the corridor beyond. The following encounter deals with the southern rooms.

The stairs wind around an open tower that rises 40 feet above and drops 40 feet below. The gem urges its wielder upward, and the stairs lead to a small room above. When the adventurers reach this room, read:

The stairs end in a small room. Stone gargoyles stand to either side of the head of the stairs, and a set of closed double doors are on the opposite wall. The gem glows brighter as you approach the doors. Suddenly a mouth appears in the center of the doors, and a booming voice echoes through the room, "You have invaded the home of the wizard Acererak! Proceed in this direction at your own peril!"

LOCKED DOOR

The double doors are locked. A character can attempt to unlock the doors with a DC 25 Thievery check, or try to bash open the doors with a DC 23 Strength check. Each time a check fails, or if the adventurers try to open the door before they realize that it is locked, a trap in the form of the stone gargoyles is triggered.

Stone Gargoyle Trap: Ranged 5, targets character that triggered the trap; +19 vs. Reflex; 1d10 + 6 fire damage.

The trap can be disabled by an adjacent character, DC 18 Thievery check.

WORKSHOP

When the adventurers open the door, read:

The large room ahead of you features tall windows along the north and east walls. Long tables filled with all kinds of tools and vials and jars and papers are set up neatly within. Standing in the middle of the room, near the north and south walls, are two large, skeletal humanoids with long, skewer-like claws. They move to intercept you as the door swings wide.

Acererak, who has recently become fascinated with the art of necromancy, has placed these undead guardians in his workshop to deal with any intruders.

2 Boneclaws (B)

Level 14 Soldier

Large shadow animate (undead)

XP 1,000 each

Initiative +15

Senses Perception +13; darkvision

HP 136; Bloodied 68; see also necrotic pulse

AC 30; Fortitude 24, Reflex 27, Will 25

Immune disease, poison; Resist 20 necrotic; Vulnerable 5 radiant

Speed 8

⊕ **Claw** (standard; at-will)

Reach 3; +20 vs. AC; 1d12 + 6 damage.

⚡ **Necrotic Pulse** (free, when first bloodied; encounter) ⚡

Healing, Necrotic

Close burst 10; undead allies in the burst regain 10 hit points, and enemies in the burst take 10 necrotic damage.

Relentless Opportunist

If the boneclaw hits with an opportunity attack, it can make another opportunity attack against the same target during the current turn.

Threatening Reach

The boneclaw can make opportunity attacks against all enemies within its reach (3 squares).

Alignment Evil

Languages Common

Skills Intimidate +16, Stealth +18

Str 17 (+10)

Dex 23 (+13)

Wis 12 (+8)

Con 16 (+10)

Int 10 (+7)

Cha 18 (+11)

3 Skeletal Arcane Guardians (S)

Level 15 Brute

Medium natural animate (undead)

XP 1,200 each

Initiative +12

Senses Perception +15; darkvision

HP 176; Bloodied 88

AC 27; Fortitude 27, Reflex 27, Will 25

Immune disease, poison; Resist 10 necrotic;

Vulnerable 10 radiant

Speed 8

⊕ **Twin Scimitar Strike** (standard; at-will) ⚡ **Weapon**

The skeletal arcane guardian makes two scimitar attacks against the same target: +18 vs. AC; 1d10 + 6 damage (crit 1d10 + 16). This also holds true for opportunity attacks.

⚡ **Cascade of Steel** (standard; at-will) ⚡ **Weapon**

The skeletal arcane guardian makes two twin scimitar strike attacks (four scimitar attacks total).

⚡ **Arcane Assassin** (immediate reaction; when an enemy uses an arcane power; at-will) ⚡ **Weapon**

The skeletal arcane guardian shifts 8 squares and makes a melee basic attack against the triggering target.

⚡ **Sudden Strike** (immediate reaction, when an adjacent enemy shifts; at-will) ⚡ **Weapon**

The skeletal arcane guardian makes a melee basic attack against the enemy.

Alignment Unaligned

Languages —

Str 20 (+12)

Dex 20 (+12)

Wis 16 (+10)

Con 16 (+10)

Int 3 (+3)

Cha 3 (+3)

Equipment 4 scimitars

TACTICS

The boneclaws move to intercept and engage the intruders as close to the doorway they entered as possible. They stop just far enough into the room so that the potential for the skeletal guardians to slip up behind and set up flanks is available. The boneclaws prefer to take advantage of their long reach. As a

boneclaw gets close to being bloodied, it begins to position itself to best use *necrotic pulse* to aid its allies and harm its foes.

The skeletal guardians begin the encounter in the northwest section of the workshop. They slide toward the sound of battle, ready to engage the intruders from behind. The skeletal guardians use *cascade of steel* most of the time, piling attacks and damage on one target at a time. As soon as an arcane character uses an arcane power, however, the guardians utilize *arcane assassin* to move and attack the caster. Thereafter, they concentrate on destroying the intruding arcane character.

These undead creatures fight until they are destroyed, and they eagerly follow the adventurers out of the workshop if they haven't been defeated first.

DEVELOPMENT

The gem glows brightly if it is carried near the southern door, and it gently tugs the character who possesses it toward the southwestern portion of this level of the tower.

Spiked Floor

Trap

Level 16 Lurker

XP 1,400

Spikes burst from the floor, striking upward with deadly precision.

Trap: When a character enters a trapped square, spikes burst from the floor.

Perception

◆ DC 25: You notice which part of the floor is trapped.

Trigger

When a creature enters a trapped square, spikes shoot up from that square.

Attack

Standard Action **Melee 1**

Target: Creature in trapped square

Attack: +19 vs. Reflex

Hit: 1d10 + 7 damage, and ongoing 10 poison damage and slowed (save ends both).

Countermeasures

◆ An adjacent character can disable the trap (DC 20 Thievery check).

Fire Cage

Trap

Level 16 Lurker

XP 1,400

Bars of fire flare up around you.

Trap: When a character enters a trapped square, a cage of fire forms around him.

Perception

◆ DC 25: You notice strange sigils upon the floor.

Trigger

When a creature enters a trapped square, a fire cage forms.

Attack

Standard Action **Melee 1**

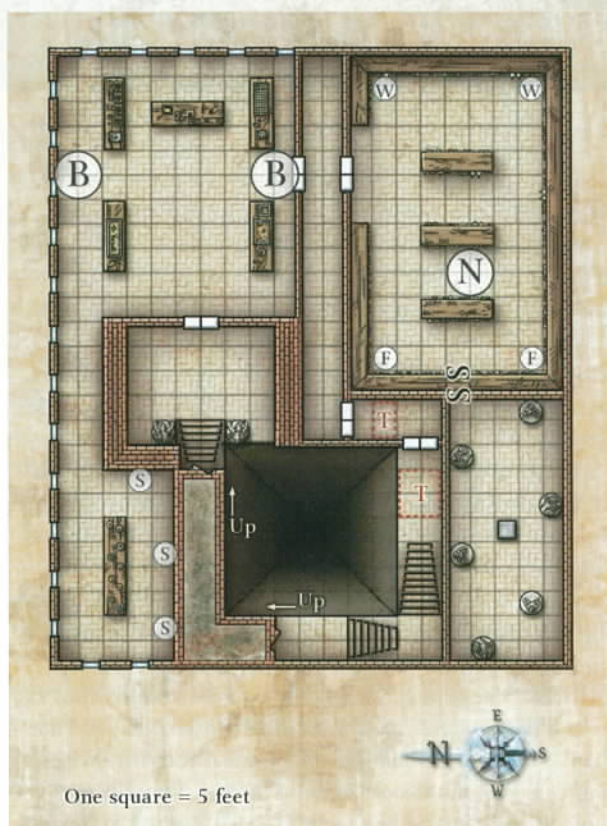
Target: Creature in trapped square

Attack: +19 vs. Fortitude

Hit: 1d10 + 7 fire damage, ongoing 10 fire damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends both).

Countermeasures

◆ An adjacent character can disable the sigils (DC 20 Thievery check or DC 25 Arcana check).



FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Bright light.

Central Hall: The southern door of the workshop leads to a long central corridor with two sets of double doors along its southern wall.

The doors opposite the workshop doors lead to the wizard's library (see **Encounter 13** on page 74).

The western doors lead to the tower stairs that provide access to the top level of the tower. Two traps, a spiked floor and a fire cage, protect this passage from unauthorized visitors.

The stairs lead up to **Encounter 14** on page 76.

Windows: Tall, evenly spaced windows filled with clear glass cover the north, east, and west walls of the workshop. From this height in the tower, about 40 feet up, the windows look out upon a Bael-Turath city with amazing spires and shining edifices that are at once familiar and totally alien. The city appears to be alive with humans, primarily, but also with dwarves, elves, and halflings, among others.

Workshop: The wizard's workshop fills the northern portion of this level of Acererak's tower. Tables in the larger, eastern portion of the room are filled with sheets of parchment, ink bottles and quills, arcane components, jars and bottles (some filled with liquids, some empty), and various tools. The table located in the western section of the room holds the cadaver of a troll, the body in the midst of a complicated dissection.

If the adventurers spend 10 minutes searching the room, they recover 1,800 gp worth of residuum.

ENCOUNTER 13: WIZARD'S LIBRARY

Encounter Level 17 (8,400 XP)

SETUP

- 2 sword wraiths (W)
- 1 bone naga (N)
- 2 demonic flameskulls (F)

This encounter features events and creatures in the southern rooms of this level. The following encounter deals with the corridor and the southern rooms.

The double doors to the library are adorned with an ornate letter "A" rendered in Old Common. The doors are neither locked nor trapped. The creatures within the room are not immediately visible; don't place the monsters until the PCs can see them. When the adventurers open the doors to the library, read:

The dark-blue gem glows brightly and the now-familiar tug of its magic nudges you toward the southwest. Beyond the doors, you see a grand library, its walls covered in shelves packed with bound books and scroll cases. Three large tables in the center of the room are each covered with what appears to be the model of some vast complex, complete with tiny rooms, staircases, and other recognizable features.

Perception Check

DC 22: A small skull sits atop a shelf on the west wall. The hollows of its eye sockets glow with tiny flames.

DC 25: A pile of bones fills the floor between the two far tables. A slight rattle reverberates from among the bones.

| Bone Naga (N) | Level 16 Elite Controller |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Large immortal magical beast (undead) | XP 2,800 |
| Initiative +11 | Senses Perception +13; darkvision |
| Death Rattle (Necrotic) aura 2; enemies that start their turns in the aura are dazed. | |
| HP 328; Bloodied 164 | |
| AC 32; Fortitude 32, Reflex 28, Will 29 | |
| Immune disease, poison; Resist 20 necrotic; | |
| Vulnerable 10 radiant | |
| Saving Throws +2 | |
| Speed 7 | |
| Action Points 1 | |
| ④ Bite (standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic | |
| Reach 2; +20 vs. AC; 2d4 + 6 damage, and ongoing 5 necrotic damage (save ends). Aftereffect: The target is weakened (save ends). | |
| ◀ Death Sway (standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic | |
| Close burst 3; blind creatures are immune; +21 vs. Will; the target is dazed (save ends). If the target is already dazed, it takes 2d6 + 6 necrotic damage instead. | |
| Alignment Unaligned | Languages Common, Draconic, Supernal |
| Skills Arcana +18, History +18, Insight +18, Religion +18 | |
| Str 22 (+14) | Dex 16 (+11) Wis 20 (+13) |
| Con 28 (+17) | Int 20 (+13) Cha 22 (+14) |

LIBRARY DEFENDERS

The bone naga starts curled up on the floor between two tables. The demonic flameskulls sit upon high shelves on the western wall. The sword wraiths are hidden within the wall, insubstantial. They phase into the room on their turns in the first round of combat.

Don't call for initiative checks until the adventurers enter the library and spot one of the defenders, or until the defenders decide to attack.

TACTICS

The bone naga rises, moving to engulf as many intruders as possible in its *death rattle* aura. Thereafter, it uses *death sway* whenever it will inflict damage on the most targets.

The demonic flameskulls carry on a conversation as the battle progresses, discussing how sorry these foolish intruders are going to be for trying to invade Lord Acererak's manor house. In between insulting the characters, the skulls discuss the best name for their master's project: "I like Place of Peril," says one; "No, no, Den of Demise is way better," proclaims the other. They toss around *unholy fire* as their standard attacks, watching for the best moment to use *vile consecration*.

The sword wraiths phase out of the eastern wall and join the attack, possibly catching the adventurers from behind and providing flanks for the bone naga.

DEVELOPMENT

The gem's glow intensifies as it gets closer to the secret room. See below for details about the secret room.

SECRET ROOM

A secret door in the shelves on the western wall can be discovered with a DC 25 Perception check. The door is locked, requiring a DC 20 Thievery check to open.

The room features statues of what appears to be an adventuring party: a human male wizard, a human male paladin, a dwarf female cleric, a human female rogue, a goliath male barbarian, and a warforged ranger. These are exact duplicates of a younger Acererak and the adventuring companions of his youth.

A pedestal in the center of the room holds a chunk of sky metal.

2 Demonic Flameskulls (F)**Level 15 Artillery**

Tiny natural animate (undead, demon)

XP 1,200 each

Initiative +11**Senses** Perception +14**HP** 114; **Bloodied** 57; see also *demonic fury***Regeneration** 5**AC** 27; **Fortitude** 25, **Reflex** 27, **Will** 26**Immune** disease, poison; **Resist** 10 fire, 10 necrotic;**Vulnerable** 5 radiant**Speed** fly 10 (hover)⚔ **Fiery Bite** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Fire**

Reach 0; +22 vs. AC; 1d8 damage plus 1d8 fire damage.

✦ **Unholy Fire** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Fire, Necrotic**

Ranged 10; +20 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 8 fire damage, plus ongoing 5 necrotic damage (save ends).

✦ **Vile Consecration** (standard; encounter) ♦ **Fire, Necrotic**Area burst 3 within 20; +20 vs. Reflex; 3d8 + 8 fire and necrotic damage. **Miss:** Half damage. The flameskull can exclude two allies from the effect.**Demonic Fury**

While the demonic flameskull is bloodied, it deals an extra 1d8 damage with its attacks.

Mage Hand (minor; at-will) ♦ **Conjuration**As the wizard power *mage hand* (see *Player's Handbook* page 158).**Illumination**

The flameskull sheds bright light out to 5 squares, but it can reduce its brightness to dim light out to 2 squares as a free action.

Alignment Unaligned**Languages** Common, one other**Skills** Stealth +12**Str** 6 (+5)**Dex** 18 (+11)**Wis** 15 (+9)**Con** 18 (+11)**Int** 23 (+13)**Cha** 21 (+12)**2 Sword Wraiths (W)****Level 17 Lurker**

Medium shadow humanoid (undead)

XP 1,600 each

Initiative +19**Senses** Perception +14; darkvision**HP** 90; **Bloodied** 45; see also *death strike***Regeneration** 10 (if the sword wraith takes radiant damage, regeneration is negated until the end of the sword wraith's next turn)**AC** 30; **Fortitude** 29, **Reflex** 30, **Will** 32**Immune** disease, poison; **Resist** 20 necrotic, insubstantial;**Vulnerable** 10 radiant (see also *regeneration* above)**Speed** fly 8 (hover); phasing; see also *shadow glide*⚔ **Shadow Sword** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Necrotic**

+20 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 7 necrotic damage, and the target is weakened (save ends).

† **Death Strike** (when reduced to 0 hit points) ♦ **Necrotic**

The sword wraith shifts 4 squares and makes a melee basic attack, dealing an extra 2d8 necrotic damage on a hit.

Combat Advantage ♦ **Necrotic**

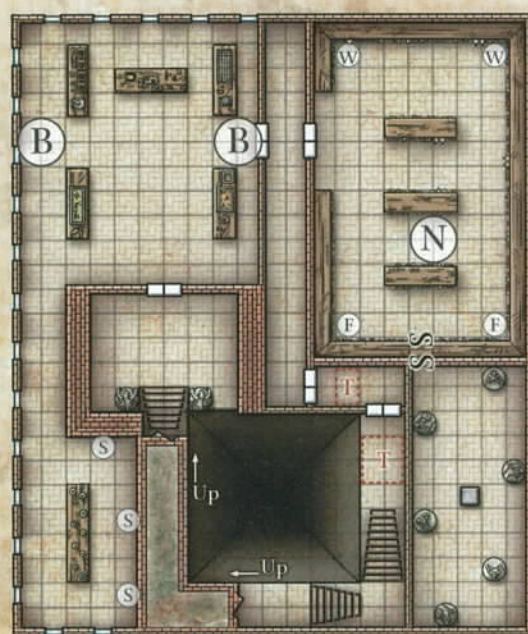
The sword wraith deals an extra 2d6 necrotic damage against any target it has combat advantage against.

Shadow Glide (move; encounter)

The sword wraith shifts 6 squares.

Spawn WraithAny humanoid killed by a sword wraith rises as a free-willed sword wraith at the start of its creator's next turn, appearing in the space where it died (or in the nearest unoccupied space). Raising the slain creature (using the *Raise Dead* ritual) does not destroy the spawned wraith.**Alignment** Chaotic evil**Languages** Common**Skills** Stealth +20**Str** 14 (+10)**Dex** 24 (+15)**Wis** 12 (+9)**Con** 18 (+12)**Int** 11 (+8)**Cha** 24 (+15)**FEATURES OF THE AREA****Illumination:** Bright light.**Central Hall:** The southern door of the workshop leads to a long central corridor with two sets of double doors along its southern wall.The western doors lead to the tower stairs that provide access to the top level of the tower. Two traps, a spiked floor and a fire cage, protect this passage from unauthorized visitors. See **Encounter 12** for details.The stairs lead up to **Encounter 14** on page 76.**Library:** The shelves cover each wall, stretching from floor to ceiling. Many of the books and manuscripts deal with arcane theories, wizard treatises, and necromancy. A search of the shelves taking at least 10 minutes and requiring a DC 25 Perception check turns up one of the following items. All three can be found if the adventurers spend 30 minutes searching the shelves.The items to be found are a View Location ritual scroll, a Shadow Walk ritual scroll, and a Passwall ritual scroll. There is also a lost tome (in the time of the adventurers) titled *History of the Fabled Realm*, which discusses the earliest days of the empire of Bael-Turath. It is worth 5,700 gp.

The models on the tables show three different versions of some kind of complex. A DC 20 Dungeoneering check recognizes the complexes as vast tombs, and a DC 25 Dungeoneering check notices that each complex is filled with all kinds of traps and obstacles, many of them deadly. These are Acererak's first designs for his legendary Tomb of Horrors.



One square = 5 feet

ENCOUNTER 14: WIZARD'S TOWER

Encounter Level 16 (7,500 XP)

SETUP

Acererak (A)

Bridge of sigils

Ooze tile trap (T)

When the adventurers climb to the top of the tower, the gem gently tugs them toward a strange device within the eastern cupola. This is also where the wizard Acererak is busily working. Acererak, who shall one day become a terrible demilich of vast power and the creator of the legendary Tomb of Horrors, is simply a powerful wizard at this point in history. He has begun to dabble with the necrotic arts, but has not yet become evil. However, he has no patience for thieves, and that is how he sees the adventurers.

When the adventurers reach this level, read:

The stairs lead up to an open tower room, the walls alternating between solid stone and open slits that look out upon the nearby city. The floor of this room runs around the outer walls, leaving the center as an open shaft that drops to the bottom of the tower far below. An uncovered causeway, its floor covered in glowing sigils, leads to a second tower chamber. A massive device of glowing orbs, rotating arms, and crystal tubes fills the eastern wall. A robed figure with a glowing staff stands before the device, turning dials and whispering words of power that you don't actually hear but instead feel reverberating through you. The remaining pieces of sky metal that you seek are clearly visible within the device's internal structure.

Without turning or even pausing in his work, the robed figure says, "I offer you one chance to avoid my wrath, you cowardly thieves. Throw yourselves from my tower and I shall allow fate to determine whether you live or die. Otherwise, prepare to truly understand why I am numbered among the greatest wizards of Bael Turath. I am Acererak of the Scarlet Robes, and this is my home!"

If the adventurers approach Acererak, the wizard attacks. Note that there are traps set up between where the adventurers arrive and where Acererak makes his stand. The ooze tile traps are designed to slow intruders while dealing minor damage, while the arcane cage trap is designed to capture intruders for later disposal.

If the adventurers attempt to negotiate with the wizard, he gives them one chance to convince him why he shouldn't turn them all into hogs and have them slaughtered for their bacon. This requires a skill challenge, as described in "Development."

Spectral Servant

Medium shadow humanoid (undead)

Level 15 Minion

XP 0

Initiative +13

Senses Perception +15; darkvision

HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.

AC 29; Fortitude 27, Reflex 28, Will 26

Speed 4

⊕ **Spectral Claws** (standard; at-will) ⊕ **Necrotic**

+20 vs. AC; 9 necrotic damage.

⊕ **Spectral Dance** (immediate reaction, when missed by an attack; at-will)

The spectral servant shifts 3 squares and makes a spectral claw attack at any point during that movement. It gains resist all damage until the start of its next turn.

Alignment Evil

Languages –

Str 16 (+10)

Dex 19 (+11)

Wis 15 (+9)

Con 14 (+9)

Int 2 (+3)

Cha 12 (+8)

Ooze Tile (T)

Trap

Level 12 Obstacle

XP 700

The tile beneath your foot suddenly turns to ooze, sucking you down into it as it scalds your flesh with acid.

Trap: When a character enters a trapped square, the square becomes an ooze that slows the character and deals acid damage.

Perception

⊕ DC 21: You notice that the tile ahead has a wet sheen.

Trigger

When a creature enters a trapped square, it attacks.

Attack

Standard Action

Melee 1

Target: Creature in trapped square

Attack: +15 vs. Reflex

Hit: 1d8 + 5 acid damage, and the target is slowed (save ends).

Countermeasures

⊕ A character who notices the sheen can step around the tile.

TACTICS

Acererak uses Acererak's missiles and necrotic ray against distant targets. He calls up a spectral servant every round, always keeping two in play until he has called up all five. He saves temporal warp until the intruders reach the eastern cupola. He fights to the death.

DEVELOPMENT

If the adventurers attempt to negotiate with Acererak, they must convince him that they are really from the future and that their need for the sky metal is great. This requires 8 successes before 3 failures: Bluff (DC 25), Diplomacy (DC 20), History (DC 20), Insight (DC 25), and Intimidate (DC 27). If the challenge fails, Acererak calls them thieves as he launches an attack.

If Acererak is defeated, his body disappears. He rises in 1d10 days as a lich, thus starting Acererak's path to ultimate darkness and evil.

If the adventurers win the skill challenge or defeat Acererak, they gain the remaining pieces of sky metal that they need to provide each party member with an *Implement of Argent*.

Acererak (A) Level 15 Solo Controller

Medium natural humanoid (human) XP 6,000 each

Initiative +11 **Senses** Perception +17
Arcane Shield aura 1; enemies that end their turn in the aura are pushed 1 square. The aura dissipates when Acererak is bloodied.
HP 584; **Bloodied** 292
AC 29; **Fortitude** 26, **Reflex** 29, **Will** 27
Saving Throws +5
Speed 6
Action Points 2

⚡ **Dazzling Touch** (standard; at-will)
+20 vs. AC; 1d10 + 6 damage, and the target is dazed (save ends).

☞ **Acererak's Missiles** (standard; at-will)
Ranged 20; +19 vs. Reflex; 1d10 + 6 damage, and one other enemy within 2 squares of the target takes the same damage.

⚡ **Acererak's Blast** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Cold**
Close blast 5; +17 vs. Fortitude; 1d10 + 6 cold damage, and ongoing 5 cold damage and the target is slowed (save ends both).

☞ **Necrotic Ray** (standard; recharge [ii]) ♦ **Healing, Necrotic**
Ranged 20; +19 vs. Fortitude; 2d8 + 6 necrotic damage, and Acererak heals 10 hit points.

⚡ **Shadow Burst** (standard; recharges when first bloodied; encounter) ♦ **Necrotic**
Close burst 5; targets enemies; +17 vs. Reflex; 3d10 + 6 necrotic damage, the target slides 2 squares, and the target is blinded (save ends).

⚡ **Prismatic Beams** (standard; encounter) ♦ **Fire, Poison**
Close burst 5; targets enemies; +17 vs. Fortitude, Reflex, Will. **Hit (Fortitude)**: 2d6 + 7 poison damage, and ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends).
Hit (Reflex): 2d6 + 7 fire damage, and ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends).
Hit (Will): The target is dazed (save ends).
Special: Acererak makes one attack roll against each target, comparing the result to each of the target's defenses. A target may be subject to any, all, or none of the effects, depending on his or her defense scores. Targets make a separate save against each ongoing effect.

Temporal Warp (standard; recharges when first bloodied; encounter)
Acererak warps time, allowing him to act faster than those around him. For the rest of this round, Acererak gains a +2 bonus to all defenses. In the next round, Acererak acts three times, at initiative count 30, 20, and 10. At each of these counts, he gets to perform a standard action, a move action, and a minor action. At the end of this round, Acererak takes 20 damage. In the round after that, he acts normally at his original count in the initiative order.

Feather Fall (free, when Acererak falls; encounter)
Acererak takes no damage from the fall, regardless of the distance, and does not fall prone at the end of the fall.

Summon Spectral Servant (minor, 1/round; at-will)
Acererak summons a spectral servant. The servant appears in one of the magic circles. Acererak can summon up to a total of 5 spectral servants during the course of an encounter. When a spectral servant is destroyed, Acererak takes 10 damage and gains +1d8 necrotic damage on his next damage roll.

Alignment Unaligned **Languages** Common
Skills Arcana +19, History +19, Insight +17
Str 14 (+9) **Dex** 18 (+11) **Wis** 20 (+12)
Con 18 (+11) **Int** 24 (+14) **Cha** 16 (+10)
Equipment quarterstaff, wand, potion of vitality

Arcane Cage Level 13 Obstacle

Trap XP 800

The glowing sigils flare brightly, and bars of arcane power fill the causeway.

Trap: When a character enters the causeway, the arcane cage snaps into existence.

Trigger
When a creature steps between the dotted lines, the area fills with an arcane cage.

Effect
While in the arcane cage, ranged attacks cannot pass out of the cage.

Endurance Check
A creature that starts its turn in the arcane cage must make a DC 18 Endurance check or take 1d10 + 6 damage.

Move Action
A creature within the arcane cage is slowed. In addition, to take a move action, a creature must make a DC 11 Strength check to push through the morass of power that fills the cage. If the check fails, no movement occurs for that action.

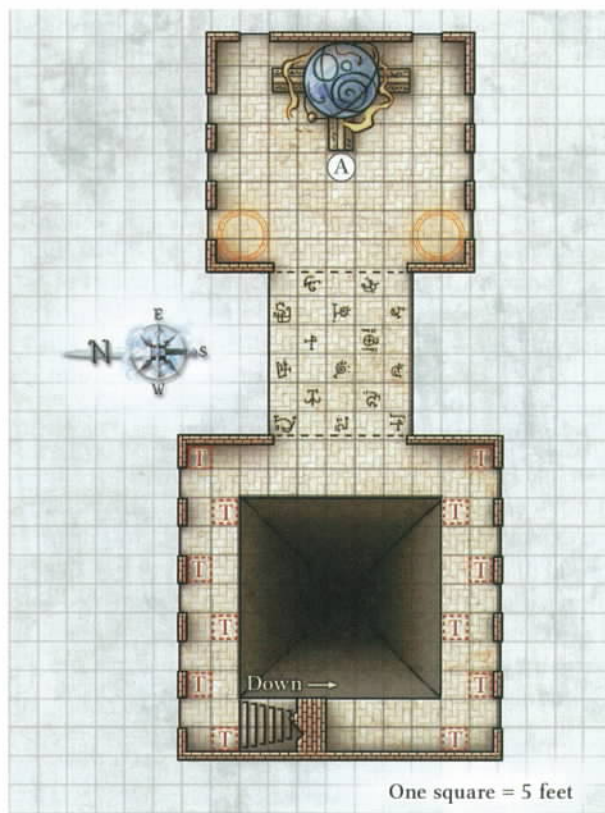
Countermeasures

- ♦ A character outside the trap can disable the sigils until the start of Acererak's next turn (DC 23 Arcana or DC 25 Thievery check).
- ♦ A character inside the trap can disable the sigils (DC 25 Arcana or DC 27 Thievery check). This causes the cage to drop until the start of Acererak's next turn.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Bright light.

Western Cupola: The squares marked "T" contain ooze tiles. Falling from either cupola or into the pit deals 6d10 damage.



ENCOUNTER D1: INTO THE ASTRAL SEA

Encounter Level 12 (3,600 XP)

After the adventurers complete **Encounter R3: Researching the Divine Engine** (see page 44) and they inform Obanar of their results, the last guardian sends them on their first diplomatic mission and provides them with the following quest.

QUEST: SEEK OUT THE ASTRAL GIANTS

"It is clear from your research that the best method for learning more about Piranoth's Bane is to locate the astral giants of the Temple of Inchoate Mysteries," Obanar says. "I do not know where in the Astral Sea this temple might be, but I can send you to a place called Black Harbor. The githyanki pirates of Black Harbor know how to get everywhere in the Astral Sea—or at least that was the case in my day. You should be able to find transport to the temple there. Find the astral giants and convince them to aid us in this mission."

Quest XP: 6,000 (major quest) if the adventurers locate the temple and the astral giants, learn about the divine engine and ritual to restore it to working order, and convince the astral giants to provide additional aid in the form of magic or military support. If the adventurers only accomplish one or two of these tasks, they treat this as a minor quest instead (1,200 XP).

THE BLACK HARBOR

When the adventurers are ready, Obanar teleports them to the Black Harbor. This port town is located on the coast of a jungle island in the natural world, but it sits on a border where the space between the planes is thin. Strange ships sail from this port to locations on both terrestrial and planar seas.

A githyanki mage named Ruothvach is the nominal mayor of the Black Harbor, but he and his astral ship, the *Crown of Cobalt*, are there less than a quarter of the time. Squads of five githyanki warriors (*Monster Manual* page 128) keep the mayhem among the Black Harbor's flophouses and taverns from spilling onto the ships or otherwise jeopardizing actual trade.

When the adventurers arrive, there are two battle-damaged terrestrial galleys manned by a mix of human and halfling pirates and one strangely ornate silver ship in the port: the *Gossamer Ghost*. Inquiries reveal that the captain, Akrathial, is drinking in one of the seedier bars on the wharf, called the Drowned Rat.

In this skill challenge, the adventurers must bargain with Akrathial to gain passage aboard the *Gossamer Ghost* for passage into the Astral Sea.

Level: 15

Complexity: 2 (requires 6 successes before 3 failures).

Skills Used in This Challenge: Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidation, Insight, Religion, Streetwise.

The negotiations with Akrathial involves dealing with a seemingly drunk and surly but actually shrewd and cunning githyanki ship captain who drives a hard bargain and doesn't take guff from anybody. The number of successes the adventurers achieve determines how much this trip into the Astral Sea is going to cost them.

"Hrrmph," Akrathial grunts after you explain what you want, "the Sea between here and the temple is hazardous. I can take you, but it will cost you."

Bluff (DC 23, standard action): You invent reasons why Akrathial should charge you less. You're using Bluff if the reasoning behind the discount is fundamentally fictitious, and Diplomacy if it's fundamentally truthful.

This skill can be used to gain 4 successes, but once you use this skill, you can't use Diplomacy.

Diplomacy (DC 23, standard action): You explain the truth of your mission, and why it is in everyone's best interest for you to reach the astral giants.

This skill can be used to gain 4 successes, but once you use this skill, you can't use Bluff.

Intimidate (DC 18, standard action): You not-so-subtly suggest that Akrathial and the *Gossamer Ghost* might wind up at the bottom of the Black Harbor if he doesn't offer the adventurers a fair price.

This skill can be used to gain 1 success, but it increases the DCs by +2 for the rest of the challenge.

Insight (DC 18, standard action): You can tell that Akrathial is nervous about something, and it isn't you. A success also opens up the use of the Streetwise skill in this challenge.

This skill can be used to gain 1 success in the challenge.

Religion (DC 23, standard action): You use your own knowledge of the Astral Sea to make sure that Akrathial believes that you can spot any deception on his part concerning this trip.

This skill can be used to gain 1 success in the challenge.

Streetwise (DC 18, standard action): You discover that Akrathial is eager to pick up cargo and get out of Black Harbor before Ruothvach's imminent return.

This skill can be used to gain 1 success in the challenge.

Success: Akrathial agrees to take the adventurers to the Temple of Inchoate Mysteries for 5,000 gp.

Failure: Akrathial agrees to take the adventurers to the temple, but the price is much higher: 20,000 gp, minus 2,000 gp for each success the adventurers earned before failing the skill challenge.

ENCOUNTER D2: THE EIGHTY-SIX STAIRS

Encounter Level 16 (7,000 XP)

SETUP

2 astral giants (A)

3 astral giant warpswords (W)

The *Gossamer Ghost* carries the adventurers to the Temple of Inchoate Mysteries, a cathedral-like building floating in the Astral Sea. The astral giants living here are a group dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and invention. They cherish their privacy, neither leaving nor accepting visitors unless the signs and portents of Erathis direct them to do so.

The 86 stairs that lead from the small dock to the temple doors are guarded by astral giants. They make sure that intruders never reach the temple. Read:

The golden staircase seems to float in midair—a bright, silver-white haze stretches all around it. The giant-sized steps climb out of sight. Appearing on the stairs above you are giants with silver skin, their lower bodies of silver mist.

TACTICS

The astral giants try to repel any intruders. The soldiers move to engage, while the warpswords strike and retreat each round. They use *dimensional blow* to teleport foes into the Astral Sea.

3 Astral Giant Warpsword (W) **Level 16 Skirmisher**
Large immortal humanoid (giant) XP 1,400 each

Initiative +15 Senses Perception +13

HP 158; Bloodied 79

AC 30; Fortitude 28, Reflex 26, Will 26

Resist 10 radiant

Speed 8; see also *astral leap*

⚔ **Warpsword** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Radiant, Weapon**

Reach 2; +21 vs. AC; 2d10 + 7 damage, plus ongoing 5 radiant damage (save ends).

✦ **Dimensional Blow** (standard; recharge ⏏⏏⏏) ♦ **Radiant, Teleportation, Weapon**

Reach 2; +21 vs. AC; 2d10 + 10 radiant damage, the target is teleported 5 squares, and the target is dazed until the end of its next turn.

Astral Retreat (immediate reaction when damaged by an attack; at-will) ♦ **Teleportation**

The astral giant teleports 2 squares.

Astral Resonance

As long as the astral giant has an unbloodied astral giant ally within 10 squares, it receives a +2 bonus to attack rolls.

Astral Leap (move; encounter; only within the Astral Sea; recharges when first bloodied)

The astral giant can fly up to 10 squares.

Alignment Unaligned **Languages** Giant, Supernal

Skills Athletics +21, Religion +16

Str 24 (+15) **Dex** 20 (+13) **Wis** 20 (+13)

Con 22 (+14) **Int** 16 (+11) **Cha** 17 (+11)

Equipment chain armor, greatsword

2 Astral Giants (A)

Large immortal humanoid (giant)

Level 16 Soldier

XP 1,400 each

Initiative +14

Senses Perception +19

HP 160; Bloodied 80

AC 32; Fortitude 31, Reflex 27, Will 28

Resist 10 radiant

Speed 8; see also *astral leap*

⚔ **Spear** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Radiant, Weapon**

Reach 2; +23 vs. AC; 2d8 + 7 radiant damage. The target is marked until the end of the astral giant's next turn.

Astral Resonance

As long as the astral giant has an unbloodied astral giant ally within 10 squares, it receives a +2 bonus to attack rolls.

Astral Leap (move; encounter; only within the Astral Sea; recharges when first bloodied)

The astral giant can fly up to 10 squares.

Alignment Unaligned

Languages Giant, Supernal

Skills Athletics +21, Religion +16

Str 26 (+16) **Dex** 18 (+12)

Wis 22 (+14)

Con 24 (+15) **Int** 16 (+11)

Cha 18 (+12)

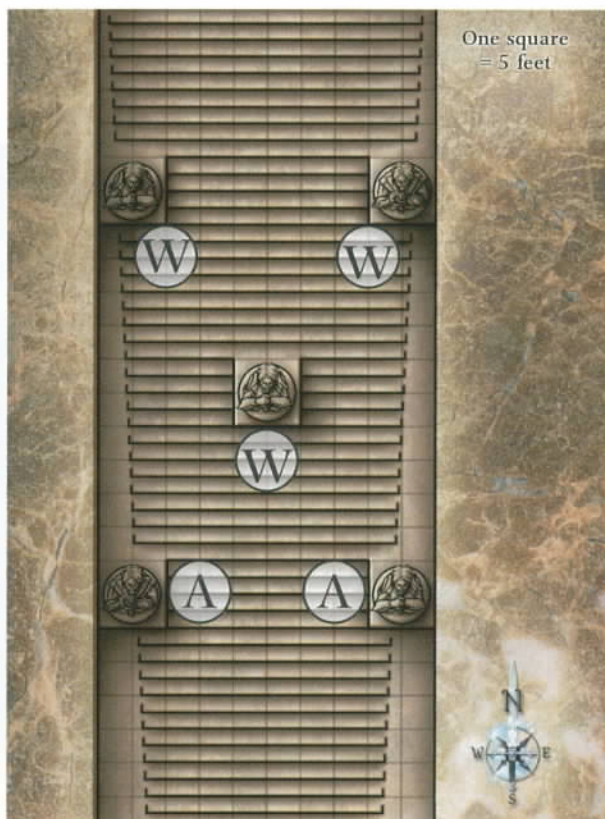
Equipment plate armor, spear, shield

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Bright light.

Astral Sea: Creatures hurled into the Astral Sea must make DC 20 Athletics checks to "swim" at half speed back to the stairs. Failing the check by 5 or more means that the creature floats 1d6 squares away from the stairs.

Golden Stairs: The giant-sized stairs are difficult terrain for creatures smaller than Large size.



ENCOUNTER D3: THE GRAND ENTRANCE

Encounter Level 16 (7,000 XP)

SETUP

3 astral giants (A)

1 astral giant star-strider (S)

2 ethereal marauders (E)

When the adventurers finally reach the top of the stairs, they see a grand landing and a massive set of double doors. The astral giants are easy to spot, but the ethereal marauders begin the encounter inside the statues; don't place them until they phase out of the statues into the spaces marked on the map. Read:

The golden steps climb higher and higher through the silvery haze until a landing emerges above you. Matching statues of crouching chimeras flank two gigantic doors of burnished copper. Gems stud the statues and the doors at irregular intervals: opals upon the chimeras and rubies upon the doors.

Carved into the stone mantel above the doors is a word in Supernal: Enigma. Standing in front of the doors are four more of the strange, silvery giants.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Bright light.

Astral Sea: Creatures hurled into the Astral Sea must make DC 20 Athletics checks to "swim" at half speed back to the stairs. Failing the check by 5 or more means that the creature floats 1d6 squares away from the stairs.

Doors: The giant-sized doors are closed but not locked. They are heavy, requiring a DC 23 Strength check to open (even the giants strain a little to open these doors). The rubies encrusted into the doors are low grade; it takes 60 minutes to collect them, and they are worth 1,200 gp.

Golden Stairs: The giant-sized stairs are difficult terrain for creatures smaller than Large size.

Statues: The statues on the stairs are made of solid stone. The statues on the landing are hollow, and the ethereal marauders like to lurk within these statues and watch what happens outside. The opals encrusted into the chimera statues are low grade; it takes 30 minutes to remove them and they are worth 800 gp.

TALKING YOUR WAY IN

If the adventurers quickly announce their peaceful intent, they can forestall the combat and try to talk their way into the temple. Doing so is a skill challenge.

Level: 15

Complexity: 1 (requires 4 successes before 3 failures)

Skills Used In This Challenge: Bluff, Diplomacy, Insight, Intimidate

Bluff (DC 25, standard action): Any ruse that suggests that the adventurers are actually supposed to be visiting falls into this category. The temple doesn't get many visitors, and astral giants are cautious by nature.

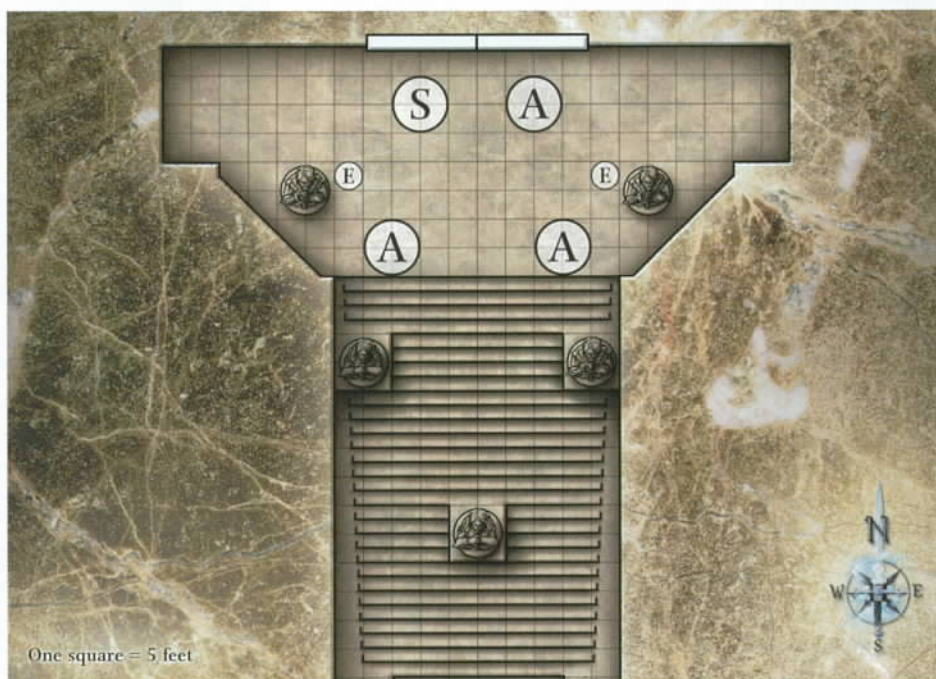
This skill can be used to gain 4 successes, but once you use this skill, you can't use Diplomacy.

Diplomacy (DC 23, standard action): If the adventurers explain the situation they're facing and try to negotiate or plead for help, it's a Diplomacy check.

This skill can be used to gain 4 successes, but once you use this skill, you can't use Bluff.

Insight (DC 18, standard action): This covers attempts to discern why the astral giants are so suspicious, what techniques will likely mollify them, etc. Anyone who gets a DC 25 on the check realizes that these astral giants are particularly nervous, especially whenever the adventurers talk about primordials, other giants, or the divine engine.

Using this skill doesn't count as a success or failure for the challenge, but instead provides a +2 bonus to the next character's Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate check.



Intimidate (DC 25, standard action): Even if they should be impressed by the dangerous visitors, the astral giants tend to think of anything smaller than they are as something weaker as well.

Success: The astral giants agree to escort the adventurers to the skywatcher's dome without a battle taking place, where they meet Zanashu. The fight in skywatcher's dome still happens, but the astral giants from this encounter won't interfere with its outcome.

If the adventurers also noticed the reactions of the giants to the adventurers' situation, one of the giants reveals the following during the walk to the dome:

"You are not the first to come to us with these tales of Piranoth and Piranoth's Bane," one of the giants says. "Since the arrival of the drow, our leader has been acting very strangely. Perhaps your arrival will settle Zanashu and restore the harmony of the temple."

Failure: The astral giants find the adventurers to be insulting and boring. They deliver an ultimatum, and then the battle begins:

"Leave now," one of the giants rumbles, "or we'll throw your battered bodies into the Astral Sea."

TACTICS

The astral giants don't stray far from the doors, using their reach to best advantage. The star-strider makes an *astral leap* into the midst of the adventurers, uses *star-stride*, and then teleports away. It uses its crossbow then to make ranged attacks.

The ethereal marauders emerge from the statues when the battle starts, using *plane phase form* to phase into the open. Whenever they are insubstantial, they use *reality warp* against targets. They save *ethereal jaunt* to employ when it will do the most damage.

| 3 Astral Giants (A) | Level 16 Soldier |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| Large immortal humanoid (giant) | XP 1,400 each |
| Initiative +14 | Senses Perception +19 |
| HP 160; Bloodied 80 | |
| AC 32; Fortitude 31, Reflex 27, Will 28 | |
| Resist 10 radiant | |
| Speed 8; see also <i>astral leap</i> | |
| ⊕ Spear (standard; at-will) ♦ Radiant, Weapon | |
| Reach 2; +23 vs. AC; 2d8 + 7 radiant damage. The target is marked until the end of the astral giant's next turn. | |
| Astral Resonance | |
| As long as the astral giant has an unbloodied astral giant ally within 10 squares, it receives a +2 bonus to attack rolls. | |
| Astral Leap (move; encounter; only within the Astral Sea; recharges when first bloodied) | |
| The astral giant can fly up to 10 squares. | |
| Alignment Unaligned | Languages Giant, Supernal |
| Skills Athletics +21, Religion +16 | |
| Str 26 (+16) | Dex 18 (+12) Wis 22 (+14) |
| Con 24 (+15) | Int 16 (+11) Cha 18 (+12) |
| Equipment plate armor, spear, shield | |

| Astral Giant Star-strider (S) | Level 17 Lurker |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| Large immortal humanoid (giant) | XP 1,600 |
| Initiative +18 | Senses Perception +19 |
| HP 128; Bloodied 64 | |
| AC 31; Fortitude 29, Reflex 29, Will 30 | |
| Resist 10 radiant | |
| Speed 8; see also <i>astral leap</i> | |
| ⊕ Longsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Radiant, Weapon | |
| Reach 2; +22 vs. AC; 2d8 + 7 radiant damage. | |
| ⊕ Crossbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Radiant, Weapon | |
| Ranged 15/30; +22 vs. AC; 2d8 + 7 radiant damage. | |
| ⚡ Astral Shadows (standard; recharge ⏏ ⏏ ⏏) ♦ Radiant | |
| Close burst 5; +20 vs. Will; enemies only; 1d8 + 7 radiant damage, and the astral giant becomes invisible until the end of its next turn. | |
| ⚡ Star-stride (standard; encounter) ♦ Radiant, Teleportation | |
| Close burst 3; +20 vs. Reflex; 3d8 + 7 radiant damage, and the astral giant teleports 3 squares and gains combat advantage against all enemies until the end of its next turn. | |
| Combat Advantage | |
| The astral giant deals an extra 2d6 damage against any target it has combat advantage against. | |
| Astral Resonance | |
| As long as the astral giant has an unbloodied astral giant ally within 10 squares, it receives a +2 bonus to attack rolls. | |
| Astral Leap (move; encounter; only within the Astral Sea; recharges when first bloodied) | |
| The astral giant can fly up to 10 squares. | |
| Alignment Unaligned | Languages Giant, Supernal |
| Str 21 (+14) | Dex 20 (+14) Wis 22 (+15) |
| Con 20 (+14) | Int 18 (+13) Cha 19 (+13) |
| Equipment longsword, crossbow | |

| 2 Ethereal Marauders (E) | Level 15 Lurker |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Medium aberrant magical beast | XP 1,200 each |
| Initiative +17 | Senses Perception +14; low-light vision |
| HP 115; Bloodied 57 | |
| AC 29; Fortitude 27, Reflex 28, Will 25 | |
| Vulnerable psychic; an ethereal marauder that takes psychic damage immediately ends <i>plane phase form</i> . | |
| Speed 7; teleport 3; phasing; see also <i>ethereal jaunt</i> | |
| ⊕ Bite (standard; at-will) | |
| +20 vs. AC; 2d8 + 6 damage. | |
| ⚡ Reality Warp (standard; usable only while insubstantial; at-will) ♦ Teleportation | |
| +18 vs. Reflex; 3d6 + 6 damage, and the ethereal marauder teleports the target 3 squares. The marauder then teleports 3 squares into a space adjacent to the target. | |
| Planar Evasion (immediate reaction, when the ethereal marauder is hit by a melee attack; recharge ⏏ ⏏ ⏏) ♦ Teleportation | |
| The marauder teleports 3 squares. | |
| ⚡ Ethereal Jaunt (standard; encounter) ♦ Teleportation | |
| Close burst 3; +17 vs. Reflex; 3d10 + 6 damage, the target is dazed (save ends), and the ethereal marauder teleports 3 squares and gains <i>plane phase form</i> until the end of its next turn. | |
| Plane phase Form (standard; at-will) | |
| The ethereal marauder partially phases into another plane, gaining insubstantial and phasing until the end of its next turn or until it hits or misses with an attack. <i>Sustain Minor</i> : The effect persists. | |
| Alignment Unaligned | Languages Deep Speech |
| Skills Stealth +18 | |
| Str 20 (+12) | Dex 22 (+13) Wis 14 (+9) |
| Con 19 (+11) | Int 16 (+10) Cha 16 (+10) |

ENCOUNTER D4: THE SKYWATCHER'S DOME

Encounter Level 17 (8,800 XP)

SETUP

Zanashu, astral giant lightpriest (L)

Esixtara, drider battlelord (B)

2 astral giants (A)

4 drow venomblades (V)

The adventurers discover that the leader of this band of astral giants has been corrupted by a gang of visiting drow. The drow have come as allies of the titan lords, seeking the same thing as the adventurers—locations of the remaining pieces of the divine engine and the ritual necessary to put the relic back together.

When the adventurers enter the temple, read:

A massive dome full of stars graces the ceiling of this huge chamber. The stars race across the blackness of the dome, moving much faster than they do in the night sky you are used to looking up at. Unadorned columns stretch from floor to ceiling, and shrines occupy niches along the walls, their many candles filling the chamber with a warm glow.

Two astral giants stand on guard just beyond the open doors, while a third giant wearing the holy symbol of Erathis stands beneath the dome, behind a great spider-like creature with the head and torso of a female elf and a group of dark-skinned elves brandishing venom-coated longwords.

"It seems you were correct, Esixtara," the priestly giant says, "the agents of Argent have come to steal the temple's secrets. Guards, destroy them!"

| Drider Battlelord (B) | | Level 15 Brute |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|
| Large fey humanoid (spider) | | XP 1,200 |
| Initiative +12 | Senses Perception +15; darkvision | |
| HP 182; Bloodied 91 | | |
| AC 27; Fortitude 28, Reflex 26, Will 24 | | |
| Speed 8, climb 8 (spider climb) | | |
| ⚔ Greatsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | | |
| +20 vs. AC; 1d12 + 8 damage. | | |
| ⚔ Quick Bite (minor; at-will) ♦ Poison | | |
| Requires combat advantage; +17 vs. Fortitude; 1d4 + 1 damage, and ongoing 10 poison damage (save ends). | | |
| ☞ Darkfire (minor; encounter) | | |
| Ranged 10; +17 vs. Reflex; until the end of the drider's next turn, the target grants combat advantage to all attackers, and the target cannot benefit from invisibility or concealment. | | |
| ☞ Web (standard; recharge ☐☐☐☐) | | |
| Ranged 5; +16 vs. Reflex; the target is restrained (until escape). Escaping from the web requires a successful DC 25 Acrobatics check or DC 27 Athletics check. | | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Common, Giant, Elven | |
| Skills Dungeoneering +15, Stealth +17 | | |
| Str 24 (+14) | Dex 21 (+12) | Wis 16 (+10) |
| Con 22 (+13) | Int 13 (+8) | Cha 9 (+6) |
| Equipment leather armor, greatsword | | |

DROW CONNECTION

Lolth, the Demon Queen of Spiders, has agreed to provide the titan lords with the one thing they need to free Piranoth: a god to help them unlock Piranoth's prison. To this end, Lolth has sent a squad of trusted drow to coerce the leader of the astral giant community at the Temple of Inchoate Mysteries to provide them with whatever the giants know about Piranoth's Bane. The drow have given Zanashu the gift of a holy symbol that has been cursed to make him perform as Esixtara commands, they have uncovered the locations of the relic, and they have the name of an exarch of Moradin who they can extract the ritual of mending from. (Zanashu has thus far been able to keep the actual ritual from falling into the drider's hands.)

Religion Check

DC 25: The holy symbol of Erathis that the astral giant lightpriest wears isn't quite right. It has five gears and five star points instead of the traditional six of each.

Insight Check (after a successful Religion check)

DC 20: The lightpriest appears as though something were influencing or controlling his actions in some way.

TACTICS

Zanashu, under the dominating influence of Esixtara, orders the astral giants to destroy the intruders. Every action he takes against the adventurers seems to cause the lightpriest some amount of discomfit and effort, as he is fighting to break free of the drider's control.

The astral giants attack as commanded, even though they feel something is wrong.

Esixtara uses *darkfire* and *web* immediately, hoping to hinder the adventurers and make them vulnerable to attack. She backs toward the shrine on the western wall, calling on Lolth when she becomes bloodied.

| 2 Astral Giants (A) | | Level 16 Soldier |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| Large immortal humanoid (giant) | | XP 1,400 each |
| Initiative +14 | Senses Perception +19 | |
| HP 160; Bloodied 80 | | |
| AC 32; Fortitude 31, Reflex 27, Will 28 | | |
| Resist 10 radiant | | |
| Speed 8; see also <i>astral leap</i> | | |
| ⚔ Spear (standard; at-will) ♦ Radiant, Weapon | | |
| Reach 2; +23 vs. AC; 2d8 + 7 radiant damage. The target is marked until the end of the astral giant's next turn. | | |
| Astral Resonance | | |
| As long as the astral giant has an unbloodied astral giant ally within 10 squares, it receives a +2 bonus to attack rolls. | | |
| Astral Leap (move; encounter; only within the Astral Sea; recharges when first bloodied) | | |
| The astral giant can fly up to 10 squares. | | |
| Alignment Unaligned | | Languages Giant, Supernal |
| Skills Athletics +21, Religion +16 | | |
| Str 26 (+16) | Dex 18 (+12) | Wis 22 (+14) |
| Con 24 (+15) | Int 16 (+11) | Cha 18 (+12) |
| Equipment plate armor, spear, shield | | |

4 Drow Venomblades (V)**Level 13 Skirmisher**

Medium fey humanoid

XP 800 each

Initiative +13 Senses Perception +12; darkvision

HP 124; Bloodied 62

AC 27; Fortitude 23, Reflex 25, Will 22

Speed 6

⚔ **Longsword** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

+18 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage, and ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends).

⚔ **Short Sword** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

+18 vs. AC; 1d6 + 5 damage, and ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends).

⚔ **Blade Mastery** (standard; recharge ☞ ☞) ♦ **Weapon**

The drow venomblade makes one longsword attack and one short sword attack.

☞ **Cloud of Darkness** (minor; encounter)

Close burst 1; this power creates a cloud of darkness that remains in place until the end of the drow venomblade's next turn. The cloud blocks line of sight for all creatures except the drow venomblade. Any creature entirely within the cloud (except the drow venomblade) is blinded until it exits.

Alignment Evil Languages Common, Elven

Skills Acrobatics +16, Dungeoneering +12, Intimidate +14, Stealth +18

Str 16 (+9) Dex 21 (+11) Wis 14 (+8)

Con 12 (+7) Int 12 (+7) Cha 12 (+7)

Equipment scale armor, longsword, short sword

Astral Giant Lightpriest (L) Level 17 Controller (Leader)

Large immortal humanoid (giant)

XP 1,600

Initiative +13 Senses Perception +13

HP 164; Bloodied 82

AC 31; Fortitude 30, Reflex 28, Will 28

Resist 10 radiant

Speed 8; see also *astral leap*⚔ **Quarterstaff** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Radiant, Weapon**

Reach 2; +22 vs. AC; 2d6 + 7 radiant damage.

☞ **Lightwave** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Radiant**

Close blast 5; +21 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 7 radiant damage, and the target is pushed 3 squares.

☞ **Blinding Light** (standard; recharge ☞ ☞ ☞) ♦ **Radiant**

Ranged 10; +21 vs. Fortitude; 2d8 + 7 radiant damage, and the target is blinded until the end of the astral giant's next turn.

☞ **Life-Absorbing Burst** (standard; recharge ☞ ☞) ♦ **Healing, Radiant**

Close burst 5; +19 vs. Fortitude; 1d8 + 7 radiant damage, and the astral giant and all allies in the burst regain 20 hit points.

☞ **Lighttrap** (standard; encounter) ♦ **Radiant**Area burst 1 within 20; +20 vs. Reflex; 3d6 + 7 radiant damage, and the target is slowed (save ends). *First failed save:* Target takes 5 radiant damage and is immobilized (save ends). *Second failed save:* Target takes 10 radiant damage and is restrained (save ends).**Astral Resonance**

As long as the astral giant has an unbloodied astral giant ally within 10 squares, it receives a +2 bonus to attack rolls.

Astral Leap (move; encounter; only within the Astral Sea; recharges when first bloodied)

The astral giant can fly up to 10 squares.

Alignment Unaligned Languages Giant, Supernal

Str 22 (+15) Dex 18 (+13) Wis 20 (+13)

Con 20 (+14) Int 20 (+11) Cha 24 (+11)

Equipment quarterstaff, holy symbol

DEVELOPMENT

If the adventurers remove the cursed holy symbol from Zanashu, they free him of Esixtara's control. He immediately orders the giants to aid the adventurers and destroy the drow.

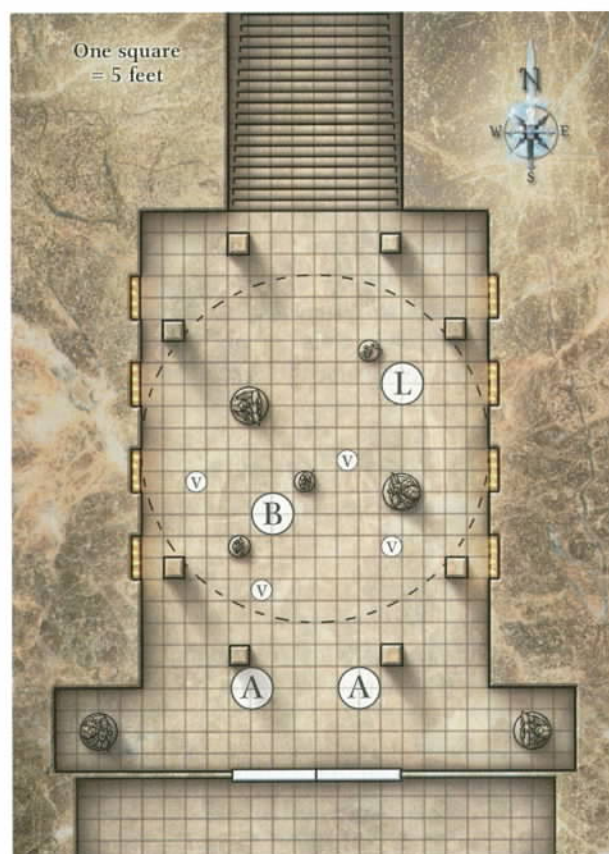
When Esixtara is bloodied, she goes to the shrine she has rededicated to Lolth and calls on the god to aid her. Lolth teleports her away from the temple with the information she has gained.

After freeing Zanashu from the influence of the drider, the astral giant provides the adventurers with the ritual to repair the divine engine and use it to reestablish Piranoth's prison. He also gives them the locations of the relic's five pieces: two are already with the fire giants at Flamefall Tower, one remains hidden at a place called Frost Spire, one is in the possession of a djinn called Kaseem, and one is in the mayor's home in the city of Breelton. Stress that the frost giants are closing in on the two at Flotsam and Frost Spire. Save Breelton for last (see page 127). Finally, he tells them that he was forced to reveal the location of Torugar, exarch of Moradin, to the drider.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Dim light.

Shrines: Each shrine displays an item significant to the astral giants: a spear, a text, a stone from an ancient temple. The second shrine from the north on the west has been dedicated to Lolth by Esixtara.



ENCOUNTER D5: COURT OF FALLEN LEAVES

Encounter Level 11 (3,000 XP)

During one return trip to Argent, Obanar asks the adventurers to go on a diplomatic mission to rally the Court of Fallen Leaves. This eladrin stronghold in the Feywild conducts regular trade with the coastal towns of Andor and Flotsam, both currently being marched upon by an overwhelming force of frost giants. Read:

"The Court of Fallen Leaves regularly sends traders into the natural world to conduct business with Andor, Flotsam, and other coastal settlements," Obanar says. "I shall send you to the eladrin stronghold as official representatives of Argent. I am sure they will be happy to help defend against the hordes of giants."

Quest XP: 1,400 (minor quest) for successfully convincing the eladrins to provide troops and support to aid the coastal settlements in the natural world from the frost giant onslaught.

BEHIND THE SCENES

The adventurers have the opportunity to win an alliance with the Court of Fallen Leaves, a collection of eladrin nobles that could provide a useful contingent of warriors and spellcasters to help defend the settlements of the natural world.

The adventurers travel to the Feywild and gain an audience with the court. There, three of its members charge them with recovering a magic item, the *chalice of autumn's regret*, from the fomorian Taroxn. If the adventurers retrieve the item, the court lends its military might to the support of the besieged settlements.

Unfortunately, the court is as capricious, conniving, and duplicitous as the worst of the fey. While not evil, these eladrin are decidedly unaligned. In their mind, the plea for help is merely an amusing diversion. They have a hard time truly grasping the gravity of the situation that the natural world is facing, or realizing what it means for the Feywild should the natural world fall.

INTO THE FEYWILD

When the adventurers depart for the Court of Fallen Leaves, read:

You step through Obanar's teleportation circle and arrive in the courtyard of a crumbling castle. Three towers rise around you, joined by walls to form a triangle of sorts. Nested between the two towers is a two-story building of white marble. A pair of eladrin warriors clad in gleaming chainmail and bearing spears flank an eladrin woman dressed in a flowing gown. Three glittering orbs of light circle her brow, and as you watch her dress slowly shifts in color from emerald green, to light purple, to a brilliant red.

"Welcome, travelers, to the Court of Fallen Leaves," she says, as she bows low, gesturing to the double doors that stand behind her.

The eladrin woman is Alarielle. She leads the adventurers to a long, wide entry chamber in the building. There, the courts' warriors and retainers have gathered while the noble members of the court hold a private counsel within their chambers. Alarielle offers to answer any of the adventurers' questions while her masters complete their business.

BACKGROUND

The Court of Fallen Leaves was once a powerful alliance of eladrin lords. Now, it is a mere shadow of its former self. The teleportation circle once led to a powerful castle that protected the Feywild, but the place is now a near ruin. The Court of Fallen Leaves has dwindled in numbers, and the three lords that remain (Kaerwyn, Tarentia, and Maervik) are content to bicker and scheme against each other.

SKILL CHALLENGE

The adventurers must impress the members of the Court of Fallen Leaves. If they do well, they gain an important edge in their fight against Taroxn. If they fail, the eladrin levy several curses against them to hamper their efforts.

Level: 14

Skills In This Challenge: Acrobatics, Athletics, Bluff, Diplomacy, Insight, Intimidate, History, Nature.

The format for this skill challenge is different from other skill challenges. The successes and failures are divided between two scenes, and in the second scene further divided between the court's three members.

In the first scene, the adventurers talk with the members of each lord's retinue and explore the ruined castle. Their success and failure in this scene plays a direct role in their meeting with the lords.

In the second scene, the adventurers must speak with each of the three lords. The lords offer either a benefit or a drawback for the encounter with Taroxn.

SCENE 1: THE RETINUES

The eladrin lords' followers mull around a large, marble hall. A moldering red carpet covers the floor, while dust and cobwebs cover everything. Here and there, weeds grow through cracks in the floor.

Each noble has a number of retainers here. In addition to talking to the retainers, the adventurers can explore the area. Each adventurer makes one skill check in this scene. A given skill can only be used once during this scene.

Successes and failures here only affect the next scene in the challenge. Do not end the challenge if the adventurers accumulate three failures, though in such a case the characters face a tougher challenge as the encounter plays on.

Diplomacy or Insight (DC 18, *standard action*): A few honeyed words can win the trust of Lord Kaerwyn's noble warriors. On a successful check, they tell the adventurer that their lord is an honorable man who respects fighting ability and chivalry.

If the adventurers fail this check, they receive a -5 penalty on all checks during their audience with Lord Kaerwyn. His retainers describe the adventurers as rude louts without an ounce of honor or respect.

Acrobatics or Bluff (DC 23, *standard action*): Lady Tarentia's troubadours are impressed with artful lies and bawdy stories. The more outrageous, the better. On a successful check, they tell the adventurer that their lady is currently obsessed with the arcane arts.

If the adventurer fails this check, they need 3 successes rather than 2 to win Lady Tarentia's support. Her followers describe the adventurers as boring, and she pays no attention to their plea.

Athletics or Intimidate (DC 18, *standard action*): Several centaurs, brutish barbarian warriors, accompany Lord Maervik. They respect demonstrations of strength, and an adventurer who can menace them earns their admiration. On a successful check, they tell the adventurer that their master always keeps his word to someone who defeats him in a physical contest.

On a failure, Lord Maervik hears that the adventurers are weak and ineffectual. If an adventurer wrestles him, the best of three Athletics checks becomes the best of five instead.

History or Nature (DC 15, *standard check*): A character can walk the grounds and notice that this place was once more majestic. He or she also notices a plaque mounted near the keep's gate. It proclaims the alliance of the Court of Fallen Leaves. If the adventurer succeed on this check, the group gains a +5 bonus to any single check during the second scene by invoking the memory of the alliance and the current lords' failure to maintain the traditions and splendors of the past.

SCENE 2: THE AUDIENCE CHAMBER

Once the adventurers have each interacted in the first scene, the leader of each group of courtiers is summoned to the counsel chamber. After a few moments, the adventurers are invited inside.

The chamber is as dingy and run down as the entrance way. The lords sit at a narrow wooden table. The table and chairs are the only things that have been cleaned and maintained in this area.

Each lord has a list of three skills and a DC next to their names. The adventurers need 2 successes on checks against a lord to win his or her support. A single failure turns the lord against them.

The adventurers can use any combination of skills to gain the successes, but they cannot use the same skill against a lord more than once. Each character can make one check to impress a lord.

Lord Maervik (*Athletics, History Intimidate*, DC 18, *standard actions*): Characters with a Strength of 15 or higher gain a +2 bonus on checks against Maervik.

If an adventurer uses Athletics, Lord Maervik challenges that character to a wrestling match. The lord and the adventurer make three opposed Athletics checks. If the PC wins two of the three checks, Maervik decides to support their efforts.

The lord offers the adventurers a small cask of his finest brandy. He tells them to each drink a shot before the battle to come. If they do so, they gain a +2 bonus on saves until the end of the encounter.

If the adventurers fail to win Maervik's support, he gives them a cask of even stronger brandy. They gain the save bonus, but also slide 1 square in a random direction at the start and end of each of their turns until the end of the encounter.

Lady Tarentia (*Arcana, Bluff, History*, DC 23, *standard actions*): PCs with access to the arcane power source gain a +2 bonus on checks against Tarentia.

The lady comes off as a giggling young woman, but beneath this façade lurks a calculating, clever mind.

If the adventurers win her over, she tells her spy, the gnome Twistroot, to aid them. Otherwise, she tells him to hinder them. See **Encounter D6** on page 86 for more information.

Lord Kaerwyn (*Diplomacy, Insight, Religion*, DC 20, *standard actions*): This paladin of Corellon has a soft spot for priests of any faith. Characters with the divine power source or trained in Religion gain a +2 bonus on checks against him.

Lord Kaerwyn is cold and haughty. He sees the adventurers as a nuisance, and the business with the giants not his concern. He responds well to promises of a glorious battle.

If the adventurers win his support, he gives them the eye of a fomorian preserved in a jar. If the PCs crush the eye outside of Taroxn's lair, they learn the location and nature of each creature in the lair.

If the adventurers fail to win his support, he secretly places a curse upon them. The next time a PC is hit by an attack roll with a natural 19, that hit becomes a critical hit.

OUTCOME

Whether the adventurers gain the support of all of the lords or not, the lords of the Court of Fallen Leaves give them a mission to help them decide on whether to provide aid to the natural world. "Go into the lair of the fomorian Taroxn, recover the *chalice of autumn's regret*, and return it to us," says Lord Kaerwyn. "Accomplish this task and we shall support the embattled settlements with troops and other aid."

ENCOUNTER D6: TAROXN'S LAIR

Encounter Level 18 (11,000 XP)

SETUP

Taroxn, fomorian painbringer (T)

1 fomorian warrior (F)

1 cyclops battleweaver (C)

1 blackspawn gloomweb (B)

After the adventurers make a deal with the Court of Fallen Leaves, they travel into the Feydark to defeat Taroxn and recover the magic item for the eladrin nobles. In addition, the boons and banes placed upon them by the eladrin determine the hindrances or advantages they gain in their quest. Read

For two days you have plumbed the depths of the Feydark. Using a map provided by the eladrin, you have avoided the dangers that lurk in this place. Now you follow the last leg of the route to Taroxn's lair. The passage ahead leads to a large cavern. Spectral green light washes out of the cavern, cast by enormous stands of tree-sized mushrooms. The dank, loamy odor reminds you of a fetid swamp.

This encounter depends heavily on the outcome of the skill challenge with the Court of Fallen Leaves. Refer to the skill challenge for how Twistroot behaves toward the adventurers, along with whether to apply each eladrin noble's boon or bane.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Dim light.

Mushroom Bog: This ground is muddy, and the toadstools are enormous. The bog provides cover, is difficult terrain, and is filled with poison gases. A character that enters or begins his or her turn here takes 10 poison damage and is dazed (save ends).

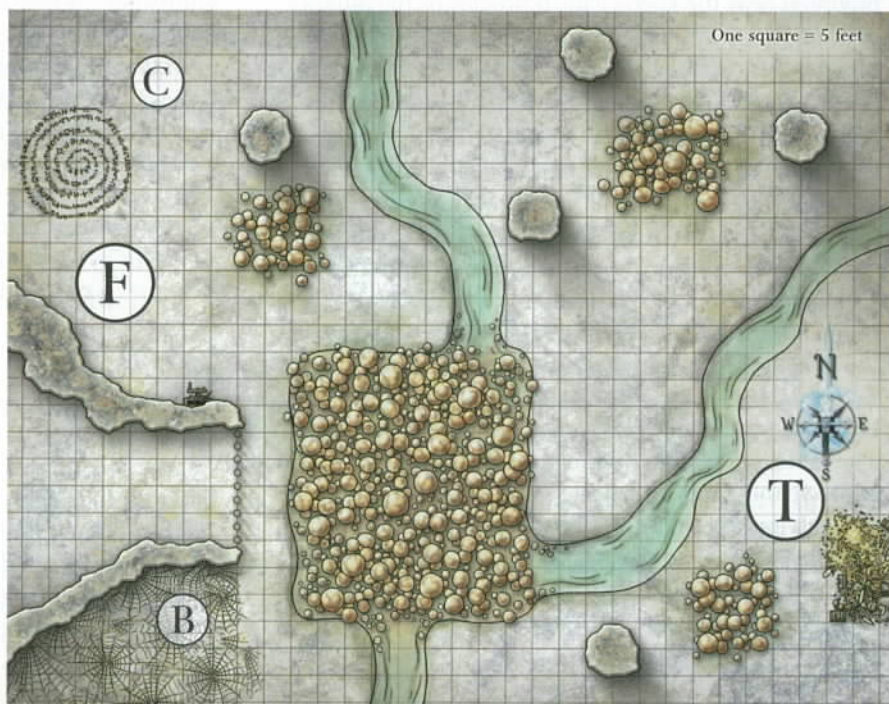
Mushroom Patches: The smaller patches provide cover and are difficult terrain, but they are not toxic.

Portcullis and Winch: The portcullis is made of iron. It can be broken with a DC 25 Strength check, has AC 5 and Reflex and Fortitude 3, and 30 hit points. It takes 2 standard actions to open the portcullis and 1 minor action to close it. A creature beneath the portcullis when it closes is attacked: +21 vs. Reflex; 5d10 + 20 damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends). If the attack misses, the creature slides clear of the portcullis (1-3 slide west, 4-6 slide east).

Webs: A creature that enters a square of webs is restrained (save ends).

Treasure: The *chalice of autumn's regret* is in the pile of 12,700 gp along with a level 17 magic item.

| Blackspawn Gloomweb (B) | Level 16 Lurker |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Large natural beast (reptile) | XP 1,400 |
| Initiative +19 | Senses Perception +8; darkvision |
| HP 120; Bloodied 60 | |
| AC 30; Fortitude 26, Reflex 27, Will 20; see also <i>gloom</i> | |
| Resist 15 acid | |
| Speed 8, climb 8 (spider climb); see also <i>mobile melee attack</i> | |
| ⚔ Bite (standard; at-will) ♦ Acid | |
| +21 vs. AC; 2d10 + 6 damage, and ongoing 5 acid damage (save ends). | |
| ⚔ Goring Charge (standard; at-will) | |
| The blackspawn gloomweb makes a charge attack: +21 vs. Fortitude; 2d8 + 7 damage, the target is knocked prone, and the blackspawn gloomweb makes a bite attack against the same target. | |
| ⚔ Mobile Melee Attack (standard; at-will) | |
| The blackspawn gloomweb can move up to half its speed and make one melee basic attack at any point during that movement. The creature doesn't provoke opportunity attacks when moving away from the target of its attack. | |
| ☞ Acidic Web (standard; at-will) ♦ Acid | |
| Ranged 10; +20 vs. Reflex; the target takes ongoing 10 acid damage and is restrained (save ends both). | |
| Gloom | |
| If the blackspawn gloomweb does not move on its turn, the shadows that constantly swirl around its form settle into a cloudlike mass that grants concealment until the beginning of its next turn. | |
| Alignment Unaligned | Languages — |
| Skills Stealth +20 | |
| Str 22 (+14) | Dex 24 (+15) Wis 10 (+8) |
| Con 18 (+12) | Int 2 (+4) Cha 8 (+7) |



| Fomorian Warrior (F) | | Level 17 Elite Soldier |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Huge fey humanoid (giant) | | XP 3,200 |
| Initiative +12 | Senses Perception +13; truesight 6 | |
| HP 332; Bloodied 166 | | |
| AC 34; Fortitude 38, Reflex 30, Will 32 | | |
| Saving Throws +2 | | |
| Speed 8 | | |
| Action Points 1 | | |
| ⚔ Mace (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | | |
| Reach 3; +22 vs. AC; 1d12 + 10 damage; see also <i>skullcracker</i> . | | |
| 👁 Evil Eye (minor; at-will) | | |
| Ranged 5; +20 vs. Will; the target is immobilized (save ends). | | |
| The target is no longer immobilized if the fomorian uses its <i>evil eye</i> on another creature. | | |
| Skullcracker | | |
| The fomorian warrior deals an extra 2d10 damage on melee attacks made against an immobilized creature. | | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Elven | |
| Skills Intimidate +17 | | |
| Str 30 (+18) | Dex 15 (+10) | Wis 10 (+8) |
| Con 22 (+14) | Int 11 (+8) | Cha 18 (+12) |
| Equipment hide armor, mace | | |

TACTICS

Taroxn relies on her two bodyguards, the fomorian warrior and the cyclops battleweaver, to protect her from harm. Taroxn stands next to the treasure pile at the southeast end of the cavern, happily counting her hoard. The cyclops and the fomorian stand at the stone pattern, engaged in a game of dice, while the gloomweb sleeps in its webs. It is a deep sleeper, and is difficult to rouse. At the end of Taroxn's turn, roll a d20. On a 10 or higher, the gloomweb awakens and joins the fight. Roll for its initiative as normal.

Taroxn moves into range only after her guards have engaged the PCs in battle. She uses *evil eye* on any character with the ability to harm her, favoring wizards or other controllers. She tries to keep the mushroom bog between her and the PCs. If engaged in melee, she gladly accepts opportunity attacks to move away, confident that her *evil eye* extracts a high levy from her foes.

The fomorian warrior is a simple, dimwitted brute. He uses his *evil eye* on a defender in an attempt to lock the character down so that the rest of the monsters can attack softer targets. He remains near the entrance.

The cyclops battleweaver stays between the fomorian warrior and Taroxn, serving as a second line of defense. She uses her reach to strike at PCs engaged by the fomorian warrior. She uses her *evil eye* on any elves, rogues, or other mobile characters.

Once battle is joined, the gloomweb uses its spider climb ability to scuttle up the cavern's ceiling. From there, it uses its *acidic web* to harass and trap characters. Once the fomorian warrior or the cyclops fall, it climbs down to engage the adventurers in melee.

Note that Twistroot, Tarentia's spy, has followed the adventurers into the cavern. What he does depends on how the skill challenge played out. See "Development" for details.

| Cyclops Battleweaver (C) | | Level 17 Skirmisher |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Large fey humanoid | | XP 1,600 |
| Initiative +14 | Senses Perception +18; truesight 6 | |
| HP 165; Bloodied 82 | | |
| AC 31; Fortitude 30, Reflex 28, Will 29 | | |
| Speed 8 | | |
| ⚔ Glaive (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | | |
| Reach 2; +22 vs. AC; 1d10 + 6 damage. | | |
| ↖ Sweeping Glaive (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | | |
| Requires glaive; close blast 2; +22 vs. AC; 1d10 + 6 damage, and the target is pushed 1 square and knocked prone. | | |
| 👁 Evil Eye (minor; at-will) | | |
| Ranged 20; the target takes a -2 penalty to speed until the end of the encounter or until the cyclops battleweaver uses <i>evil eye</i> on a different target. | | |
| Effect Transfer (immediate interrupt, when the cyclops battleweaver suffers an effect that a save can end; encounter) | | |
| The effect instead applies to the target of the battleweaver's <i>evil eye</i> . | | |
| Alignment Unaligned | | Languages Elven |
| Str 23 (+14) | Dex 18 (+12) | Wis 20 (+13) |
| Con 21 (+13) | Int 10 (+8) | Cha 12 (+9) |

| Fomorian Painbringer (T) | | Level 19 Elite Controller |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Huge fey humanoid (giant) | | XP 4,800 |
| Initiative +8 | Senses Perception +16; truesight 6 | |
| HP 362; Bloodied 181 | | |
| AC 35; Fortitude 35, Reflex 29, Will 33 | | |
| Saving Throws +2 | | |
| Speed 8 | | |
| Action Points 1 | | |
| ⚔ Flail (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | | |
| Reach 3; +24 vs. AC; 2d6 + 7 damage; see also <i>studied foe</i> . | | |
| 👁 Evil Eye (minor; at-will) | | |
| Ranged 5; +22 vs. Will; the target takes 3d6 + 5 damage whenever it damages the fomorian painbringer. If the painbringer uses this power against a new target, the previous target is no longer affected. | | |
| 👁 Funnel Pain (standard; at-will) | | |
| Ranged 8; +22 vs. Will; 4d6 + 5 damage; see also <i>studied foe</i> . | | |
| ↖ Painful Visions (minor; encounter) | | |
| Close burst 4; +22 vs. Will; the target is dazed (save ends); see also <i>studied foe</i> . | | |
| Studied Foe | | |
| The fomorian painbringer gains a +2 bonus to attack rolls against a creature affected by its <i>evil eye</i> power. | | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Elven | |
| Skills Intimidate +19 | | |
| Str 24 (+16) | Dex 9 (+8) | Wis 14 (+11) |
| Con 21 (+14) | Int 12 (+10) | Cha 21 (+14) |

DEVELOPMENT

Twistroot enters the cavern invisibly. This gnome spy has one mission, depending on whether or not Lady Tarentia told him to aid or hinder the adventurers.

If he is supposed to aid them, he uses an action each round to either give an adventurer an immediate saving throw or to sneak over and slip a *potion of vitality* into a wounded adventurer's hand. He has two potions to aid them with.

If he is supposed to hinder them, he drops the portcullis so that it divides the party, releasing it after one or two PCs have entered the cavern.

ENCOUNTER D7: THREE CORNERS GAMBIT

Encounter Level 15 (6,400 XP)

During one return trip to Argent, Obanar asks the adventurers to go on a diplomatic mission to forge an alliance between three nearby settlements: one human, one dwarven, and one goblinoid. Read:

"An army of giants, a mix of frost and fire, along with elemental allies and various monster slaves and mercenaries, prepares to march upon a place to the west of the Nentir Vale known as Three Corners," Obanar explains. "Here, three settlements stand in the path of the giant onslaught—a town of humans, a village of dwarves, and a tribe of goblins. You must go and forge an alliance between these three communities, for they shall surely fall if they stand alone."

Quest XP: 1,600 (minor quest) for successfully getting the three settlements to join forces for the mutual defense of the region.

BEHIND THE SCENES

The three communities that live within close proximity of Three Corners don't get along particularly well. The mostly human town of Treeline has a long-standing rivalry with the dwarven village of Broken Anvil that revolves around trade and fishing upon Silvery Lake. Both communities, meanwhile, consider themselves to be at war with the goblins of the Skewered Rat tribe led by the hobgoblin warlord called Skruk.

Despite the ever-increasing frequency of attacks by the giants, none of the communities of Three Corners believes that a massive army of giants and elementals is marching across the land. The reactions of the leaders of these settlements to the claims made by the adventurers range from disbelief to ridicule to anger and aggression. The adventurers can approach the communities in any order.

Skruk and the goblins expect that this is a trick of some sort, and he maintains an attitude of threatening hostility throughout any meeting.

The human leader, Sala Brim, treats the adventurers as amusing children. She explains away each of their warnings, insisting that nothing unusual is going on, and even if a few giants wander too close to Treeline, her warriors would take care of them. In truth, Sala Brim is a doppelganger who has replaced the human leader at the behest of the giants she is allied with. Her goal is to keep the people of Treeline from mustering an effective defense against the giants.

The dwarf leader, Baram Stonefist, won't agree to help until the insult leveled at him by Sala Brim is expunged with a heartfelt apology.

BROKEN ANVIL CHALLENGE

To convince Baram Stonefist to ally with the humans and goblins, the adventurers must appeal to his hurt pride and find a way to make amends for past insults.

The village of Broken Anvil consists of stone buildings and hollowed chambers carved into the surrounding hillside. Most of the inhabitants of the village are dwarfs, but there are also halflings, goliaths, and a small group of dragonborn living here.

There are two parts to this challenge. Each part requires 4 successes before 3 failures; the first part provides information and a bonus, while the second part determines whether or not the party gains the support of Baram Stonefist and the community of Broken Anvil.

Note that if the adventurers have already been to Treeline and exposed the doppelganger, then they receive a +2 bonus to checks when they negotiate with Baram Stonefist.

Level: 17

Skills Used: Bluff, Diplomacy, History, Insight, Intimidate, Religion, Streetwise.

Part 1: Gathering Information; Bluff (DC 20), Diplomacy (DC 20), Insight (DC 25), Intimidate (DC 25), Streetwise (DC 13): The adventurers explore Broken Anvil to get information to help them negotiate.

If the party succeeds, they are met with acceptance and hospitality. They learn that Broken Anvil has long had a friendly rivalry with Treeline over trade and fishing on Silvery Lake that recently turned hostile. Sala Brim, leader of Treeline, turned the annual fishing competition into a bitter experience for Baram Stonefist, not only beating him in the contest but insulting him throughout and making him look like a fool. Proceed to *Part 2: Negotiating with Baram*.

If the party fails, they are met with silence and menacing stares. They receive a -4 penalty to their checks in *Part 2: Negotiating with Baram*.

Part 2: Negotiating with Baram; Bluff (DC 25), Diplomacy (DC 20), History (DC 20), Insight (DC 13), Religion (DC 20): The adventurers appear before Baram Stonefist, leader of Broken Anvil, to state their case and convince the dwarf to form an alliance with the nearby communities before the giants arrive.

If the party succeeds, Baram's attitude becomes one of trust and friendliness. "You make a compelling argument for cooperation," Baram says. "If you convince either or both of our neighbors to align, you can count on the support of Broken Anvil."

If the party fails, Baram becomes angry and suspicious of the adventurers. "Who are you to bring warnings and falsehoods to my town? Go cry dragon somewhere else," he tells them, demanding that they leave Broken Anvil immediately and never return.

TREELINE CHALLENGE

To convince the primarily human community of Treeline to join forces with the neighboring settlements of Broken Anvil and the Skewered Rat goblin tribe, the adventurers must first discover that Sala Brim has been replaced by a doppelganger. Only then can they negotiate in any meaningful manner with Treeline's new leaders.

There are three parts to this challenge. Each part requires 4 successes before 3 failure.

Note that if the adventurers have already been to Broken Anvil, they gain a +2 bonus to checks to expose Sala Brim's true identity.

Level: 17

Skills Used: Bluff, Diplomacy, History, Insight, Intimidate, Nature, Perception, Streetwise.

Part 1: Gathering Information; Bluff (DC 20), Diplomacy (DC 20), Insight (DC 25), Intimidate (DC 25), Perception (DC 20); Streetwise (DC 13): The adventurers explore Treeline to get information to help them negotiate with the leaders of the community.

If the party succeeds, they are met with nervous politeness and aloof hospitality. They learn that the once-popular leader of the community, Sala Brim, has become cold and haughty in recent weeks. She even insulted and humiliated the leader of the dwarven community of Broken Anvil, which was extremely uncharacteristic of her usual outlook and behavior.

If the party fails, they are met with silence and menacing stares. They receive a -2 penalty to their checks in the next part of the challenge.

Part 2: Negotiating with Sala; Bluff (DC 25), Diplomacy (DC 25), History (DC 20), Insight (DC 13), Intimidate (DC 20): The adventurers appear before Sala Brim, leader of Treeline, to state their case and convince the human to form an alliance with the nearby communities before the giants arrive.

If the party succeeds, they gain a +2 bonus to checks in the next part of the challenge.

If the party fails, they gain a -2 penalty to checks in the next part of the challenge.

Succeed or fail, Sala smiles and offers the adventurers the same response. "I believe that you believe that we are in terrible danger," Sala Brim says. "I see no real evidence of such an alliance of giants, however. I am afraid that you have been deluded by agents who want Treeline to make itself vulnerable to its real enemies—Broken Anvil and the goblins that follow the bandit Skruk."

Part 3: Exposing Sala; Insight (DC 20), Intimidate (DC 25), Nature (DC 20), Perception (DC 25), Streetwise (DC 20): The adventurers must discover why Sala Brim's attitude has changed so drastically. They can either gather more information by talking to the people of Treeline, or they can confront Sala directly.

If the party succeeds, they expose Sala as a doppelganger. The real Sala was eliminated so that the switch could take place. The doppelganger works for Breven Foss, sowing dissent and discord among the people of Three Corners. Once Sala is exposed, she attacks and tries to escape. The new leaders of Treeline immediately agree to an alliance.

If the party fails, Sala demands that the adventurers leave Treeline immediately and never return.

| Doppelganger Rogue | | Level 16 Skirmisher |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| Medium natural humanoid (shapechanger) | | XP 1,400 |
| Initiative +14 | Senses Perception +14 | |
| HP 150; Bloodied 75 | | |
| AC 30; Fortitude 28, Reflex 29, Will 29 | | |
| Speed 6 | | |
| ⚔ Longsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | | |
| +21 vs. AC; 1d10 + 7 damage. | | |
| † Shapeshifter Feint (minor; at-will) | | |
| +19 vs. Reflex; the doppelganger gains combat advantage against the target until the end of the doppelganger's next turn. | | |
| Combat Advantage | | |
| The doppelganger sneak deals an extra 3d8 damage against any target it has combat advantage against. | | |
| Change Shape (minor; at-will) ♦ Polymorph | | |
| A doppelganger can alter its physical form to take on the appearance of any Medium humanoid, including a unique individual (see Change Shape, <i>Monster Manual</i> page 280). | | |
| Alignment Unaligned | | Languages Common, Giant |
| Skills Bluff +17, Insight +14, Stealth +17 | | |
| Str 16 (+11) | Dex 18 (+12) | Wis 13 (+9) |
| Con 14 (+10) | Int 10 (+8) | Cha 18 (+12) |

SKEWERED RAT CHALLENGE

To convince Skruk to agree to the alliance, the adventurers must best the leader in a contest of skill and physical prowess. They must overcome each of Skruk's champions (achieve 2 successes against each) before gaining 3 failures in total across the entire challenge.

Level: 17

Complexity: 2 (6 successes before 3 failures)

Skills Used: Acrobatics, Athletics, Arcana, Endurance, Intimidate, Perception, Religion, Stealth, Thievery.

Chiss, a goblin shaman, engages the PCs in a contest of mystic knowledge. Arcana (DC 20), Nature (DC 25), Religion (DC 25) are used in this contest.

Brubb, a bugbear, engages the PCs in a contest of physical superiority. Athletics (DC 25), Endurance (DC 20), Intimidate (DC 25) are used in this contest.

Klik, a goblin sneak, engages the PCs in a contest of stealth and dexterity. Acrobatics (DC 20), Perception (DC 20), Stealth (DC 25), and Thievery (DC 25) are used in this contest.

If the PCs succeed, Skruk agrees to join the alliance. If they fail, Skruk expels the party from goblin territory.

FROST GIANT ENCOUNTERS OVERVIEW

In this portion of *Revenge of the Giants*, the adventurers travel to Flotsam, a small village perched on the shores of the Frozen Sea. Once there, they must defend the village from an attack by raiding frost giants and help the villagers weather a particularly bad storm. In so doing, they earn the trust of Kaseem, a djinn sea captain who watches over the village and knows how to navigate the Frozen Sea and cross over into the Elemental Chaos to reach Frost Spire.

GETTING INVOLVED

As the adventurers deal with their research quests and with the threat of the earth giants, they eventually discover that there is an alliance of giants. Frost giants in the alliance sail from their frozen lands to strike at coastal towns and villages, such as Andor and Flotsam. Worse, the adventurers learn that the frost giant jarl has undertaken a special mission to a place called Frost Spire. The elemental master, Breven Foss, even confirmed that he was heading there to help the jarl. In discussions with Obanar, the last guardian identifies Frost Spire as a location in the Elemental Chaos. "I suggest you try to stop the jarl before he completes his task," Obanar says. "I can send you to Flotsam, where you should be able to find transportation into the Elemental Chaos. Many of the pirates of the Frozen Coast know how to navigate between the planes."

THE VILLAGE OF FLOTSAM

Flotsam, a small village of desperate treasure hunters and fishermen sits along the shore of the Frozen Sea. Battered by vicious storms which can drop over a foot of snow on the village in a single day, the place nevertheless tenaciously clings to life. Several times in the past, monsters, a deadly storm, or a similar mishap have laid waste to the village. Yet, the place survives.

Flotsam lacks any sort of true leadership or government, though the inhabitants have come to trust and rely on each other. Justice is harsh, swift, and brutal here, with thieves and murderers either killed by an angry mob or driven from the village or stripped of their belongings and forced to face the dangers of the Frozen Coast alone.

Flotsam is built amid the scattered ruins of an ancient fort. A single, tumbled stone wall marks what was once a defensive position, while four columns of hardened amber surround a large, flat stone embedded in the ground and covered with arcane runes. The stone is a nexus for several types of magic, and a skilled caster can tap into it to enhance his or her abilities. A nearby teleportation circle links this place with distant locales, though few use it today.

The village consists of a number of simple huts built from scrap wood and broken stones from the ruined fort, along with a number of igloos. Stone jetties serve as docks for small boats.

Flotsam rests on the stony rim of the Frozen Sea. Tides and eddies off the coast connect with the Sea of Howling Souls in the Elemental Chaos, as the border between the natural world and the Plane Below is very thin in this area. The locals rely on the sea for food including fish, sea plants, and so forth to provide a sustainable diet.

FEATURES OF THE VILLAGE

The following landmarks can be found in or near the village of Flotsam.

Bridge: The villagers built this crude, wooden bridge to connect the two parts of the village separated by the Flotsam River. The bridge creaks and pops ominously when crossed, and the locals know to cross over it one at a time.

Docks: Flotsam's docks are simply long, stone formations carved to allow small fishing boats to dock here. The villagers keep them clear of snow and ice to make loading and unloading as easy as possible.

When a boat returns from a fishing trip, the villagers gather at the docks to see what the fishermen have caught. While most return with fish and other food, once or twice a year a boat returns with a creature from the Elemental Chaos.

Huts: The huts are little more than mounds of broken rock and driftwood built with a hollow, central area accessible by a small tunnel dug through the snow. Most of them rest atop packed snow and ice. Several of the more-prominent villagers dwell in well-crafted igloos.

Ice Floes: Here and there, chunks of ice float in the water off shore.

River: The Flotsam River, an icy cold waterway, winds from the warmer inland regions to empty into the Frozen Sea. Ice floes regularly appear within the swift-moving river.

Standing Stones: Four 6-foot tall stone pillars stand at the corner of a stone floor scribed with arcane ruins. Snow never piles up here, and the stone pulses with arcane energy.

Teleportation Circle: The teleportation circle is a low circle of stones of the same make as the wall. It is located 200 feet west of the village. A well-used trail through the snow leads from the circle to the village of Flotsam.

Wall: This 40-foot-tall stone wall is ancient and very unusual. It is utterly smooth and shows no signs of natural wear, though only three small sections of it remain. Even the rubble lacks signs of cracks and wear due to the weather.

KASEEM

Kaseem is a djinn, an elemental creature of wind. In his humanoid form, he is blue-skinned and goes bare-chested, even on the coldest of days. He speaks in a well-mannered voice, always polite and patient. He never uses contractions, and does his best to calm any disputes. He has lived among the villagers of Flotsam for a long time, and protects the place as best he can.

Kaseem owns and sails the *Percheron*, a small ship crafted from ice and imbued with the magic of storm and sea. When sailing, Kaseem transforms into a vortex of winds. His elemental nature allows him to guide the ship through any storm, no matter how fierce.

FROZEN SEA AND SEA OF HOWLING SOULS

The Frozen Sea, a cold stretch of ocean that pounds along the Frozen Coast, flows near thin cracks in reality that connect the natural world to the Elemental Chaos. To some that sail this dangerous stretch of water, the sea simply takes a ship or two every season, never to be returned. To others with more experience and knowledge, the course between the planes presents an opportunity for profit and adventure.

Within the Elemental Chaos floats a 50-mile-wide, bowl-shaped storm formation. The rim of the storm forms a 3-mile-wide “beach” that surrounds the water contained within the bowl, the storm tossed Sea of Howling Souls. Thick clouds churn above the sea in an enormous vortex, an endless hurricane that sweeps the waves with powerful winds and, at times, blizzard-like storms. Even at its most peaceful moments, the storm creates winds that kick up dust and snow drifts. At their worst, the winds can pick up a dragon and cast it into the sea.

The temperature throughout the sea hovers just above freezing. Icebergs float across its waters, while somewhere in the sea stands an island of rock and ice known as the Frost Spire. Legends tell that a mighty frost giant lord, Jarl Hargaad, secreted a cache of gems, gold, and magical treasures within Frost Spire, a great hoard pillaged from dozens of domains within the Astral Sea, cities of the Elemental Chaos, and settlements in the natural world. The jarl was eventually slain during a raid on Gruumsh’s astral domain.

Few explorers would have any reason to visit this storm-blasted place, save for the kernel of truth that keeps the legend of Frost Spire alive in the hearts of the greedy and ambitious. At times, the sea’s storm-tossed waves deposit minor treasures and magical items. Goblets forged from gold and decorated with gems, swords that blaze with the light of the sun, and other treasures are washed into the connected seas and sometimes caught in the nets of surprised fishermen.

Most believe that the great treasure houses of Frost Spire have flooded, and the riches within them are now scattered to the waves. Since the death of the frost giant jarl, no living creature has set foot there. A ferocious storm circles the island, destroying any ship that dares its waters. When the jarl died, his most trusted followers buried him on the island and wrought a powerful ritual to protect the place from thieves. Or at least, that is what the giants believed.

In truth, Frost Spire is the remaining piece of an enormous spear hurled by Kord at the dawn of the war between the gods and the primordial. The spear impaled the primordial Suulkar, lord of oceans and water, and nearly killed the powerful creature. When the divine engine that trapped Piranoth was shattered, a piece of it landed in this desolate location. Jarl Hargaad sought to recover divine artifacts and other items that could awaken the primordial and heal its wounds. The jarl failed, and Suulkar remains trapped beneath Frost Spire, caught on the boundary between life and death.

THE FROST GIANTS

An expedition of frost giants, led by the fearsome Jarl Grugnurson, are the first creatures to step foot on the Spire since Jarl Hargaad’s death. The jarl carries with him the *talisman of seven winds*, a magic item capable of controlling the storms around Frost Spire. He gathered a number of warriors, including a small contingent of ice archons led by the archon wizard Zaelex, and headed to the island.

Jarl Grugnurson and his followers came in search of a piece of the divine engine, which is supposed to be hidden within Frost Spire. They also plan to release Suulkar, to further incite terror and provide an additional ally for Piranoth when the primordial is freed.

Grugnurson and a few elite guards traveled into the inner sanctum where Suulkar slumbers several days ago. They took the *talisman of seven winds* with them, stranding the rest of the expedition on the island. His remaining lieutenants have fallen to infighting.

Worse yet, Zaelex and the frost giant smith Helstaff condoned the looting of an ancient frost giant burial ground on the island. The restless giant dead now wander about, killing any giants they encounter. Many of the surviving warriors, gripped by panic at the apparent sacrilege and the jarl’s disappearance, took to their longships and attempted to escape. Only a few made it past the storm, with the rest sent to the bottom of the sea.

As it stands now, the frost giants at Frost Spire are divided, tense, and desperate. The adventurers must fight their way through them while perhaps turning the mistrust (and perhaps even the undead giant jarl’s wrath) in their favor.

ENCOUNTER F1: ATTACK ON FLOTSAM

Encounter Level 18 (11,000 XP)

SETUP

3 frost giants
3 frost giant marauders
1 frost giant windkeeper

Obanar teleports the adventurers to the magic circle just outside the village of Flotsam. The adventurers arrive in time to see the sails of frost giant ships approaching the shore. Frost giants aboard the ships prepare to leap to the beach at attack as soon as the vessels make landfall.

Don't place any of the monsters as yet, since the encounter begins with the frost giants approaching the shore of Flotsam. Read:

You appear in a frozen waste, with icy cold and relentless wind howling all around you. For a brief, merciful moment, the winds pause. Then the moment of silence is shattered by the sound of a great horn.

Three kayaks carved from ice glide across the water toward the shore and the village that hugs the coast. The ships are impossibly large, as are their occupants, frost giant warriors clutching great axes that nearly match their prodigious heights. One of the frost giants, clad in thick furs, grasps a horn and gives it another blast. As he does so, the howling winds once again begin to blow.

| 3 Frost Giants | Level 17 Brute |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Large elemental humanoid (cold, giant) | XP 1,600 each |
| Initiative +11 | Senses Perception +13 |
| HP 201; Bloodied 100; see also <i>dying swipe</i> | |
| AC 29; Fortitude 32, Reflex 27, Will 28 | |
| Resist 15 cold | |
| Speed 8 (ice walk) | |
| ⚔ Icy Greataxe (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold, Weapon | |
| Reach 2; +20 vs. AC; 4d6 + 7 (crit 8d6 + 31) cold damage. | |
| † Dying Swipe (when the frost giant drops to 0 hit points) | |
| The frost giant makes an icy greataxe attack. | |
| † Chilling Strike (standard; recharge ☞ ☞) ♦ Cold, Weapon | |
| Reach 2; +20 vs. AC; 2d6 + 7 cold damage, and the target gains vulnerable 10 cold (save ends). | |
| ✂ Icy Handaxe (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold, Weapon | |
| Ranged 5/10; +20 vs. AC; 2d8 + 7 cold damage. | |
| Icebound Footing | |
| When an effect pulls, pushes, or slides a frost giant, the giant moves 2 squares less than the effect specifies. Also, a frost giant can make a saving throw to avoid being knocked prone. | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Giant |
| Skills Athletics +19 | |
| Str 23 (+14) | Dex 16 (+11) Wis 20 (+13) |
| Con 21 (+13) | Int 10 (+8) Cha 12 (+9) |
| Equipment hide armor, greataxe, 3 handaxes | |

| 3 Frost Giant Marauders | Level 17 Skirmisher |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Large elemental humanoid (cold, giant) | XP 1,600 each |
| Initiative +14 | Senses Perception +11 |
| HP 168; Bloodied 84 | |
| AC 31; Fortitude 30, Reflex 27, Will 26 | |
| Resist 15 cold | |
| Speed 8 (ice walk) | |
| ⚔ Icy Handaxe (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold, Weapon | |
| Reach 2; +22 vs. AC; 2d8 + 8 cold damage; hit or miss, the frost giant may shift 2 squares after the attack. | |
| ✂ Icy Handaxe (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold, Weapon | |
| Ranged 5/10; +22 vs. AC; 2d6 + 6 cold damage; hit or miss, the frost giant may shift 2 squares after the attack. | |
| ✂ Hurling Charge (standard; encounter) ♦ Cold, Weapon | |
| Ranged 5/10; +21 vs. Reflex; 1d8 + 8 cold damage; hit or miss, the frost giant then makes a charge against the target. | |
| † Twin Strike (standard; recharge ☞ ☞) ♦ Cold, Weapon | |
| The frost giant makes two icy handaxe attacks; the frost giant may shift 2 squares after the first attack. | |
| Icebound Footing | |
| When an effect pulls, pushes, or slides a frost giant, the giant moves 2 squares less than the effect specifies. Also, a frost giant can make a saving throw to avoid being knocked prone. | |
| Threatening Reach | |
| The frost giant can make opportunity attacks against all enemies within its reach (2 squares). | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Giant |
| Skills Athletics +19 | |
| Str 21 (+13) | Dex 19 (+12) Wis 17 (+11) |
| Con 24 (+15) | Int 10 (+8) Cha 12 (+9) |
| Equipment hide armor, 4 handaxes | |

TACTICS

Roll for initiative, though the giants do nothing but row to shore on the first round of combat. The kayaks arrive at the points indicated on the map at the end of the first round. The kayaks begin directly north of their landing points, just off the map. The adventurers enter the map from the west side.

The frost giants seek to land their ships at the points marked on the map, disembark, and slaughter everyone in the village. The giants grant no quarter, nor do they ask for any.

The giants are organized into three groups, one for each kayak. The kayaks are labeled A, B, and C, and each group uses different tactics.

Kayak A: This group includes the windkeeper and 1 frost giant. They seek to secure the village's walled area. They massacre anyone they see, then the windkeeper uses his spells to harass any defenders within the village's eastern end. The frost giant stands on the western end of the bridge to block access to the windkeeper and protect him from harm.

Kayak B: This group consists of 1 frost giant and 2 frost giant marauders. They rampage through the village's eastern end, kicking over huts and killing anyone they find in the streets. In their frenzy, they always attack the nearest enemy.

Frost Giant Windkeeper Level 16 Controller (Leader)

Large elemental humanoid (cold, giant) XP 1,400

Initiative +13

Senses Perception +20

HP 158; Bloodied 79

AC 30; Fortitude 31, Reflex 30, Will 32

Resist 15 cold

Speed 8 (ice walk)

④ **Spear of Storms** (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold, Weapon

Reach 3; +21 vs. AC; 2d10 + 5 cold damage, and the target slides 3 squares.

❄ **Arctic Vortex** (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold

Area burst 1 within 20; +20 vs. Fortitude; 2d6 + 5 cold damage, and the target slides 3 squares.

❄ **Driving Blizzard** (standard; recharge [2][2]) ♦ Cold

Area burst 2 within 20; +20 vs. Reflex; 3d6 + 5 cold damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends). Until the end of the encounter, the area becomes difficult terrain for creatures smaller than Large size.

❄ **Gale of the North Wind** (standard; encounter) ♦ Cold

Close blast 5; targets enemies only; +20 vs. Fortitude; 4d10 + 5 cold damage, and the target is pushed 2 squares and knocked prone. Miss: Half damage and push 1 square.

❄ **Drums of the North** (standard; at-will) ♦ Fear, Implement

Close burst 10; targets enemies; +20 vs. Will; the target is pushed 2 squares and slowed until the end of the frost giant's next turn. Allies in the burst immediately shift 3 squares. The frost giant must sheath his longsword to play the drum.

Alignment Evil

Languages Common, Giant

Skills Arcana +17, Nature +20, Religion +17

Str 20 (+13)

Dex 21 (+13)

Wis 24 (+15)

Con 22 (+14)

Int 19 (+12)

Cha 21 (+13)

Equipment hide armor, longsword, drum

Kayak C: This kayak transports 1 frost giant and 1 frost giant marauder. They rush along the village's eastern edge to seize the standing stones. From there, they use ranged attacks to help the giants from kayak B finish off the villager's defenders. They are cannier fighters despite their battle madness and focus their attacks on adventurers with ranged and area attacks.

Attacking Huts: Some giants might spend their turns smashing huts. Ideally, at least one giant each round should hack at a hut. Damage three or more huts to make the next encounter more interesting.

THE VILLAGERS

Place 8 villagers in the village streets when the attack begins. Lacking combat abilities, the villagers try to hide in their huts. Otherwise, they run from the giants. They try to run to the west, toward the walls. In their panic they forget the bridge's weakness and might cause it to collapse. A villager is killed with a single hit. They have defenses of 15.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Bright light.

Bridge: The bridge is in poor repair. If 2 or more size Medium creatures or 1 Large creature stands on it, it immediately collapses. Anyone on the bridge when it falls suffers 2d10 damage as it tumbles into the icy water below. The giants do not notice the bridge's poor shape.

Huts: The giants take particular joy in demolishing the villagers' crude huts. As a minor action once per turn, a giant can kick an adjacent hut for 1d10 damage. If a hut takes more than 20 damage total, it collapses. Anyone inside a collapsing hut takes 2d10 damage and is immobilized (save ends). The area becomes difficult terrain.

Ice Floes: Here and there, chunks of ice float in the water.

Kayaks: The kayaks are 2 squares wide and 6 squares long, just large enough to hold three frost giants each. It costs one extra square of movement to enter or exit a kayak.

Standing Stones: A creature standing on the stone embedded on the ground can use a minor action to tap into its power. Until the end of its turn, it gains a +2 bonus to attack rolls with implement powers. For each attack it makes that gains the bonus but misses, the creature suffers 2 damage.

Wall: The wall is 8 squares tall. Climbing the wall requires a DC 20 Athletics check.



ENCOUNTER F2: MEETING KASEEM

Encounter Level 16 (7,800 XP)

After the adventurers defeat the frost giants, they meet Kaseem, a djinn windsword who calls Flotsam home. Kaseem insists that they help repair the huts and prepare for a coming storm. Kaseem refuses to aid the adventurers until these tasks are completed.

Kaseem was once part of a guild of elemental creatures who aided Argent and its champions in ages past. He often provided help in the form of wayfarer—navigating paths through the deadliest areas of the Elemental Chaos when the champions of Argent needed to enter the Plane Below.

| Djinn Windsword | Level 17 Soldier |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Large elemental humanoid (air) | XP 1,600 |
| Initiative +16 | Senses Perception +19; blindsight 10 |
| HP 162; Bloodied 81 | |
| AC 33; Fortitude 31, Reflex 29, Will 29 | |
| Immune disease, poison; Resist 15 lightning, 15 thunder | |
| Speed 6, fly 8 (hover) | |
| ④ Scimitar (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| Reach 2; +24 vs. AC; 2d8 + 7 damage (crit 3d8 + 23), and the target is marked until the end of the djinn windsword's next turn. | |
| ✈ Come to Me (minor 1/round; at-will) | |
| Ranged 5; +22 vs. Fortitude; the djinn windsword pulls the target 5 squares. | |
| ✈ Wind Vortex (standard; at-will) | |
| Ranged 5; +22 vs. Reflex; the target slides 3 squares. | |
| ◀ Whirlwind Dervish (standard; recharges when the djinn windsword is struck by a critical hit) ♦ Lightning, Thunder | |
| Close burst 2; +22 vs. AC; 3d10 + 6 lightning and thunder damage. | |
| Change Shape (minor; at-will) ♦ Polymorph | |
| A djinn windsword can alter its physical form to appear as an attractive Medium humanoid of any race or gender (see <i>Monster Manual</i> page 280). | |
| Alignment Unaligned | Languages Common, Primordial |
| Skills Bluff +18, Insight +19, Nature +19, Thievery +19 | |
| Str 26 (+16) | Dex 23 (+14) Wis 23 (+14) |
| Con 18 (+12) | Int 19 (+12) Cha 20 (+13) |
| Equipment scimitar | |

THE MEETING

Once the frost giants are slain, Kaseem appears before the adventurers and begs them to help the people of Flotsam. He arrives just as the battle ends. While he is greatly impressed by the courage the adventurers have shown (assuming they fought against the giants), he expects them to take care of the villagers before they depart or otherwise continue their personal quest.

The adventurers must spend a day helping repair the village. During this time, a ferocious wind squall hits Flotsam, and a number of creatures emerge from the Frozen Sea to attack. This sequence consists of a

number of mini-encounters designed to set the stage for the upcoming voyage and to evoke the feeling of chaos, danger, and peril of this region that is so close to the Elemental Chaos.

REPAIR DUTY

Kaseem asks the adventurers to help repair the damaged huts and tend to wounded villagers. The adventurers can repair a hut at the direction of the villagers. This work takes 2 hours per hut damaged during the fight with the giants.

The following mini-encounters take place on a timeline based on how long the adventurers spend fixing the huts. If the adventurers finish early, they can avoid some of the encounters.

SPEEDING THE REPAIR PROCESS

When the adventurers begin work on a hut, one character aided by up to two others can attempt a DC 25 Dungeoneering or Nature check to speed up the process. On a success, the characters repair the hut in 1 hour. On a failed check, it takes 3 hours to make the repairs.

Hour 2: TIDAL WAVE

Just as the adventurers complete repairs on the first hut (or their second, with good skill checks), a massive wave appears on the horizon. The villagers run for cover. In just under a minute, the tidal wave hits.

The tidal wave is minor by the standards of this region. It is a wall of water barely 10 feet tall once it crashes over the shore. Still, it damages to 1d4 huts and each PC who fails a DC 18 Athletics check to run for cover takes 3d10 + 5 damage from the wave.

Hour 3: SLAAD ATTACK

The adventurers soon learn what caused the tidal wave. A small chunk of rock fell from the sky, a fragment tossed out of the Elemental Chaos from a slaad colony. Some of the slaad survived the impact, washing ashore to attack the village. Among the invaders are three gray slaads, two red slaads, and five slaad spawn.

The slaads try to sneak ashore and devour a few villagers and knock over the nearest hut. They simply want to cause chaos. They attack the adventurers if the party attempts to defend the village.

During the fight, Kaseem uses his powers to aid the adventurers. He transforms into a *wind vortex* and, on his turn, can slide one creature 3 squares. Pick one monster, PC, or villager as the target. Kaseem protects villagers first, pushes a slaad out of a flank second, or moves a PC into a flank or out of danger as his third choice of action in a round.

3 Gray Slaads (Rift Slaad)**Level 13 Skirmisher**

Medium elemental humanoid

XP 800 each

Initiative +12 **Senses** Perception +7; low-light vision**HP** 128; **Bloodied** 64; see also *planar flux***AC** 27; **Fortitude** 25, **Reflex** 26, **Will** 24**Immune** chaos phage (see *Monster Manual* page 239)**Speed** 6, teleport 4⚔ **Claws** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Disease**+18 vs. AC; 2d8 + 2 damage, and the slaad makes a secondary attack against the same target. *Secondary Attack*: +16 vs. Fortitude; on a hit, the target contracts chaos phage.✂ **Condition Transfer** (immediate interrupt, when hit by an attack that applies any conditions; recharge ☐ ☐ ☐)

Ranged 5; +16 vs. Fortitude; conditions applied by the triggering attack affect the target instead of the slaad.

⬅ **Induce Planar Instability** (standard; encounter)

Close burst 3; +16 vs. Will; 1d8 + 2 damage, and the target shifts 3 squares and is knocked prone.

⬅ **Planar Flux** (free, when first bloodied; encounter) ♦ **Teleportation**

The slaad teleports 8 squares and becomes insubstantial until the end of its next turn.

Alignment Chaotic evil **Languages** Primordial**Skills** Athletics +13, Stealth +15**Str** 15 (+8) **Dex** 18 (+10) **Wis** 12 (+7)**Con** 16 (+9) **Int** 9 (+5) **Cha** 14 (+8)**2 Red Slaads (Blood Slaad)****Level 15 Soldier**

Large elemental humanoid

XP 1,200 each

Initiative +13 **Senses** Perception +8; low-light vision**HP** 146; **Bloodied** 73**AC** 29; **Fortitude** 28, **Reflex** 29, **Will** 25**Immune** chaos phage (see *Monster Manual* page 239)**Speed** 8, teleport 4⚔ **Bite** (standard; at-will)

Reach 2; +21 vs. AC; 2d8 + 6 damage.

⚔ **Claw** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Disease**Reach 2; +21 vs. AC; 1d6 + 3 damage, and the slaad makes a secondary attack against the same target. *Secondary Attack*: +19 vs. Fortitude; on a hit, the target contracts chaos phage.⚔ **Leaping Pounce** (standard; recharge ☐ ☐ ☐)

The slaad shifts 4 squares and makes two claw attacks. If either claw attack hits, the target is marked until the end of the slaad's next turn.

⬅ **Horrid Croak** (standard; encounter) ♦ **Fear**

Close blast 5; +19 vs. Fortitude; the target is immobilized until the end of the slaad's next turn.

Alignment Chaotic evil **Languages** Primordial**Skills** Athletics +15, Stealth +16**Str** 17 (+10) **Dex** 19 (+11) **Wis** 12 (+8)**Con** 18 (+11) **Int** 11 (+7) **Cha** 15 (+9)**Hour 4: The Argument**

This encounter gives the players a chance to roleplay a bit with the villagers. As work proceeds, two villagers get into a fight. The adventurers can break up the fight easily enough. The two people involved are the dwarf Mag Maggarg, a one-eyed, old dwarf who has lost all his teeth, and the human sailor Vandulf. Vandulf is bald, wears a thick layer of furs, and is covered in runic tattoos.

The two argue over what happened to a gold statuette they recovered from the sea three days ago. Kaseem tries to calm them, but they refuse to listen to

5 Slaad Spawn**Level 17 Minion Skirmisher**

Small elemental humanoid

XP 400 each

Initiative +17 **Senses** Perception +10; low-light vision**HP** 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.**AC** 31; **Fortitude** 30, **Reflex** 31, **Will** 26**Speed** 5, teleport 3⚔ **Bite** (standard; at-will)

+22 vs. AC; 13 damage.

⚔ **Chaotic Slam** (standard; at-will)

The slaad spawn jumps a distance up to its speed and then attacks an adjacent enemy: +22 vs. AC; 12 damage and the target is knocked prone. *Miss*: The slaad spawn explodes and is reduced to 0 hit points. The spawn then makes the following close burst 1 attack: +20 vs. Reflex; 9 damage.

Alignment Chaotic evil**Languages** —**Str** 17 (+11) **Dex** 24 (+15) **Wis** 14 (+10)**Con** 22 (+14) **Int** 3 (+4) **Cha** 7 (+6)

reason. If the PCs intervene, they can help calm the villagers and win Kaseem's respect.

This is a complexity 1 skill challenge. The PCs need 4 successes before they accrue 3 failures. They can use the following skills, but can make only one check each. One PC at a time can aid each skill check.

Diplomacy (DC 19, *standard action*): The PCs can talk some sense into the two sailors, bringing their tempers under control.

Intimidate (DC 19, *standard action*): If gentle persuasion doesn't work, threats and reminders that there's too much work to do to let a squabble get in the way can also help.

Perception (DC 23, *standard action*): The statuette was buried in a box near the village wall. It was knocked further inland by the tidal wave. With a success, a PC finds the splintered box. Success also allows the PCs to use *Thievery* (see below).

Nature (DC 16, *standard action*): By simply pointing out the ferocity of the tidal wave, the PCs can convince the villagers that the item's loss was no one's fault.

Thievery (DC 16, *standard action*): Success determines that the box was battered open. While the lock is broken, it was not picked or bashed. Rather, it tore apart when the box was splintered by the wave.

Insight (DC 19, *standard action*): A success indicates that neither villager is lying when they claim that they didn't steal the statuette.

Success: The adventurers convince the two villagers to stop fighting. Work continues at a brisk pace, and the villagers agree that the wave must have carried off their treasure.

Failure: The villagers become bitter enemies. A noticeable pall settles over the community, and the villagers work in grudging silence for the rest of the day.

Wrapping Up

Award the PCs full XP for defeating the slaad. They earn 200 XP each and Kaseem gives them a level 18 magic item as a gift if they succeed at the skill challenge, as well as his piece of the divine engine.

ENCOUNTER F3: VOYAGE TO FROST SPIRE

Encounter Level Varies

The adventurers now have a chance to talk to Kaseem and explain their situation. After they convince the djinn to help them get to Frost Spire, the rest of this encounter takes the form of a series of random encounters as Kaseem's ship braves the perils of the Frozen Sea and the Sea of Howling Winds as it makes its way to the Elemental Chaos.

Even under the best of conditions, sailing through the rift into the Sea of Howling Souls is a perilous undertaking. Not only do storms churn and toss the sea, but a multitude of strange creatures prowl its waters. Even with Kaseem's help, the adventurers face a daunting journey.

In this portion of the adventure, the characters face a harrowing trip aboard the *Percheron*. You can present the trip as a simple narration using the elements below, or include several battles and hazards as you see fit. Think of this as a chance to let the adventurers catch up on XP, accumulate some additional treasure, and gather hints of story lines you want to explore beyond this adventure. This section is an open space for you to include elements of your own design.



THE PERCHERON

Kaseem's ship is a vessel of wind and water carved from blue ice. Icicles hang from its sides, and a figure-head of a proud warhorse decorates its prow. Despite its appearance, the ship is warm to the touch. Its elemental nature provides some protection against the sea's wrath. While aboard the ship, the adventurers suffer no ill effects from the weather (unless otherwise noted in the encounters below).

When Kaseem pilots the ship, he transforms into a whirling vortex of wind that swirls around its mast. A sail of clouds descends from the mast's top and billows outward at Kaseem's command. Unfortunately, Kaseem must remain in this form to control the ship. During a battle, he leaves the adventurers to fend for themselves. If he did transform back into humanoid form, the fierce waves and howling winds would quickly capsize the *Percheron*.

Tent: For the comfort of passengers, Kaseem erected a yellow and blue striped tent on the *Percheron's* deck. It has enough space inside for six characters to sleep comfortably. In addition, a glowing coal mounted on an iron frame radiates enough heat to hold back the bitter cold.

Masts: The masts are 4 squares tall. Atop it sits a small crow's nest. Climbing the mast is relatively easy (DC 11 Athletics check) due to handholds carved into the pole. In addition, a character atop the crow's nest gains a +2 bonus on Perception checks to notice approaching ships or monsters.

THE VOYAGE

It takes three days for Kaseem to bring the adventurers to Frost Spire. Before the first day of travel ends, the ship passes from the Frozen Sea in the natural world into the Sea of Howling Souls within the Elemental Chaos. The encounters and hazards that follow can be used to inject some excitement into the trip.

Even if you do not use any of the encounters, remember that the adventurers sail aboard a djinn-propelled ship of ice and snow upon a roiling sea contained within a massive, bowl-shaped rock that floats within the Elemental Chaos. This is journey across a vista of magic, wonder, and danger, not a jaunt to the corner shop in a peaceful village. In addition to the encounter ideas below, there are also several wondrous sites you can use to inject a sense of wonder and magic into the session. Use them, or create your own to impress upon the players the strange voyage their characters have undertaken.

As a rule of thumb, plan on one encounter, hazard, or vista for each day of the voyage. At dusk of the third day, the adventurers arrive at the Frost Spire.

During a fight, the *Percheron* moves 8 squares per round. If a PC is knocked into the water, he or she must make a DC 20 Athletics check to swim. Kaseem has perfect control over the *Percheron* allowing him to turn back and retrieve a PC as needed. A character who begins his turn in the sea suffers 5 cold damage.

DEATH FROM ABOVE

Level 13 Encounter (4,000 XP)

2 rocs (*Monster Manual*, page 220)

These two massive birds of prey have been drawn to the howling storms above rift between the planes. They love to glide on the strong winds. They spot the *Percheron* from high above and attempt to swoop down and devour its passengers.

The rocs glide silently down upon the ship. Any adventurers on watch must make DC 24 Perception checks to avoid being surprised as the birds streak out of the clouds and attack.

During the fight, the rocs try to drop adventurers into the water using *claw snatch*. See above for swimming on the sea.

THE SEEKERS

Level 15 Encounter (6,200 XP)

2 kuo-toa marauders (*Monster Manual*, page 172)

2 kuo-toa harpooners (*Monster Manual*, page 172)

1 kuo-toa monitor (*Monster Manual*, page 172)

1 kuo-toa whip (*Monster Manual*, page 173)

A small band of kuo-toa are on a quest at the bidding of Ghool'a'fath, a powerful aboleth. They seek treasure on the Sea of Howling Souls. Unlike other kuo-toa, their scales are light blue with white streaks, a sign of the strange ritual the aboleth used to ward them against the cold (a DC 18 Arcana check reveals this information).

The kuo-toa attempt to sneak up on the ship, swimming beside it before climbing over the sides to attack the adventurers. Their leader, the whip Boosya, carries a coral dagger. This item is useless in combat, but it might play into Ghool'a'fath's plans. Perhaps it is the item the kuo-toa sought.

THE SHIP OF BONES

Level 16 Encounter (7,800 XP)

3 abyssal ghouls (*Monster Manual*, page 118)

1 death hag (*Monster Manual*, page 151)

1 battle guardian (*Monster Manual*, page 149)

The death hag Yurria sails the Sea of Howling Souls aboard a small ship crafted from bones. Four long, skeletal limbs that end in bony flippers guide the

craft on the water. Yurria and her followers seek to ram Kaseem's ship and slay the adventurers.

A noted pirate, Yurria is but one of several death hags who ply the waves of the Elemental Chaos. Whoever strikes the killing blow against her feels a deathly chill run down his or her spine. Yurria's two sisters, Derona and Willina, place a curse upon that character. Each night, he or she is plagued with nightmares about the two hags, who appear to swear vengeance. It is up to you to decide what form this revenge takes, but assume that both of Yurria's sisters have access to ships, construct servants, and undead minions. They can follow and attack the adventurers anywhere.

HAZARDS AND VISTAS

A number of natural dangers can threaten the adventurers throughout the voyage. Some can leave them in worse shape, while others are merely bizarre sights upon these strange and distant seas.

Howling Souls: With a sudden gust of wind, a swarm of howling souls washes over the ship. The souls, dragged along by the relentless winds, shriek in agony. These are the souls of those who have died upon this planar sea, trapped forever among the raging winds. Perhaps the adventurers recognize old foes, allies, or even souls that duplicate their appearance, among the swarm. Viewing your own image in such a swarm is an ill omen. The next time the adventurer uses an action point to take an extra action, he or she suffers a -2 penalty to any attacks or checks made as part of that action.

Tidal Wave: A huge wave of water, carrying with it chunks of ice that dwarf the *Percheron*, threatens to swamp the ship. As the wave approaches, Kaseem takes action to reduce the shock to the ship. When the tidal wave hits, the *Percheron* is almost turned on its side. Each adventurer must make a DC 23 Acrobatics check or lose a healing surge as they are slammed to and fro by the crashing wave and the smashing chunks of ice.

Vortex: The *Percheron* sails into a fog bank. After an hour in the gloom, Kaseem brings the ship to a sudden halt. He whispers to the adventurers that they must keep absolutely quiet. When all is quiet, the adventurers hear the sound of rushing water. The fog breaks, revealing a whirlpool forming in the sea ahead of them. On the opposite side of the whirlpool, an iceberg looms. Dozens of ogres swarm over the surface of the iceberg as it slides into the whirlpool, pulled in by dozens of massive black tentacles that erupt from the whirlpool's center. The adventurers hear an inhuman shriek and the screams of the ogres as the iceberg disappears beneath the waves and the whirlpool slowly dissipates.

FROST SPIRE OVERVIEW

The Frost Spire is a jagged crag of ice that rises from the waters of the Sea of Howling Souls. Sheer cliffs ring the Spire's outer edges. They rise nearly 500 feet above the water. A single hollow carved at the base of the Spire's north edge allows access into a sea cave. From there, the adventurers can ascend stairs to the Spire's interior.

The Spire's interior consists of a plain of ice and snow. The cliffs rise 100 feet above it, creating a valley of sorts. Rolling hills of ice, interspersed with broad plains and mountainous ice formations, dominate the Spire's interior. A black cloud hovers over the Spire, dropping a steady fall of snow upon it. Only the cruel winds from the Sea of Howling Souls prevent the Spire from being buried under hundreds of feet of snow.

This portion of the adventure combines survival and exploration. As the adventurers arrive on Frost Spire Island, Kaseem's ship suffers serious damage. Stranded on the island, the party must deal with the punishing elements, frost giant warriors, ice archons, wandering undead giants, and eventually the might of Jarl Grugnurson and Suulkar itself.

KEY LOCATIONS

The Frost Spire Island map includes two types of tags. Named areas, such as the Ice Bridge, describe general regions of the island. Refer to these entries for general descriptions and hazards of the island.

The numbered entries refer to encounter areas further detailed later in this section.

DEAD PLATEAU

This broad, flat, elevated plain is the uppermost edge of a rock spire. The scouring winds blow snow and ice off this place, depositing it into the Plains of Ice below.

Anyone who carefully inspects the bare rock can notice (with a DC 23 Perception check) what looks like a faint pattern of lines and symbols that seem to undulate across the rock. With a DC 23 Arcana check, the character learns that the entire plateau is, in fact, the broken shaft of a spear used to pin Suulkar to the bottom of the Sea of Howling Souls. Travelers on the Dead Plateau stand atop the shaft.

Monsters are rare here, giving a -2 modifier to the wandering monster roll, but characters also suffer a -2 penalty to Endurance checks in this region. As the bare rock attests, the winds are stronger here.

GREAT STEPS

A series of 50-foot-tall cliffs (DC 18 Athletics check to climb) rise above this area, giving characters a clear view of the regions to the west. If the adventurers

ascend to the top of the steps, give them descriptions of Location 4, both instances of Location 2, the Dead Plateau, the Plains of Ice, the Howling Valley, and the Ice Hollow.

HOWLING VALLEY

These two narrow valleys feature winds that are even more punishing and relentless than the typical gales that roll over the rest of the island. While in the Howling Valley, characters suffer a -5 penalty on Perception checks and a -2 penalty on Endurance checks.

The spirits of dead frost giant warriors linger in this place. Each hour, roll a d20. On a 16 or higher, the spirits appear before the PCs and levy upon them a task. See "The Restless Dead" on page 103 for details.

ICE BRIDGE

A broad arc of ice extends from the island's mainland to a smaller, adjacent spire, the Island of Tombs. The ice here is treacherous. If a character stands near the edge, the winds make a +15 attack against Fortitude, sliding the off the bridge to his or her death. A saving throw allows the character to catch the edge before falling.

ICE HOLLOW

A steep slope drops downward here, funneling into a rift-like depression on the island. The Ice Hollow is about 200 feet deep at its lowest point. A thick mist swirls in its lower depths, where it is warmer and less exposed to the constant wind. The adventurers can take extended rests here and need not make Endurance checks while traveling.

Unfortunately for the adventurers, the ice here is melting because of Suulkar's gradual reawakening. There is a chance (16 or higher on a d20 roll, check once per hour) that the adventurers find the wreckage of a frost giant camp that tumbled into the hollow as the ice melted.

If the adventurers take an extended rest here, they experience awful dreams of the Sea of Howling Souls rising above its levels to drown all of the Elemental Chaos. After this dream, the adventurers suffer a -2 penalty to Will defense until they complete their next extended rest.

ISLAND OF TOMBS

When the frost giants dwelled here, they carved tombs for their dead from the ice, interred the bodies, and replaced the ice to freeze the corpses in place. Slain giants, clad in mail and bearing weapons, are visible within the ice. Excavating one the slain giants takes weeks. The items buried with them are worthless old armor and weapons. The giants, as befits a group of evil marauders, find too much utility in magical gear to bury it with those weak enough to die on a raid.

FROST SPIRE Island



LAKES

There are two bodies of water on the island. Both of them are extremely salty, making the water undrinkable. The water in both is absolutely clear, giving an unblemished view of the ice that forms the lake's bottom. The water is choppy due to the winds that scour the island (DC 18 Athletics check to swim in these waters).

While on the shore of the lake, wandering monster checks receive a +2 bonus. There are no wandering monsters on the lake itself.

Crossing a lake might prove difficult. The adventurers can attempt to build a raft from a chunk of carved ice. Building a raft requires a DC 23 Dungeoneering or Nature check, and two DC 18 Athletics checks. These checks represent two hours of work, and up to two characters can aid in each skill check. If the PCs fail one check, the raft is still sea worthy. If they fail two checks, the raft is obviously flawed and they must start over. If they fail two checks and miss at least one check by 10 or more, the raft appears usable but breaks apart 2d10 minutes into the voyage.

PEAKS

The peaks that ring the island rise over 400 feet. Climbing the peaks is no easy task (DC 25 Athletics check). Here and there, shelves of ice allow climbers to take a break from the ascent. There are no random encounters here. Anyone who manages to ascend the peaks can take little solace in their triumph. The other side drops almost straight down to the raging Sea of Howling Souls below.

PLAINS OF ICE

This region is a flat plain of bare ice. Snow drifts pile up here and there, like frozen dunes upon a desert.

Monsters are common upon the Plains of Ice; add +2 to rolls to check for wandering monsters.

TRAVEL ON THE ISLAND

Frost Spire Island is, like much of the plane of Elemental Chaos, an unforgiving environment. Winds howl across the island and blizzards are a common occurrence. The players should feel that the island is a dangerous place, with the simple dangers of cold, wind, and snow as deadly as the frost giant warriors that stalk the land.

The adventurers can travel across the island based on the speed of the slowest character in the group. The distance traveled per hour is slower than normal, due to the icy terrain, deep snow, and terrible weather.

TRAVEL ON THE ISLAND

| Speed | Per Hour |
|-------|-----------|
| 5 | 1 mile |
| 6 | 1.5 miles |
| 7 | 2 miles |

In addition, the characters must make Endurance checks every four hours that they are on the island and exposed to the elements. The characters don't need to make these checks if they are in a cave or some other shelter.

If the characters move at half speed while traveling, they gain a +1 bonus to this check for each of the four hours they move at this reduced speed.

The characters can also choose to move faster. If they increase their per hour speed by 1 mile, they suffer a -2 penalty to their Endurance checks for each hour they move at this pace.

ENDURANCE CHECK RESULT

| Check Result | Effect |
|--------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| 10 or less | Lose 1 healing surge, gain vulnerable 10 cold |
| 11 - 20 | Lose 1 healing surge, gain vulnerable 5 cold |
| 21 - 25 | Lose 1 healing surge |
| 26+ | No effect |

The supernatural winds and intense cold of the island saps a character's strength and also leaves him or her more vulnerable to future cold attacks. Healing surges return as normal after an extended rest, and any vulnerabilities gained disappear after an extended rest. A character can lose multiple surges to multiple checks. If a character acquires multiple vulnerability results, only the highest vulnerability applies.

WANDERING MONSTERS

A number of ferocious creatures prowl the island. Every two hours that the adventurers spend wandering the island's wastes, roll a d20 with modifiers for the current region, as appropriate. On a result of 19 or 20, the adventurers encounter a group of wandering monsters.

Before the encounter begins, roll 1d6 to determine the group of monsters the adventurers meet. Once the adventurers defeat a band of wandering monsters, eliminate it from this list. Reroll if the die indicates a group that has already been defeated. There are three groups of frost giants, two groups of undead, and one dragon on the island.

The monsters appear within 2d10 + 10 squares of the adventurers. Check for surprise as normal, with both the adventurers and monsters comparing their passive Perception scores to the opposing group's lowest Stealth check.

1-3: TREASURE HUNTERS

Level 15 Encounter (6,600 XP)

- 1 frost giant (page 22)
- 2 frost giant hunters (page 22)
- 1 frost giant marauder (page 23)
- 1 warthorn battlebriar (*Monster Manual*, page 28)

This group of frost giants, along with a warthorn battlebriar formed from a combination of jagged ice and thorny shrubs, attempts to ambush the party, using the battlebriar as a decoy. Once the party attacks the battlebriar, the giants leap from nearby cover to attack.

4-5: THE WALKING DEAD

Level 15 Encounter (6,400 XP)

- 2 frost giant boneclaws (*Monster Manual*, page 37)
- 1 frost giant sword wraith (*Monster Manual*, page 267)
- 2 frost giant abyssal ghouls (*Monster Manual*, page 118)

The frost giants, in their boredom and greed, have taken to looting their buried ancestors on the Island of Tombs. Some of the dead frost giants now walk the Frost Spire, seeking vengeance. The adventurers stumble across a number of freshly slain giants before the undead attack. These creatures fight to the death. Note that these are size Large versions of the monsters presented in the *Monster Manual*, with 1d6 cold damage added to any attacks they make.

6: THE WYRM

Level 17 Encounter (8,000 XP)

- 1 elder white dragon (*Monster Manual*, page 85)

The white dragon Ketherek prowls the skies above the island, eager to determine why so many frost giants have congregated here. The dragon has picked off a few isolated giants and is eager to figure out some way that it can use the situation to its treasure hoard. The dragon soars over the adventurers, watching them from a distance. Vain, greedy, and scheming, Ketherek is open to sparing the adventurers if they promise a sizable treasure. Otherwise, the dragon attacks and fights until bloodied. At that point, it flees the island, never to return. Ketherek does not care for trickery, and if double-crossed it attacks the adventurers at the most opportune moment.

IMPORTANT NPCs

Three major NPCs on the island are detailed below. Use the following descriptions to guide how you run the adventure if the players attempt to negotiate or form some sort of alliance.

GORRICK (ENCOUNTER F7, PAGE 110)

As the spiritual leader of the frost giant expedition, Gorrick is enraged that the giants have plundered the tombs of their ancestors at the behest of a mere ice archon. Gorrick offers to ally with the adventurers under one condition—they must kill the smith Helstaff and the wizard Zaelex and cast their bodies into the tomb of Jarl Hargaad. He tells them to push aside the snow blocking entrance to the tomb and leave the bodies at the base of the stairs. Gorrick expects Hargaad to attack and kill them. If the characters defeat the undead jarl, Gorrick acknowledges their power and helps them craft the key to the inner sanctum. He remains on the island, tending to the looted graves. He sees defeat as the price of their sacrilege.

JARL HARGAAD (ENCOUNTER F8, PAGE 112)

The undead frost giant jarl is enraged that his descendants would so casually loot the tombs and burial mounds of their ancestors. If the adventurers enter the tomb without triggering the pit trap, he speaks with them. In a grating, rasping voice, he offers to give them the treasure from **Encounter F8** if they bring him the severed heads of Helstaff, Gorrick, and Zaelex. He also demands that the adventurers recover the ancestral urns from Locations 1, 3, and 7 and bury them on the Island of Tombs. If the adventurers return to the tomb without fulfilling these conditions, Hargaad and his coterie of undead attack them and fight to the death.

ZAELEX (ENCOUNTER F10, PAGE 116)

This scheming ice archon spellcaster joined the jarl's expedition in hopes of increasing his power and prestige. His loyalty to Grugnurson or lack thereof makes him the weakest of the jarl's three lieutenants. If the adventurers approach his tower in peace, Zaelex's minions escort them to an audience with the wizard on the second floor of the structure.

Zaelex wants to see the frost giants eliminated so that he can escape the island. He offers to create the key to the inner sanctum if the adventurers kill Helstaff and Gorrick and turn over the forged frost fire and a shard of elemental ice to him. In truth, he plans to lure the PCs into his tower and kill them after they have done the work of destroying the giants.

Zaelex saw Breven Foss arrive recently, using magic more powerful than any the archon can wield. The elemental master went in search of Grugnurson and has yet to return.

RUNNING THE FROST SPIRE ENCOUNTERS

The action on Frost Spire Island is a mix of freeform exploration, careful negotiations, roleplaying, puzzle solving, and a race against time. Here's what the adventurers face:

- ◆ The adventurers need to explore the island and learn of its inhabitants and the current situations.
- ◆ They must gain access to the inner sanctum. In order to accomplish this, they need to retrieve the *Tome of the Frozen Gate* from Zaelex, a shard of pure elemental ice from Gorrick, and the forged frost fire from Helstaff.
- ◆ In the inner sanctum, they must defeat Jarl Grugnurson, battle the primordial Suulkar, and claim the *talisman of seven winds* so that they can escape this place and continue the fight against the giants.

It's likely that this section follows this general pattern: The adventurers explore the island, learn about the situation by fighting or interacting with its inhabitants, ally with one of the villains, destroy the others, enter the inner sanctum, defeat the jarl and his minions, battle Suulkar, and either seal the deal with their allies, betray them, or get betrayed by them.

EXPLORING THE ISLAND

The tunnel through the ice leads to Location 1 (**Encounter F4: The Frozen Beach** on page 104), the place that the frost giants landed when they arrived on the island. This portion of the adventure is somewhat freeform, as the adventurers must range across the island in search of the inner sanctum of Suulkar. However, while the adventurers have latitude in where they can travel and the plans they attempt to set into motion, the frost giant Jarl Grugnurson and his allies are by no means complacent. Grugnurson works to free the primordial Suulkar. Grugnurson used his nominal allies, the ice archon wizard Zaelex, the ice shaman Gorrick, and the smith Helstaff, to gain access to Suulkar's inner sanctum. Originally, these villains planned to share in the power that Suulkar granted to them, but it is now clear that Grugnurson wants it all for himself.

THE FEUD

Grugnurson and his allies assumed that the primordial Suulkar was dead, and that the inner sanctum held Jarl Hargaad's treasure trove. In truth, Suulkar lingers in a state just short of death, as do many of the trapped primordials. Grugnurson saw an opportunity to gain far greater power than a simple pile of coins, a few magic items, and a piece of the divine engine. He and his inner circle of confederates attempted to restore the primordial to life, but instead came under

his sway. They are now his servants, dedicated to restoring him to life, and all thoughts of alliance have been cast away.

Meanwhile, Zaelex, Gorrick, and Helstaff have turned against one another. Each is convinced that the others have allied with Grugnurson to cut them out of the power and treasure. As the jarl remains missing, tension between the others simmers to a breaking point. To win the loyalty of the frost giant warriors, Zaelex and Helstaff gave them permission to loot the burial mounds on the Island of Tombs. The looting has awakened undead creatures, and many of the giants fled this place rather than face the wrath of their long-dead ancestors.

The adventurers step into a scene of chaos. Many of the frost giants, without the stern leadership of Jarl Grugnurson to guide them, have revolted. A number of them fled the island, leaving the rest stranded. The constant storm is no easier for the giants to navigate than it is for Kaseem. The giants and their archon allies have waited for over a week for some sign of the jarl. Thus far, they have seen and heard nothing from the missing frost giant jarl.

THE GATE OF ICE

The adventurers must find entrance to Suulkar's inner sanctum via the Gate of Ice. Opening the gate is no easy task. The adventurers must forge a key of pure elemental ice. Luckily, the frost giants have all the tools needed to complete this task. Unluckily, the components needed to create the key lie in the clutches of the three rivals who await Jarl Grugnurson's return: the wizard Zaelex, the shaman Gorrick, and the smith Helstaff.

Zaelex holds a book, the *Tome of the Frozen Gate*, that describes how to craft the key. Gorrick tends to several pillars of pure, elemental ice that must be harvested for the components needed to create the key. The smith Helstaff tends to the forged frost fire, a "flame" of pure cold needed to shape the elemental ice.

None of these three villains trusts the other. Grugnurson intentionally entrusted them with one part of the process needed to create the key, believing that such a show of trust would win each's loyalty while creating a careful balance between them. With his apparent disappearance, Grugnurson's carefully arranged web of alliances has cracked and shattered.

The adventurers step into this situation as a wild card. Their presence is an unexpected complication, and they have the option to work for or against any or all of the three villains. In the end, they need to figure out what the frost giants are up to, recover the piece of the divine engine before the jarl does, and stop the frost giants from releasing the lesser but still dangerous primordial Suulkar from its prison.

ISLAND QUESTS

The adventurers have a chance to acquire a few quests while on the island. The first quests are part of the adventure. Ones marked optional come into play based on the choices the player characters make.

ESCAPE THE ISLAND

The adventurers must recover the *talisman* of seven winds to escape the island. Kaseem can use the magic item to shield the *Percheron* from the winds that surround Frost Spire Island, thereby allowing the damaged vessel to make the return trip safely.

The magic item can also be used to form a calm area around the adventurers, allowing them to make use of their Argent Portal ritual to leave the plane, if they want to use that method to escape from Frost Spire.

There are two *talismans* available to recover: one possessed by Jarl Grugnurson and one possessed by Breven Foss.

Once the adventurers use a *talisman* to escape from Frost Spire, the item loses its magic and Frost Spire once again becomes inaccessible.

Quest XP: 1,000 xp (minor quest).

CRAFT THE KEY

If the adventurers gather the *Tome of the Frozen Gate* from Zaelex, a shard of pure elemental ice from Gorrick, and the forge frost fire from Helstaff, they can craft the key needed to open the inner sanctum.

Quest XP: 1,000 xp (minor quest).

DEFEAT SUULKAR

Jarl Grugnurson and his allies have partially freed the primordial Suulkar and haven fallen under the power entity's sway. The adventurers need to break the hold of Suulkar and make sure that the primordial remains in its prison on Frost Spire Island.

Quest XP: 6,000 xp (major quest).

THE RESTLESS DEAD (OPTIONAL)

As the adventurers explore the Howling Valley, there is a chance that the ghosts of several frost giants appear before them. The ghosts levy a *geas* upon the adventurers, demanding that they recover the ancestral urns found in Locations 1, 3, and 7 and bury them in the ice on the Island of Tombs. "Do not open the urns," the ghosts warn. If the adventurers accomplish this task, they complete the quest. If the adventurers leave Frost Spire without completing this quest, they suffer a -2 penalty on all saving throws for one week.

Alternatively, Jarl Hargaad can give the adventurers this quest if they speak with him when they meet him instead of leaping right in to attack.

Quest XP: 1,000 xp (minor quest).

REACHING THE SPIRE

As the adventurers approach the Frost Spire aboard *Percheron*, read the following:

Ahead looms what might be the most threatening storm you have ever seen. Jet black clouds filled with flashes of lightning that illuminate the blizzard raging beneath it stretches across the horizon. Directly beneath the storm, a massive spire of ice towers over the churning sea.

A massive gust of wind slams into the Percheron. For the first time on your journey, you hear Kaseem grunt with effort as the ship turns against the wind.

The voyage through the storm is a nightmare of wind, waves, lightning, and snow. Time and again, massive sea swells hammer the *Percheron*, but each time Kaseem manages to keep the ship afloat. After what seems like an eternity, Kaseem finally spots a hollow on the Spire's northern face and guides the *Percheron* toward it. The hollow leads to a long, broad tunnel cut through the ice. It ends at Location 1, **Encounter F4: The Frozen Beach** on page 104. As the *Percheron* enters the hollow, read:

Without warning, a lightning bolt arcs from the clouds to strike the spire above you. A huge chunk of ice, one three times the size of your ship, drops toward you. With a wild howl, Kaseem conjures a mighty blast of wind to push the Percheron to safety. The chunk of ice slams into the water, sending the ship careening into the frozen shore with an ear-splitting crack. Kaseem unleashes a stream of oaths but manages to bring the ship safely ashore.

STRANDED!

Despite Kaseem's efforts, the *Percheron* is badly damaged. Kaseem explains that the materials he needs to make repairs are back in his hut at Flotsam. "There's magic involved," he says, "and I can't just carve another ship out of the ice and start sailing." The *Percheron*, in its current shape, won't survive a return trip through the raging storm that surrounds the Spire.

Kaseem returns to humanoid form to inspect the damage. He refuses to leave the ship, as he worries it could be stolen or receive additional damage. He owes the adventurers the voyage to and from Frost Spire Island, and nothing more. As a being of air and wind he can, if needed, simply abandon his ship (though it would pain him to do so) and return to Flotsam without it.

"I don't want to leave my ship or you stranded here, but there may not be much more that I can do," he says. "If the giants sailed here, they must have some sort of magic to get them through the storm. Maybe that would help us as well."

Go on to **Encounter F4: The Frozen Beach**.

ENCOUNTER F4: THE FROZEN BEACH

Encounter Level 15 (6,600 XP)

SETUP

2 frost giants (F)

1 frost giant windkeeper (W)

1 winterclaw owlbear (O)

This encounter takes place in Location 1 on the Frost Spire Island map (see page 99).

The frozen beach is the only point on Frost Spire Island where Kaseem can dock his ship. After the ship emerges from the storm and crashes into the beach, the adventurers must follow a long, winding set of stairs to reach the island's interior.

After the ship reaches the shore of the frozen beach, read the following:

The ship has come to rest inside a large cave carved into the ice, just above the water level. Ropes, crates, and barrels are piled upon the frozen shore. In the back of the cave, a set of steps carved into the ice head upward to a platform before ascending further upward and inward toward the interior of the island.

A number of slain frost giants have been piled atop a rise of ice, their corpses covered in hideous wounds.

A small group of frost giants, along with their pet owlbear, lurk here. The giants wish to seize any incoming ships so that they can try to escape the island. The frost giants have taken to fighting among themselves due to the vacuum created by the missing jarl. The corpses belong to the giants that fell in prior battles upon this frozen beach.

As the adventurers begin to explore the beach, compare their passive Perception scores against the Stealth check results of the lurking giants and owlbear.

Stealth Checks

Frost giants, Stealth result 21

Winterclaw owlbear, Stealth result 29

Frost giant windkeeper, Stealth result 23

Any player character with a passive Perception score that is equal to or greater than one of the hiding giants or the owlbear immediately notices the creature skulking atop the rise of ice above them. When this occurs, place the noticed monsters on the map. Note that the windkeeper and one frost giant lay prone on the eastern rise, watching the approaching adventurers. The second frost giant and the owlbear hide behind the pile of frost giant corpses.

2 Frost Giants (F)

Large elemental humanoid (cold, giant)

Level 17 Brute

XP 1,600 each

Initiative +11 Senses Perception +13

HP 201; Bloodied 100; see also *dying swipe*

AC 29; Fortitude 32, Reflex 27, Will 28

Resist 15 cold

Speed 8 (ice walk)

⚔️ **Icy Greataxe** (standard; at-will) ♦️ Cold, Weapon

Reach 2; +20 vs. AC; 4d6 + 7 (crit 8d6 + 31) cold damage.

⚔️ **Dying Swipe** (when the frost giant drops to 0 hit points)

The frost giant makes an *icy greataxe* attack.

⚔️ **Chilling Strike** (standard; recharge ⏏️ ⏏️) ♦️ Cold, Weapon

Reach 2; +20 vs. AC; 2d6 + 7 cold damage, and the target gains vulnerable 10 cold (save ends).

🔪 **Icy Handaxe** (standard; at-will) ♦️ Cold, Weapon

Ranged 5/10; +20 vs. AC; 2d8 + 7 cold damage.

Icebound Footing

When an effect pulls, pushes, or slides a frost giant, the giant moves 2 squares less than the effect specifies. Also, a frost giant can make a saving throw to avoid being knocked prone.

Alignment Evil

Languages Giant

Skills Athletics +19

Str 23 (+14)

Dex 16 (+11)

Wis 20 (+13)

Con 21 (+13)

Int 10 (+8)

Cha 12 (+9)

Equipment hide armor, greataxe, 3 handaxes

Frost Giant

Level 16 Controller (Leader)

Windkeeper (W)

Large elemental humanoid (cold, giant)

XP 1,400

Initiative +13

Senses Perception +20

HP 158; Bloodied 79

AC 30; Fortitude 31, Reflex 30, Will 32

Resist 15 cold

Speed 8 (ice walk)

⚔️ **Spear of Storms** (standard; at-will) ♦️ Cold, Weapon

Reach 3; +21 vs. AC; 2d10 + 5 cold damage, and the target slides 3 squares.

❄️ **Arctic Vortex** (standard; at-will) ♦️ Cold

Area burst 1 within 20; +20 vs. Fortitude; 2d6 + 5 cold damage, and the target slides 3 squares.

❄️ **Driving Blizzard** (standard; recharge ⏏️ ⏏️) ♦️ Cold

Area burst 2 within 20; +20 vs. Reflex; 3d6 + 5 cold damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends). Until the end of the encounter, the area becomes difficult terrain for creatures smaller than Large size.

🌀 **Gale of the North Wind** (standard; encounter) ♦️ Cold

Close blast 5; targets enemies only; +20 vs. Fortitude; 4d10 + 5 cold damage, and the target is pushed 2 squares and knocked prone. Miss: Half damage and push 1 square.

🥁 **Drums of the North** (standard; at-will) ♦️ Fear, Implement

Close burst 10; targets enemies; +20 vs. Will; the target is pushed 2 squares and slowed until the end of the frost giant's next turn. Allies in the burst immediately shift 3 squares. The frost giant must sheath his longspear to play the drum.

Alignment Evil

Languages Common, Giant

Skills Arcana +17, Nature +20, Religion +17

Str 20 (+13)

Dex 21 (+13)

Wis 24 (+15)

Con 22 (+14)

Int 19 (+12)

Cha 21 (+13)

Equipment hide armor, longspear, drum

Winterclaw Owlbear (O)

Level 14 Elite Controller

Huge fey beast

XP 2,000

Initiative +9

Senses Perception +15; low-light vision

HP 280; Bloodied 140; see also frost wail

AC 28; Fortitude 28, Reflex 23, Will 24

Saving Throws +2

Speed 7 (ice walk)

Action Points 1

⚔ Winterclaw (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold

Reach 3; +18 vs. AC; 1d8 + 7 damage plus 1d8 cold damage, and the target is slowed (save ends).

⚔ Double Attack (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold

The winterclaw owlbear makes two winterclaw attacks. If both claws hit the same target, the target is immobilized (save ends).

Afterside: The target is slowed (save ends).

⚔ Frost Wail (standard; recharges when first bloodied) ♦ Cold

Close burst 3; +16 vs. Fortitude; 1d10 + 5 cold damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends).

Alignment Unaligned

Languages –

Str 24 (+14)

Dex 14 (+9)

Wis 16 (+10)

Con 20 (+12)

Int 2 (+3)

Cha 12 (+8)

TACTICS

The frost giants plan to ambush the adventurers and take their ship. Due to the sudden and violent nature of their approach, the giants are ready for the adventurers when they reach the frozen beach.

The windkeeper remains in the upper part of the cave, atop the rise of ice by the carved stairs. The frost giant that lurks nearby attempts to remain hidden. Once the adventurers disembark from the ship and set foot on the frozen beach, he rushes out to attack.

The owlbear roosts behind the pile of frost giant corpses. Once the adventurers come ashore, it also rises up to attack.

The final frost giant hangs back, using the corpses for cover. He uses its icy handaxe attack when any of the adventurers wanders close. If either the owlbear or the first frost giant fall, he leaps out from behind cover to attack.

Desperate to escape the island and tired of the constant wind, these frost giants are ready to leave. They fight to the death in order to take control of the Percheron.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Dim light. Softly glowing lichen on the walls and ceiling of the ice chamber provide dim light in this area.

Corpses: Nearly a dozen slain frost giants are piled atop the rise of ice to the west. The corpses form difficult terrain and provide cover. The owlbear hides behind the pile, gaining a +10 bonus to its Stealth checks to remain hidden (already figured into the Stealth result on the facing page).

Rise: The rise of ice to the east and west create areas of higher ground in this cave. The rise forms a sheer wall of ice that is 15 feet high. A DC 25 Athletics check is required to climb the wall to the rise above.

Shelf: The area at the top of the stairs is open to the cave below. Just to the east is another set of stairs leading up to the Frost Spire's interior.

Stairs: The stairs form a gentle slope for giants, but represent an arduous climb for smaller creatures. Large and bigger creatures treat the stairs as normal terrain. Creatures smaller than Large treat them as difficult terrain, both when going up and going down.

Treasure: The frost giants here have gathered a pile of treasure from their dead compatriots. They have a total of 22,000 gp in gems between them.

In addition, the windkeeper carries a 2-foot tall, bronze urn. This is one of the urns that the ghosts want the adventurers to find and bury, as described under "The Restless Dead" on page 103. The urn is sealed with wax and contains several bone fragments from an ancient frost giant. If the adventurers open the urn, they desecrate the remains. They suffer a -2 penalty to all defenses for the entire encounter the next time they fight undead frost giants on the island.



ENCOUNTER F5: GUARD POSTS

Encounter Level 16 (7,200 XP)

SETUP

2 frost giant hunters (H)

3 frost giant marauders (M)

This encounter takes place in any of the spots marked Location 2 on the Frost Spire Island map (see page 99).

The frost giants erected several guard posts across the Frost Spire to guard against the growing undead menace on the island.

This encounter spread covers each of these guard posts. You can use the provided map for each guard post, or you can improvise each map as you see fit. The basic structure of each guard post is the same: the giants picked high points on the island to keep watch, and stocked those positions with hard packed balls of ice to use as ranged weapons against any hostile creatures.

As the adventurers approach a guard post, read:

Ahead a looming ice cliff rises into the stormy sky. A sharp, sloping pathway winds upward to the cliff's peak, creating a jutting promontory point. Atop the cliff stands a number of frost giants.

The frost giant guards, for lack of any other option, remain at their post. Driven mad by Suulkar's magic, they wait for intruders to approach and launch their attack. In their deranged minds, they believe that they must defend Suulkar from intruders who seek to prevent the primordial from waking fully.

TACTICS

The frost giants have the high ground in this fight, and they seek to keep it. While the map shows only the area around the promontory, at the table you should expand the area to provide the giants with enough distance to use their ranged attacks. Assume that the path is clear in a 20-square radius from the promontory's base. The giants seek to wear down the adventurers as they move across the open ground.

The frost giant marauders hurl ice balls at the adventurers (see "Features of the Area"), hoping to kill them before they close to melee range. Once the adventurers draw near, the marauders set up near the ice ball pile to wait for the PCs to make their charge. Once the adventurers draw close, the giants push over the pile of ice to create a landslide.

The frost giant hunters rely on their crossbows to bring down the intruders. Once the adventurers scale the promontory, they switch to their harpoons.

These crazed giants fight to the death.

| 2 Frost Giant Hunters (H) | | Level 15 Artillery |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| Large elemental humanoid (cold, giant) | | XP 1,200 each |
| Initiative +16 | Senses Perception +13 | |
| HP 114; Bloodied 57 | | |
| AC 27; Fortitude 27, Reflex 26, Will 28 | | |
| Resist 15 cold | | |
| Speed 8 (ice walk) | | |
| ⚔️ Icy Harpoon (standard; at-will) ♦️ Cold, Weapon | | |
| Reach 3; +22 vs. AC; 2d10 + 5 cold damage. | | |
| 🏹 Icy Crossbow (standard; at-will) ♦️ Cold, Weapon | | |
| Ranged 15/30; +22 vs. AC; 3d6 + 5 cold damage. | | |
| ⚡ Skewering Strike (standard; recharge ⏏️ ⏏️) ♦️ Cold, Weapon | | |
| Reach 3; +20 vs. Reflex; 3d10 + 5 cold damage, and the target slides 3 squares and is slowed (save ends). | | |
| Opening Strike | | |
| The frost giant gains combat advantage against enemies that have not yet acted during an encounter. | | |
| Combat Advantage | | |
| The frost giant deals an extra 1d10 damage against any target it has combat advantage against. | | |
| Icebound Footing | | |
| When an effect pulls, pushes, or slides a frost giant, the giant moves 2 squares less than the effect specifies. Also, a frost giant can make a saving throw to avoid being knocked prone. | | |
| Alignment Evil | | Languages Common, Giant |
| Skills Athletics +17, Endurance +16, Stealth +16 | | |
| Str 21 (+12) | Dex 19 (+11) | Wis 22 (+13) |
| Con 18 (+11) | Int 12 (+8) | Cha 12 (+8) |
| Equipment hide armor, harpoon, crossbow | | |

| 3 Frost Giant Marauders (M) | | Level 17 Skirmisher |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Large elemental humanoid (cold, giant) | | XP 1,600 each |
| Initiative +14 | Senses Perception +11 | |
| HP 168; Bloodied 84 | | |
| AC 31; Fortitude 30, Reflex 27, Will 26 | | |
| Resist 15 cold | | |
| Speed 8 (ice walk) | | |
| ❶ Icy Handaxe (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold, Weapon | | |
| Reach 2; +22 vs. AC; 2d8 + 8 cold damage; hit or miss, the frost giant may shift 2 squares after the attack. | | |
| ❷ Icy Handaxe (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold, Weapon | | |
| Ranged 5/10; +22 vs. AC; 2d6 + 6 cold damage; hit or miss, the frost giant may shift 2 squares after the attack. | | |
| ❸ Hurling Charge (standard; encounter) ♦ Cold, Weapon | | |
| Ranged 5/10; +21 vs. Reflex; 1d8 + 8 cold damage; hit or miss, the frost giant then makes a charge against the target. | | |
| ❹ Twin Strike (standard; recharge ⏏ ⏏) ♦ Cold, Weapon | | |
| The frost giant makes two icy handaxe attacks; the frost giant may shift 2 squares after the first attack. | | |
| Icebound Footing | | |
| When an effect pulls, pushes, or slides a frost giant, the giant moves 2 squares less than the effect specifies. Also, a frost giant can make a saving throw to avoid being knocked prone. | | |
| Threatening Reach | | |
| The frost giant can make opportunity attacks against all enemies within its reach (2 squares). | | |
| Alignment Evil | | Languages Giant |
| Skills Athletics +19 | | |
| Str 21 (+13) | Dex 19 (+12) | Wis 17 (+11) |
| Con 24 (+15) | Int 10 (+8) | Cha 12 (+9) |
| Equipment hide armor, 4 handaxes | | |

OTHER GUARD POSTS

There are three guard posts on the island. You can alternate the monsters at each location, as shown.

Archon Post (7,800 XP)

2 ice archon rimehammers
3 chillfire destroyers

Frost Giant Post (7,000 XP)

2 frost giants
2 frost giant hunters
1 frost giant windkeeper

Statistics for the frost giants can be found on pages 22-23.

3 Chillfire Destroyers

Level 14 Brute

Large elemental magical beast (cold, fire) XP 1,000 each

Initiative +12 Senses Perception +12

Leaking Firecore (Fire) aura 2; while the chillfire destroyer is bloodied, each creature that starts its turn within the aura takes 10 fire damage.

HP 173; Bloodied 86; see also *firecore breach*

AC 26; Fortitude 26, Reflex 25, Will 25

Immune disease, poison; Resist 10 cold, 10 fire

Speed 5

⚡ **Freezing Slam** (standard; at-will) ⚡ Cold

Reach 2; +17 vs. AC; 1d12 + 6 damage plus 1d12 cold damage.

⚡ **Trample** (standard; at-will) ⚡ Cold

The chillfire destroyer moves its speed and can move through enemies' spaces. The destroyer makes an attack: +15 vs. Reflex; 1d10 + 6 damage plus 1d10 cold damage, and the target is knocked prone.

⚡ **Firecore Breach** (when the chillfire destroyer drops to 0 hit points) ⚡ Fire

The destroyer does not die until the start of its next turn. Until then, the destroyer can take no actions. At the start of the destroyer's next turn, it makes an attack: close burst 3; +15 vs. Reflex; 4d10 + 6 fire damage.

Alignment Unaligned

Languages Primordial

Str 16 (+10)

Dex 20 (+12)

Wis 20 (+12)

Con 23 (+13)

Int 5 (+4)

Cha 12 (+8)

2 Ice Archon Rimehammers

Level 19 Soldier

Medium elemental humanoid (cold)

XP 2,400 each

Initiative +15 Senses Perception +12

Icy Ground (Cold) aura 1; enemies treat the area within the aura as difficult terrain.

HP 185; Bloodied 92

AC 35; Fortitude 35, Reflex 32, Will 31

Immune disease, poison; Resist 30 cold

Speed 6 (ice walk)

⚡ **Maul** (standard; at-will) ⚡ Cold, Weapon

+25 vs. AC; 2d6 + 7 damage plus 1d6 cold damage, and the target is slowed (save ends). Against a slowed target, the rimehammer deals an extra 2d6 cold damage.

Alignment Chaotic evil

Languages Primordial

Str 24 (+16)

Dex 18 (+13)

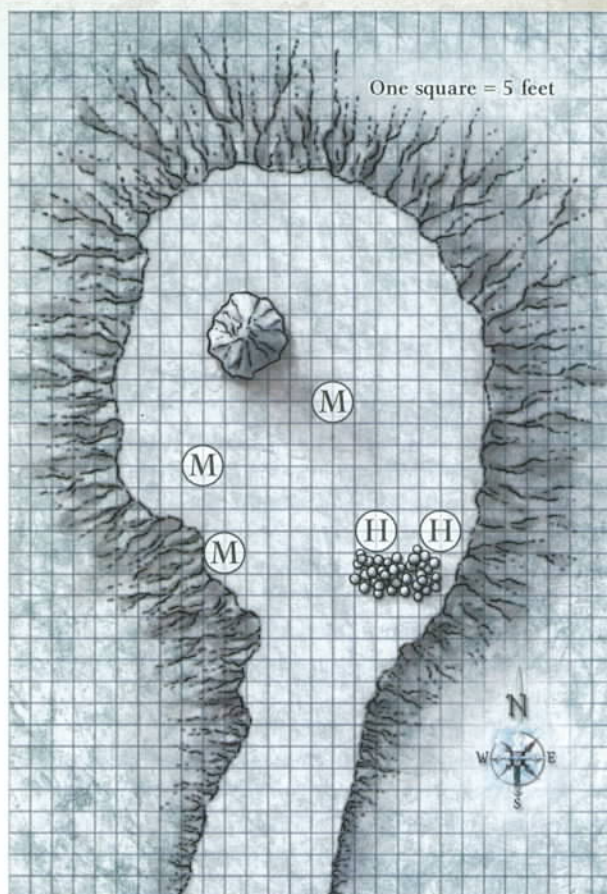
Wis 16 (+12)

Con 25 (+16)

Int 14 (+11)

Cha 15 (+11)

Equipment plate armor, maul



ENCOUNTER F5: GUARD POSTS

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Dim light. The constant storm blankets the entire island in dim light. At night, the island is covered in darkness.

Ice Balls: The frost giants have gathered a large pile of ice balls for hurling at enemies. The pile is difficult terrain that provides cover. In addition, as a minor action a giant adjacent to the pile can grab an ice ball. A hurled ice ball uses the attack below.

Ranged 10/20; targets 1 creature; +18 vs. Reflex; 1d10 + 6 cold damage, and the target is pushed 2 squares.

In addition, as a standard action a giant can kick over the pile to create a small avalanche. This destroys the pile. Use the following attack to represent the avalanche. The giant places the blast as it wishes, but the blast's origin space is the ice ball pile:

Close blast 5; targets all creatures in the blast; +18 vs. Fortitude; 1d10 + 6 cold damage, and the target is pushed 2 squares.

Cliff: The cliff face is 30 feet tall. Climbing the cliff requires a DC 20 Athletics check. Falling from the cliff deals 3d10 damage.

ENCOUNTER F6: ICE CAVE

Encounter Level 17 (8,000 XP)

SETUP

- 1 frost giant (F)
- 2 frost giant marauders (M)
- 2 frost giant hunters (H)
- 2 frost giant raiders (R)

This encounter takes place in the spot marked Location 3 on the Frost Spire Island map (see page 99).

When the frost giants arrived on the island, they found several caves to use as barracks. This cave is one of several barracks they set up.

As the adventurers approach the cave, read:

The ice ahead rises like a small hill, with a cave opening in its side. From the cave comes the sound of voices and laughing.

The cave converted into a barracks has minimal creature comforts. Aside from a few everburning torches that provide light, furs that serve as bedrolls, and barrels and crates full of supplies, there is little of interest within this location.

| 2 Frost Giant Marauders (M) | Level 17 Skirmisher |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Large elemental humanoid (cold, giant) | XP 1,600 each |
| Initiative +14 | Senses Perception +11 |
| HP 168; Bloodied 84 | |
| AC 31; Fortitude 30, Reflex 27, Will 26 | |
| Resist 15 cold | |
| Speed 8 (ice walk) | |
| ① Icy Handaxe (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold, Weapon | |
| Reach 2; +22 vs. AC; 2d8 + 8 cold damage; hit or miss, the frost giant may shift 2 squares after the attack. | |
| ② Icy Handaxe (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold, Weapon | |
| Ranged 5/10; +22 vs. AC; 2d6 + 6 cold damage; hit or miss, the frost giant may shift 2 squares after the attack. | |
| ③ Hurling Charge (standard; encounter) ♦ Cold, Weapon | |
| Ranged 5/10; +21 vs. Reflex; 1d8 + 8 cold damage; hit or miss, the frost giant then makes a charge against the target. | |
| ④ Twin Strike (standard; recharge [2][3]) ♦ Cold, Weapon | |
| The frost giant makes two icy handaxe attacks; the frost giant may shift 2 squares after the first attack. | |
| Icebound Footing | |
| When an effect pulls, pushes, or slides a frost giant, the giant moves 2 squares less than the effect specifies. Also, a frost giant can make a saving throw to avoid being knocked prone. | |
| Threatening Reach | |
| The frost giant can make opportunity attacks against all enemies within its reach (2 squares). | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Giant |
| Skills Athletics +19 | |
| Str 21 (+13) | Dex 19 (+12) Wis 17 (+11) |
| Con 24 (+15) | Int 10 (+8) Cha 12 (+9) |
| Equipment hide armor, 4 handaxes | |

| 2 Frost Giant Hunters (H) | Level 15 Artillery |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Large elemental humanoid (cold, giant) | XP 1,200 each |
| Initiative +16 | Senses Perception +13 |
| HP 114; Bloodied 57 | |
| AC 27; Fortitude 27, Reflex 26, Will 28 | |
| Resist 15 cold | |
| Speed 8 (ice walk) | |
| ① Icy Harpoon (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold, Weapon | |
| Reach 3; +22 vs. AC; 2d10 + 5 cold damage. | |
| ② Icy Crossbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold, Weapon | |
| Ranged 15/30; +22 vs. AC; 3d6 + 5 cold damage. | |
| ③ Skewering Strike (standard; recharge [2][3]) ♦ Cold, Weapon | |
| Reach 3; +20 vs. Reflex; 3d10 + 5 cold damage, and the target slides 3 squares and is slowed (save ends). | |
| Opening Strike | |
| The frost giant gains combat advantage against enemies that have not yet acted during an encounter. | |
| Combat Advantage | |
| The frost giant deals an extra 1d10 damage against any target it has combat advantage against. | |
| Icebound Footing | |
| When an effect pulls, pushes, or slides a frost giant, the giant moves 2 squares less than the effect specifies. Also, a frost giant can make a saving throw to avoid being knocked prone. | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Common, Giant |
| Skills Athletics +17, Endurance +16, Stealth +16 | |
| Str 21 (+12) | Dex 19 (+11) Wis 22 (+13) |
| Con 18 (+11) | Int 12 (+8) Cha 12 (+8) |
| Equipment hide armor, harpoon, crossbow | |

| Frost Giant (F) | Level 17 Brute |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Large elemental humanoid (cold, giant) | XP 1,600 |
| Initiative +11 | Senses Perception +13 |
| HP 201; Bloodied 100; see also dying swipe | |
| AC 29; Fortitude 32, Reflex 27, Will 28 | |
| Resist 15 cold | |
| Speed 8 (ice walk) | |
| ① Icy Greataxe (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold, Weapon | |
| Reach 2; +20 vs. AC; 4d6 + 7 (crit 8d6 + 31) cold damage. | |
| ② Dying Swipe (when the frost giant drops to 0 hit points) | |
| The frost giant makes an icy greataxe attack. | |
| ③ Chilling Strike (standard; recharge [2][3]) ♦ Cold, Weapon | |
| Reach 2; +20 vs. AC; 2d6 + 7 cold damage, and the target gains vulnerable 10 cold (save ends). | |
| ④ Icy Handaxe (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold, Weapon | |
| Ranged 5/10; +20 vs. AC; 2d8 + 7 cold damage. | |
| Icebound Footing | |
| When an effect pulls, pushes, or slides a frost giant, the giant moves 2 squares less than the effect specifies. Also, a frost giant can make a saving throw to avoid being knocked prone. | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Giant |
| Skills Athletics +19 | |
| Str 23 (+14) | Dex 16 (+11) Wis 20 (+13) |
| Con 21 (+13) | Int 10 (+8) Cha 12 (+9) |
| Equipment hide armor, greataxe, 3 handaxes | |

2 Frost Giant Raiders (R)**Level 17 Minion**

Large elemental humanoid (cold, giant)

XP 400 each

Initiative +11**Senses** Perception +13**HP** 1; a missed attack never damages a minion; see also *dying swipe***AC** 29; **Fortitude** 32, **Reflex** 27, **Will** 28**Resist** 15 cold**Speed** 8 (ice walk)⚔ **Icy Greataxe** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Cold, Weapon**

Reach 2; +20 vs. AC; 10 cold damage.

† **Dying Swipe** (when the frost giant drops to 0 hit points)

The frost giant makes an icy greataxe attack.

✂ **Icy Handaxe** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Cold, Weapon**

Ranged 5/10; +20 vs. AC; 9 cold damage.

Icebound Footing

When an effect pulls, pushes, or slides a frost giant, the giant moves 2 squares less than the effect specifies. Also, a frost giant can make a saving throw to avoid being knocked prone.

Alignment Evil**Languages** Giant**Skills** Athletics +19**Str** 23 (+14)**Dex** 16 (+11)**Wis** 20 (+13)**Con** 21 (+13)**Int** 10 (+8)**Cha** 12 (+9)**Equipment** hide armor, greataxe, 3 handaxes

TACTICS

The frost giants in this place have been cast into a maniacal fear of the outside world. They refuse to leave the cave and are quickly working their way through their supply of food and water. They believe that Suulkar lurks outside the cave, ready to devour anyone foolish enough to exit this safe haven. When the adventurers arrive, the giants assume they are demons or angels come to claim their souls. They fight with a strength born of madness.

Some of the walls in the ice cave are relatively weak, as they giants carved through the ice to expand the dwelling space. During the battle, the giants smash through the walls to surround the adventurers or otherwise gain an advantageous position.

The giants' overall battle plan is simple. The raiders distract the intruders and try to lure them deeper into the cave. The rest of the giants then emerge to attack.

The marauders begin the fight in the central area of the cave. They throw icy handaxes before rushing through the weakened walls to flank the adventurers.

The hunters begin the fight in the rear of the cave. They take shots if possible, but wait for the marauders to crash through the walls before using *skewering strikes*.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Bright light. The *everburning torches* provide bright light throughout the cave.

Walls: The walls in this cave are easy to climb, as they are roughly hewn from the ice. A character can climb the walls with a DC 13 Athletics check. In addition, due to the plentiful hand and footholds, a character on the wall can attack without restrictions.

Weak Walls: Many of the ice walls in this cave are relatively thin and brittle. While too thick for a size Medium creature to smash through them, a giant can shoulder through them with ease. When a giant

moves, it can chose to move through one of the sections of weakened wall. This costs one extra square of movement and creates a space large enough for the giant to fit through. Characters adjacent to the wall when it is destroyed take 1d10 + 6 cold damage from the falling chunks of ice.

Supplies: The frost giants have several large piles of supplies stored here in crates and barrels. The crates and barrels are stacked 10 feet tall. A DC 13 Athletics check is required to climb the piled supplies. During the battle, the giants can knock over the crates and barrels. A giant adjacent to the supplies can use the following attack as a standard action. After the attack, the supplies and all squares within the blast are difficult terrain. A character on the supplies when a giant uses them to attack is automatically hit.

Close blast 3; targets all creatures in the blast; +18 vs. Fortitude; 2d6 + 6 damage, and the target is knocked prone.

Treasure: The frost giants in this cave have accumulated a level 16 magic item, two *potions of vitality*, and 4,000 gp in gems.

In addition, one of the crates contains a 2-foot tall, bronze urn. This is one of the urns that the ghosts want the adventurers to find and bury, as described under "The Restless Dead" on page 103. The urn is sealed with wax and contains several bone fragments from an ancient frost giant. If the adventurers open the urn, they desecrate the remains. They suffer a -2 penalty to all defenses for the entire encounter the next time they fight undead frost giants on the island.



ENCOUNTER F7: ICE HUT

Encounter Level 17 (8,000 XP)

SETUP

Gorrick Frostcaller (G)
 2 chillfire destroyers
 1 rockfire dreadnought
 2 stormstone furies

This encounter takes place in the spot marked Location 4 on the Frost Spire Island map (see page 99).

Gorrick Frostcaller, a powerful frost giant spellcaster and a student of the war between the gods and the primordials, understands the potential dangers of delving too deep into the ice of Frost Spire. He is responsible for summoning and conjuring a variety of elementals to help with the task of burrowing into the ice. Now, he remains in his icy redoubt, desperate for a way to escape from the island. He tries to trick the adventurers into speaking with him so that he has enough time to gather his power and destroy them. A fanatic to the core, he would rather die than betray the grand scheme of revenge that the titan lords have come up with.

As the adventurers approach the ice hut, read:

A deep depression cuts into the ice ahead. A sloped path leads down into the depression toward a small building crafted from ice. Within the depression and scattered on the ice to the west of it are a number of elaborately carved ice pillars. They resemble rearing dragons, heavily armed and armored frost giants, and other creatures native to frigid environments.

Gorrick rests within his abode when the adventurers approach. His elemental minions do not begin the encounter on the map. Instead, they arrive as he calls them to join the fight.

GORRICK'S DECEPTION

Gorrick attempts to parlay with the adventurers, hoping to distract them and win their trust. When they least expect it, he summons his elemental minions to attack. The frost giant claims to be a simple artisan who has been conscripted to dig into the ice for some unknown purpose. He points to the icy pillars that surround his hut as proof of his true nature.

As the adventurers ask him questions, Gorrick attempts to waste their time as the elemental nexus that surrounds this place gathers power. Keep track of the passage of time. If Gorrick can distract the adventurers for 5 minutes, he attacks as the nexus achieves full power. If the adventurers attack Gorrick before that time, the nexus is only partially useful to him.

Only one thing can help the adventurers avoid an attack. If they mention Zaelex, Gorrick becomes eager to ally with the adventurers against the archon wizard. Gorrick wants the book that Zaelex jealously guards, and he'll make any deal to acquire it. He has no intention of honoring such a deal, but don't tell the adventurers that. See page 102 for more information.

Gorrick Frostcaller (G) **Level 18 Controller (Leader)**
 Large elemental humanoid (cold, giant) XP 2,000

Initiative +12 **Senses Perception** +14
HP 172; **Bloodied** 86
AC 32; **Fortitude** 30, **Reflex** 31, **Will** 30
Resist 15 cold
Speed 8 (ice walk)

⚡ **Frost Touch** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Cold**
 Reach 2; +22 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 6 cold damage, and the target is immobilized until the end of Gorrick's next turn.

☊ **Ray of Frost** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Cold**
 Ranged 10; +22 vs. Fortitude; 2d10 + 6 cold damage, and the target is slowed until the end of Gorrick's next turn.

➤ **Ice Tomb** (standard; recharge [5][5]) ♦ **Cold**
 Ranged 20; +22 vs. Reflex; 3d10 + 6 cold damage, and the target is entombed in a block of ice until the end of Gorrick's next turn. While entombed, the target is stunned, and attacks cannot gain line of effect against the target.

➤ **Elemental Wrath** (standard; at-will)
 Ranged 20; targets one elemental ally; the elemental ally makes a basic attack with a +4 bonus to the attack roll and damage roll.

Icebound Footing
 Gorrick moves 2 squares fewer than any forced movement specifies. He makes a saving throw to avoid being knocked prone.

Alignment Evil **Languages** Common, Giant, Primordial

Skills Arcana +20, Bluff +17, Diplomacy +17, History +20, Thievery +17

Str 21 (+14) **Dex** 16 (+12) **Wis** 21 (+14)
Con 20 (+14) **Int** 22 (+15) **Cha** 16 (+12)

Rockfire Dreadnought **Level 18 Soldier**
 Large elemental magical beast (earth, fire) XP 2,000

Initiative +17 **Senses Perception** +12
Waves of Flame (Fire) aura 1; any creature that enters or starts its turn in the aura takes 10 fire damage.

HP 170; **Bloodied** 85
AC 34; **Fortitude** 34, **Reflex** 32, **Will** 29
Immune disease, petrification, poison; **Resist** 25 fire
Speed 8

⚡ **Fist of Flame** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Fire**
 Reach 2; +21 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 8 fire damage.

➤ **Brimstone Rock** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Fire**
 The rockfire dreadnought hurls a flaming chunk of brimstone at the target. Ranged 10/20; +23 vs. AC; 2d6 + 6 damage plus 5 fire damage.

Alignment Unaligned **Languages** Primordial
Str 27 (+17) **Dex** 22 (+15) **Wis** 16 (+12)
Con 18 (+13) **Int** 8 (+8) **Cha** 7 (+7)

2 Chillfire Destroyers**Level 14 Brute**

Large elemental magical beast (cold, fire)

XP 1,000 each

Initiative +12

Senses Perception +12

Leaking Firecore (Fire) aura 2; while the chillfire destroyer is bloodied, each creature that starts its turn within the aura takes 10 fire damage.

HP 173; Bloodied 86; see also *firecore breach*

AC 26; Fortitude 26, Reflex 25, Will 25

Immune disease, poison; Resist 10 cold, 10 fire

Speed 5

⚡ **Freezing Slam** (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold

Reach 2; +17 vs. AC; 1d12 + 6 damage plus 1d12 cold damage.

⚡ **Trample** (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold

The chillfire destroyer moves its speed and can move through enemies' spaces. The destroyer makes an attack: +15 vs. Reflex; 1d10 + 6 damage plus 1d10 cold damage, and the target is knocked prone.

⚡ **Firecore Breach** (when the chillfire destroyer drops to 0 hit points) ♦ Fire

The destroyer does not die until the start of its next turn. Until then, the destroyer can take no actions. At the start of the destroyer's next turn, it makes an attack: close burst 3; +15 vs. Reflex; 4d10 + 6 fire damage.

Alignment Unaligned

Languages Primordial

Str 16 (+10)

Dex 20 (+12)

Wis 20 (+12)

Con 23 (+13)

Int 5 (+4)

Cha 12 (+8)

2 Stormstone Furies**Level 14 Artillery**

Medium elemental magical beast (air, earth)

XP 1,000 each

Initiative +12

Senses Perception +9

HP 113; Bloodied 56

AC 26; Fortitude 26, Reflex 25, Will 25

Immune disease, petrification, poison; Resist 10 thunder

Speed 6

⚡ **Grinding Stones** (standard; at-will)

+21 vs. AC; 1d10 + 3 damage.

⚡ **Hurling Thunderstone** (standard; at-will) ♦ Thunder

Ranged 20; +21 vs. AC; 2d8 + 6 damage. Miss: Half damage.

Effect: One square the target currently occupies becomes the origin square of a burst 2 attack that occurs at the start of the stormstone fury's next turn: +19 vs. Fortitude; 1d10 + 6 thunder damage.

⚡ **Shrapnel Burst** (minor; recharge ⚡ ⚡ ⚡) ♦ Thunder

Close burst 2; +21 vs. AC; 1d6 + 6 damage plus 1d6 thunder damage, and the stormstone fury pushes the target 2 squares.

Meld to Ground (when first bloodied; requires the stormstone fury to be on the ground; encounter) ♦ Teleportation

The fury disappears, and no creatures have line of sight or line of effect to it. At the start of its next turn, the fury appears within 10 squares of its previous space.

Alignment Unaligned

Languages Primordial

Str 16 (+10)

Dex 20 (+12)

Wis 15 (+9)

Con 23 (+13)

Int 6 (+5)

Cha 20 (+12)

TACTICS

Once combat begins, the elementals appear. They emerge from the ice pillars closest to the hut, each emerging from a different pillar. Using a variety of rituals, Gorrick bound the elementals to defend him.

Gorrick uses his powers to slow down the adventurers, holding them at bay as the elementals attack. At the first opportunity, he moves away from the battle (double moving if necessary) to avoid more attacks and to let the elementals fully engage the intruders.

The elementals fight to the death. The rockfire dreadnought engages as soon as it can. The stormstone furies attack from a distance, and the chillfire destroyers use their *trample* attack again and again, ignoring attacks of opportunity.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Dim light. The constant storm blankets the entire island in dim light. At night, the island is covered in darkness. Bright light inside the hut due to an *everburning torch*.

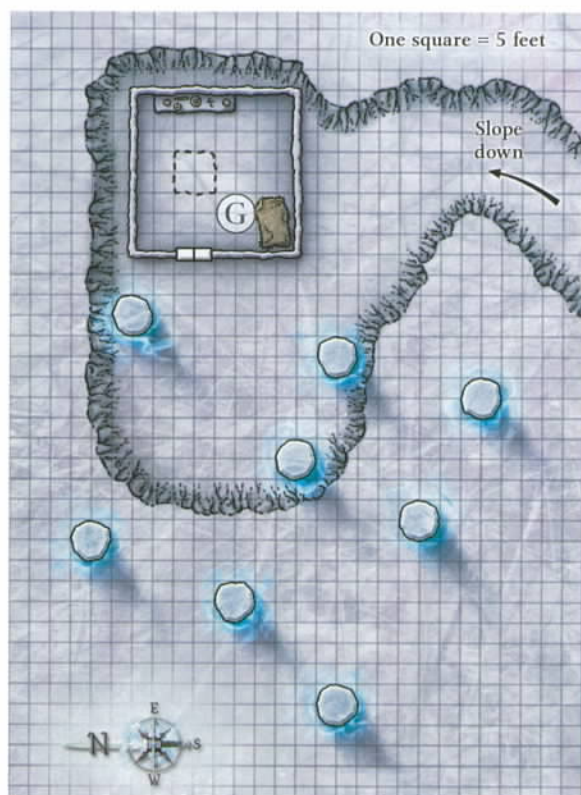
Gorrick's Hut: Crafted from ice, this small abode serves as a workshop for Gorrick. A DC 20 Athletics check is required to climb to the roof. There is a wide hole in the roof that can be used to enter the hut.

Elemental Nexus: The ice carvings scattered around Gorrick's hut are plinths infused with elemental energy. At Gorrick's command, they gain greater and greater power.

If Gorrick manages to stall the adventurers for 5 minutes, any character that begins his turn adjacent to a pillar loses all resistances and elementals gain a +2 bonus on attack rolls against the character until the end of the character's next turn.

If Gorrick fails to stall the adventurers, a character that begins his or her turn adjacent to a pillar has resistances reduced by 5 and elementals gain a +1 bonus on attack rolls against the character until the end of the character's next turn.

Treasure: There are two shards of pure elemental ice harvested from the pillars on the table in the hut. There is also a level 16 magic item, a 1,000 gp gem, and a *potion of vitality*.



ENCOUNTER F8: BURIAL CAVE

Encounter Level 16 (7,000 XP)

SETUP

- 2 frost giant boneclaws (B)
- 1 frost giant bodak reaver (R)
- 1 frost giant sword wraith (S)
- Flash frost shaft trap (X)

This encounter takes place in the spot marked Location 5 on the Frost Spire Island map (see page 99).

When the giants first landed on the Frost Spire, they looted many of the tombs they found here. They left this cave alone. Jarl Hargaad rests here, though the looting of his vassals' burial grounds has awoken him from his eternal slumber. He has risen as a bodak.

As the adventurers approach the burial cave, read:

A cave set into the side of an ice cliff is adorned with the symbol of a frost giant jarl. Flickering torchlight makes the cave's opening glow with warm light.

The frost giants left a pair of everburning torches within the cave as a signal to expedition members who decided to wander the island.

This encounter uses a pit trap found just inside the cave entrance. If the adventurers blunder into the pit, some of them may be forced to fight the undead on their own while the rest of the party struggles to reach the main burial chamber.

| 2 Frost Giant Boneclaws (B) | | Level 14 Soldier |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------------|
| Large shadow animate (cold, giant, undead) | | XP 1,000 each |
| Initiative +15 | | Senses Perception +13; darkvision |
| HP 136; Bloodied 68; see also necrotic pulse | | |
| AC 30; Fortitude 24, Reflex 27, Will 25 | | |
| Immune disease, poison; Resist 15 cold, 20 necrotic; | | |
| Vulnerable 5 radiant | | |
| Speed 8 (ice walk) | | |
| ④ Icy Claw (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold | | |
| Reach 3; +20 vs. AC; 1d12 + 6 cold damage. | | |
| ◀ Necrotic Pulse (free, when first bloodied; encounter) ♦ | | |
| Healing, Necrotic | | |
| Close burst 10; undead allies in the burst regain 10 hit points, and enemies in the burst take 10 necrotic damage. | | |
| Relentless Opportunist | | |
| If the boneclaw hits with an opportunity attack, it can make another opportunity attack against the same target during the current turn. | | |
| Threatening Reach | | |
| The boneclaw can make opportunity attacks against all enemies within its reach (3 squares). | | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Giant | |
| Skills Intimidate +16, Stealth +18 | | |
| Str 17 (+10) | Dex 23 (+13) | Wis 12 (+8) |
| Con 16 (+10) | Int 10 (+7) | Cha 18 (+11) |

| Frost Giant Sword Wraith (S) | Level 17 Lurker | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------|
| Large shadow humanoid (cold, giant, undead) | XP 1,600 | |
| Initiative +19 | Senses Perception +14; darkvision | |
| HP 90; Bloodied 45; see also <i>death strike</i> | | |
| Regeneration 10 (if the sword wraith takes radiant damage, regeneration is negated until the end of the sword wraith's next turn) | | |
| AC 30; Fortitude 29, Reflex 30, Will 32 | | |
| Immune disease, poison; Resist 15 cold, 20 necrotic, insubstantial; | | |
| Vulnerable 10 radiant (see also <i>regeneration</i> above) | | |
| Speed fly 8 (hover); phasing; see also <i>shadow glide</i> | | |
| ⊕ Shadow Sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic | | |
| +20 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 7 necrotic damage, and the target is weakened (save ends). | | |
| † Death Strike (when reduced to 0 hit points) ♦ Cold, Necrotic | | |
| The sword wraith shifts 4 squares and makes a melee basic attack, dealing an extra 2d8 cold and necrotic damage on a hit. | | |
| Combat Advantage ♦ Cold, Necrotic | | |
| The sword wraith deals an extra 2d6 cold and necrotic damage against any target it has combat advantage against. | | |
| Shadow Glide (move; encounter) | | |
| The sword wraith shifts 6 squares. | | |
| Spawn Wraith | | |
| Any humanoid killed by a sword wraith rises as a free-willed sword wraith at the start of its creator's next turn, appearing in the space where it died (or in the nearest unoccupied space). Raising the slain creature (using the Raise Dead ritual) does not destroy the spawned wraith. | | |
| Alignment Chaotic evil | | |
| Skills Stealth +20 | | |
| Str 14 (+10) | Dex 24 (+15) | Wis 12 (+9) |
| Con 18 (+12) | Int 11 (+8) | Cha 24 (+15) |

| Frost Giant Bodak Reaver (R) | Level 18 Soldier | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------|
| Large shadow humanoid (cold, giant, undead) | XP 2,000 | |
| Initiative +16 | Senses Perception +17; darkvision | |
| Agonizing Gaze (Fear, Gaze, Necrotic) aura 5; a creature in the aura that makes a melee or a ranged attack against the bodak reaver takes 5 necrotic damage before the attack roll is made and takes a -2 penalty to the attack roll. | | |
| HP 175; Bloodied 87 | | |
| AC 31; Fortitude 31, Reflex 30, Will 31 | | |
| Immune disease, poison; Resist 15 cold, 20 necrotic; Vulnerable 5 radiant; a bodak reaver that takes radiant damage can't weaken a target until the end of its next turn. | | |
| Speed 7 (ice walk) | | |
| ④ Icy Greataxe (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold, Necrotic, Weapon +23 vs. AC; 1d12 + 6 cold damage (crit 2d12 + 18) plus 1d8 necrotic damage, and the target is dazed and weakened (save ends both). | | |
| ✂ Death Gaze (standard; encounter) ♦ Gaze, Necrotic Ranged 10; targets a living creature; +20 vs. Fortitude; if the target is weakened, it is reduced to 0 hit points; otherwise, the target takes 1d6 + 6 necrotic damage and loses a healing surge. | | |
| Death Drinker If a living creature is reduced to 0 hit points within 5 squares of the bodak reaver, the reaver gains a +1 bonus to attack rolls until the end of its next turn, as well as 15 temporary hit points. | | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Common, Giant | |
| Str 22 (+15) | Dex 21 (+14) | Wis 16 (+12) |
| Con 23 (+15) | Int 10 (+9) | Cha 23 (+15) |
| Equipment plate armor, greataxe | | |

Flash Frost Shaft

Trap

Level 16 Obstacle

XP 1,400

Suddenly ice bursts from beneath you and the ground opens, creating an ice-coated shaft that slides you down, dropping you onto a carpet of bones in a lower chamber.

Trap: When a character steps into a trapped square (marked "X" on the map), he or she slides down a shaft and lands atop a pile of bones in the lower chamber. The shaft immediately fills with ice, cutting off this pathway.

Trigger

When a creature enters a trapped square, the trap activates.

Attack

Free Action **Close burst 2**

Target: All creatures in the burst

Attack: +19 vs. Reflex

Hit: 4d12 + 7 cold damage, and the target is pulled 2 squares into the newly formed shaft. The target slides down the shaft to land prone in a random square marked "Y" in the lower chamber.

Effect: The shaft immediately fills with ice, blocking this pathway down. The trap cannot be sprung again for 24 hours.

TACTICS

The undead surge forth to attack any creature that enters the lower chamber. They ignore anyone in the upper chamber. If the adventurers push aside the snow boulders that block the stairs, the giants wait until the intruders descend the stairs before attacking.

The boneclaws form a defensive barrier across the chamber, pouncing on anyone who falls down the shaft or blocking the stairs to prevent any rescue attempts.

The bodak reaver is clad in the finery of a great, frost giant king (or jarl). It is hungry for living victims and attacks without remorse. When any of the adventurers enter the lower chamber, it leaps up from its throne to attack.

The sword wraith lurks beside the throne or near the edge of the battle. It darts in to strike with combat advantage. If it cannot gain combat advantage, it prefers to withdraw and wait for an opening.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Bright light in the entry cave due to an everburning torch. Darkness in the lower chamber.

Columns: Four columns of ice stand in the entry chamber. They are decorated with carvings of axes, swords, harpoons, and other weapons favored by frost giants.

Ice Pillars: The four pillars of ice in the lower chamber pulse with frost magic. Any living creature that begins its turn adjacent to a pillar takes 10 cold damage and cannot shift until the end of its next turn.

Snow Boulders: Large boulders of packed snow block the stairs leading down to the lower chamber. Moving a boulder requires a DC 20 Strength check made as a standard action. A successful check allows

a character to slide a boulder one square. Up to two characters can aid an attempt to slide a boulder.

The boulder can also be pushed down the stairs with a DC 25 Strength check made as a standard action. This is an attack against all creatures on the stairs and at the base of the stairs. The boulder collapses into snow after it is used to attack in this manner.

+18 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 6 damage, and the target is knocked prone. Any creature missed by the attack takes half damage and is not knocked prone.

Stairs: The stairs are cut for Large or bigger creatures to easily navigate. Medium or smaller creatures treat the stairs as difficult terrain.

Bone Pile: The pile of bones beneath the shaft is difficult terrain.

Throne: This enormous throne is carved from stone. It is covered with scenes depicting frost giant warriors sailing longships and attacking shoreline settlements of creatures smaller than themselves.

Treasure: Four 5,000 gp gems can be found in the bone pile with a DC 20 Perception check. If the adventurers search the throne and make a DC 25 Perception check, they discover a level 19 magic item hidden in a secret compartment



ENCOUNTER F9: FROST FORGE

Encounter Level 15 (6,600 XP)

SETUP

- 2 firebred hell hounds (H)
- 2 quickling zephyrs (Q)
- 1 frost giant windkeeper (W)

This encounter takes place in the spot marked Location 6 on the Frost Spire Island map (see page 99).

The iron smith Helstaff, a frost giant windkeeper, dwells within this series of cavern chambers. He forges weapons and armor for the frost giants, along with the tools needed to excavate the ice of the Frost Spire. He is aided in his work by a pair of hell hounds and two quicklings.

These chambers are carved into one of the few areas of exposed rock on the island.

As the adventurers approach the area, read:

A small hill of earth and stone breaks up the seemingly endless sheets of ice that stretch before you. A cave opens onto a set of stairs carved into the rock that descend deeper into the Frost Spire.

Since the collapse of the giants' hierarchy on the island, the frost forge has become the site of several battles. Undead giants tried to attack this place not too long ago, and both Gorrick and Zaelex have sent forces to attempt to wrest the frost flame from Helstaff.

When the adventurers reach the cave entrance, read:

The corpses of three frost giants are scattered in the snow just outside the cave entrance. They appear to have been dead long before they fell here, as no blood covers the snow, and their flesh is dried and pulled taught over their bones. The barking of hounds echoes from deep within the cave.

Perception Check

DC 20: Horrid burns cover the bodies of the dead frost giants.

The firebred hell hounds provide the burns and the barking, and the forged frost fire can be found in this location.

TACTICS

Helstaff wishes only to be left alone to pursue his craft. After several attacks by his brethren, he and his assistants have developed a simple plan for defending their cavern chambers.

The two hell hounds bark, whine, and howl at each other. Helstaff hopes that the distraction draws intruders directly to the forge, where he and his minions can launch their attack. The hounds appear to

be trapped in a cage of ice, but they can easily melt the bars and attack. Meanwhile, Helstaff attacks the adventurers from an opening in his quarters which overlooks the forge. The quicklings emerge from trap doors hidden in the floor of the forge to strike fast and furiously.

Helstaff, a frost giant windkeeper, spends most of his time in his personal chamber. Driven paranoid by a combination of Suulkar's awakening and the attacks made against the forge, he waits in ambush for intruders to show themselves. He prefers to attack through the open window, striking down into the forge below with either *arctic vortex* or *driving blizzard*. If the adventurers discover the secret door of ice that hides the entrance to his chamber, he climbs down into the forge to avoid engaging in melee combat by himself. When pressed into close combat, he relies on *drums of the north* and *spear of storms*, saving *gale of the north wind* for when he can catch most of his enemies within its blast.

The firebred hell hounds provide the searing flame for Helstaff's forge. As a minor action, they can melt the bars that seal their lair. They do this when an intruder enters the forge, immediately springing to attack. Until such a time, they paw at the bars in an attempt to lure their enemies closer.

The quicklings begin the encounter in their lair at the bottom of their stairs. Once a battle begins in the forge, they rush into the secret doors marked "A," "B," and "C" to emerge from a corresponding trap door hidden in the floor of the forge. They dart in and out of the melee, seeking to attack wizards and other characters with poor melee capabilities.

2 Quickling Zephyrs (Q)

Small fey humanoid

Level 14 Lurker

XP 1,000 each

Initiative +20

Senses Perception +10; low-light vision

HP 82; Bloodied 41

AC 30; Fortitude 26, Reflex 29, Will 23

Speed 12, climb 6; see also *blinding speed* and *unstoppable*

① **Short Sword** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

+19 vs. AC; 1d6 + 9 damage.

Blinding Speed (move; recharge 2) ♦ **Illusion**

The quickling zephyr moves up to 12 squares and becomes invisible until it attacks or until the end of its next turn.

Combat Advantage

If the quickling zephyr has combat advantage against its target, it deals an extra 2d6 damage and dazes the target (save ends) on a successful melee attack.

Unstoppable

The quickling zephyr ignores difficult terrain and can move across any solid or liquid surface.

Alignment Evil Languages Elven

Skills Acrobatics +26, Bluff +13, Stealth +21

Str 12 (+8)

Dex 28 (+16)

Wis 17 (+10)

Con 22 (+13)

Int 16 (+10)

Cha 12 (+8)

Equipment short sword

Frost Giant **Level 16 Controller (Leader)****Windkeeper (W)**

Large elemental humanoid (cold, giant)

XP 1,400

Initiative +13 Senses Perception +20

HP 158; Bloodied 79

AC 30; Fortitude 31, Reflex 30, Will 32

Resist 15 cold

Speed 8 (ice walk)

⚔ **Spear of Storms** (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold, Weapon

Reach 3; +21 vs. AC; 2d10 + 5 cold damage, and the target slides 3 squares.

❄ **Arctic Vortex** (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold

Area burst 1 within 20; +20 vs. Fortitude; 2d6 + 5 cold damage, and the target slides 3 squares.

❄ **Driving Blizzard** (standard; recharge [2][3]) ♦ Cold

Area burst 2 within 20; +20 vs. Reflex; 3d6 + 5 cold damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends). Until the end of the encounter, the area becomes difficult terrain for creatures smaller than Large size.

❄ **Gale of the North Wind** (standard; encounter) ♦ Cold

Close blast 5; targets enemies only; +20 vs. Fortitude; 4d10 + 5 cold damage, and the target is pushed 2 squares and knocked prone. Miss: Half damage and push 1 square.

❄ **Drums of the North** (standard; at-will) ♦ Fear, Implement

Close burst 10; targets enemies; +20 vs. Will; the target is pushed 2 squares and slowed until the end of the frost giant's next turn. Allies in the burst immediately shift 3 squares. The frost giant must sheath his longsword to play the drum.

Alignment Evil

Languages Common, Giant

Skills Arcana +17, Nature +20, Religion +17

Str 20 (+13) Dex 21 (+13) Wis 24 (+15)

Con 22 (+14) Int 19 (+12) Cha 21 (+13)

Equipment hide armor, longsword, drum

2 Firebred Hell Hounds (H)

Medium elemental beast (fire)

Level 17 Brute

XP 1,600 each

Initiative +10 Senses Perception +17

Fire Shield (Fire) aura 1; any creature that enters or begins its turn in the aura takes 1d10 fire damage.

HP 205; Bloodied 102

AC 30; Fortitude 30, Reflex 28, Will 29

Resist 40 fire

Speed 8

⚔ **Bite** (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire

+20 vs. AC; 1d10 + 6 plus 1d10 fire damage.

❄ **Fiery Breath** (standard; recharge [2][3][3]) ♦ Fire

Close blast 3; +18 vs. Reflex; 4d6 + 7 fire damage.

❄ **Fiery Burst** (standard; recharge [3]) ♦ Fire

Close burst 3; +18 vs. Reflex; 4d10 + 7 fire damage.

Alignment Unaligned

Languages –

Str 22 (+14) Dex 14 (+10) Wis 19 (+12)

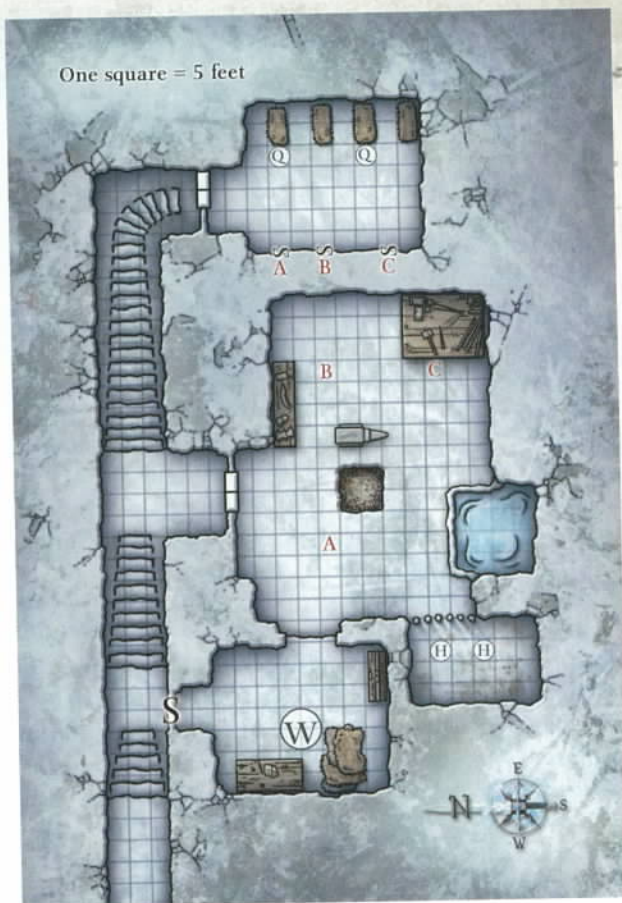
Con 25 (+15) Int 2 (+4) Cha 12 (+9)

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Bright light in the upper and central chambers (Helstaff's quarters and the forge). Dim light in the lower chamber (quicklings' lair).

Stairs: The stairs are cut for Large or bigger creatures to easily navigate. Medium or smaller creatures treat the stairs as difficult terrain.

Secret Door: A DC 25 Perception check is required to spot this door. Helstaff carved a block of ice to hide the entry to his chamber. Moving it aside requires a DC 25 Strength check.



Helstaff's Chamber: The uppermost chamber in this complex, this room sits 20 feet above the forge. An open window looks down upon the forge. A DC 20 Athletics check is required to climb the wall from the window. The chamber contains sleeping furs.

Forge: The central chamber is Helstaff's forge. The worktables and anvils feature armor and weapons in various stages of completion. A pit of blue-white frost fire in the center of the chamber blazes with a strange combination of intense heat and cold. Any creature that enters or starts its turn in the pit takes 15 fire damage and 15 cold damage; a creature gains ongoing 5 cold and fire damage upon leaving the pit. A small metal brazier containing a smoldering piece of frost fire hangs above the pit.

A font of ice-cold water stands against the southern wall. Any creature that enters or starts its turn in the font takes 10 cold damage.

Three trap doors hidden in the floor of the forge (DC 25 Perception to notice) connect this room to the room below. Small creatures can move through the tunnels without penalty. Larger creatures must squeeze to enter and move through them.

Treasure: A level 18 magic item is among the weapons and armor in the forge.

ENCOUNTER F10: TOWER OF ICE

Encounter Level 18 (10,000 XP)

SETUP

2 ice archon rimehammers (R)

2 ice archon hailscourges (H)

Zaelex (Z)

This encounter takes place in the spot marked Location 7 on the Frost Spire Island map (see page 99).

A number of ice archons accompanied the giants on their expedition to the Frost Spire. Zaelex, their leader and a spellcaster skilled in the magic of frost and storm, crafted a spire of ice to serve as his domicile during the occupation of the island.

As the adventurers approach the tower, read:

Atop a small hill of snow stands a short, squat structure. It is a square, two-story building carved from ice. Battlements ring the roof, and you can see three statues perched at three of the roof's corners. Doors on the north and east side of the structure offer obvious entrances into the tower of ice.

Zaelex retreated to this place once the frost giants unearthed Suulkar. He works to complete a ritual to break the spell that Suulkar placed over the giants.

Zaelex (Z) **Level 19 Controller (Leader)**
Medium elemental humanoid (cold), ice archon XP 2,400

Initiative +12 Senses Perception +14

HP 180; Bloodied 90

AC 33; Fortitude 31, Reflex 32, Will 31

Immune disease, poison; Resist 30 cold

Speed 6 (ice walk)

⚔ **Ice Staff** (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold, Weapon

+24 vs. AC; 2d8 + 3 cold damage, and the target is immobilized until the end of Zaelex's next turn.

✂ **Ice Shard** (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold

Ranged 10; +23 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 3 cold damage, and the target is slowed and takes ongoing 10 cold damage (save ends both).

❄ **Blizzard Strike** (standard; recharge [3]) ♦ Cold, Zone

Area burst 2 within 10; targets enemies; +23 vs. Fortitude; 3d8 + 5 cold damage, and the area becomes a zone that lasts until the end of the encounter. If a creature begins its turn in the zone, Zaelex can slide the creature 2 squares as a free action.

❄ **Winter's Breath** (standard; encounter) ♦ Cold

Close blast 5; targets enemies; +23 vs. Fortitude; 4d10 + 7 cold damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends). *First Failed Save:* The target is restrained (save ends). *Second Failed Save:* The target turns to ice and is petrified.

Master of the Tower

Zaelex can utilize the effects described under "Tower Effects," and can move through tower walls as though they weren't there.

Alignment Evil Languages Common, Giant, Primordial

Skills Arcana +20, Bluff +17, Diplomacy +17, History +20

Str 21 (+14) Dex 16 (+12) Wis 21 (+14)

Con 20 (+14) Int 22 (+15) Cha 16 (+12)

2 Ice Archon Rimehammers (R)

Medium elemental humanoid (cold)

Level 19 Soldier

XP 2,400 each

Initiative +15 Senses Perception +12

Icy Ground (Cold) aura 1; enemies treat the area within the aura as difficult terrain.

HP 185; Bloodied 92

AC 35; Fortitude 35, Reflex 32, Will 31

Immune disease, poison; Resist 30 cold

Speed 6 (ice walk)

⚔ **Maul** (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold, Weapon

+25 vs. AC; 2d6 + 7 damage plus 1d6 cold damage, and the target is slowed (save ends). Against a slowed target, the rimehammer deals an extra 2d6 cold damage.

Alignment Chaotic evil Languages Primordial

Str 24 (+16) Dex 18 (+13) Wis 16 (+12)

Con 25 (+16) Int 14 (+11) Cha 15 (+11)

Equipment plate armor, maul

2 Ice Archon Hailscourges (H)

Medium elemental humanoid (cold)

Level 16 Artillery

XP 1,400 each

Initiative +11 Senses Perception +10

HP 120; Bloodied 60

AC 30; Fortitude 28, Reflex 27, Will 26

Immune disease, poison; Resist 20 cold

Speed 6 (ice walk)

⚔ **Slam** (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold

+19 vs. AC; 1d6 + 4 cold damage.

❄ **Ice Shuriken** (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold

Ranged 6/12; +21 vs. AC; 1d6 + 4 damage plus 1d6 cold damage.

✂ **Double Attack** (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold

The ice archon hailscourge makes two ice shuriken attacks.

❄ **Hail Storm** (standard; recharge [3]) ♦ Cold

Area burst 1, 2, 3, or 4 within 20; +21 vs. AC; 2d8 + 4 cold damage. Miss: Half damage. The ice archon hailscourge determines the exact burst radius of the hail storm.

Frost Shield (immediate interrupt, when attacked by a ranged, a close, or an area attack; encounter) ♦ Cold

The ice archon hailscourge gains resist 20 to all damage against the triggering attack.

Alignment Chaotic evil Languages Primordial

Str 18 (+12) Dex 16 (+11) Wis 14 (+10)

Con 18 (+12) Int 14 (+10) Cha 15 (+10)

Equipment plate armor

TACTICS

If attacked, Zaelex uses his control over the very fabric of the tower to attack the adventurers. While his archon aids hold back the adventurers, Zaelex rains spells and other attacks upon them. He prefers to fight on the second floor of the tower, in the area open to the sky so that the hailscourges can attack from the roof above.

The rimehammers move forward to attack intruders. They fight on the tower's first floor, defending the stairs and pouncing on any adventurers that become isolated from their companions. Once bloodied, they retreat to the second floor, allowing Zaelex to engage the enemy while they continue to hammer at them.

The hailscourges keep to the roof, raining attacks upon intruders that fight their way to the second level.

The archons fight to the death.

TOWER EFFECTS

Zaelex used a ritual of primordial magic to raise the tower from the icy tundra. The structure is a living being that obeys his commands. As a minor action, once per round, Zaelex can do one of the following.

Icy Maw: The floor beneath an enemy opens, dropping the enemy to the level below. This power is usable only against targets on the second or third level. The opening immediately closes after the enemy falls.

+23 vs. Reflex; the target falls 10 feet to the floor below, taking 1d10 damage.

Ice to Water: The floor beneath a target partially melts, turning the area slippery. The square remains slick until the end of the encounter. Any creature that enters or starts its turn in the square is attacked.

+23 vs. Reflex; the target falls prone.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Bright light.

Outer Walls: Scaling the tower's walls requires a DC 25 Athletics check.

First Level: The tower's lowest level features a large ice statue of Zaelex (a monument to his arrogance) along with a series of ice pillars.

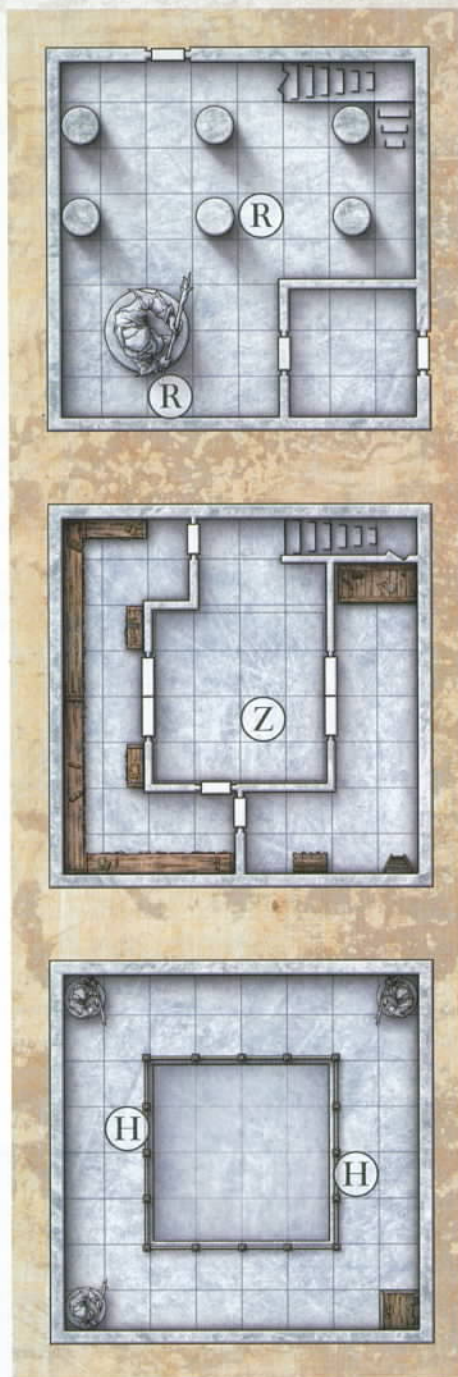
Second Level: This level features a chamber used as a workroom and a library. The library has shelves along its wall, but they are empty except for an urn.

The central section of the level is open to the sky. Creatures on the roof can see down into this area.

The eastern chamber is a workroom, with a table and chest carved from the ice. The table is covered with powdered silver and gold, carefully arranged in an arcane pattern. This is where Zaelex toils over his pet projects. While the powder seems as fine as dust, no amount of force can move it. If an adventurer observes the dust for a minute, he or she might notice that the entire pattern slowly moves and changes (DC 25 Perception check).

Third Level: A trap door in the southeast corner allows access to this place. Opening it is a minor action. The three statues depict archon warriors. They are purely decorative.

Treasure: The archons have been busy, collecting treasure from the frost giant graves on the island. The chest carved from ice in the workroom contains 40,000 gp in coins and gems. Zaelex carries the *Tome of the Frozen Gate*.



ENCOUNTER F10: TOWER OF ICE

In addition, a 2-foot tall, bronze urn sits on a shelf in the library. This is one of the urns that the ghosts want the adventurers to find and bury, as described under "The Restless Dead" on page 103. The urn is sealed with wax and contains several bone fragments from an ancient frost giant. If the adventurers open the urn, they desecrate the remains. They suffer a -2 penalty to all defenses for the entire encounter the next time they fight undead frost giants on the island.

ENCOUNTER FII: HUNTERS OF THE WASTES

Encounter Level 20 (15,200 XP)

SETUP

- 1 remorhaz
- 2 winter wolf frostbreaths
- 3 dire winter wolf iceclaws

This encounter takes place as the adventurers travel from one numbered location to another across the Frost Spire. Use this encounter once, preferably after the adventurers have had a relatively easy encounter.

There is no tactical map for this encounter. It takes place on a flat plain of ice and snow, with a scattering of icy mounds to break up the landscape.

The remorhaz and a pack of winter wolves have become a sort of hunting party. The wolves follow the remorhaz around the island as it burrows and surfaces in search of prey. When the remorhaz strikes, the wolves rush in to take whatever bits of flesh they can before the remorhaz eventually swallows its victim.

When the adventurers approach the area where you want this encounter to occur, read:

The frozen plain ahead reflects the lightning crackling in the dark clouds above. Icy peaks in the distance break up the otherwise flat expanse of snow. Suddenly, the ground rumbles and shakes, and a mound of snow rises as though something very large were moving beneath the frosty surface—and heading right toward you!

The ground in front of you explodes, throwing snow and ice in all directions. A huge creature, like an enormous centipede with icy blue scales and a quilled frill, emerges from the broken ground. A terrible screech fills the air as the elemental beast opens its tooth-filled maw and gets ready to deliver a deadly bite.

The remorhaz emerges from its tunnel to strike right in the middle of the party. It attacks once in this surprise round, before the adventurers roll initiative and get to act. After this initial bite attack, roll initiative to establish the battle order for the adventurers, the remorhaz, and the winter wolves.

Perception Check

DC 37: *Something fast approaches from out of the blinding snow, rushing right toward you.*

Any character that succeeds at the Perception check notices the approaching wolves. Anyone who fails the check grants combat advantage to the creatures for their first attack in the battle.

TACTICS

The remorhaz tries to bite and grab a target. Then it spends its action point to immediately attempt to swallow the grabbed victim. The following round, it leads off with *immolating carapace*, then moves away. This is followed by a *trample* attack as it tries to include as many enemies as possible. Then it starts the cycle again with a bite attack.

The winter wolves work together, avoiding the remorhaz as they harry the adventurers. The iceclaws rush forward, pausing long enough to unleash their *freezing breath* blasts before making *claw and run* attacks. The iceclaws love to attack with combat advantage, dealing extra cold damage with each such attack. If they take damage, they use *slipstream* to slide away from an opponent and set up for their next attack.

The frostbreaths, meanwhile, hang back and use *ray of cold* to slow opponents, and *blast of sleet* when opponents get too close.



The winter wolves move into and out of combat, taking advantage of any opportunities presented to them by the remorhaz as it battles the adventurers.

The remorhaz attempts to escape if the adventurers reduce it to 100 hit points or fewer. The winter wolves run off if the remorhaz is driven away or defeated, or if the winter wolves lose two or more members of their hunting pack.

DEVELOPMENT

If the adventurers defeat the remorhaz, they can attempt to follow its trail back to its subterranean lair. This requires a DC 27 Perception check and 1d4 hours of tracking. If the adventurers find the lair, they discover the remains of previous victims and the treasure these victims left behind. This includes a level 17 magic item, an ornate set of dress armor worth 7,500 gp, a collection of gems worth 5,500 gp, and two *potions of vitality*.

If the adventurers defeat the winter wolves, they can attempt to trace a path back to their lair, hidden within a cave in a nearby hill of ice and stone. This requires a DC 22 Perception check and 1d4 hours of tracking. If the adventurers find the lair, they discover treasure scattered within the cave, including a collection of various gems worth a total of 8,000 gp.

3 Dire Winter Wolf Iceclaws Level 17 Skirmisher Large natural magical beast XP 1,600 each

Initiative +19 **Senses** Perception +20; low-light vision
HP 168; **Bloodied** 84
AC 31; **Fortitude** 29, **Reflex** 30, **Will** 28
Resist 20 cold
Speed 8 (ice walk)

⊕ **Bite** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Cold**
+22 vs. AC; 1d10 + 7 damage plus 1d8 cold damage.

⊕ **Claw and Run** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Cold**
Two attacks against one or two targets; +22 vs. AC; 1d8 + 7 cold damage per attack. After the first or second attack, the dire winter wolf can shift 4 squares.

⚡ **Freezing Breath** (standard; recharge Ⓜ Ⓜ) ♦ **Cold**
Close blast 5; +20 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 7 cold damage, and ongoing 5 cold damage (save ends). **Miss:** Half damage.

Combat Advantage

The dire winter wolf gains combat advantage against a target that has one or more of the dire winter wolf's allies adjacent to it. The dire winter wolf deals an extra 2d6 cold damage on attacks against any target it has combat advantage against.

Slipstream (immediate reaction, when an attack damages the dire winter wolf; at-will)

The dire winter wolf shifts 4 squares and gains +2 to all defenses until the start of its next turn.

Alignment Evil **Languages** Common, Giant
Skills Stealth +22 (+27 in snow or ice)
Str 26 (+16) **Dex** 28 (+17) **Wis** 24 (+15)
Con 24 (+15) **Int** 12 (+9) **Cha** 18 (+12)

2 Winter Wolf Frostbreaths Level 18 Artillery Medium natural magical beast XP 2,000 each

Initiative +17 **Senses** Perception +13; low-light vision
HP 136; **Bloodied** 68
AC 30; **Fortitude** 29, **Reflex** 31, **Will** 27

Resist 20 cold

Speed 8 (ice walk)

⊕ **Bite** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Cold**
+25 vs. AC; 1d10 + 7 damage plus 1d8 cold damage.

☼ **Ray of Cold** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Cold**
Ranged 10; +23 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 7 cold damage, and the target is slowed (save ends).

⚡ **Blast of Sleet** (standard; recharge Ⓜ Ⓜ) ♦ **Cold**
Close blast 5; +21 vs. Reflex; 3d8 + 7 cold damage, and the target slides 3 squares and falls prone.

Alignment Evil **Languages** Common, Giant
Skills Stealth +22 (+27 in snow or ice)
Str 21 (+14) **Dex** 26 (+17) **Wis** 19 (+13)
Con 22 (+15) **Int** 10 (+9) **Cha** 13 (+10)

Remorhaz Level 21 Elite Brute Huge elemental beast XP 6,400

Initiative +18 **Senses** Perception +15; low-light vision
Blistering Heat (Fire) aura 2; each creature that starts its turn within the aura takes 10 fire damage.

HP 480; **Bloodied** 240

AC 33; **Fortitude** 33, **Reflex** 34, **Will** 32

Saving Throws +2

Speed 6, burrow 4 (tunneling)

Action Points 1

⊕ **Bite** (standard; at-will)
Reach 2; +24 vs. AC; 2d12 + 10 damage, and the target is grabbed.

⊕ **Swallow** (minor; at-will) ♦ **Fire**
Reach 2; targets a creature grabbed by the remorhaz; +24 vs. Fortitude; the target is swallowed and is no longer grabbed. While swallowed, the target is restrained and takes 10 damage plus 10 fire damage at the start of the remorhaz's turn. The swallowed creature has line of sight and line of effect only to the remorhaz, and no creature has line of sight or line of effect to the target. The swallowed creature can make only melee or close attacks. If the swallowed creature deals 30 damage to the remorhaz with an attack, the remorhaz regurgitates the creature into an adjacent square, and the creature is no longer swallowed. When the remorhaz dies, the target is no longer swallowed and can escape as a move action, appearing in the remorhaz's former space.

⊕ **Trample** (standard; at-will)
The remorhaz moves its speed and can enter enemies' spaces. The remorhaz makes an attack against each enemy whose space it enters; +22 vs. Reflex; 2d10 + 5 damage, and the target is knocked prone.

⚡ **Immolating Carapace** (standard; recharge Ⓜ) ♦ **Fire**
Close burst 1; +24 vs. Reflex; 3d10 + 5 fire damage, and the target takes ongoing 10 fire damage until it ends its turn in a space that is not adjacent to the remorhaz.

Enraged Heat (immediate reaction, when a creature hits the remorhaz with a melee attack; usable only while bloodied; at-will) ♦ **Fire**
The triggering creature takes 10 fire damage.

Alignment Unaligned **Languages** —
Str 23 (+16) **Dex** 26 (+18) **Wis** 21 (+15)
Con 20 (+15) **Int** 5 (+7) **Cha** 10 (+10)

ENCOUNTER F12: CRAFTING THE KEY

Encounter Level 13 (4,400 XP)

This encounter takes place in the spot marked Location 6 on the Frost Spire Island map (see page 99).

Once the adventurers have collected the three items, they can forge the key they need to follow Jarl Grugnurson into the inner sanctum.

FORGING THE KEY

To gain entrance to the inner sanctum, the characters must forge a key of pure elemental ice. As described earlier, this requires a shard of elemental ice from Gorrick's hut (Location 4), the *Tome of the Frozen Gate* from Zaelex's tower (Location 7), and the forged frost fire tended by Helstaff (Location 6). The adventurers need the book for the directions to craft the key, the elemental ice to serve as the raw material, and the frost fire to craft it without damaging the pure ice.

Creating the key requires a series of skill checks. The adventurers have access to enough elemental ice that, sooner or later, they can complete the key. The checks determine how quickly the work is finished.

Three characters must work together to forge the key. One must follow the directions from the *Tome of the Frozen Gate*. Another must handle the tools in Helstaff's forge to manipulate the frost fire to prepare it for the ice. Finally, a third character must feed the ice into the frost-fire-imbued forge to craft the key. These three steps require one day of work in Helstaff's forge. One PC can aid each check, however none of the lead characters can aid with the other checks.

All three characters must succeed with their checks to craft the key. Otherwise, the adventurers must start the process over again the next day, after an extended rest, using all of the required items.

THE TOME OF THE FROZEN GATE

This 30-page book is carved from ice, with its covers a 1-inch slab of white ice. Each page is a paper-thin sliver of transparent ice scribed with silver runes. Holding different pages together causes the runes on each to run together and form different messages. Thus, taking the first three pages and holding them together causes a different message (or perhaps gibberish) to appear. In order to read the ritual, the characters must determine the pages they must hold together and what order to read them in. This requires a DC 22 Arcana check that takes two hours of work.

When the check succeeds, the runes swirl and move like smoke caught within the ice. They form into a language that only the character making the check can read.

FROST FIRE FORGE

The frost fire burns within Helstaff's forge. The fire is a white and blue flame that casts a pale, harsh light. The character must work the various tools and stoke the fire of heat and cold to prepare it to accept the pure elemental ice. This requires two hours of work and a DC 22 Athletics check.

When the check succeeds, the frost fire burning in the forge becomes a silver so intense that it hurts to look directing into the flame.

PURE ELEMENTAL ICE

The ice pillars outside of Gorrick's hut consist of pure elemental ice. The adventurers can find two shards ready to use in the hut, or they can extract shards from the pillars. It takes one hour and a DC 22 Thievery check to harvest a usable shard of ice. Pure elemental ice is completely transparent. Note that any failed checks when attempting to craft the key consumes one shard of pure elemental ice.

When the forge is ready, a character must feed the pure elemental ice into the forge and work the prepared tools to shape the shard into a key. This requires one hour of work and a DC 22 Thievery check.

THE KEY

If the three checks succeed, the completed key emerges from the forge as a narrow, 3-foot-long sliver of ice that looks like an icicle with a series of grooves carved along its length. It comes to a point as sharp as a dagger. White and blue energy courses through the ice, like liquid water sealed within it. While the key looks fragile, it is as hard as tempered steel.

AT THE GATE

The gate to the inner sanctum is carved into the side of the peaks that dominate the southwestern portion of the island (Location 8 on the map on page 99). The double doors are crafted from ice and are covered with carvings of writhing tentacles that rise from the sea.

The doors open by inserting the key. Slowly, the doors swing open to reveal a set of stairs carved into the ice that plunge downward at a steep angle.

When the doors open, the characters experience a vision. For a moment, the wind and snow that howl over the island cease, and a crimson fire plays across the tops of the peaks. That fire coalesces and flows down the peaks, revealing the dark, shadowy form of gargantuan tentacles buried deep within the ice. For a moment, the tentacles writhe and struggle as if they seek to break free of the ice that entraps them. With a final, crimson flash, the fire dissipates, the winds return, and all signs of the tentacles disappear.

Just inside the open doors, the adventurers see the body of a huge white dragon, its chest open and its heart removed. It appears to have died recently.

ENCOUNTER F13: AGAINST THE FROST TITAN

Encounter Level 20 (14,000 XP)

SETUP

Frost giant warchief (W)

3 frost giant hunters (H)

Frost titan (T)

Breven Foss

The adventurers proceed through the gate, down the steep steps, and work their way deep beneath the ice and snow of the island. After an hour of travel, they reach a cavern of water and ice and see a group of frost giants engaged in some arcane task. Read:

Before you stretches a long, wide chamber hacked from the ice. The ceiling rises 50 feet, and embedded within the ice, just beneath the frozen surface, are thick, entwined tentacles.

A narrow path of ice twists before you. Pools of water stretch to the edge of this chamber. At the end of the path, a stone platform with a flight of stairs rises up out of the ice.

Three frost giants with harpoons guard the way to the stone platform, where a powerful-looking frost giant appears to be casting a spell over a crimson pool.

Suddenly a blizzard swirls into existence right ahead of you. It spins with icy ferocity before it takes the shape of a huge frost titan. "I am here, Grugnurson!" the titan bellows. "Why have you called me from my work when we are so close to releasing Piranoth?"

The frost giant jarl, the warchief Grugnurson, takes the final steps needed to completely awaken the slumbering Suulkar. The warchief and his frost giant hunters are under Suulkar's powerful influence, for the slumbering primordial is not some mindless tool to be used by lesser beings such as themselves.

Grugnurson, at the behest of Suulkar, has summoned the frost titan Glacier to this subterranean cavern to expose his lord to the awakening primordial. Suulkar cares nothing about the titan lords or their desire to free Piranoth. It just wants to get out of this prison of ice and gather followers that it can control.

The ritual that Grugnurson is being directed to complete involves the still-beating heart of a white dragon and a pool of crimson blood. If the jarl is allowed to complete the ritual, Suulkar will fully awaken and cast off the frozen prison that is the Frost Spire. When this occurs, the primordial will be free to wreak havoc across the planes.

Breven Foss is not visible when this encounter begins. He appears as directed later in the encounter.

This encounter is continued on the next page.

ENCOUNTER F13: AGAINST THE FROST TITAN

Frost Giant Warchief (W) **Level 20 Brute**
Large elemental humanoid (cold, giant) XP 2,800

Initiative +15 Senses Perception +16

HP 233; Bloodied 116; see also *dying swipe*

AC 32; Fortitude 32, Reflex 30, Will 31

Resist 15 cold

Speed 8 (ice walk)

⚔ **Icy Greataxe** (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold, Weapon

Reach 2; +25 vs. AC; 4d6 + 9 (crit 8d6 + 33) cold damage.

⚔ **Dying Swipe** (when the frost giant drops to 0 hit points)

The frost giant makes an icy greataxe attack.

⚔ **Chilling Strike** (standard; recharge ⏏ ⏏) ♦ Cold, Weapon

Reach 2; +25 vs. AC; 2d6 + 9 cold damage, and the target gains vulnerable 10 cold (save ends).

⚔ **Icy Handaxe** (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold, Weapon

Ranged 5/10; +25 vs. AC; 2d8 + 9 cold damage.

Icebound Footing

When an effect pulls, pushes, or slides a frost giant, the giant moves 2 squares less than the effect specifies. Also, a frost giant can make a saving throw to avoid being knocked prone.

Alignment Evil

Languages Common, Giant, Primordial

Skills Athletics +23

Str 25 (+17)

Dex 21 (+15)

Wis 22 (+16)

Con 23 (+16)

Int 14 (+12)

Cha 16 (+13)

Equipment hide armor, greataxe, 3 handaxes

3 Frost Giant Hunters (H) **Level 15 Artillery**
Large elemental humanoid (cold, giant) XP 1,200 each

Initiative +16 Senses Perception +13

HP 114; Bloodied 57

AC 27; Fortitude 27, Reflex 26, Will 28

Resist 15 cold

Speed 8 (ice walk)

⚔ **Icy Harpoon** (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold, Weapon

Reach 3; +22 vs. AC; 2d10 + 5 cold damage.

⚔ **Icy Crossbow** (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold, Weapon

Ranged 15/30; +22 vs. AC; 3d6 + 5 cold damage.

⚔ **Skewering Strike** (standard; recharge ⏏ ⏏) ♦ Cold, Weapon

Reach 3; +20 vs. Reflex; 3d10 + 5 cold damage, and the target slides 3 squares and is slowed (save ends).

Opening Strike

The frost giant gains combat advantage against enemies that have not yet acted during an encounter.

Combat Advantage

The frost giant deals an extra 1d10 damage against any target it has combat advantage against.

Icebound Footing

When an effect pulls, pushes, or slides a frost giant, the giant moves 2 squares less than the effect specifies. Also, a frost giant can make a saving throw to avoid being knocked prone.

Alignment Evil

Languages Common, Giant

Skills Athletics +17, Endurance +16, Stealth +16

Str 21 (+12)

Dex 19 (+11)

Wis 22 (+13)

Con 18 (+11)

Int 12 (+8)

Cha 12 (+8)

Equipment hide armor, harpoon, crossbow

This encounter is continued from the previous page.

| Breven Foss, Final Battle | | Level 14 Elite Controller |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Medium natural humanoid, human | | XP 2,000 |
| Initiative +8 | Senses Perception +19 | |
| Elemental Energy aura 10; each elemental ally within the aura regenerates 10 hp at the start of its turn. | | |
| HP 264; Bloodied 132 | | |
| AC 28; Fortitude 26, Reflex 27, Will 28 | | |
| Saving Throws +2 | | |
| Speed 6 | | |
| Action Points 1 | | |
| ⚡ Fire Touch (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire | | |
| +18 vs. Reflex; 1d10 + 6 fire damage, and the target takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls until the end of Foss's next turn. | | |
| ✂ Frost Bolt (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold | | |
| Ranged 10; +18 vs. Fortitude; 2d8 + 6 cold damage, and until the end of Foss's next turn, the target is slowed and takes a -2 penalty to all defenses. | | |
| ⚡ Elemental Burst (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold, Fire | | |
| Close burst 5; targets enemies; +17 vs. Fortitude; 1d10 + 6 cold and fire damage, Foss slides the target 3 squares, and the target is dazed (save ends). | | |
| Elemental Mist (immediate reaction, when Foss takes damage; encounter) | | |
| Foss becomes invisible until after he hits or misses with an attack or until the end of his next turn. | | |
| Alignment Unaligned | | Languages Common, Giant, Primordial |
| Skills Arcana +17, Insight +18, Religion +17 | | |
| Str 12 (+8) | Dex 12 (+8) | Wis 24 (+14) |
| Con 20 (+12) | Int 22 (+13) | Cha 15 (+9) |

Perception Check

DC 22: A beating heart of great size sits atop a pedestal on the stone platform. With every beat of the heart, dark blood pours forth, forming a pool around the pedestal and flowing into the icy water. The water and the ice around the chamber are slowly turning crimson, and the tentacles within the ice seem to pulse each time the heart pumps blood.

BREVEN FOSS

The elemental master Breven Foss is dedicated to the quest to free Piranoth from its eternal prison. He works with the titan lords to make sure that Piranoth's bid for freedom succeeds. Breven has come to Frost Spire to help Jarl Grugnurson complete his mission: to recover a piece of the divine engine. Unfortunately, Grugnurson heard the subtle whispers of the slumbering primordial trapped here, and has abandoned his original mission in favor of a new one. The jarl wants to free Suulkar and gain the power that the primordial has promised him. Breven quaffed a *potion of invisibility* and has been watching Grugnurson for a while now. The elemental master is trying to decide how to salvage the original plan when Grugnurson summons the frost titan Glacier and the adventurers arrive.

| Frost Titan (T) | Level 20 Elite Brute |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Huge elemental humanoid (cold, giant) | XP 5,600 |
| Initiative +14 | Senses Perception +16 |
| Fimbulwinter Breath (Cold) aura 2; enemies treat the aura's area as difficult terrain. Each enemy that starts its turn within the aura takes 5 cold damage. | |
| HP 466; Bloodied 233; see also <i>furios swipe</i> | |
| AC 32; Fortitude 34, Reflex 29, Will 33 | |
| Resist 15 cold | |
| Saving Throws +2 | |
| Speed 8 (ice walk) | |
| Action Points 1 | |
| ⚡ Icy Greataxe (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold, Weapon | |
| Reach 3; +23 vs. AC; 2d8 + 9 (crit 4d8 + 25) cold damage, and ongoing 10 cold damage (save ends). | |
| ✂ Furios Swipe (free, when first bloodied and again when the frost titan drops to 0 hit points) | |
| The titan makes an <i>icy greataxe</i> attack. | |
| ✂ Cold-Blooded Kick (minor 1/round; at-will) | |
| Reach 3; +21 vs. Reflex; 1d8 + 9 damage, and the target is pushed 2 squares and knocked prone. | |
| ✂ Ice Bolts (standard; recharge ☒ ☐) | |
| Ranged 20; targets one or two creatures; +21 vs. Fortitude; 1d8 + 9 cold damage, and the target is slowed (save ends). | |
| ⚡ Blast of Winter (standard; encounter) | |
| Close blast 5; +21 vs. Reflex; 3d8 + 6 cold damage, ongoing 10 cold damage (save ends), and the target is immobilized until the end of the frost titan's next turn. Miss: Half damage. | |
| Glacial Footing | |
| When an effect pulls, pushes, or slides a frost titan, the titan moves 4 squares less than the effect specifies. Also, a frost titan can make a saving throw to avoid being knocked prone. | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Giant, Primordial |
| Skills Athletics +24 | |
| Str 28 (+19) | Dex 19 (+14) Wis 23 (+16) |
| Con 23 (+16) | Int 12 (+11) Cha 16 (+13) |
| Equipment greataxe | |

TACTICS

The jarl and his followers fight to the death. The frost titan, unaware of Suulkar and the influence that the primordial has over the frost giants here, joins them in battle against the adventurers. Breven waits for an opportunity to grab the piece of the divine engine that hangs from Grugnurson's belt, then he moves to join the frost titan in hopes that the two of them can escape with the prize they were sent here to get.

The jarl warchief fights with insane fury, laughing and delighting at the carnage he causes. He takes up a position at the top of the stairs, hurling axes and then moving to engage enemies in direct combat.

The frost titan Glacier moves to block the path to the stone platform. He focuses on using *cold-blooded kick* to send enemies into the freezing water. If he knocks a character prone but fails to push him into the water, he delights in striking with combat advantage.

The frost giant hunters use their crossbows, switching to their harpoons when the adventurers draw near.

Once the titan is bloodied, two of the hunters leap into the water, swim to where the adventurers entered, and climb up to attack from behind or to engage wizards or rangers in melee.

Breven Foss grabs the divine engine from Grugnurson, moves to a position behind the frost titan, and then attacks with either *frost bolt* or *elemental burst*, depending on the distance between himself and the adventurers. While he hopes to escape with the frost titan and the relic, this is probably the place where this villain makes his last stand.

DEVELOPMENT

Grugnurson has finished the ritual whispered into his mind by the slumbering Suulkar. Now, with each beat of the white dragon heart, Suulkar grows closer to being able to free itself from its prison. The adventurers must stop this from occurring. They can spot the signs with a Perception check, or Breven Foss can warn them during the battle. Breven wants to free Piranoth—Suulkar might endanger that goal.

Keep track of rounds in this battle. On round 3, initiative 20 in the order, Suulkar begins to make +18 vs. Will attacks against individual adventurers each round. A success deals 1d10 + 6 psychic damage and dominates the target (save ends). On round 10, the ice begins to crack and tentacles start to emerge. On round 15, Suulkar breaks free.

To stop this, the adventurers must destroy the heart. It has AC 10, Fortitude 20, Reflex 10, and 100 hp. A DC 22 Arcana check deals 25 damage to the heart. If the heart is destroyed, Suulkar returns to a deep sleep.

If the adventurers reduce the frost titan to 0 hit points, Glacier explodes into hundreds of chunks of ice. Glacier's life force immediately flies to the Elemental Chaos, where it flows into an obelisk for later reconstitution (see **Encounter P1** on page 154).

FEATURES OF THE AREA

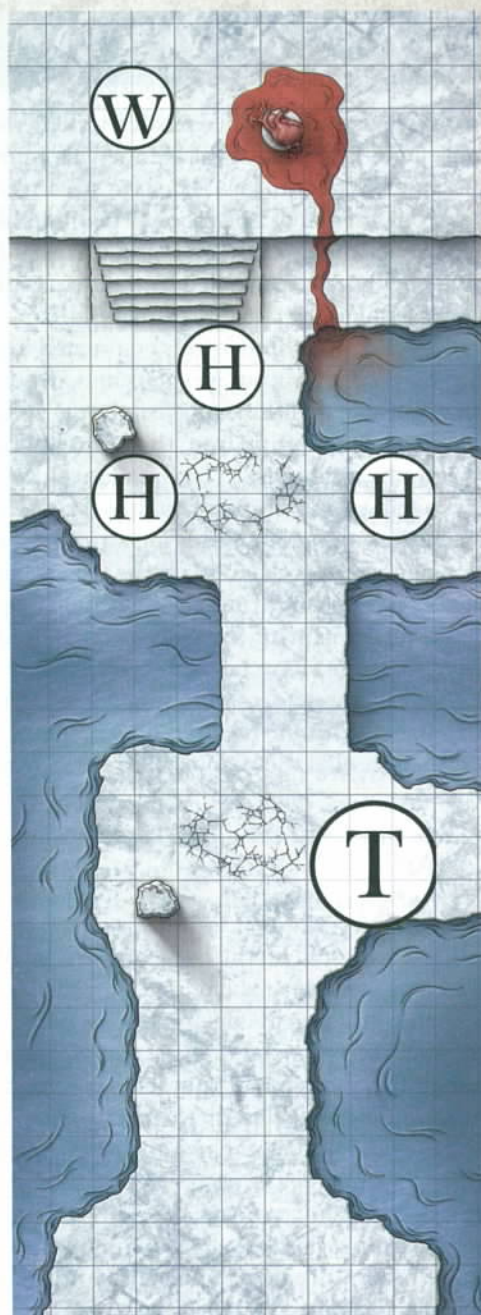
Illumination: Bright light.

Blood: The blood that pools around the dais and flows into the icy water is difficult terrain.

Heart: Atop a dais on the stone platform sits the heart of a white dragon. It continues to beat and pump blood thanks to the magic of the ritual Suulkar whispered into Grugnurson's mind. The heart is causing Suulkar to fully awaken. See "Development" above.

Stone Platform: The stone platform rises 10 feet off the icy floor. The stairs are difficult terrain.

Water: The water surrounding the ice in this chamber is relatively calm (DC 18 Athletics check to swim) but incredibly cold. Any creature that enters or begins its turn in the water takes 15 cold damage.



Weak Ice: These areas are covered with a thin layer of ice. If an attack does 20 or more damage (or 10 or more fire damage) to these squares, the ice collapses. Creatures standing on the square when it collapses are dropped into the freezing water below.

Treasure: Jarl Grugnurson and Breven Foss both carry a *talisman of the seven winds*, a golden necklace with a disk carved from whalebone. With one of these items, the adventurers can calm the storm around Frost Spire so that they can leave the island. A piece of the divine engine is also here.

The jarl also carries five 5,000 gp gems and a 20th level magic item.

Breven also carries a bronze plaque with the words "Flamefall Tower" in Giant and a drawing of the tower inscribed upon it.

FLAMEFALL TOWER OVERVIEW

Flamefall Tower, a black edifice nestled among the mountains far to the south of the Nentir Vale, stands beneath a flowing river of lava. The lava streams into the tower from a series of volcanoes, providing the power that keeps the tower's forges and furnaces blazing. Flamefall Tower is controlled by the fire giant king Snarr, vassal to the fire titan lord Wildfire.

The tower (actually three towers connected to each other) has been churning out weapons and armor for the giant armies, in addition to its usual work mining iron, silver, and adamantite from the immense caverns beneath the mountains. The fire giants have been working in secret for many months, preparing to arm the forces of the titan lords for war. In these penultimate moments of their plan, the tower's forges and furnaces have been turned to one primary project: they are busy repairing the pieces of the divine engine that the giants have been able to collect, combining them to re-create the artifact known as Piranoth's Bane. With the restored divine engine, the titan lords believe that they can free Piranoth from its eternal prison.

GETTING TO FLAMEFALL TOWER

Flamefall Tower should be the last giant stronghold that the adventurers learn about, and thus the last giant stronghold they go to explore. By this point in the adventure, the party should have completed all of the research and diplomatic quests they intend to, and they should have dealt with the earth giants and the frost giants. A number of clues and discoveries point them to Flamefall Tower.

◆ After the adventurers learn the name of an exarch of Moradin who knows how to mend the divine engine, one Torugar, Obanar discovers that the exarch has been captured by fire giants.

◆ The astral giants provided the locations of all of the pieces of the divine engine: one in Frost Spire, one with Kaseem the djinn of Flotsam, two with the fire giants at Flamefall Tower, and one in Breeton.

◆ Breven Foss carried a strange bronze plaque engraved with the words "Flamefall Tower" in Davek (the written form of Giant) and a picture of an equally strange triple-spined tower. Obanar recognizes the object as a sort of portal key. "I can use this to teleport you to a teleportation circle at this location," he says.

When the adventurers have learned everything they can and are ready to make the trip, Obanar teleports them to Flamefall Tower. They arrive within the teleportation circle on the portal platform (see **Encounter G1: Portal Platform** on page 130).

GIANTS IN THE WORLD

At this point in the adventure, the progress of the giant armies depends on how successful the adventurers have been and which quests they have completed along the way. Determine how many of the listed accomplishments the adventurers successfully completed, then cross reference that number to the state of the giant armies shown below.

REVENGE OF THE GIANTS

| Accomplishments | Points |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
| Convinced the torrians to return to Argent. | 1 |
| Secured the aid of the Court of Fallen Leaves. | 1 |
| Forged an alliance with two or three of the settlements of Three Corners. | 2 |
| Defeated the hill giant battlechief and the earth titan. | 2 |
| Defeated the frost giant jarl and the frost titan. | 2 |

| Points | State of the Giant Army |
|--------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 0 | The giant armies rampage across the land and have conquered much territory. |
| 1-3 | The giant armies have had some set backs, but are well on their way to victory. |
| 4-6 | The civilized settlements are working together to keep the giant armies at bay. |
| 7-8 | Alliances forged by the civilized settlements have destroyed most of the giant armies. Only the fire giants remain a viable threat. |

WHAT'S GOING ON IN FLAMEFALL TOWER?

The fire giants have recovered three pieces of the divine engine once known as Piranoth's Bane (see the sidebar on page 127). They have captured the exarch of Moradin named Torugar, and they are forcing the exarch to help them repair the three pieces. They also have drow allies, provided by the Demon Queen Lolth, who can help the fire giants make use of the incomplete artifact.

The fire giant king Snarr has sequestered himself in one of the tower workshops, where he forces the weakened exarch to mend the artifact. The fire titan Wildfire is also on hand within Flamefall Tower, growing more and more impatient. The fire titan waits for the mended artifact to be prepared. Then, with artifact in hand and drow exarch at his side, Wildfire plans to enter the Elemental Chaos and finally set the primordial Piranoth free.

If the hill giant battlechief and the frost giant jarl have fallen to the adventurers, then King Snarr is particularly paranoid that they will be coming for him next. He makes sure that the tower is on full alert before locking himself away to complete his work.

If the earth titan and frost titan have fallen to the adventurers, the fire titan Wildfire is enraged and consumed with thoughts of revenge. That said, the titan knows that they prepared for just such a contingency, and so he forces himself not to give in to his wild nature and inadvertently cause their plans to go awry. He knows he needs to keep focused so that he can make sure that the divine engine arrives at the appointed place, at the appointed time.

A force of 30 fire giants remains in place to guard Flamefall Tower, as well as azer slaves, a few drow ambassadors, and a variety of elemental creatures and other allies of the titan lords.

THE MOVING TOWERS

Flamefall Tower has a traditional tower that's six giant-sized stories tall. Attached to the north and south walls are secondary towers that, when embedded gears receive power from the magma fall, can move up and down the sides of the central tower.

The north and south towers are usually in the position shown on the side-view diagram on page 126. With the use of levers in the audience chamber (see **Encounter G2: Audience Chamber** on page 132) the north and south towers can be raised or lowered. Doing so takes only one round per level. Characters in the central tower don't notice the side towers moving unless they're next to one of the portcullises and can actually see the side-tower interiors move up or down. Characters in a side tower likewise don't see the movement unless they're looking at a portcullis or out a window, but they do feel a gentle vibration in the floor that lasts for about six seconds.

Originally built as a defense mechanism, the ability of the north and south towers to rise and fall is now merely a convenience for the fire giants. Snarr orders the towers raised when he wants privacy on the fabrication floor (see **Encounter G11: King Snarr's Crafting** on page 150), for example.

That's why the rising towers exist in the game world. Why they exist in the game is simpler: So you can surprise the adventurers by changing the layout of Flamefall Tower in the middle of the adventure. Because the towers move quickly and there aren't many reference points (such clear views of the central tower from the north or south towers), it's likely that the adventurers won't realize what's happening. They'll come to a portcullis and discover a completely different room than they thought was going to be there. Let your own sense of pacing determine when the towers move. You don't need to invent a reason for the giants to have moved a tower, because it's not likely the adventurers would ever learn the reason anyway.

The moving towers also have a secondary purpose: Putting Snarr and the fabrication floor off limits until the adventurers have explored the rest of the tower. If you lower the towers to surprise the adventurers,

raise them again before the PCs can reach the fabrication floor. When the players figure out what's going on and use the controls in the audience chamber to intentionally raise and lower the towers, then they've earned access to Snarr and the divine engine.

REACTING TO INTRUDERS

King Snarr is obsessed with completing repairs on the divine engine, so he won't stop working on it even as Flamefall Tower is under assault by the adventurers. The giants and other denizens are certainly capable of basic tactics designed to thwart and ultimately kill intruders, and the fire titan can take command of the place if the situation calls for it.

The giants regularly practice defending the tower, but it's more important to show the giants undertaking rudimentary measures in view of the adventurers than it is to plot out an elaborate series of countermeasures.

Once the adventurers start fighting in Flamefall Tower, employ the following techniques to give the players a sense that the fire giants are mobilizing to defend their fortress:

- ◆ Rooms adjacent to a room where a battle takes place (including directly upstairs and downstairs) hear the sounds of a fight. Monsters there become alert for next 30 minutes.
- ◆ The north and south towers move up or down.
- ◆ If the adventurers take more than a short rest in a chamber, a patrol appears (see page 128).
- ◆ Use a patrol to refresh and restock a room the adventurers have cleared. You can do this while the adventurers are fighting elsewhere in Flamefall Tower, or add the monsters when the adventurers retreat to take an extended rest.
- ◆ In an otherwise empty room, show signs that monsters were recently there and left in a hurry. The living quarters are particularly good for this, because they're usually empty anyway.
- ◆ If the adventurers defeat monsters in a room, leave, and then come back, tell them that someone or something dragged the bodies of the fallen monsters away.

FLAMEFALL TOWER OVERVIEW

Flamefall Tower consists of a central tower and two side towers (identified as the north tower and the south tower). The side towers can be raised or lowered to provide more direct access from one level of the tower to another.

The lava emerging from the series of volcanoes at the top of the mountains is channeled into a single stream that flows into the central tower. Pipes in the walls distribute the flowing lava to specific chambers throughout the central tower to provide power for the forges, furnaces, and gears that move the side towers.

FLAMEFALL TOWER KEY

The numbered entries below correspond to the map shown. Note that the ceilings on each level are 30 feet high unless a specific encounter states otherwise.

1. PORTAL PLATFORM

This platform on the exterior of the central tower is not shown on the map. It is located on the same level as Location 2. A teleportation portal is inscribed upon the floor of this platform to accommodate visitors to Flamefall Tower, and a sturdy portcullis guards the entrance to the tower. See **Encounter G1: Portal Platform** on page 130.

2. AUDIENCE CHAMBER

Whenever King Snarr is in residence, this large chamber serves as his throne room. Otherwise, it is used by the master fabricator to meet with traders and allies of the fire giants. The controls used to raise and lower the north and south towers can be found in this chamber. Stairs here lead up to the roof of the central tower and down to the Common Area. See **Encounter G2: Audience Chamber** on page 132.

3. FIRE GIANT COMMON AREA

This location in the central tower serves as an exercise and common area for the fire giants. Here, fire giants lounge around, work on private projects, practice martial skills, and engage in other leisure activities. Stairs here lead up to the Audience Chamber. From this level, the only way to descend deeper into the central tower is by accessing the north or south towers.

4. FIRE GIANT BARRACKS

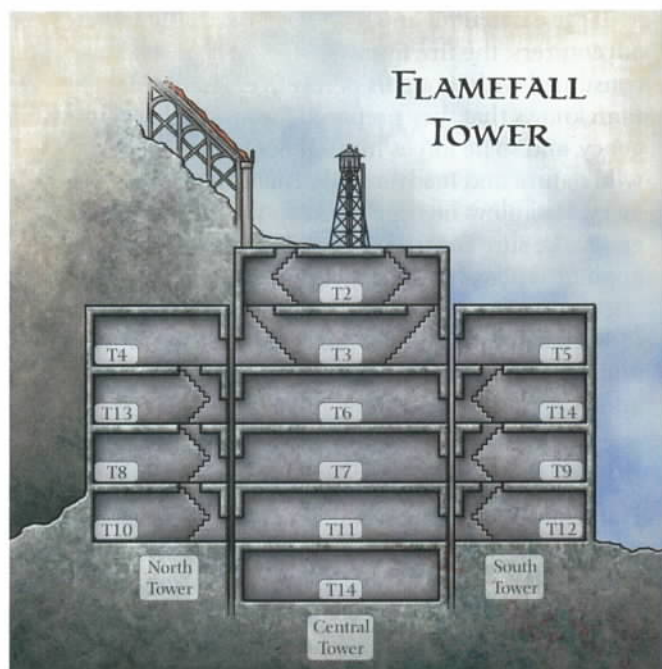
Located in the north tower, this level contains sleeping quarters for the fire giants stationed within Flamefall Tower. Common rooms contain sleeping mats and lockers for personal items. A few private chambers serve as quarters for higher-ranking fire giants.

5. GUEST QUARTERS

Located in the south tower, this level contains quarters for visiting traders and other guests of King Snarr and the fire giants. Currently, the drow exarch and her party occupy quarters here, as does a rakshasa noble negotiating a treaty with the fire titan.

6. ARMORY

A series of vaults comprise the central tower's armory. Each vault features racks of armor and weapons, and a few are also equipped with forges and worktables where weapons and armor can either be crafted or repaired. See **Encounter G3: Armory** on page 134.



7. FURNACE

Located in the central tower, this level features a series of chambers that are each occupied by a powerful furnace. Ores can be smelted here. See **Encounter G4: Elemental Furnace** on page 136.

8. SUMMONING CHAMBER

A bone naga arcanist, loyal to the fire titan, works in a secluded chamber on this level of the north tower. In addition to exploring potential rituals associated with the divine engine, the bone naga is preparing to summon undead creatures to bolster the forces of the fire giants. See **Encounter G5: Summoning Chamber** on page 138.

9. RITUAL CHAMBER

Drow provided by Lolth, the god of shadow and spiders, toll here to prepare a ritual provided by the Demon Queen that will allow the divine engine to operate even though not all of the pieces were used to mend it. See **Encounter G6: Ritual Chamber** on page 140.

10. LAVA OUTFLOW CHAMBER

The lava that flows from the top of the central tower to the bottom through a large pipe is eventually diverted to this chamber at the bottom of the north tower. A chute in the ceiling allows the lava to pour into the pool in this chamber and flow out into an aqueduct that leads back into the mountain. The chute only allows lava to flow into this area when the north tower is locked into its at-rest position, when Location 10 is adjacent to Location 11. See **Encounter G7: Salamander Defenders** on page 142.

11. INGOT FOUNDRY

The foundry on this level of the central tower usually churns out ingots of iron, silver, or adamantine for use by crafters in other parts of the tower, or even to be used as trade goods to add to the fire giants' coffers. Currently, the foundry is working to duplicate the missing pieces of the divine engine. See **Encounter G8: False Relics** on page 144.

12. INGOT STORAGE

A series of special vaults on the lowest level of the south tower are used to store the ingots of iron, silver, and adamantine that the fire giants craft from the ore extracted from the nearby mountains. See **Encounter G9: Storage Vault** on page 146.

13. SLAVE QUARTERS

The azer slaves working in Flamefall Tower and the nearby mines within the mountains live on these levels of the north and south towers. See **Encounter G10: Fire Giant Slaves** on page 148.

14. FABRICATION CHAMBER

A series of massive chambers on the lowest level of the central tower serve as fabrication chambers where the master crafters of the fire giants can construct amazing siege engines and even artifacts. King Snarr works here, completing the final tasks necessary to mend the divine engine known as Piranoth's Bane. See **Encounter G11: King Snarr's Crafting** on page 150.

THE HEAT OF FLAMEFALL TOWER

The lava flowing through the central tower makes Flamefall Tower unbearably hot for creatures not connected to elemental fire. Each time the adventurers start an encounter in the central tower, or once each hour if they are moving around the central tower without attracting any attention, have each character make an Endurance check.

ENDURANCE CHECK RESULT

| Check Result | Effect |
|--------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| 10 or less | Lose 1 healing surge, gain vulnerable 10 fire |
| 11 - 20 | Lose 1 healing surge, gain vulnerable 5 fire |
| 21 - 25 | Lose 1 healing surge |
| 26+ | No effect |

DISASTER AT BREELTON

After the events at Frost Spire, the adventurers learn that a huge army of giants destroyed the city of Breelton and have acquired a third piece of the divine engine. Obanar can relay the news, or the adventurers can visit the site and witness the destruction firsthand.

The intense heat of the central tower saps a character's strength and also leaves him or her more vulnerable to future fire attacks. Healing surges return as normal after an extended rest, and any vulnerabilities gained disappear after an extended rest, as well. A character can lose multiple surges to multiple checks. If a character acquires multiple vulnerability results, only the highest vulnerability applies.

IMPORTANT NPCs

Three major NPCs can be encountered within Flamefall Tower. Use the following descriptions to complement the material provided in the encounters detailed later in this book.

KING SNARR

The king of these fire giants is Snarr, a powerful and charismatic leader who commands the utmost loyalty from the fire giants that follow him. He is obsessed with the idea that by releasing Piranoth, he will gain a huge chunk of the world as his new kingdom. He plans to enslave all of the nongiant races in his new territory, forcing them to work for the glory and betterment of the fire giants—and to elevate the name of Snarr to the highest levels. To accomplish this, he has undertaken the task of reconstructing the divine engine that was used to imprison Piranoth. A key can unlock as well as lock, and that is Snarr's goal.

WILDFIRE

One of the titan lords that have formed an alliance to free Piranoth and take revenge upon the natural world, Wildfire is the most powerful titan the adventurers must contend with in this adventure. The fire titan is suspicious of the drow, but without the remaining pieces of the divine engine, Wildfire knows that he needs the help of a god to set Piranoth free. Lolth offered her assistance, and the titan lords reluctantly agreed to accept it. Wildfire, however, remains alert for betrayal. He also works very hard to keep his fury and thoughts of revenge in check, even though he wants to destroy the adventurers who have defeated his fellow titan lords.

LOLESTRA

An exarch of Lolth sent by the Demon Queen to aid the giants, Lolestra is haughty, confident, and somewhat insane. She revels in deception and mindgames, enjoys torturing victims for sport, and can barely contain her contempt of the giants she has been forced to work alongside. She can't wait to cast the ritual Lolth has provided her with and return to her palace in the Underdark. If the adventurers defeated Esixtara at the Temple of Inchoate Mysteries (see **Encounter D4: The Skywatcher's Dome** on page 82), then Lolestra wants to make them suffer before she destroys them.

FLAMEFALL TOWER PATROLS

Use the following patrols to run random encounters within the towers, to re-stock a chamber that the adventurers have previously cleared, or to come to the aid of creatures in a planned encounter if those creatures are able to sound the alarm or otherwise call for help.

FIRE GIANT PATROL

Level 17 Encounter (XP 9,200)

SETUP

2 fire giants
1 fire giant forgecaller
2 firebred hell hounds

These roaming guards patrol the levels of the three towers, making sure the slaves are doing their jobs and watching for any signs that intruders have entered the place. A total of four such patrols is available to re-stock encounter areas or to run into the adventurers as they explore Flamefall Tower.

| 2 Fire Giants | Level 18 Soldier |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Large elemental humanoid (giant) | XP 2,000 each |
| Initiative +11 | Senses Perception +14 |
| HP 174; Bloodied 87 | |
| AC 34; Fortitude 34, Reflex 28, Will 28 | |
| Resist 15 fire | |
| Speed 7 | |
| ⚔ Searing Greatsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire, Weapon | |
| Reach 2; +23 vs. AC; 1d12 + 6 damage plus 2d8 fire damage, and the target is marked until the end of the fire giant's next turn. | |
| ⚔ Sweeping Sword (standard; encounter) ♦ Fire, Weapon | |
| Requires greatsword; close blast 2; +21 vs. AC; 1d12 + 6 damage plus 2d8 fire damage, and the target is marked until the end of the fire giant's next turn. | |
| ⚔ Iron Javelin (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| Ranged 15/30; +21 vs. AC; 1d10 + 6 damage, and the target is slowed until the end of the fire giant's next turn. | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Giant |
| Skills Intimidate +14 | |
| Str 23 (+15) | Dex 11 (+9) Wis 10 (+9) |
| Con 22 (+15) | Int 10 (+9) Cha 11 (+9) |
| Equipment plate armor, greatsword, 4 javelins | |

| Fire Giant Forgecaller | Level 18 Artillery |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Large elemental humanoid (giant) | XP 2,000 |
| Initiative +11 | Senses Perception +17 |
| HP 136; Bloodied 68 | |
| AC 32; Fortitude 33, Reflex 29, Will 30 | |
| Resist 15 fire | |
| Speed 8 | |
| ⚔ Smoldering Mace (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire, Weapon | |
| Reach 2; +21 vs. AC; 1d10 + 6 damage plus 1d10 fire damage. | |
| ⚔ Fire Pillar (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire | |
| Ranged 20; +21 vs. Reflex; 3d8 + 3 fire damage. | |
| ⚔ Flame Burst (standard; recharge [III]) ♦ Fire | |
| Area burst 2 within 10; +21 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 3 fire damage, and ongoing 10 fire damage (save ends). | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Giant |
| Skills Intimidate +14 | |
| Str 23 (+15) | Dex 15 (+11) Wis 16 (+12) |
| Con 22 (+15) | Int 10 (+9) Cha 11 (+9) |
| Equipment dragonhide armor, mace | |

| 2 Firebred Hell Hounds | Level 17 Brute |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Medium elemental beast (fire) | XP 1,600 each |
| Initiative +10 | Senses Perception +17 |
| Fire Shield (Fire) aura 1; any creature that enters or begins its turn in the aura takes 1d10 fire damage. | |
| HP 205; Bloodied 102 | |
| AC 30; Fortitude 30, Reflex 28, Will 29 | |
| Resist 40 fire | |
| Speed 8 | |
| ⚔ Bite (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire | |
| +20 vs. AC; 1d10 + 6 plus 1d10 fire damage. | |
| ⚔ Fiery Breath (standard; recharge [II]) ♦ Fire | |
| Close blast 3; +18 vs. Reflex; 4d6 + 7 fire damage. | |
| ⚔ Fiery Burst (standard; recharge [II]) ♦ Fire | |
| Close burst 3; +18 vs. Reflex; 4d10 + 7 fire damage. | |
| Alignment Unaligned | Languages – |
| Str 22 (+14) | Dex 14 (+10) Wis 19 (+12) |
| Con 25 (+15) | Int 2 (+4) Cha 12 (+9) |

DROW VISITORS

Level 17 Encounter (XP 9,200)

SETUP

1 drow matron
2 drow templars
3 drow demonbinders

Exarch Lolestra is accompanied to Flamefall Tower by a small contingent of highly trained drow. In addition to any drow listed in the set encounters, this group is under orders to stay mobile. They can often be found near the guest quarters that the drow use while in the towers, but they also make regular "strolls" through the three towers to "stretch the matron's legs." In truth, Lolestra wants them to keep an eye on what the fire giants are up to, as well as to stay alert for the arrival of the adventurers who have been causing so much trouble for the giants.

| Drow Matron | Level 16 Elite Controller |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Medium fey humanoid | XP 2,800 |
| Initiative +12 Senses Perception +16; darkvision | |
| Lolth's Authority aura 5; drow and spider allies in the aura gain a +1 bonus to attack rolls and a +2 bonus to damage rolls. | |
| HP 304; Bloodied 152; see also <i>spider link</i> | |
| AC 32; Fortitude 25, Reflex 30, Will 30 | |
| Saving Throws +2 | |
| Speed 7 | |
| Action Points 1 | |
| ⚔ Mace (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| +21 vs. AC; 1d8 + 4 damage. | |
| † Wrath of the Spider Queen (immediate reaction, when the drow matron is hit by a melee attack; at-will) | |
| +21 vs. AC; 1d6 + 2 damage. | |
| ✱ Webs of Madness (standard; at-will) ♦ Psychic | |
| Burst 2 within 20; +19 vs. Reflex; 2d10 + 9 psychic damage, and the target is dazed and slowed (save ends both). | |
| ✱ Lolth's Rebuke (minor; recharge ☐ ☐ ☐) ♦ Poison | |
| Area burst 1 within 10; +19 vs. Will; target is weakened and dazed (save ends both). If the target is slain while weakened and dazed, it explodes in a burst 3; +17 vs. Reflex; 3d6 + 7 poison damage. | |
| ✱ Darkfire (minor; encounter) | |
| Ranged 10; +19 vs. Reflex; until the end of the drow matron's next turn, the target grants combat advantage to all attackers, and the target cannot benefit from invisibility or concealment. | |
| Spider Link (minor; at-will) ♦ Healing | |
| The drow matron can transfer up to 75 damage she has taken to a spider or drow within 5 squares of her. She cannot transfer more hit points than the creature has remaining. | |
| Mask of the Matriarch (immediate interrupt, when the drow matron is targeted by a melee attack; encounter) ♦ Fear | |
| The target moves its speed away from the drow matron. | |
| Alignment Chaotic evil Languages Abyssal, Common, Elven | |
| Skills Bluff +19, Insight +21, Intimidate +19, Religion +21, Stealth +17 | |
| Str 14 (+10) Dex 18 (+12) Wis 27 (+16) | |
| Con 16 (+11) Int 26 (+16) Cha 22 (+14) | |
| Equipment chainmail, mace, <i>mask of the matriarch</i> | |

| 3 Drow Demonbinders | Level 15 Skirmisher |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Medium fey humanoid (demon) | XP 1,200 each |
| Initiative +12 Senses Perception +7; darkvision | |
| HP 153; Bloodied 76; see <i>hideous transformation</i> | |
| AC 29; Fortitude 31, Reflex 27, Will 30 | |
| Resist 10 variable (1/encounter; see <i>Monster Manual</i> page 282) | |
| Speed 7 | |
| ⚔ Demon Rod (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| +20 vs. AC; 1d8 + 3 damage, and the target is dazed until the end of its next turn. <i>Miss:</i> The demonbinder can shift 1 square as a free action. | |
| ✱ Abyssal Blast (standard; at-will) | |
| Ranged 10; +18 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 7 damage, and the target is dazed (save ends). | |
| ⬅ Hideous Transformation (immediate reaction, when first bloodied) ♦ Fear , Polymorph | |
| Close burst 2; +18 vs. Will; target is stunned until the end of the demonbinder's next turn. In addition, the demonbinder can shift 3 squares. | |
| Alignment Evil Languages Abyssal, Common, Elven | |
| Skills Arcana +17, Intimidate +13, Stealth +15 | |
| Str 10 (+7) Dex 16 (+10) Wis 11 (+7) | |
| Con 25 (+14) Int 20 (+12) Cha 13 (+8) | |
| Equipment leather armor, demon rod | |

| 2 Drow Templars | Level 16 Soldier |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Medium fey humanoid | XP 1,400 each |
| Initiative +11 Senses Perception +15; darkvision | |
| HP 150; Bloodied 75 | |
| AC 32; Fortitude 28, Reflex 22, Will 25 | |
| Immune fear | |
| Speed 6 | |
| ⚔ Spear (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| +23 vs. AC; 1d8 + 8 damage, and the target is marked until the end of the drow templar's next turn. | |
| † Fierce Rebuke (immediate interrupt, when an adjacent marked target shifts; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| Requires spear; +23 vs. AC; 2d8 + 8 damage, and the target is knocked prone. | |
| ⬅ Wrath of Lolth (standard; recharges when first bloodied) | |
| Close burst 1; +21 vs. Fortitude; 1d10 + 4 poison damage, and ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends), and the target is pushed 1 square. | |
| Whispers of the Spider Queen | |
| A drow templar gains a +2 bonus to attack rolls against a bloodied target. | |
| Alignment Chaotic evil Languages Common, Elven | |
| Skills Intimidate +17, Stealth +9 | |
| Str 24 (+15) Dex 12 (+9) Wis 15 (+10) | |
| Con 14 (+10) Int 8 (+7) Cha 19 (+12) | |
| Equipment plate armor, spear | |



ENCOUNTER G1: PORTAL PLATFORM

Encounter Level 17 (8,000 XP)

SETUP

2 fire giants (G)
1 fire giant forgecaller (F)
1 nabassu gargoyle (N)

This encounter takes place at Location 1. This exterior platform extends from the spire atop the central tower and connects to Location 2. When Obanar uses the bronze plaque that the adventurers found upon Breven Foss, he can teleport the party to the inscribed circle on this platform. When the adventurers appear in the circle, read:

You see a platform of black stone and dark fortress walls beyond it—like a castle courtyard, but you are clearly standing on a platform attached to a spire atop a black tower. Two other towers connect to the black tower, one to each side. Three fire giants—two in plate armor and one in red dragonhide—stand about 20 feet from the circle, squinting as they stare right at you. Behind them, you see an iron portcullis that leads into the spire. The entire area is bathed in a reddish light, and you can see a stream of molten lava pouring down from the mountaintops above like a fiery waterfall. The lava flows into an opening in the tower roof.

Perception Check

DC 25: One fire giant says in a low voice, "It's not the drow—are they intruders?" The one wearing dragonhide replies, "Just as King Snarr warned us." Then the giants draw weapons and prepare to defend themselves.

DC 31: You see a horned gray head peering over the edge of the crenellations on the platform ledge.

| Fire Giant Forgecaller (F) | Level 18 Artillery |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Large elemental humanoid (giant) | XP 2,000 |
| Initiative +11 | Senses Perception +17 |
| HP 136; Bloodied 68 | |
| AC 32; Fortitude 33, Reflex 29, Will 30 | |
| Resist 15 fire | |
| Speed 8 | |
| ⚔ Smoldering Mace (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire, Weapon | |
| Reach 2; +21 vs. AC; 1d10 + 6 damage plus 1d10 fire damage. | |
| ⚔ Fire Pillar (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire | |
| Ranged 20; +21 vs. Reflex; 3d8 + 3 fire damage. | |
| ⚔ Flame Burst (standard; recharge [1]) ♦ Fire | |
| Area burst 2 within 10; +21 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 3 fire damage, and ongoing 10 fire damage (save ends). | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Giant |
| Skills Intimidate +14 | |
| Str 23 (+15) | Dex 15 (+11) Wis 16 (+12) |
| Con 22 (+15) | Int 10 (+9) Cha 11 (+9) |
| Equipment dragonhide armor, mace | |

| 2 Fire Giants (G) | Level 18 Soldier |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Large elemental humanoid (giant) | XP 2,000 each |
| Initiative +11 | Senses Perception +14 |
| HP 174; Bloodied 87 | |
| AC 34; Fortitude 34, Reflex 28, Will 28 | |
| Resist 15 fire | |
| Speed 7 | |
| ⚔ Searing Greatsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire, Weapon | |
| Reach 2; +23 vs. AC; 1d12 + 6 damage plus 2d8 fire damage, and the target is marked until the end of the fire giant's next turn. | |
| ⚔ Sweeping Sword (standard; encounter) ♦ Fire, Weapon | |
| Requires greatsword; close blast 2; +21 vs. AC; 1d12 + 6 damage plus 2d8 fire damage, and the target is marked until the end of the fire giant's next turn. | |
| ⚔ Iron Javelin (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| Ranged 15/30; +21 vs. AC; 1d10 + 6 damage, and the target is slowed until the end of the fire giant's next turn. | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Giant |
| Skills Intimidate +14 | |
| Str 23 (+15) | Dex 11 (+9) Wis 10 (+9) |
| Con 22 (+15) | Int 10 (+9) Cha 11 (+9) |
| Equipment plate armor, greatsword, 4 javelins | |

| Nabassu Gargoyle (N) | Level 18 Lurker |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Medium elemental humanoid (earth) | XP 2,000 |
| Initiative +20 | Senses Perception +17; darkvision |
| Bloodfire Gaze (Fire) aura 2; any creature taking ongoing damage that enters or starts its turn in the aura takes 5 fire damage and is weakened (the effect ends when the creature leaves the aura). This aura is not active while the nabassu gargoyle is in stone form. | |
| HP 136; Bloodied 68 | |
| AC 32; Fortitude 30, Reflex 30, Will 28 | |
| Immune petrification | |
| Speed 6, fly 8 | |
| ⚔ Claw (standard; at-will) | |
| +23 vs. AC; 2d8 + 7 damage, and ongoing 5 damage (save ends). | |
| ⚔ Savage Bite (standard; recharge [2]) ♦ Healing | |
| +23 vs. AC; 2d6 + 7 damage, or 2d10 + 7 damage against a bloodied or weakened target. In addition, the gargoyle regains a number of hit points equal to the amount of damage dealt. | |
| Stone Form (standard; at-will) | |
| The gargoyle becomes a statue and gains resist 30 to all damage, regeneration 5, and tremorsense 10. It loses all other senses and can take no actions in stone form other than revert to its normal form (as a minor action). | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Primordial |
| Skills Stealth +21 | |
| Str 25 (+16) | Dex 24 (+16) Wis 17 (+12) |
| Con 22 (+15) | Int 5 (+6) Cha 20 (+14) |

TACTICS

One fire giant charges into melee and tries to mark an opponent it believes is a defender. The other tries to mark a different opponent. They maneuver to keep enemies away from the forgecaller and to keep as many targets as possible within range of their sweeping sword attack (close blast 2). At the start of each turn, if a fire giant can maneuver to get at least three

enemies with the *sweeping sword* attack, it uses that power—even if the fire giant has to provoke an opportunity attack to set it up.

The forger stays back and uses *flame burst* as often as it can and *fire pillar* whenever *flame burst* is unavailable. A *flame burst* won't hurt the fire giants much, so the forger doesn't mind if they're caught in the area. It doesn't care about the gargoyle, either—the fire giants regard the gargoyles as pests.

Roll initiative for the nabassu gargoyle at the start of the second round of combat. It flies behind an adventurer (preferably a target that has taken some amount of damage) and delivers a claw attack. As soon as an enemy is taking ongoing damage, the gargoyle uses its *savage bite* against that target. Remember to check for the gargoyle's aura effect at the start of every creature's turn—including the fire giants, who don't have to worry about the fire damage but might be weakened by the aura. The nabassu gargoyle likes to perch upon the spire keep and doesn't care for the fire giants.

DEVELOPMENT

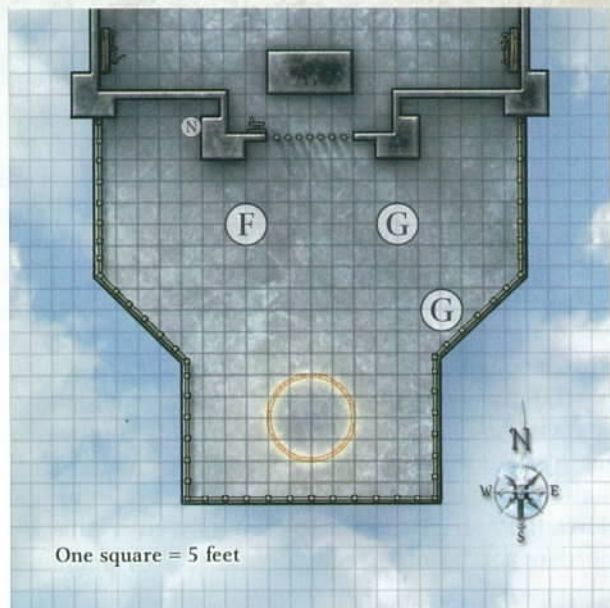
The fire giants get too caught up in the heat of battle to actually retreat or sound an alarm, so it's possible that the adventurers can enter Flamefall Tower from here undetected.

If the adventurers leave the tower and return later, perhaps after leaving to take an extended rest, they won't find fire giants here when they return. They will be beset by five nabassu gargoyles (a level 18 encounter), however, when they arrive in the portal. The adventurers must defeat the gargoyles several times before the gargoyles figure out that the adventurers are too dangerous and should be left alone.

Even if the fire giants know that the adventurers are using the teleportation portal to attack Flamefall Tower, they leave the portal circle intact. It's the fastest way to get reinforcements into and out of Flamefall Tower, and all of the fire giants' allies know how to use it.

FLAMEFALL TOWER

Once the adventurers have a moment, they can examine their surroundings. The platform they arrive on extends from the spire atop the tower of black stone. Two identical towers are attached to the central tower, one on each side, though they are set slightly lower than the level of the central tower. The towers are nestled along the side of a rugged mountain range. A stream of molten lava flows like fiery water from the top of the mountains, pouring into a collection pipe that extends up from the top of the central tower to catch the flowing lava.



FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Bright light from the magma fall, which paint the area in a reddish tint.

Ledge: It's a 100-foot fall from the platform to the top of the tower below. Characters that fall (or jump) land on the roof of the central tower and take 10d10 damage. From there, they can climb back up the side of the spire (DC 20 Athletics check) or enter through the stairs that lead to the audience chamber (see Location 2).

Iron Portcullis: The portcullis is in the down and locked position due to King Snarr's fears that the champions of Argent might try to interfere with their plans. It can be unlocked manually from the inside with a lever. The lever is located on the wall to the west of the portcullis, inside the spire keep. DC 25 Strength check to lift it if it is unlocked, DC 30 if it is locked. (Assume that the giants can automatically lift an unlocked portcullis.) Raising the lever all the way retracts the portcullis into the ceiling, and lowering the lever all the way lowers it to the floor. Placing the lever in the middle position locks it in place.

Portal Circle: This inscribed circle functions like any linked portal, except that it's larger than most. The bronze plaque that Breven Foss carried (see **Encounter F13: Against the Frost Titan** on page 121) is linked to this circle.

ENCOUNTER G2: AUDIENCE CHAMBER

Encounter Level 18 (11,500 XP)

SETUP

- 5 fire giant troopers (F)
- 1 drow noble (N)
- 5 drow warblades (W)

This encounter takes place at Location 2. After entering the spire keep, the adventurers can descend the stairs to the roof of the central tower. This grants them access to the stairs that lead to King Snarr's audience chamber. When the adventurers climb down the stairs (they can descend from either the north or south stairs), read:

A raised dais at the center of the far wall of the chamber features a black obsidian throne built for a creature much larger than a human. No one sits upon the throne, but a sword-wielding fire giant stands at attention at the foot of the stairs. A detailed mosaic depicting a red dragon adorns the center of the floor. To either side, giant-sized trestle tables are positioned for either a feast or a meeting. A drow female sits cross-legged atop the dais, surrounded by five drow males in chain armor. She seems to be lecturing the drow. Three more fire giants stand at the other end of the chamber, apparently extremely bored by whatever the drow is talking about.

On the walls hang battered shields—mostly human-sized, but a few intended for giant-sized wielders are displayed as well. There's a wide variety, all dented, crumpled, or otherwise showing signs of battle damage.

If the adventurers immediately spring into action, they may gain surprise (the passive Perception of the fire giant troopers is only 19, and the drow warblades are too busy listening to the noble to notice intruders.) If the adventurers make their presence known before attacking, then no surprise round is granted to them.

| 5 Fire Giant Troopers (F) | | Level 18 Minion |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| Large natural humanoid (giant) | | XP 500 each |
| Initiative +11 | Senses Perception +9 | |
| HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion. | | |
| AC 34; Fortitude 34, Reflex 28, Will 28 | | |
| Speed 7 | | |
| ⚔ Searing Longsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire, Weapon | | |
| Reach 2; +23 vs. AC; 10 damage plus 1d8 fire damage. | | |
| ➤ Iron Javelin (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | | |
| Ranged 15/30; +21 vs. AC; 10 damage, and the target is slowed until the end of the fire giant trooper's next turn. | | |
| Alignment Chaotic evil | | Languages Giant |
| Str 22 (+15) | Dex 10 (+9) | Wis 10 (+9) |
| Con 20 (+14) | Int 8 (+8) | Cha 9 (+8) |
| Equipment chain armor, longsword | | |

5 Drow Warblades (W)

Medium fey humanoid

Level 16 Lurker

XP 1,400 each

Initiative +16

Senses Perception +15; darkvision

HP 114; Bloodied 57

AC 30; Fortitude 28, Reflex 29, Will 27

Speed 6

⚔ **Warblade** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Poison, Weapon**

+21 vs. AC; 1d10 + 7 damage, and the drow warblade makes a secondary attack against the same target. *Secondary Attack:* +19 vs. Fortitude; see *drow poison* for the effect.

➤ **Hand Crossbow** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Poison, Weapon**

Ranged 10/20; +21 vs. AC; 1d8 + 7 damage, and the drow warblade makes a secondary attack against the same target. *Secondary Attack:* +19 vs. Fortitude; see *drow poison* for the effect.

➤ **Darkfire** (minor; encounter)

Ranged 10; +19 vs. Reflex; until the end of the drow warblade's next turn, the target grants combat advantage to all attackers, and the target cannot benefit from invisibility or concealment.

Combat Advantage

The drow warblade deals an extra 3d8 damage on melee and ranged attacks against any target it has combat advantage against.

Drow Poison ♦ Poison

A creature hit by a weapon coated in *drow poison* takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls (save ends). *First Failed Saving Throw:* The target is also weakened (save ends). *Second Failed Saving Throw:* The target falls unconscious until the end of the encounter.

Alignment Evil

Languages Common, Elven

Skills Dungeoneering +15, Intimidate +14, Stealth +17

Str 16 (+11)

Dex 19 (+12)

Wis 14 (+10)

Con 12 (+9)

Int 13 (+9)

Cha 12 (+9)

Equipment chainmail, warblade*, hand crossbow, 20 bolts*

*These weapons are coated in *drow poison*.

TACTICS

The fire giant troopers rush to defend the tower as soon as they become aware of the intruders. The fire giant closest to the stairs the adventurers use to enter the chamber engages them in melee combat, while the others hang back for a round or two to hurl iron javelins. As soon as one or more of the giants fall, one of the troopers breaks off to head for the stairs leading down into the tower in order to raise the alarm.

The drow noble seems more amused by the appearance of the intruders than surprised or angry. Indeed, she has been bored and suddenly sees the adventurers as the means to some much needed entertainment. She uses *shadow wrath* as her first attack, then she moves away to put as much distance as possible between herself and the intruders. She uses *darkfire* to make one enemy more vulnerable to the warblades, and makes *fire web* attacks as long as she has range on the intruders. Once the adventurers push deeper into the chamber, the noble unleashes her *maddening oratory* to damage and daze as many targets as possible, and to heal her warblades. She fights to the death, mostly because she never seriously believes that the adventurers pose a real threat to her.

ENCOUNTER G3: ARMORY

Encounter Level 17 (8,800 XP)

SETUP

- 1 fire giant icefist (F)
- 1 salamander archer (A)
- 2 salamander swordbearers (S)

This encounter takes place at Location 6. The adventurers must descend through either the north or south tower to reach this level of the central tower. A series of vaults, each protected by a portcullis, fill this level of the tower. Because of the war efforts, which have depleted the tower of most of its occupants, and due to all of the work happening in the lowest levels where King Snarr toils to mend the divine engine, the armory isn't the bustling location it once was. When the adventurers reach this area, they come across a lot of empty vaults and one armory vault that is occupied. Bright light spills from this particular vault. Read:

Beyond the portcullis, two salamanders hold their strangely curved swords out toward a spinning grindstone in a wooden frame, causing a shower of sparks as the metal meets the stone.

Another salamander with a bow across its back stands at a table covered with a pile of brilliant purple feathers. It appears to be preparing arrows for its bow.

A fire giant leans against a wall, adjusting the straps on the strange gauntlets it wears. The gauntlets appear to be covered in a fine layer of frost.

Armor racks stand at intervals along the left and right walls. About half are empty, and the other half have battered or incomplete suits of giant-sized plate or chainmail hanging on them. A small forge glows a dull red in one corner. Hanging from pegs about 10 feet off the ground are giant-sized melee weapons—mostly swords and mauls.

Maps cover the walls where weapons and armor aren't in evidence.

TACTICS

The fire giant icefist oversees the activities of the salamanders here, who are working on their own weapons for a change. When the intruders arrive, the fire giant starts by hefting a spare grindstone and hurling it at the adventurers (see "Features of the Area" for details). Then he rushes toward the intruders and uses *blizzard of blows* on a single target. If the fire giant manages to grab a target, he can hold that enemy with one arm while making *ice punch* attacks against other targets. Remember that grabbed targets suffer the effects of *coldsnap* at the start of their turns.

| Fire Giant Icefist (F) | Level 19 Elite Brute |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Large elemental humanoid (giant) | XP 4,800 |
| Initiative +15 | Senses Perception +12 |
| HP 454; Bloodied 227 | |
| AC 31; Fortitude 31, Reflex 28, Will 28 | |
| Saving Throws +2 | |
| Resist 15 fire | |
| Speed 7 | |
| Action Points 1 | |
| ⚔ Ice Punch (standard; at-will) ⚔ Cold, Weapon | |
| Requires frigid gauntlets; reach 2; +22 vs. AC; 1d8 + 18 damage plus 2d8 cold damage. | |
| ⚔ Blizzard of Blows (standard; at-will) ⚔ Cold, Weapon | |
| The fire giant icefist makes three <i>ice punch</i> attacks. If all three attacks hit, make an immediate <i>freezing grasp</i> attack as a free action. This attack can't be used while the icefist has a grabbed target. | |
| ⚔ Freezing Grasp (standard; recharge ☐☐☐) ⚔ Cold, Weapon | |
| Requires frigid gauntlets; +20 vs. Reflex; 1d8 + 18 damage plus 2d8 cold damage, and the target is grabbed. | |
| Coldsnap | |
| At the start of a grabbed target's turn, the grabbed target takes 10 cold damage. | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Giant |
| Skills Intimidate +20 | |
| Str 29 (+18) | Dex 23 (+15) Wis 16 (+12) |
| Con 27 (+17) | Int 17 (+12) Cha 23 (+15) |
| Equipment chain armor, frigid gauntlets | |

The salamander swordbearers use *tail lash* to confound the movement of the adventurers. Try to position the swordbearers so they are in the way of the adventurers to better trigger the attack. The swordbearers work to set up flanks for each other. When an enemy becomes bloodied, the two swordbearers concentrate their attacks on that target, employing *executioner's strike* and *tail lash* to maximum effect.

The salamander archer's tactics are pretty simple: it tries to stay out of melee combat and shoot as many arrows as possible. It uses *tail thrust* to keep would-be melee combatants at a distance; remember that the archer has reach 2 and can use *tail thrust* more than once on its turn.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Dim light from the glowing forge. Bright light in a 20-square radius from each salamander, as long as the salamander is alive.

Armor Racks: None of the armor sets hanging on these racks are complete. If the PCs are determined to construct Large armor from the pieces, they can get two sets of plate armor and three sets of chainmail by cannibalizing armor pieces and straps from components scattered throughout the vault. This requires an hour of work.

Salamander Archer (A) Level 15 Artillery

Large elemental humanoid (fire, reptile) XP 1,200

Initiative +10 Senses Perception +9

HP 114; Bloodied 57

AC 28; Fortitude 26, Reflex 23, Will 22

Resist 20 fire

Speed 6

④ **Tail Lash** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Fire**

Reach 2; +18 vs. AC; 1d10 + 6 fire damage.

③ **Longbow** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Fire, Weapon**

Ranged 20/40; +20 vs. AC; 1d10 + 6 damage plus 1d6 fire damage.

⚡ **Tail Thrust** (minor; at-will)

Reach 2; +18 vs. Reflex; the target is pushed 1 square.

⚡ **Double Attack** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Fire, Weapon**

The salamander archer makes two ranged basic attacks against the same target or two separate targets within 5 squares of each other.

Alignment Evil Languages Primordial

Str 17 (+10) Dex 22 (+13) Wis 15 (+9)

Con 18 (+11) Int 11 (+7) Cha 11 (+7)

Equipment longbow, quiver of 30 arrows

Grindstone: The grindstone in the framework spins of its own volition. Any creature that is pushed or slides into the spinning grindstone takes 3d10 damage. A spare grindstone leaning against the wall next to the fire giant makes an excellent missile weapon. The fire giant can hurl it as an attack; ranged 20; +20 vs. AC; 2d10 damage and the target is knocked prone; make a secondary attack against a target within 2 squares of the original target; +20 vs. AC; 1d10 damage.

Iron Portcullis: Ordinarily left unlocked and closed, the portcullis can be locked manually from the inside with a lever. DC 25 Strength check to lift a closed portcullis if it is unlocked, DC 30 if it is locked. (Giants can automatically lift an unlocked portcullis.) Raising the lever all the way retracts the portcullis into the ceiling, and lowering the lever all the way lowers it to the floor. Placing the lever in the middle position locks the portcullis in place.

The portcullis on the south wall opens into the main hallway running through this level of the tower. The portcullises on the east and west walls lead to other vaults on this level.

Maps: Among the maps on the walls is a map of the mining tunnels within the mountains and a regional map showing major Underdark communities nearby. Other maps are military in nature, showing encampments and battle plans for the fire giant armies currently on the march.

Weapons: There are fourteen Large weapons hanging on the walls: two falchions, seven greatswords, four mauls, and one greataxe.

Work Table: The feathers are normal feathers, suitable for fletching. There are 60 complete Large arrows on the table, and enough shafts, arrowheads, and feathers to make another 60.

2 Salamander Swordbearers (S) Level 16 Soldier

Large elemental humanoid (fire, reptile) XP 1,400 each

Initiative +14 Senses Perception +12

HP 153; Bloodied 76

AC 32; Fortitude 28, Reflex 29, Will 27

Resist 20 fire

Speed 6

④ **Khopesh** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Fire, Weapon**

Reach 2; +23 vs. AC; 1d8 + 7 damage, plus 5 fire damage.

④ **Executioner's Strike** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Fire, Weapon**

Targets bloodied enemy only; reach 2; +21 vs. Fortitude; 2d8 + 7 damage, plus 5 fire damage. If the target is prone, it takes an additional 10 damage.

⚡ **Tail Lash** (immediate reaction, when an enemy moves within 2squares of the salamander swordbearer; at-will) ♦ **Fire**

The salamander attacks the enemy; reach 2; +21 vs. Reflex; 1d10 + 7 fire damage, the target is knocked prone, and the target's move action ends in that square.

Alignment Evil Languages Primordial

Str 20 (+13) Dex 22 (+14) Wis 18 (+12)

Con 18 (+12) Int 13 (+9) Cha 15 (+10)

Equipment khopesh

Treasure: One weapon or suit of armor stored here was taken from a human-sized opponent. If the adventurers make a successful DC 25 Perception check, they spot the item among the other arms and armor stored here. They find a level 20 magic item, either a weapon or armor, as you see fit.



ENCOUNTER G4: ELEMENTAL FURNACE

Encounter Level 17 (8,000 XP)

SETUP

- 1 fire archon blazesteel (A)
- 1 fire giant flamecrusher (F)
- 2 fire elemental infernos (E)

This encounter takes place at Location 7. The adventurers must descend through either the north or south tower to reach this level of the central tower. A series of furnace chambers, each protected by a portcullis, fill this level of the tower. Because of the war efforts, which have depleted the tower of most of its occupants, and due to all of the work happening in the lowest levels where King Snarr toils to mend the divine engine, the furnaces aren't the bustling location they usually are. When the adventurers reach this area, they come across a lot of empty chambers and one furnace chamber that is occupied. Here, the last replacement piece for the divine engine has recently been completed and is now on its way to King Snarr. The remaining creatures guard the area. Read:

Beyond the portcullis, a massive furnace with iron doors stretches from floor to ceiling. There's a metal tank on either side of the furnace doors, with pipes connecting each to the floor and ceiling. A fire giant holds a steaming stone mold with massive iron tongs as he moves it to a side work table. A massive anvil dominates the far end of the room, and numerous drawings hang upon the walls, along with tongs, hammers, jigs, and other tools of the blacksmith's trade. Three fiery creatures stand near the open doors of the blazing furnace.

| 2 Fire Elemental Infernos (E) | | Level 18 Controller |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Large elemental magical beast (fire) | | XP 2,000 each |
| Initiative +15 | Senses Perception +10 | |
| Blazing Heat (Fire) aura 3; any creature that enters or starts its turn in the aura takes 10 fire damage. | | |
| HP 170; Bloodied 85 | | |
| AC 32; Fortitude 30, Reflex 32, Will 29 | | |
| Immune disease, petrification, poison; Resist 30 fire | | |
| Speed 6 | | |
| ⚡ Fire Tendril (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire | | |
| Reach 3; +23 vs. AC; 1d10 + 7 fire damage, and target slides 3 squares. | | |
| ☄ Inferno (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire, Zone | | |
| Area burst 1 within 10; +22 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 7 fire damage and the target is immobilized (save ends). The zone is filled with fire and is considered difficult terrain until the end of the encounter. Any creature that enters or starts its turn in the zone takes 10 fire damage. | | |
| Alignment Unaligned | | Languages Primordial |
| Str 14 (+11) | Dex 22 (+15) | Wis 12 (+10) |
| Con 18 (+13) | Int 8 (+8) | Cha 16 (+12) |

| Fire Giant Flamecrusher (F) | | Level 17 Brute |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Large elemental humanoid (giant) | | XP 1,600 |
| Initiative +11 | Senses Perception +10 | |
| HP 204; Bloodied 102 | | |
| AC 29; Fortitude 30, Reflex 25, Will 28 | | |
| Resist 15 fire | | |
| Speed 7 | | |
| ⚡ Searing Maul (standard; at-will) ⚡ Fire, Weapon | | |
| Reach 2; +20 vs. AC; 2d8 + 8 damage plus 2d8 fire damage. | | |
| ⚡ Overhead Smash (standard; at-will) ⚡ Fire, Weapon | | |
| Requires maul; reach 2; +18 vs. AC; 2d8 + 14 damage plus 2d8 fire damage, and the target is knocked prone. | | |
| ⚡ Battering Blows (standard; usable only when bloodied; encounter) ⚡ Fire, Weapon | | |
| Requires maul; close burst 2; +20 vs. AC; 2d8 + 8 damage plus 2d8 fire damage, and the target is pushed 2 squares and knocked prone. | | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Giant | |
| Skills Endurance +20 | | |
| Str 27 (+16) | Dex 17 (+11) | Wis 15 (+10) |
| Con 24 (+15) | Int 8 (+7) | Cha 22 (+14) |
| Equipment plate armor, maul | | |

| Fire Archon Blazesteel (A) | | Level 19 Soldier |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Medium elemental humanoid (fire) | | XP 2,400 |
| Initiative +18 | Senses Perception +12 | |
| HP 182; Bloodied 91; see also wounded fireburst | | |
| AC 35; Fortitude 33, Reflex 32, Will 28 | | |
| Immune disease, poison; Resist 30 fire | | |
| Speed 8 | | |
| ⚔ Scimitar (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire, Weapon | | |
| +25 vs. AC; 1d8 + 8 damage (crit 2d8 + 16) plus 1d8 fire damage, and the target is marked until the end of the blazesteel's next turn. | | |
| ⚡ Wounded Fireburst (when first bloodied and again when the blazesteel is reduced to 0 hit points) ♦ Fire | | |
| Close burst 2; +21 vs. Reflex; 10 fire damage, and ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends). | | |
| Combat Advantage ♦ Fire | | |
| The blazesteel makes a single extra scimitar attack and deals an extra 1d8 fire damage against any enemy it has combat advantage against. | | |
| Alignment Chaotic evil | | Languages Primordial |
| Str 26 (+17) | Dex 24 (+16) | Wis 16 (+12) |
| Con 22 (+15) | Int 14 (+11) | Cha 15 (+11) |
| Equipment plate armor, scimitar | | |

TACTICS

The fire giant flamecrusher starts this encounter carrying the still-steaming mold that was used to form the last missing piece of the divine engine. Remember that King Snarr hopes that by completely mending Piranoth's Bane (even if he is using some replacement pieces that he has fashioned himself) he will have a better chance of calling upon its powers to set Piranoth free.

As soon as the fire giant notices the intruders, he tosses the red-hot stone mold onto the table. Then he pulls his maul and turns to attack. He uses *overhead*

smash as his primary mode of attack, though he will switch to *searing maul* if he's having a hard time hitting his target. When the fire giant becomes bloodied, he positions himself to use *battering blows*, trying to catch as many opponents as possible in the burst.

The fire archon blazesteel charges and makes a scimitar attack against the nearest melee-capable adventurer. Then it bides its time with scimitar attacks until one of the fire elemental infernos can move into a flanking position—providing the blazesteel with an extra scimitar attack and extra fire damage.

The fire elemental infernos like to get close to their opponents to allow their *blazing heat* auras to do their jobs. One tries to establish a flanking position with the fire archon blazesteel, while the other alternates between using *fire tendril* attacks to slide opponents into the open furnace and *inferno* to set up zones of immobilizing fire elsewhere in the area.

The fire archon attempts to escape if the other creatures fall. It hopes to reach other fire giants or the drow so that it can raise the alarm and warn King Snarr about the intruders. The fire giant flame-crusher and the fire elemental infernos, however, get caught up in the heat of battle and fight to the death.

DEVELOPMENT

The stone mold on the table was used to forge one of the missing pieces of the divine engine known as Piranoth's Bane. A character can make a DC 25 Dungeoneering check or a DC 20 Religion check to recognize the shape within the mold as one of the pieces of the divine engine—perhaps even one of the pieces the adventurers recovered from Frost Spire Island. It is clear from this still-hot mold that this tool was used very recently.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Bright light, from the fire archon blazesteel and the fire elemental infernos (each emits bright light in a 10-square radius). The glow of the furnace provides dim light, once the elemental creatures are defeated.

Anvil: The massive anvil is designed for use by the fire giants. It shows the wear and tear of ages of use, but it also looks to be well cared for and maintained.

Elemental Furnace: The massive iron furnace burns with elemental fire. As long as the heavy iron doors remain open, creatures can be pushed or slid into the intense heat of the elemental furnace. Any creature that enters or starts its turn in the elemental furnace takes $4d10 + 7$ fire damage.

Closing the furnace door takes a standard action because it is so heavy. A Medium character can change the action to a minor action by making a DC 25 Strength check.

Furnace Tanks: The tanks on each side of the furnace allow lava to flow from the tower's internal

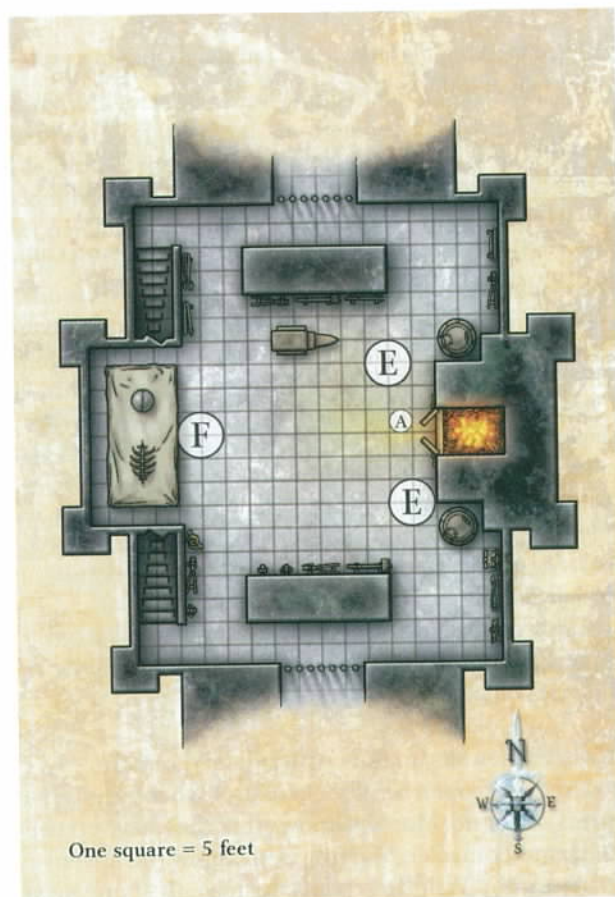
magma pipes into the elemental furnace, where the molten rock mingles with the elemental fire to feed the furnace and maintain the amazingly intense temperatures. Every time an area attack includes a furnace tank, there's a chance that the tank ruptures and explodes. When a close burst or burst, or an area burst, includes a tank, roll 1d20. On a roll of 1, the tank explodes, spewing lava in all directions. If both tanks are destroyed, the damage dealt by the furnace is reduced to $1d10 + 7$ fire damage.

Exploding Tank: Close burst 5; +20 vs. Reflex; $4d12 + 7$ fire damage, and ongoing 10 fire damage (save ends). Miss: Half damage, and no ongoing damage.

Iron Portcullis: Ordinarily left unlocked and closed, each portcullis can be locked manually from the inside with a lever. DC 25 Strength check to lift a closed portcullis if it is unlocked, DC 30 if it is locked. (Giants can automatically lift an unlocked portcullis.) Raising the lever all the way retracts the portcullis into the ceiling, and lowering the lever all the way lowers it to the floor. Placing the lever in the middle position locks the portcullis in place.

The portcullises on the north and south walls lead to other furnace chambers on this level.

Stairs: The stairs leading down out of this chamber are sealed. They don't go anywhere.



ENCOUNTER G5: SUMMONING CHAMBER

Encounter Level 17 (9,000 XP)

SETUP

- 1 bone naga arcanist (N)
- 2 slaughter wights (W)
- 5 fiendish armor animuses (A)

This encounter takes place at Location 8. Stairs in this chamber lead up to Location 13. Stairs in a matching chamber across the hall from the portcullis lead down to Location 10.

The bone naga arcanist that calls itself Marrow is completely loyal to the fire titan Wildfire. It uses this secluded chamber in the depths of the north tower to explore ways to utilize the powers of the divine engine, as well as to summon forth an undead army to bolster the forces of the fire giants. It has already begun to summon undead spirits in the form of haunted armor animuses when the adventurers arrive. Two are visible and three more arrive as the encounter unfolds.

When the adventurers find the door on the slave quarters level of the north tower that leads to the stairs down to the summoning chamber, read:

Painted in red on the locked door is a simple message written in Giant: "Snarr says stay out."

The door to the stairs is locked. A DC 22 Thievery check unlocks the door, or the door can be bashed open with a DC 25 Strength check.

When the adventurers descend the stairs and can see into the chamber, read:

A bone naga scuttles on its rib-bones, dancing around a large summoning circle as it chants in a quiet, singsong voice. Pinpricks of red light flicker in its eye-sockets as sulphurous smoke fills the circle, reaching from floor to ceiling like a pillar of thick mist. Two undead humanoids, their flesh gaunt yet muscled, with wild white hair and long, clawed fingers, watch from the far sides of the chamber. By the back wall, two armored forms stand straight and unmoving, as though they were statues or suits of armor on display.

Without turning in your direction, the bone naga continues its dance and says, "Why have the living come to Marrow's hall?"

A workbench sits on the north side of the room, covered with open scrolls. No matter what the adventurers say or do, Marrow knows that they have come to harm her master. Marrow won't allow the adventurers to stop Wildfire's plans. Instead, the bone naga prepares to launch a devastating attack.

Bone Naga Arcanist (N) Level 18 Elite Controller
Large immortal magical beast (undead) XP 4,000

Initiative +12 Senses Perception +14; darkvision
Death Rattle (Necrotic) aura 2; enemies that start their turns in the aura are dazed.

HP 360; Bloodied 180

AC 32; Fortitude 32, Reflex 28, Will 29

Immune disease, poison; Resist 20 necrotic;

Vulnerable 10 radiant

Saving Throws +2

Speed 7

Action Points 1

⚔ Bite (standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic

Reach 2; +23 vs. AC; 2d4 + 7 damage, and ongoing 5 necrotic damage (save ends). *Aftereffect:* The target is weakened (save ends).

⚔ Death Dance (standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic

Close burst 3; blind creatures are immune; +22 vs. Will; 2d6 + 7 necrotic damage and the target is dazed (save ends). If the target is already dazed, it takes an additional 2d6 + 7 necrotic damage.

Alignment Unaligned

Languages Common, Draconic, Supernal

Skills Arcana +19, History +19, Insight +19, Religion +19

Str 22 (+15)

Dex 16 (+12)

Wis 20 (+14)

Con 28 (+18)

Int 20 (+14)

Cha 22 (+15)

Slaughter Wight

Level 18 Brute

Medium natural humanoid (undead)

XP 2,000

Initiative +14 Senses Perception +13; darkvision

HP 182; Bloodied 91; see also death wail

AC 30; Fortitude 30, Reflex 27, Will 26

Immune disease, poison; Resist 20 necrotic;

Vulnerable 10 radiant

Speed 7

⚔ Claw (standard; at-will) ♦ Healing, Necrotic

+21 vs. AC; 3d6 + 8 necrotic damage, the target loses a healing surge and is weakened (save ends), and the slaughter wight regains 15 hit points.

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

Close burst 5; targets enemies; +21 vs. Fortitude; 2d6 + 4 necrotic damage. Undead allies in the burst can make a basic attack as a free action.

Alignment Chaotic evil

Languages Common

Str 26 (+17)

Dex 20 (+14)

Wis 9 (+8)

Con 22 (+15)

Int 12 (+10)

Cha 18 (+13)

TACTICS

The bone naga arcanist has a powerful aura. At the start of every player character's turn, check to see whether the character is within 2 squares of the bone naga. Characters who start their turn that close to the naga are dazed for that turn.

The bone naga's first priority is to finish its dance around the summoning circle to complete the ritual it is working on when the adventurers arrive. It moves 7 squares around the circle (move action), traveling clockwise. Then it makes a DC 28 Arcana check (minor action). If the check succeeds, a third haunted

5 Haunted Armor Animuses (A) Level 19 Minion Soldier

Medium immortal animate (undead) XP 600 each

Initiative +14 Senses Perception +11; darkvision

HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.

AC 35; Fortitude 31, Reflex 30, Will 29

Resist 10 fire, 10 poison

Speed 6

⚔ Longsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic, Weapon

+26 vs. AC; 12 necrotic damage.

Ectoplasmic Burst (when the haunted armor animus drops to 0 hit points) ♦ Necrotic

Close burst 3; +24 vs. Fortitude; 12 necrotic damage and the target is dazed (save ends).

Alignment Evil

Languages –

Str 19 (+13)

Dex 16 (+12)

Wis 14 (+11)

Con 15 (+11)

Int 8 (+8)

Cha 11 (+9)

Equipment heavy shield, longsword

armor animus appears in the circle. It uses another minor action to summon a fourth animus. On its second turn, it repeats the process until there are five animuses in play, then it turns its attention to the intruders. The bone naga can make bite attacks (with reach 2). The bone naga also has a powerful *death dance* attack, but it avoids using it if the wights or animuses are within the burst area.

The slaughter wights are straightforward. They rush into melee and try to weaken as many different opponents as possible. When they are defeated, don't forget their *death wail* power.

The animuses try to get between the adventurers and the bone naga. They concentrate exclusively on protected the arcanist from the intruders.

The bone naga, thoroughly captivated by the goals of the giants and their titan lords, fights to the death.

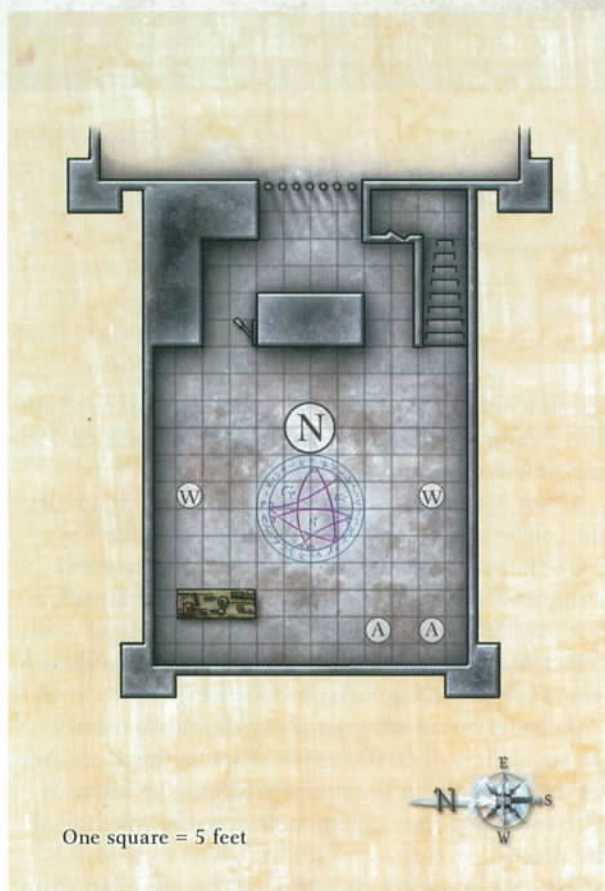
FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Dim light, provided by the glowing runes at the edge of the summoning circle.

Iron Portcullis: This portcullis is locked. DC 30 Strength check to lift a locked portcullis. Raising the lever all the way retracts the portcullis into the ceiling, and lowering the lever all the way lowers it to the floor. Placing the lever in the middle position locks the portcullis in place.

Stairs down to Location 10 can be accessed by exiting through the portcullis and finding a similar chamber across a wide hallway.

Workbench: It takes significant effort to decipher the cramped, coded script that the bone naga uses: both a DC 25 Religion check and a DC 25 Arcana check (separate characters can make the checks if they're examining the papers at the same time and collaborating). They describe ritual techniques for summoning undead creatures from the Shadowfell.



ENCOUNTER G5: SUMMONING CHAMBER

Summoning Circle: The summoning underway is a multi-step process that the bone naga doesn't expect to complete for another week or two. In the meantime, the circle remains full of smoke and occasionally spits out a haunted armor animus. Creatures who move into or start their turn inside the circle take 10 poison damage from the smoke. Creatures who start two consecutive turns in the smoke are also dazed (save ends), and creatures who start three or more consecutive turns in the smoke are dominated by the bone naga (save ends).

Treasure: A gold-encrusted writing quill on the workbench is worth 7,500 gp. Among the vials and other components on the bench are two *potions of vitality*. The bone naga wears a small leather pouch on a chain from one of its ribs. The pouch contains 1,500 gp.

ENCOUNTER G6: RITUAL CHAMBER

Encounter Level 19 (13,600 XP)

SETUP

- 1 fire giant icefist (F)
- 2 drow arcanists (A)
- 2 drow rangers (R)
- 1 rakshasa noble (N)

This encounter takes place at Location 9 in the south tower. Stairs in this chamber lead up to Location 13 and down to Location 12.

Drow arcanists prepare support rituals that will aid Lolestra when she casts the ritual provided by Lolth that will activate the divine engine and set Piranoth free. If the adventurers disrupt this arcane workings happening in this chamber, it delays Lolestra's efforts until they can reach the chamber where her and King Snarr are working.

A fire giant stands guard over the drow, mostly because Snarr doesn't completely trust the drow. A rakshasa noble, in the midst of forging an alliance with the giants, has asked to observe the working of the ritual.

The adventurers can approach this chamber from an easily accessible staircase that leads down from the slave quarters of the south tower to the hallway outside the chamber. This places the adventurers on the other side of the portcullis. Or, they can access

a locked door (DC 22 Thievery check unlocks the door, or the door can be bashed open with a DC 25 Strength check) that leads to stairs that descend directly into the chamber.

When the adventurers approach the ritual chamber, read:

Five magic circles inscribed on the floor of this chamber glow with arcane light. A portal glows on a side wall. Metal cages of various sizes stand against the far wall. A fire giant wearing strange iron gauntlets leans against one of the cages as he watches two drow as they trace patterns of arcane energy in the air. In the center circle, the hazy image of a drow female in ornate robes decorated with a spider web motif converses with the drow arcanists.

Perception Check

DC 24: A rakshasa wearing a fine furred cape stands in the shadows, watching the drow perform their ritual.

DC 28: Two more drow are crouched high in alcoves near the ceiling. They both have longbows resting on their thighs.

If the adventurers pause to eavesdrop on the drow's conversation, they learn information about what's going on at this point in the adventure.

Drow Image: King Snarr and I are almost ready to proceed. Have you completed your portion of the ritual?

Drow Arcanist: Not yet, mistress. We have just a few more steps to go.

Drow Image: I suggest you hurry. I believe that there are agents of Argent within the towers.

Drow Arcanist: Understood, mistress. We shall cast the final portion of the ritual and then join you in the fabrication chamber.

Drow Image: No, time has run out. The intruders have found you. Finish the ritual, then destroy the intruders. I shall close the portal and await your signal to proceed.

Drow Arcanist: As you command, mistress.

| Fire Giant Icefist (F) | Level 19 Elite Brute |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Large elemental humanoid (giant) | XP 4,800 |
| Initiative +15 | Senses Perception +12 |
| HP 454; Bloodied 227 | |
| AC 31; Fortitude 31, Reflex 28, Will 28 | |
| Saving Throws +2 | |
| Resist 15 fire | |
| Speed 7 | |
| Action Points 1 | |
| ⚔ Ice Punch (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold, Weapon | |
| Requires frigid gauntlets; reach 2; +22 vs. AC; 1d8 + 18 damage plus 2d8 cold damage. | |
| ❄ Blizzard of Blows (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold, Weapon | |
| The fire giant icefist makes three ice punch attacks. If all three attacks hit, make an immediate freezing grasp attack as a free action. This attack can't be used while the icefist has a grabbed target. | |
| ❄ Freezing Grasp (standard; recharge ☞ ☞) ♦ Cold, Weapon | |
| Requires frigid gauntlets; +20 vs. Reflex; 1d8 + 18 damage plus 2d8 cold damage, and the target is grabbed. | |
| Coldsnap | |
| At the start of a grabbed target's turn, the grabbed target takes 10 cold damage. | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Giant |
| Skills Intimidate +20 | |
| Str 29 (+18) | Dex 23 (+15) Wis 16 (+12) |
| Con 27 (+17) | Int 17 (+12) Cha 23 (+15) |
| Equipment chain armor, frigid gauntlets | |

| 2 Drow Rangers (R) | Level 17 Artillery |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Medium fey humanoid | XP 1,600 each |
| Initiative +13 | Senses Perception +15; darkvision |
| HP 122; Bloodied 61 | |
| AC 29; Fortitude 29, Reflex 31, Will 28 | |
| Speed 7 | |
| ⚔ Longsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| +24 vs. AC; 1d10 + 7 damage. | |
| 🏹 Longbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| Ranged 10/20; +24 vs. AC; 1d10 + 7 damage, plus 2d6 quarry damage if the target is the closest enemy. | |
| 🏹 Double Attack (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| The drow ranger makes two longbow attacks against the same target. | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Common, Elven |
| Skills Dungeoneering +15, Stealth +18 | |
| Str 16 (+11) | Dex 20 (+13) Wis 15 (+10) |
| Con 14 (+10) | Int 13 (+9) Cha 12 (+9) |
| Equipment leather armor, longsword, longbow, 40 arrows | |

2 Drow Arcanists (A)**Level 17 Controller**

Medium fey humanoid

XP 1,600 each

Initiative +10 Senses Perception +14; darkvision

HP 156; Bloodied 78

AC 31; Fortitude 26, Reflex 29, Will 31

Speed 7

⚔ **Dagger** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Poison, Weapon**

+22 vs. AC; 1d4 + 9 damage, and the drow arcanist makes a secondary attack against the same target. *Secondary Attack:* +21 vs. Fortitude; see *drow poison* for the effect..

☞ **Shadow Missile** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Necrotic**

Ranged 10; +21 vs. Reflex; 1d10 + 7 necrotic damage, and the target is slowed (save ends).

☞ **Darkfire** (minor; encounter)

Ranged 10; +21 vs. Reflex; until the end of the drow arcanist's next turn, the target grants combat advantage to all attacks, and the target cannot benefit from invisibility or concealment.

☼ **Shadow Fire** (standard; recharge [1]) ♦ **Fire**

Area burst 2 within 20; +21 vs. Reflex; 5d6 + 7 fire damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends).

Drow Poison ♦ **Poison**

A creature hit by a weapon coated in *drow poison* takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls (save ends). *First Failed Saving Throw:* The target is also weakened (save ends). *Second Failed Saving Throw:* The target falls unconscious until the end of the encounter.

Alignment Evil Languages Common, Elven

Skills Arcana +17, Nature +19, Religion +17

Str 12 (+9) Dex 15 (+10) Wis 22 (+14)

Con 12 (+9) Int 18 (+12) Cha 20 (+13)

Equipment dagger*, wand

*This weapon is coated in *drow poison*.**Rakshasa Noble (N)****Level 19 Controller**

Medium natural humanoid

XP 2,400

Initiative +14 Senses Perception +19; low-light vision

HP 178; Bloodied 89

AC 33; Fortitude 31, Reflex 33, Will 34; see also *phantom image*

Speed 7

⚔ **Claw** (standard; at-will)

+22 vs. AC; 1d6 + 3 damage, and the target is blinded until the end of the rakshasa noble's next turn.

☞ **Mind Twist** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Psychic**

Ranged 20; +22 vs. Will; 3d6 + 7 psychic damage, and the target is dazed (save ends).

☞ **Phantom Lure** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Charm**

Ranged 10; +22 vs. Will; the target slides 5 squares.

☞ **Frightful Phantom** (standard; recharge [1]) ♦ **Fear**

Ranged 5; +22 vs. Will; 4d8 + 7 psychic damage, the target is pushed 5 squares, and the target is stunned (save ends).

Deceptive Veil (minor; at-will) ♦ **Illusion**

The rakshasa noble can disguise itself to appear as any Medium humanoid. A successful Insight check (opposed by the rakshasa's Bluff check) pierces the disguise.

Phantom Image (minor; recharge [1]) ♦ **Illusion**

Until the end of the rakshasa noble's next turn, any creature that attacks the rakshasa's AC or Reflex defense must roll twice and use the lower attack roll result. If either result is a critical hit, use that result instead.

Alignment Evil Languages Common

Skills Arcana +20, Athletics +17, Bluff +21, Diplomacy +21,

History +20, Insight +19, Intimidate +21

Str 16 (+12) Dex 20 (+14) Wis 20 (+14)

Con 18 (+13) Int 22 (+15) Cha 24 (+16)

TACTICS

The drow arcanists spend one round each making DC 28 Arcana checks to finish their ritual. They need to achieve five more successes to complete it. They have one failure. Two more failures before the five successes ends the ritual in failure. In the second round, one continues the ritual while the other turns to fight the intruders.

The rangers attack from their hiding places, making double attacks every round.

The fire giant wades into close combat.

The rashesas uses *deceptive veil* to disguise itself as a human prisoner. When all attention is turned to the drow, it attacks.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Bright light.

Magic Circles: The center circle is used by the drow to communicate with Lolestra and to focus the energy of their ritual. A creature that starts its turn in one of the circles suffers the following effect:

Circle 1: Randomly teleported to one of the other circles, then immobilized (save ends).

Circle 2: 10 fire damage.

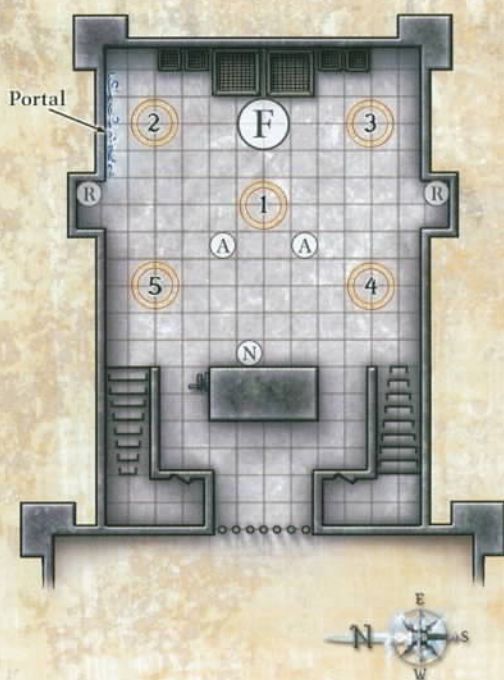
Circle 3: 10 lightning damage.

Circle 4: 10 cold damage.

Circle 5: Dazed by disturbing visions of the Abyss (save ends).

Portal: This portal leads to the fabrication chamber (Location 14). After Lolestra's image fades, the portal closes in 1d4 + 1 rounds.

One square = 5 feet



ENCOUNTER G7: SALAMANDER DEFENDERS

Encounter Level 18 (10,000 XP)

SETUP

- 1 salamander noble (N)
- 1 salamander archer (A)
- 2 salamander swordbearers (S)
- 1 fire archon blazesteel (B)
- Lava hazard

This encounter takes place at Location 10 in the north tower. Stairs in this chamber lead up to Location 8.

Salamanders allied to the fire giants of Flamefall Tower live in this chamber, bathing in the magma that flows through the fortress. Lava flows out of a chute in the ceiling, pooling in this chamber before flowing out through a sluice that leads back to the lakes of lava underneath the nearby mountains.

When the adventurers reach this chamber, read:

A lava pours from the ceiling to form a pool that glows a dull red in the middle of this chamber before sluggishly flowing out through a wide opening in the east wall. At the edge of the pool, four salamanders variously armed with spears, bows, and curved swords, mill about in the stifling heat.

Perception Check

DC 25: You see the glint of metal among the stones in piled in the northeast corner.

DC 26: You spot a humanoid creature of fire and steel moving within the fiery cascade of lava.

| Salamander Archer (A) | Level 15 Artillery |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Large elemental humanoid (fire, reptile) | XP 1,200 |
| Initiative +10 | Senses Perception +9 |
| HP 114; Bloodied 57 | |
| AC 28; Fortitude 26, Reflex 23, Will 22 | |
| Resist 20 fire | |
| Speed 6 | |
| ① Tail Lash (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire | |
| Reach 2; +18 vs. AC; 1d10 + 6 fire damage. | |
| ② Longbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire, Weapon | |
| Ranged 20/40; +20 vs. AC; 1d10 + 6 damage plus 1d6 fire damage. | |
| † Tail Thrust (minor; at-will) | |
| Reach 2; +18 vs. Reflex; the target is pushed 1 square. | |
| ✶ Double Attack (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire, Weapon | |
| The salamander archer makes two ranged basic attacks against the same target or two separate targets within 5 squares of each other. | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Primordial |
| Str 17 (+10) | Dex 22 (+13) |
| Con 18 (+11) | Int 11 (+7) |
| | Wis 15 (+9) |
| | Cha 11 (+7) |
| Equipment longbow, quiver of 30 arrows | |

| Salamander Noble (N) | Level 15 Controller |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Large elemental humanoid (fire, reptile) | XP 1,200 |
| Initiative +12 | Senses Perception +16 |
| HP 152; Bloodied 76 | |
| AC 29; Fortitude 27, Reflex 27, Will 26 | |
| Resist 20 fire | |
| Speed 6 | |
| ① Tail Crush (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire | |
| Reach 2; +16 vs. AC; 1d10 + 6 fire damage, and the target is grabbed (until escape). The grabbed target takes 1d10 + 6 fire damage at the start of its turn while grabbed. The salamander noble cannot make melee basic attacks while grabbing a creature with its tail. | |
| † Longspear (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire, Weapon | |
| Reach 3; +18 vs. AC; 1d12 + 5 damage, and ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends). | |
| ✶ Fire Cage (standard; recharge 2) ♦ Fire | |
| Ranged 10; +18 vs. Reflex; the target takes ongoing 10 fire damage and is immobilized (save ends both) as a cage of searing flame springs up around it. The cage does not block line of sight. | |
| Threatening Reach | |
| The salamander noble can make opportunity attacks against all enemies within its reach (2 squares). | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Primordial |
| Skills Insight +16, Intimidate +15 | |
| Str 20 (+12) | Dex 20 (+12) |
| Con 24 (+14) | Int 14 (+9) |
| | Wis 18 (+11) |
| | Cha 16 (+10) |
| Equipment longspear | |

| 2 Salamander Swordbearers (S) | Level 16 Soldier |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Large elemental humanoid (fire, reptile) | XP 1,400 each |
| Initiative +14 | Senses Perception +12 |
| HP 153; Bloodied 76 | |
| AC 32; Fortitude 28, Reflex 29, Will 27 | |
| Resist 20 fire | |
| Speed 6 | |
| ① Khopesh (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire, Weapon | |
| Reach 2; +23 vs. AC; 1d8 + 7 damage, plus 5 fire damage. | |
| ② Executioner's Strike (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire, Weapon | |
| Targets bloodied enemy only; reach 2; +21 vs. Fortitude; 2d8 + 7 damage, plus 5 fire damage. If the target is prone, it takes an additional 10 damage. | |
| † Tail Lash (immediate reaction, when an enemy moves within 2 squares of the salamander swordbearer; at-will) ♦ Fire | |
| The salamander attacks the enemy; reach 2; +21 vs. Reflex; 1d10 + 7 fire damage, the target is knocked prone, and the target's move action ends in that square. | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Primordial |
| Str 20 (+13) | Dex 22 (+14) |
| Con 18 (+12) | Int 13 (+9) |
| | Wis 18 (+12) |
| | Cha 15 (+10) |
| Equipment khopesh | |

TACTICS

Throughout the battle, the noble orders the other salamanders around, commanding them to make specific attacks against specific characters. The noble doesn't know the names of the characters, so it uses whatever demeaning nicknames it can invent on the fly to identify them.

In the first round, the noble uses *fire cage* against whichever adventurer looks the fastest. Then it stands front and center between the adventurers and the archer. It intentionally leaves space on either side of it so that it can use threatening reach on characters that try to move around or past it to set up a flank. The noble prefers to use its longspear, but if an opponent moves adjacent to it, the noble counters with a *tail crush*. The noble takes a standard action on its next turn to move a grabbed opponent and itself into the lava pool.

The swordbearers move so they're between the archer and the adventurers, preferably on either side of the noble and a few squares away. They target enemies who are bloodied whenever possible.

The archer's tactics are simple: shoot as many arrows as possible. If the adventurers engage it in melee, it tries to shift (over the course of several turns if necessary) so that it places itself on the other side of the lava pool.

| Fire Archon Blazesteel (B) | | Level 19 Soldier |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| Medium elemental humanoid (fire) | | XP 2,400 |
| Initiative +18 | Senses Perception +12 | |
| HP 182; Bloodied 91; see also <i>wounded fireburst</i> | | |
| AC 35; Fortitude 33, Reflex 32, Will 28 | | |
| Immune disease, poison; Resist 30 fire | | |
| Speed 8 | | |
| ⚔ Scimitar (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire, Weapon | | |
| +25 vs. AC; 1d8 + 8 damage (crit 2d8 + 16) plus 1d8 fire damage, and the target is marked until the end of the blazesteel's next turn. | | |
| ⚡ Wounded Fireburst (when first bloodied and again when the blazesteel is reduced to 0 hit points) ♦ Fire | | |
| Close burst 2; +21 vs. Reflex; 10 fire damage, and ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends). | | |
| Combat Advantage ♦ Fire | | |
| The blazesteel makes a single extra scimitar attack and deals an extra 1d8 fire damage against any enemy it has combat advantage against. | | |
| Alignment Chaotic evil | Languages Primordial | |
| Str 26 (+17) | Dex 24 (+16) | Wis 16 (+12) |
| Con 22 (+15) | Int 14 (+11) | Cha 15 (+11) |
| Equipment plate armor, scimitar | | |

| Lava Pool | Level 19 Obstacle |
|-----------|-------------------|
| Hazard | XP 2,400 |

Lava pours from the ceiling in a cascade of molten fire, forming a pool in the center of the chamber and flowing out through a hole in the wall.

Hazard: The heat in the chamber is debilitating, but the real danger comes from being pushed into the scalding lava.

Trigger

When a creature starts its turn in the lava overflow chamber.

Attack

Free Action

Target: One creature.

Attack: +23 vs. Fortitude

Hit: 2d6 + 7 fire damage.

Effect: If a creature enters or starts its turn in a square within the lava pool, the creature takes 20 fire damage and is knocked prone.

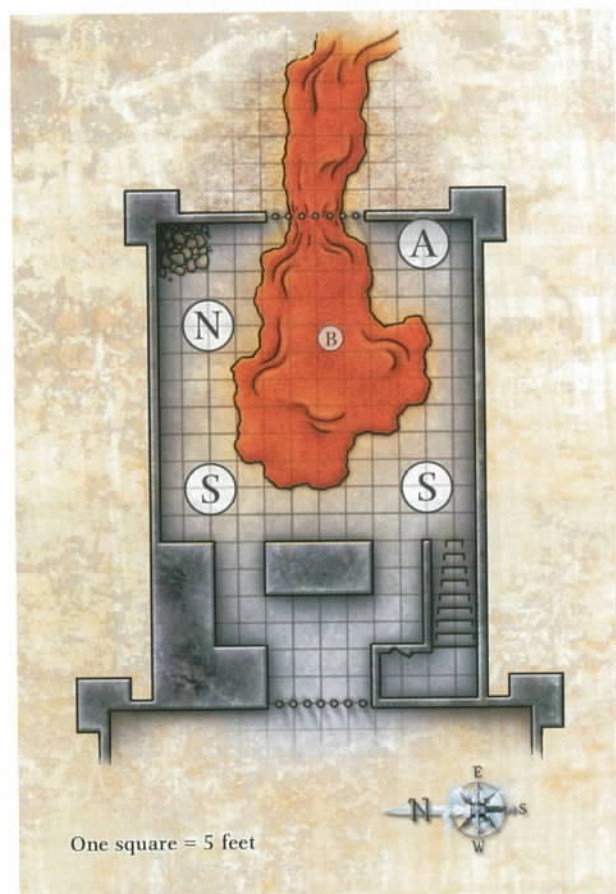
FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Dim light, from the glowing lava.

Lava Pool: Creatures who enter or start their turn in the lava pool take 20 fire damage. A creature pushed, pulled, or slid into the lava pool gets an immediate saving throw to clutch the edge and not fall in; success means the creature is instead prone in the square it was in before it would have moved into the lava. The salamanders have fire resist 20, so they don't take damage and can freely move into and out of the lava pool.

Lava Outflow: If the adventurers follow the sluice out of the chamber, they find themselves at the base of the north tower, heading toward the mountain.

Rock Pile: If the adventurers noticed the glint of metal in the pile of rocks, they can search for the treasure of the salamanders. The treasure is a collection of gems worth 22,000 gp.



ENCOUNTER G8: FALSE RELICS

Encounter Level 18 (10,800 XP)

SETUP

- 2 fire giants (F)
- 1 genasi elemental dervish (D)
- 1 fire archon ash disciple (A)

This encounter takes place at Location 11 in the central tower. Chambers through the portcullises to the east and west provide access to the north and south towers when they are lowered to this level of the tower.

This foundry refines the ore mined from the mountain and casts it into ingots—mostly of iron, but sometimes of silver and adamantite, as well. The foundry was recently converted over to the task of crafting replacement pieces for the divine engine. All of the missing pieces have now been replaced by substitute versions of the relics that were molded and crafted here and in the elemental furnace (Location 7).

When the adventurers arrive at one of the portcullises leading into this area, read:

A massive blacksmith's oven dominates one side of the chamber, tended by a graceful humanoid with an obvious connection to elemental powers. A fire archon shovels metal shavings into a pile beside the over. By a large table, a fire giant taps at a press-mold with a chisel. Other molds and metal-casting tools litter the floor. There's a portcullis on the far wall, and a doorway in the wall opposite the work table.

| 2 Fire Giants (G) | Level 18 Soldier |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Large elemental humanoid (giant) | XP 2,000 each |
| Initiative +11 | Senses Perception +14 |
| HP 174; Bloodied 87 | |
| AC 34; Fortitude 34, Reflex 28, Will 28 | |
| Resist 15 fire | |
| Speed 7 | |
| ⚔ Searing Greatsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire, Weapon | |
| Reach 2; +23 vs. AC; 1d12 + 6 damage plus 2d8 fire damage, and the target is marked until the end of the fire giant's next turn. | |
| ⚔ Sweeping Sword (standard; encounter) ♦ Fire, Weapon | |
| Requires greatsword; close blast 2; +21 vs. AC; 1d12 + 6 damage plus 2d8 fire damage, and the target is marked until the end of the fire giant's next turn. | |
| 🏹 Iron Javelin (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon | |
| Ranged 15/30; +21 vs. AC; 1d10 + 6 damage, and the target is slowed until the end of the fire giant's next turn. | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Giant |
| Skills Intimidate +14 | |
| Str 23 (+15) | Dex 11 (+9) Wis 10 (+9) |
| Con 22 (+15) | Int 10 (+9) Cha 11 (+9) |
| Equipment plate armor, greatsword, 4 javelins | |

Genasi Elemental Dervish (D) Level 18 Elite Skirmisher
Medium elemental humanoid (air, earth, fire, water) XP 4,000

| | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Initiative +17 | Senses Perception +13 |
| HP 344; Bloodied 172 | |
| AC 32; Fortitude 30, Reflex 32, Will 30 | |
| Resist 10 cold, 10 fire, 10 lightning | |
| Saving Throws +3 | |
| Speed 6, fly 6 (hover), swim 6 | |
| Action Points 1 | |
| ⚔ Double Sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon; Varies | |
| +23 vs. AC; 1d8 + 7 damage, and ongoing 5 damage (save ends) of the type determined by elemental manifestation. | |
| ⚔ Double Attack (standard; at-will) | |
| The genasi elemental dervish makes two double sword attacks. | |
| ⚔ Fiery Riposte (immediate reaction, when the genasi elemental dervish is hit by an enemy adjacent to it; at-will) ♦ Fire | |
| Targets the triggering enemy; +21 vs. Reflex; the target takes ongoing 10 fire damage (save ends). If the target is already taking ongoing fire damage, that damage increases by 10. | |
| ⚔ Primordial Storm (standard; recharge ⏏ ⏏) ♦ Weapon | |
| The genasi elemental dervish shifts 6 squares and can move through enemies' spaces. During its movement, the dervish makes the following three attacks in order, each against a different target. | |
| Promise of Storm (Thunder): +21 vs. Fortitude; 1d8 + 5 thunder damage, and the target gains vulnerable 5 thunder (save ends). | |
| Earth Shock: +21 vs. Fortitude; 1d8 + 5 damage, and the target is dazed until the end of its next turn. | |
| Lightning Cut (Lightning): +21 vs. Reflex; 1d8 + 5 lightning damage, and the target gains ongoing 10 lightning damage (save ends). | |
| Elemental Manifestation | |
| At the start of a genasi elemental dervish's turn, it chooses fire, lightning, or thunder damage. The dervish's double sword attack deals that type of damage until the start of its next turn, when it can choose a different damage type. | |

Alignment Unaligned Languages Common, Primordial
Skills Acrobatics +20, Athletics +21, Endurance +21, Intimidate +16, Nature +20

Str 19 (+13) Dex 24 (+16) Wis 18 (+13)
Con 20 (+14) Int 16 (+12) Cha 15 (+11)

Equipment hide armor, double sword

TACTICS

One fire giant is working in antechamber when the adventurers arrive. It waits to emerge so that it can move in and take an opponent by surprise or gain combat advantage by setting up a flank. The other moves immediately to engage the intruders, protecting the genasi and the fire archon and marking one of the enemy characters. Both of them save their *sweeping sword* attacks for a round when they can catch three or more enemy targets in the blast.

The genasi believes in the goals of the giants and the titans, and is just one of a number of elemental creatures to side with them in this endeavor. It spends a minor action in the first round to open the oven doors. It uses *primordial storm* as soon as

possible, targeting the most-powerful of the intruders. While it waits for the power to recharge, it makes *double attacks*. Don't forget the creature's *fiery riposte* which allows it to make an immediate attack when an adjacent enemy scores a hit against it. The genasi uses *elemental manifestation* to cycle through different damage types. It prefers to switch between lightning and thunder damage, as it knows that the adventurers probably have some amount of fire protection due to the nature of their mission against the fire giants.

The fire archon hangs back and uses *rain of fire* in the first round, igniting as many enemy targets as possible. It remains ready to use *cinder burst* when enemies converge upon it, then it either moves or *flame steps* away to teleport close to a fire giant.

Fire Archon Ash Disciple (A) Level 20 Artillery

Medium elemental humanoid (fire)

XP 2,800

Initiative +18 Senses Perception +13

HP 150; Bloodied 75; see also *death embers*

AC 33; Fortitude 33, Reflex 34, Will 29

Immune disease, poison; Resist 30 fire

Speed 8; see also *flame step*

⚡ **Flaming Fist** (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire

+20 vs. Reflex; 1d8 + 5 fire damage, and ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends).

☄ **Rain of Fire** (standard; encounter) ♦ Fire

Area burst 1 within 10; +23 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 8 fire damage, and ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends). Miss: Half damage, and no ongoing damage.

⚡ **Flame Wave** (standard; encounter) ♦ Fire

Close blast 5; +23 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 8 fire damage, and the target is pushed 2 squares and takes ongoing 10 fire damage (save ends).

⚡ **Cinder Burst** (standard; encounter) ♦ Fire

Close burst 5; +23 vs. Fortitude; 2d8 + 8 fire damage, and the target is blinded (save ends).

⚡ **Death Embers** (when reduced to 0 hit points) ♦ Fire

As the effect of *cinder burst*. The ash disciple is consumed in the burst, leaving only its metallic robes behind.

Flame Step (move; at-will) ♦ Teleportation

The ash disciple can teleport to within 3 squares of any fire creature within 20 squares of it.

Alignment Chaotic evil Languages Primordial

Str 20 (+15) Dex 27 (+18) Wis 16 (+13)

Con 24 (+17) Int 14 (+12) Cha 15 (+12)

Equipment scale armor (metal robes)

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Dim light, provided by the oven.

Antechamber: The antechamber has more casting tools and a level 19 magic item, either a weapon or armor, that the fire giant recently completed work on.

Chute: A chute in the floor of the southwest corner of the room drops into the fabrication chamber. Falling into the chamber from here results in a 50 foot drop and 5d10 damage from the fall.

Iron Portcullis: These portcullises are locked. DC 30 Strength check to lift a locked portcullis. Raising the lever all the way retracts the portcullis into the ceiling, and lowering the lever all the way lowers it to the floor. Placing the lever in the middle position locks the portcullis in place.

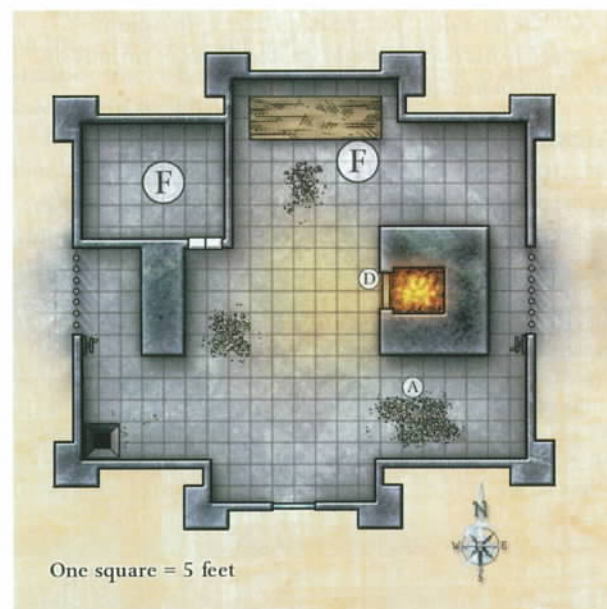
Metal Shavings: Piles of scrap metal piled in various locations around the chamber are difficult terrain.

Oven: Intense heat radiates from the oven. Any creature that starts its turn adjacent to the oven takes 5 fire damage. Any creature that enters or starts its turn in the oven takes 10 fire damage. Opening the oven doors from the outside is a minor action, from the inside it is a standard action.

Window: This is one of the few chambers in Flamefall Tower to have a window—in this case a square window 10 feet across with light wooden latticework that swings open like shutters.

The window looks out upon a location in the Elemental Chaos, an area not unlike an ocean of different elements—flowing water, shifting earth, burning magma, crackling lightning, and blizzards of snow and sleet. Islands float within the elemental sea, including one that features a step pyramid and three octagonal pillars. This is a view of Piranoth's prison, the location of the final set of encounters starting on page 154.

Work Table: In addition to various tools, the molds used to craft the replacement pieces of the divine engine are located here.



ENCOUNTER G9: STORAGE VAULT

Encounter Level 18 (11,200 XP)

SETUP

1 fire giant element handler (E)

1 fire giant flamecrusher (F)

1 azer flameward (A)

2 firebred hell hounds (H)

Freezing moat trap

This encounter takes place at Location 12 in the south tower. Stairs here lead up to Location 9. A hallway outside the portcullis leads to a connection point for the central tower. Where it connects to depends upon which level the south tower has been lifted or raised to correspond with.

Before they joined forces with the titan lords, this clan of fire giants became wealthy by supplying Underdark civilizations like the drow with refined metal. They have halted their mining operations in recent weeks to concentrate fully on supply arms and armor to their giant and elemental allies, and to work on mending the divine engine. The ingots in this chamber represent the fire giant's remaining supply of wealth.

When the adventurers reach this chamber, read:

A shallow moat bisects this room, separating the far end from the portion where you descend the stairs. Two fire giants stand on the near side of the moat, each with a hell hound on a chain.

On the far side of the moat, an azer with a glaive strapped to his back stacks brick-like ingots of various silvery hues in neat piles.

Arcana Check

DC 20: You feel the pulse of energy moving back and forth in front of you. It seems to brush against you at regular intervals—roughly once every five or six seconds.

Azer Flameward (A) **Level 19 Skirmisher**
Medium elemental humanoid (fire) XP 2,400

Initiative +15 Senses Perception +15

Warding Flame (Fire) Any enemy adjacent to two or more azers at the start of its turn takes 5 fire damage.

HP 181; Bloodied 90

AC 33; Fortitude 31, Reflex 30, Will 32

Resist 30 fire

Speed 5

⚔ **Glaive** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Fire, Weapon**

Reach 2; +24 vs. AC; 1d10 + 7 damage plus 2d6 fire damage.

Flameward (immediate reaction, when an enemy attacks the azer flameward; at-will) ♦ **Fire**

The azer flameward shifts 5 squares and the enemy that triggered this reaction takes ongoing 10 fire damage (save ends).

Alignment Unaligned

Languages Giant

Str 20 (+14) Dex 18 (+13) Wis 22 (+15)

Con 21 (+14) Int 14 (+11) Cha 16 (+12)

Equipment chainmail, glaive

DC 25: The energy seems to be moving along the surface of the moat.

The moat is a trap, placed so that members of the fire giant clan wouldn't be tempted to take ingots for themselves. The azers can cross the moat without worry as they stack the ingots. King Snarr isn't worried that they'll steal ingots, as they never leave the tower or the nearby mines, and they can't easily hide the ingots.

When the adventurers make their presence known, the fire giant unleashes their hell hounds and orders the beasts to attack. Then the fire giants join in, but not before ordering the azer to "guard the ingots with your miserable, worthless life!"

Fire Giant Element Handler (E) **Level 18 Controller**
Large elemental humanoid (giant) XP 2,000

Initiative +13 Senses Perception +18

HP 175; Bloodied 87

AC 32; Fortitude 30, Reflex 29, Will 30

Resist 15 fire

Speed 7

⚔ **Fiery Quarterstaff** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Fire, Weapon**

Reach 2; +23 vs. AC; 1d8 + 7 damage plus 2d8 fire damage.

⚡ **Fire Bolt** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Fire**

Ranged 20; +22 vs. Reflex; 2d10 + 4 fire damage, and the target is dazed until the end of the fire giant's next turn.

⚡ **Searing Wind** (minor 1/round; at-will)

Ranged 10; +22 vs. Fortitude; the fire giant slides the target 3 squares.

⚡ **Boiling Wave** (standard; at-will)

Close blast 3; +20 vs. Fortitude; 1d10 + 7 damage, and the target is pushed 3 squares.

⚡ **Earthen Spikes** (standard; recharge [E])

Area burst 1 within 20; spikes of stone burst from the ground; +21 vs. Reflex; 4d10 + 7 damage; the affected area becomes difficult terrain for the rest of the encounter.

Fire Shroud (minor; recharge [E]) ♦ **Fire**

One ally within 10 squares of the fire giant gains resist 10 to all damage until the end of the fire giant's next turn. In addition, any enemy that starts its turn adjacent to the ally while the fire shroud is in effect takes 15 fire damage.

Alignment Evil

Languages Common, Giant

Skills Arcana +18, Diplomacy +19, Dungeoneering +18

Str 21 (+14)

Dex 17 (+13)

Wis 17 (+13)

Con 23 (+15)

Int 17 (+13)

Cha 18 (+14)

Equipment quarterstaff

TACTICS

The fire giant element handler stands back to use its ranged attacks, starting with *earthen spikes* and *fire bolt*. It uses *boiling wave* when multiple enemies are in range. It uses *searing wind* (minor action) each round to slide opponents toward the moat.

The azer flameward stands at the edge of the moat and uses the reach of his weapon to attack enemies that enter the trap. It can be intimidated into surrendering once it is bloodied (DC 22 Intimidate check).

Fire Giant Flamecrusher (F) Level 17 Brute

Large elemental humanoid (giant) XP 1,600

Initiative +11 Senses Perception +10

HP 204; Bloodied 102

AC 29; Fortitude 30, Reflex 25, Will 28

Resist 15 fire

Speed 7

⚔ **Searing Maul** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Fire, Weapon**

Reach 2; +20 vs. AC; 2d8 + 8 damage plus 2d8 fire damage.

⚔ **Overhead Smash** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Fire, Weapon**

Requires maul; reach 2; +18 vs. AC; 2d8 + 14 damage plus 2d8 fire damage, and the target is knocked prone.

⚔ **Battering Blows** (standard; usable only when bloodied; encounter) ♦ **Fire, Weapon**

Requires maul; close burst 2; +20 vs. AC; 2d8 + 8 damage plus 2d8 fire damage, and the target is pushed 2 squares and knocked prone.

Alignment Evil Languages Giant

Skills Endurance +20

Str 27 (+16)

Dex 17 (+11)

Wis 15 (+10)

Con 24 (+15)

Int 8 (+7)

Cha 22 (+14)

Equipment plate armor, maul

2 Firebred Hell Hounds Level 17 Brute

Medium elemental beast (fire) XP 1,600 each

Initiative +10 Senses Perception +17

Fire Shield (Fire) aura 1; any creature that enters or begins its turn in the aura takes 1d10 fire damage.

HP 205; Bloodied 102

AC 30; Fortitude 30, Reflex 28, Will 29

Resist 40 fire

Speed 8

⚔ **Bite** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Fire**

+20 vs. AC; 1d10 + 6 plus 1d10 fire damage.

⚔ **Fiery Breath** (standard; recharge ⏏ ⏏ ⏏) ♦ **Fire**

Close blast 3; +18 vs. Reflex; 4d6 + 7 fire damage.

⚔ **Fiery Burst** (standard; recharge ⏏ ⏏) ♦ **Fire**

Close burst 3; +18 vs. Reflex; 4d10 + 7 fire damage.

Alignment Unaligned Languages –

Str 22 (+14)

Dex 14 (+10)

Wis 19 (+12)

Con 25 (+15)

Int 2 (+4)

Cha 12 (+9)

Freezing Moat Level 18 Obstacle

Trap XP 2,000

The still water appears calm and empty. At the bottom of the clear water, strange sigils glow with a cold, blue light.

Trap: When a character enters the moat, the magic protecting it attacks.

Trigger

When a creature enters or starts its turn in a moat space.

Attack

Free Action

Target: One creature.

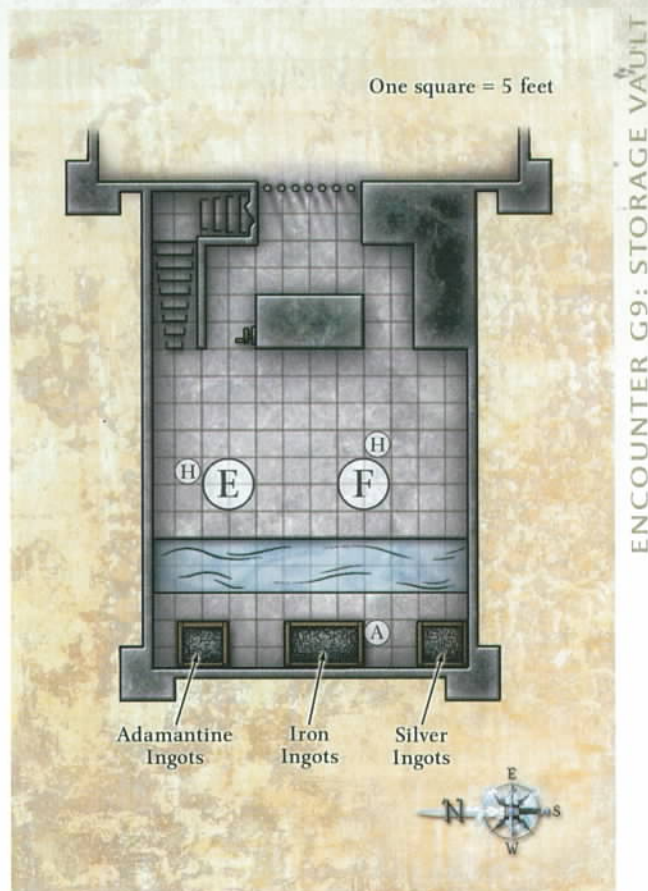
Attack: +23 vs. Fortitude

Hit: 3d12 + 5 cold damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends).

Countermeasures

♦ A character in the moat can disable the sigils (DC 20 Arcana check or DC 25 Thievery check). This disrupts the magic and disables the trap until the end of the character's next turn.

♦ Four successes before three failures totally disables the trap.



ENCOUNTER G9: STORAGE VAULT

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Bright light, emitted by the azer and hell hounds within 10 squares.

Ingots: The ingots are stacked in three neat piles—an immense stack for iron in the middle, and two smaller stacks for silver and adamantine to each side. Each ingot weighs 100 pounds.

Moat: The moat is 5 feet deep. See the statistics block on this page.

Treasure: The ingots are each worth the following amounts of gold. There are 880 iron ingots, worth 25 gp each (22,000 gp total), 330 silver ingots, worth 100 gp each (33,000 gp total), and 72 adamantine ingots, worth 500 gp each (36,000 gp total).

ENCOUNTER G10: FIRE GIANT SLAVES

Encounter Level 17 (9,000 XP)

SETUP

- 1 azer taskmaster (T)
- 2 azer ragers (R)
- 3 azer foot soldiers (S)
- 5 azer warriors (W)

This encounter takes place at Location 13 in either the north or south tower.

This warrenlike series of rooms covers this level of both the north and south towers. Here, most of the azers live when they aren't slaving away for the fire giants. They are fearful enough that they cower when they hear the mailed boot of an approaching giant.

When the adventurers leave the hallway beyond the portcullis or descend the stairs into this area, read:

The ceiling here is lower than elsewhere in the towers—only 10 feet high or so. Barred iron doors—some open, some closed—line the sides of the corridor that stretches before you. There's a brazier at the end of the hallway with a bright flame that reaches almost to the ceiling.

All of the azers are hiding or resting in their rooms when the adventurers reach this area. Note that the adventurers must speak Giant to understand the conversation in the room to the right side of the corridor.

Perception Check

DC 20: Flickering light frames several of the iron doors in the corridor, and a gruff, muttering voice says, "When do we need to go down to the furnace?"

If the adventurers pause to listen to the conversation, they discover some details about life in Flamefall Tower.

Second voice: It should be soon. No more sleeping. You know how the giants hate that.

Gruff voice: Slag-heap duty?

5 Azer Warriors (W) **Level 17 Minion**
Medium elemental humanoid (fire) XP 400 each

Initiative +11 **Senses Perception** +12
Warding Flame (Fire) Any enemy adjacent to two or more azers at the start of its turn takes 5 fire damage.
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.
AC 31; **Fortitude** 30, **Reflex** 26, **Will** 27
Resist 20 fire
Speed 5

⚔ **Warhammer** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Fire, Weapon**
+20 vs. AC; 7 fire damage, and ongoing 3 fire damage (save ends).

Alignment Unaligned **Languages** Giant
Str 21 (+13) **Dex** 17 (+11) **Wis** 18 (+12)
Con 23 (+14) **Int** 11 (+8) **Cha** 16 (+11)

Equipment chainmail, light shield, warhammer

Second voice: No. The final pieces are almost done tempering in the main furnace chamber. Once they've cooled off, we need to take them to King Snarr.

Gruff voice: Then what?

Second voice: Then we wait for King Snarr to either dismiss us or whip us because one of the pieces doesn't fit.

Gruff voice: Figures.

Second voice: And you'd rather spend the day helping Marrow?

Gruff voice: (shudder) Not for all the ingots in the tower.

When the adventurers make their presence known or peer into one of the occupied rooms in the slave warren, read:

You hear rustling and crackling from beyond several of the iron doors, and then the corridor lights up as azers start to pour into the hallway, their fiery beards flickering with fear and anger.

3 Azer Foot Soldiers (S) **Level 14 Soldier**
Medium elemental humanoid (fire) XP 1,000 each

Initiative +12 **Senses Perception** +11
Warding Flame (Fire) Any enemy adjacent to two or more azers at the start of its turn takes 5 fire damage.

HP 141; **Bloodied** 70

AC 30; **Fortitude** 28, **Reflex** 26, **Will** 27

Resist 30 fire

Speed 5

⚔ **Warhammer** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Fire, Weapon**
+20 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage plus 1d8 fire damage, and the target is marked until the end of the azer foot soldier's next turn.

Alignment Unaligned **Languages** Giant
Str 19 (+11) **Dex** 16 (+10) **Wis** 18 (+11)
Con 21 (+12) **Int** 11 (+7) **Cha** 15 (+9)

Equipment scale armor, light shield, warhammer

2 Azer Ragers (R) **Level 15 Brute**
Medium elemental humanoid (fire) XP 1,200 each

Initiative +9 **Senses Perception** +9
Warding Flame (Fire) Any enemy adjacent to two or more azers at the start of its turn takes 5 fire damage.

HP 181; **Bloodied** 90

AC 27; **Fortitude** 28, **Reflex** 25, **Will** 24

Immune fear; **Resist** 30 fire

Speed 6

⚔ **Spiked Gauntlet** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Fire, Weapon**
+18 vs. AC; 1d6 + 6 damage, and ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends).

⚔ **Chains of Flame** (standard, usable only while bloodied; encounter) ♦ **Fire**

Close burst 5; +17 vs. Reflex; 3d8 + 5 fire damage. Enemies adjacent to an azer or with ongoing fire damage are immobilized until the end of the azer rager's next turn.

Alignment Unaligned **Languages** Giant
Str 22 (+13) **Dex** 15 (+9) **Wis** 14 (+9)
Con 21 (+12) **Int** 11 (+7) **Cha** 15 (+9)

Equipment scale armor, spiked gauntlets

Azer Taskmaster (T) **Level 17 Controller (Leader)**
Medium elemental humanoid (fire) XP 1,600

Initiative +12 Senses Perception +14

Warding Flame (Fire) Any enemy adjacent to two or more azers at the start of its turn takes 5 fire damage.

HP 165; Bloodied 82

AC 31; Fortitude 28, Reflex 27, Will 29

Resist 30 fire

Speed 5

① **Scourge** (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire, Weapon

+22 vs. AC; 1d6 + 5 damage plus 2d6 fire damage.

Clinging Flames (immediate reaction, when an enemy within 5 squares of the azer taskmaster takes fire damage; at-will) ♦ Fire

The enemy takes ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends).

Alignment Unaligned Languages Giant

Str 20 (+13) Dex 18 (+12) Wis 22 (+14)

Con 21 (+13) Int 14 (+10) Cha 16 (+11)

Equipment chainmail, scourge

TACTICS

The azers treat the adventurers as intruders and attack them on sight. If the adventurers want to talk to the azers, they need to get their attention first. If the adventurers lay down their weapons, the azers are willing to hear them out. If the adventurers attack, however, the azers fight back, and a few try to escape to warn the giants about the incursion.

All the monsters in this fight are azers, so the *warding flame* ability that all azers share is important. At the start of every character's turn, check to see whether two azers are adjacent to the character. If there are, deal 5 fire damage to the character.

The foot soldiers simply waded into battle, marking as many different opponents as possible. Try to maneuver them in between the adventurers so that *warding flame* and flanks are easier for them to set up, even if they have to provoke an opportunity attack to do so.

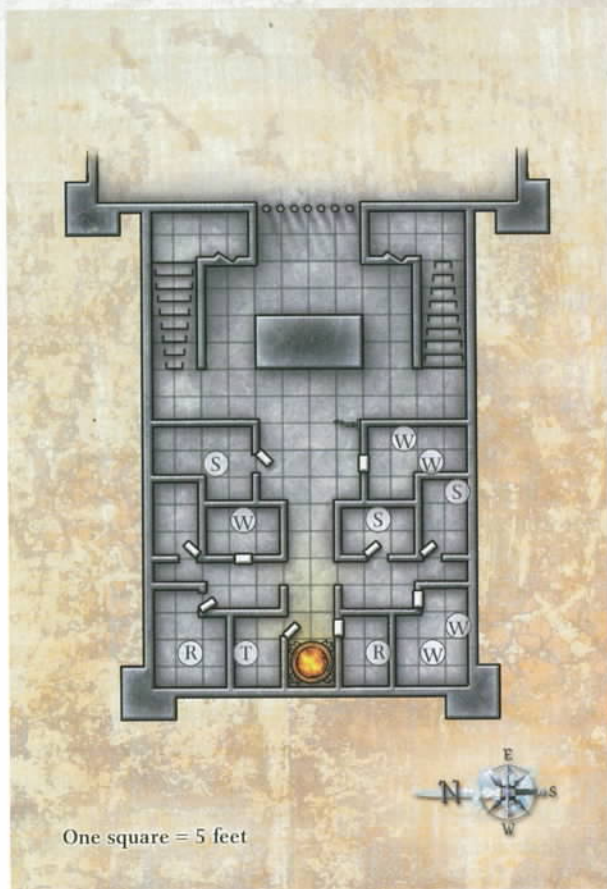
The taskmaster stands amid the foot soldiers and hits the adventurers with *scourge*. Remember that the taskmaster can use *clinging flames* as an immediate reaction only once per turn; if possible, he tries to hit someone who doesn't already have ongoing fire damage.

Ragers rush forward to strike with *spiked gauntlets*. They use their *chains of flame* as soon as they become bloodied.

The warriors set flanks and help as they can, but one or more of them also try to get away to sound the alarm and warn the giants.

DEVELOPMENT

This encounter emphasizes that the azers are utterly loyal slaves to the fire giants. Any attempts to sympathize with them or find common ground are met with bitter mockery. The azers are unable to reconcile their loathing for their lot in life with enmity for the fire giants who have enslaved them.



One square = 5 feet

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Dim light, except around the brazier and the azers, who all emit bright light.

Iron Doors: A DC 20 Strength check is needed to open or close an iron door.

Iron Portcullis: This portcullis is locked. DC 30 Strength check to lift a locked portcullis. The lever for this portcullis is in the hallway instead of in the chamber, however. Raising the lever all the way retracts the portcullis into the ceiling, and lowering the lever all the way lowers it to the floor. Placing the lever in the middle position locks the portcullis in place.

Azer Personal Effects: The floor of each of the rooms has small bags, wooden boxes, and battered chests that contain the azer's wealth, such as it is. Searching these items reveals replacement armor parts, a few coins, and spare clothes. All together, it's worth only 7,000 gp. They are slaves, after all.

Brazier of Regeneration: The brazier heals 5 hit points to any creature with the fire subtype that starts its turn within 2 squares of it. All of the azers are aware of this property, and the taskmaster in particular likes to make use of the device.

ENCOUNTER GII: KING SNARR'S CRAFTING

Encounter Level 20 (14,400 XP)

SETUP

King Snarr (S)

1 fire titan (T)

2 fire giant element handlers (F)

This encounter takes place at Location 14 at the bottom of the central tower. There are three ways to reach this chamber: using the portal in Location 9 before it closes; dropping down the chute in Location 11; or manipulating the position of either the north or south tower so that Location 10 or Location 12 is on the same level.

When the adventurers reach this area, arriving either at one of the portcullises or by dropping into the southwest corner of the chamber, read:

This massive chamber features strange items constructed of metal and stone. A portal shimmers along the western wall, revealing an alien landscape of every element flowing together in a disturbing sea of chaos. Through the portal, a female drow in ornate robes decorated with a spider motif stands beside the completed version of the divine engine. She smiles slyly as she notices you through the arcane haze.

In the chamber, a fire titan and three fire giants prepare to enter the portal. One of the giants, dressed in fine plate armor made from the scales of a red dragon, points toward the weird device in the center of the chamber. Bound to the device, you see the battered and bloody form of a dwarf. "Kill the exarc and let's get on with this," snarls the fire giant.

| King Snarr (S) | Level 18 Elite Brute |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Large elemental humanoid (giant) | XP 4,000 |
| Initiative +16 | Senses Perception +17 |
| HP 428; Bloodied 214 | |
| AC 30; Fortitude 30, Reflex 29, Will 28 | |
| Resist 15 fire | |
| Speed 7 | |
| ⚔ Searing Maul (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire, Weapon | |
| Reach 2; +21 vs. AC; 2d8 + 7 damage plus 2d8 fire damage. | |
| ⚔ Double Attack (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire, Weapon | |
| King Snarr makes two searing maul attacks. | |
| ⚡ Thundering Smash (standard; recharges when first bloodied; encounter) ♦ Fire, Thunder, Weapon | |
| Requires maul; close blast 3; +20 vs. AC; 3d8 + 7 damage plus 2d8 fire and thunder damage, and the target is pushed 2 squares and dazed (save ends). | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Common, Giant |
| Skills Arcana +18, Endurance +21, Intimidate +20 | |
| Str 27 (+17) | Dex 24 (+16) Wis 17 (+12) |
| Con 24 (+16) | Int 18 (+13) Cha 22 (+15) |
| Equipment red dragon plate armor, maul | |

| 2 Fire Giant Element Handler (F) | Level 18 Controller |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Large elemental humanoid (giant) | XP 2,000 each |
| Initiative +13 | Senses Perception +18 |
| HP 175; Bloodied 87 | |
| AC 32; Fortitude 30, Reflex 29, Will 30 | |
| Resist 15 fire | |
| Speed 7 | |
| ⚔ Fiery Quarterstaff (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire, Weapon | |
| Reach 2; +23 vs. AC; 1d8 + 7 damage plus 2d8 fire damage. | |
| ⚡ Fire Bolt (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire | |
| Ranged 20; +22 vs. Reflex; 2d10 + 4 fire damage, and the target is dazed until the end of the fire giant's next turn. | |
| ⚡ Searing Wind (minor 1/round; at-will) | |
| Ranged 10; +22 vs. Fortitude; the fire giant slides the target 3 squares. | |
| ⚡ Boiling Wave (standard; at-will) | |
| Close blast 3; +20 vs. Fortitude; 1d10 + 7 damage, and the target is pushed 3 squares. | |
| ✳ Earthen Spikes (standard; recharge [1]) | |
| Area burst 1 within 20; spikes of stone burst from the ground; +21 vs. Reflex; 4d10 + 7 damage; the affected area becomes difficult terrain for the rest of the encounter. | |
| Fire Shroud (minor; recharge [1]) ♦ Fire | |
| One ally within 10 squares of the fire giant gains resist 10 to all damage until the end of the fire giant's next turn. In addition, any enemy that starts its turn adjacent to the ally while the fire shroud is in effect takes 15 fire damage. | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Common, Giant |
| Skills Arcana +18, Diplomacy +19, Dungeoneering +18 | |
| Str 21 (+14) | Dex 17 (+13) Wis 17 (+13) |
| Con 23 (+15) | Int 17 (+13) Cha 18 (+14) |
| Equipment quarterstaff | |

| Fire Titan (T) | Level 21 Elite Soldier |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Huge elemental humanoid (giant) | XP 6,400 |
| Initiative +18 | Senses Perception +21 |
| HP 398; Bloodied 199 | |
| AC 39; Fortitude 36, Reflex 33, Will 33 | |
| Resist 30 fire | |
| Saving Throws +2 | |
| Speed 8 | |
| Action Points 1 | |
| ⚔ Fireraging Greatsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire, Weapon | |
| Reach 3; +26 vs. AC; 2d6 + 9 damage plus 4d6 fire damage, and the target is pushed 2 squares and marked until the end of the fire titan's next turn. | |
| ⚔ Double Attack (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire, Weapon | |
| The fire titan makes two fireraging greatsword attacks. | |
| ⚡ Hurl Lava (standard; recharge [2]) ♦ Fire | |
| Requires a source of lava; ranged 20; +24 vs. Reflex; 4d6 + 6 fire damage, and the target is immobilized until the end of the fire titan's next turn. A flying creature hit by this attack crashes (<i>Dungeon Master's Guide</i> 47). | |
| ⚡ Burning Wave (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire | |
| Close burst 5; +24 vs. Reflex; 2d10 fire damage, and ongoing 10 fire damage (save ends). Miss: Half damage, and no ongoing damage. | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Giant, Primordial |
| Skills Intimidate +20 | |
| Str 29 (+19) | Dex 23 (+16) Wis 23 (+16) |
| Con 23 (+16) | Int 10 (+10) Cha 21 (+15) |
| Equipment greatsword | |

DEVELOPMENT

One of the fire giant element handlers moves to comply with King Snarr's order. The dwarf is Torugar, exarch of Moradin, who has been tortured close to death until he revealed what Snarr and Wildfire wanted to know. If the adventurers don't act, the element handler strikes Torugar with a killing blow.

However, if the adventurers do anything to get the attention of the giants and make their presence known, all of the fire giants turn in their direction. As soon as this occurs, read:

The fire titan bellows, "Who dares interrupt the sacred activity of Wildfire? Lolestra, close the portal! I shall join you soon, regardless of what happens here. Snarr, if you value your existence and plan to share in the glory of Piranoth, destroy the champions of Argent! Destroy them now!"

TACTICS

Wildfire, the fire titan, doesn't care if the adventurers destroy him in this battle. Regardless of the outcome, Wildfire's life essence will fly into the Elemental Chaos if he falls, where he will be reconstituted along with his fellow titan lords. To that end, he wants nothing more than to hurt and destroy as many of the champions of Argent as he can. Wildfire hurls lava to start the battle, then makes *double attacks* in subsequent rounds. When he can get all of his enemies in the burst, he unleashes *burning wave*.

King Snarr uses *thundering smash* to start the battle, then makes *double attacks* until he is first bloodied, which allows him to use *thundering smash* again. He has no contingency for returning from the dead, but he quickly gets caught up in a battle frenzy.

The fire giant element handlers immediately forget about the exarch and turn to take on the intruders. They use *fire bolt* as a matter of course, and *boiling wave* when the battlefield allows it. Each tosses an *earthen spike* in different rounds so as not to waste the effect. One places a fire shroud upon King Snarr and the other upon Wildfire to grant them resist 10 to all damage for a turn.

Due to circumstances and (on the part of Wildfire) planning, these creatures fight to the death.

CONCLUSION

When Wildfire is defeated, his fiery form explodes into smoldering embers. His life force, however, travels to the Elemental Chaos where it flows into an obelisk for reconstitution later in the adventure.

After the battle ends, the adventurers can look around. It's evident that King Snarr was hard at work in this massive chamber, mending the divine engine so that it can be used to set Piranoth free. It appears that the giants and their allies are now ready to proceed to the final part of their master plan.

If the adventurers rescue Torugar, he tells them that Lolestra will start the ritual immediately. "It shall take her eight hours to complete the ritual, so you have time to rest and prepare before you enter the Elemental Chaos." The exarch, weak and badly hurt, thanks the adventurers for freeing him, prays to Moradin, and vanishes in a burst of blinding light. Where he was standing, a strange tool made of adamantite glows softly in the center of the floor.

If Torugar is killed, the adventurers don't receive Moradin's *universal apparatus*.

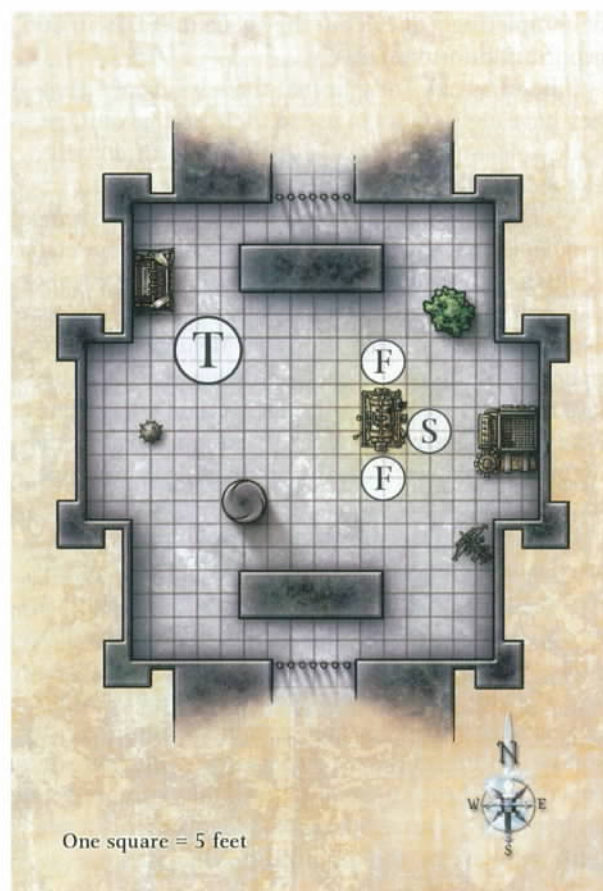
FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Bright light.

Strange Devices: These large metal objects are the remains of the work King Snarr did to repair the divine engine. One of them was used as a torture table for Torugar.

Torugar: The weak and wounded exarch can provide the adventurers with help during the battle if the fire giants don't kill him. He has one *cure serious wounds* (target regains hit points as if it had spent two healing surges) he can cast if a character stands next to him, and two *mass cure light wounds* (close burst 5; each ally in burst gains hit points as if they had spent a healing surge plus 10).

Treasure: King Snarr has a level 21 magic item and three 5,000 gp gems, as well as a focusing stone tuned to the teleporation circle in the Elemental Chaos.



INTERLUDE: PREPARING AT ARGENT

After defeating King Snarr and the fire titan Wildfire at Flamefall Tower, the adventurers can return to Argent using the Argent Portal ritual. What happens next depends on how the various encounters leading up to this moment have unfolded.

ITEMS OF ARGENT

If the adventurers are still waiting for components of the magic item set to be completed, Obanar presents the remaining items to them when they arrive. Obviously, how much of the item set was crafted depends on how many pieces of sky metal the adventurers acquired in their trip to the past. If they gathered up enough sky metal for each of them to receive a magic item in the set, then at this point anyone who hasn't yet been given an item gets his or her item now.

After completing work on the magic item set, Obanar appears older and more tired than at any previous time the adventurers have encountered him. His health seems to be failing, and the work of crafting magic items and shoring up the defenses of the city have taken a toll on the ancient guardian.

DEGREE OF URGENCY?

If the adventurers were able to rescue Torugar, the exarch of Moradin, they not only get the experience for completing a quest, but they get a useful item and important information.

If he survived, Torugar told the adventurers that they have eight hours to use to their best advantage while Lolestra completes her ritual. The ritual will take at least that long for her to complete.

When the exarch departed, he left behind a strange item: *Moradin's universal apparatus*. See below for details.

On the other hand, if the adventurers were not able to save the exarch, then they received no information about the ritual and they didn't get *Moradin's universal apparatus*. In this case, they have no idea how fast they have to move to stop Lolestra. They might take a chance and risk the time required for an extended rest, or they might decide to head into the Elemental Chaos immediately, with just a short rest to sustain them.

Even without the information provided by Torugar, the adventurers can describe what they saw at Flamefall Tower to Obanar and see what he thinks of the situation. Any character who witnessed the drow ritual and makes a DC 25 Arcana check can successfully describe the details of the ritual to Obanar. Obanar's isn't an expert, but it seems to him that the ritual to set Piranoth free, especially while using only a portion of the divine engine, will take from seven to ten hours. "Of course, I have no idea what influence Lolth will have on the timeframe," Obanar says.

MORADIN'S UNIVERSAL APPARATUS

The artifact known as *Moradin's universal apparatus* has a single purpose: to aid the adventurers if they decide to fully restore Piranoth's Bane to its original working order. The adventurers only receive this divine aid if they rescue Moradin's exarch, Torugar, from the fire giants of Flamefall Tower. With the item in their possession, the adventurers gain an additional way to defeat Piranoth in the final encounters. This takes the form of a skill challenge that can be used in **Encounter P3: The World Mover** on page 158.

To make use of the skill challenge, the adventurers must have *Moradin's universal apparatus*, all five actual pieces of the divine engine known as Piranoth's Bane (using the substitute pieces built by the fire giants doesn't count), access to Piranoth, and access to Piranoth's prison. Depending on how the adventure has unfolded, all of these elements could come together in **Encounter P3**. One character performs this skill challenge while the rest of the party deals with the released Piranoth and its allies. One other character can aid in the challenge, but that removes him or her from the rest of the encounter.

Level: 20

Complexity: 2 (6 successes before 3 failures).

Skills Used in this Challenge: Endurance, Heal, Insight, Perception, Religion.

Round 1, Insight (DC 22, standard action): The character studies the pieces of the relic and the workings of the universal tool to determine how to proceed.

If the character fails this round, nothing happens and the round must be repeated. If the character succeeds, a clear understanding of how to proceed blossoms in the character's mind.

Round 2, Perception (DC 22, standard action): The character determines the order in which the relic pieces must be placed together.

If the character fails this check, he or she receives a -2 penalty to checks made for the rest of this challenge.

If the character succeeds, he or she receives a +2 bonus to checks made for the rest of this challenge.

Round 3, Religion (DC 14, standard action): The character prays and meditates, setting the first piece into place.

If the character fails this check, repeat this round.

If the character succeeds, the first piece is placed.

Round 4, Religion (DC 22, standard action): The character prays and meditates, setting the second and third pieces of the relic into place.

If the character fails this check, repeat this round.

If the character succeeds, the party gains a +2 bonus to attack rolls against Piranoth and its allies for the rest of the encounter.

Round 5, Endurance (DC 22, standard action): The character struggles to place the fourth and fifth pieces of the relic into their proper positions. Because the fit is tight and at difficult angles, and because the divine engine is now emanating waves of divine energy, the character's endurance is tested.

If the character fails this check, he or she loses 1 healing surge and the round must be repeated.

If the character succeeds, the divine engine lets out a burst of healing (close burst 10) that allows the character and his or her allies to regain hit points as if the characters had spent a healing surge.

Round 6, Heal (DC 27, standard action): Now that the pieces of the divine engine have been put back together, it must be mended, or healed, so that it can once again do the work it was designed for. The character uses knowledge, prayer, and healing skills to repair the divine engine.

Success: If the character earns 3 successes, the divine engine known as Piranoth's Bane becomes fully functional. The character hears a powerful voice speak directly into his or her thoughts. Read:

"Well done, paragon! Now you can use Klar'ekku for the purpose for which it was originally constructed. When the World Mover is bloodied in battle, you shall have a brief window in which to act. Call upon the power of Klar'ekku at that moment, and if you are worthy of wielding the divine engine, the World Mover shall return to its prison. May the blessings of those who forged the Paragon Compact see you through this final battle."

Failure: If the character gets 3 failures, the divine engine falls apart. There is no time to start over right now, and so the party gains no advantage in the final battle with Piranoth. The only way to defeat Piranoth is through a fight to the death.

THE DIVINE ENGINE

The divine engine known as Piranoth's Bane plays an important role in the course of this adventure. In the final encounters, it is probable that the adventurers have gained possession of two pieces of the relic (from the encounters that take place on Frost Spire Island). Meanwhile, the giants have used the remaining three pieces and replicas of the two pieces the adventurers have to reconstruct the divine engine.

In the Elemental Chaos, the giants (and their ally Lolestra, exarch of Lolth), use the divine engine to set Piranoth free. If the adventurers bring the actual pieces of the relic with them (which Obanar suggests if they don't think of it), they can mend Piranoth's Bane and use it to send the World Mover back to its eternal prison, as described above.

LOLESTRA'S RITUAL

Lolth, Demon Queen of Spiders, has agreed to provide the titan lords with the aid they need to extract Piranoth from its prison. With at least three pieces of the divine engine and the added assistance of a god, Piranoth's Bane can be used to unlock the primordial's prison. Lolestra, an exarch of Lolth, has been imbued with enough divine power to provide this aid. She enters the Elemental Chaos to perform the ritual that will set Piranoth free. See **Encounter P1: Releasing Piranoth** on page 154.

OBANAR

The ancient guardian isn't well. He has been working almost nonstop to defend Argent and aid the adventurers. He knows that his time on this world is almost over, and he wants to make sure he provides the new champions with all of the knowledge and aid he can before the Raven Queen calls for his soul.

EXTENDED REST

The adventurers have time to take an extended rest before they travel to the Elemental Chaos, although they may not know exactly how much time they have. Lolestra's ritual requires eight hours, so the adventurers have time to rest (six hours) and deal with other tasks (two hours) before they make the trip.

TRAVELING TO THE ELEMENTAL CHAOS

When the adventurers are ready, Obanar can use the focusing stone they recovered from King Snarr to open a portal to the Elemental Chaos. This ritual takes a lot of the vitality Obanar has remaining, but that doesn't cause the guardian to pause. Read:

Obanar directs you to the teleportation circle in the Grand Mall. "You have done well in this difficult situation, my friends," the old man says, "and I am proud to call you champions of Argent. You have truly earned the Silver Cloaks. Go now, and stop Piranoth before the World Mover is set free." With that, Obanar begins the ritual you have seen him perform numerous times over the past few weeks. The runes inscribed in the circle begin to glow, and a window to another place shimmers into existence before you. Through the haze rising around the circle, you see a strange and disturbing sky full of lightning, sleet, fire, and rain. An island of blasted rock floats in this sky of warring elements. Standing on the island, just beyond the view of your circle, is a female drow dressed in ornate robes adorned with spider iconography. A spider-shaped amulet hangs around her neck. The circle flares, and suddenly Argent is gone, replaced by the Elemental Chaos."

Go to **Encounter P1** on page 154.

ENCOUNTER P1: RELEASING PIRANOTH

Encounter Level 19 (12,400 XP)

SETUP

Lolestra, Exarch of Lolth (L)

1 earth titan (T)

3 earth archon rumbler (R)

Use the poster map when running this encounter.

The adventurers appear in and around the magic circle labeled "1" on the map. Place the earth archon rumbler and Lolestra on the map as shown. Earthshaker, the earth titan, appears in the place marked on the map later in the encounter.

THE ELEMENTAL CHAOS

The adventurers arrive upon one of many islands of solid land swirling around a platform in the Elemental Chaos. Islands of earth, ice, and fire orbit an octagonal platform of solid adamantine. A step pyramid atop the platform serves as Piranoth's prison. Three pillars, one of stone, one of ice, and one of magma, are positioned around the edges of the platform. These hold the life essences of the titan lords that the adventurers defeated earlier in the adventure. Between the pillars and the pyramid, floating above the center of the platform, is the divine engine. Elemental energy flares around the divine engine, arcing to the pillars and the pyramid and back again. A sea of converging elements roil all around the islands.

| Earth Titan (T) | Level 16 Elite Brute |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Huge elemental humanoid (earth, giant) | XP 2,800 |
| Initiative +7 | Senses Perception +9 |
| HP 384; Bloodied 192 | |
| AC 31; Fortitude 33, Reflex 27, Will 28 | |
| Immune petrification | |
| Saving Throws +2 | |
| Speed 6 | |
| Action Points 1 | |
| ④ Slam (standard; at-will) | |
| Reach 3; +20 vs. AC; 2d10 + 6 damage. | |
| ⚡ Double Attack (standard; at-will) | |
| The earth titan makes two slam attacks. | |
| ➤ Hurl Rock (standard; at-will) | |
| Ranged 20; +18 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 6 damage, and the target is dazed (save ends). | |
| ⚡ Earth Shock (standard; encounter) | |
| Close burst 2; +18 vs. Fortitude; 2d10 + 6 damage, and the target is stunned until the end of the earth titan's next turn. | |
| Miss: Half damage, and the target is not stunned. | |
| Alignment Chaotic evil | Languages Giant, Primordial |
| Skills Athletics +19 | |
| Str 23 (+14) | Dex 8 (+7) Wis 12 (+9) |
| Con 22 (+14) | Int 11 (+8) Cha 13 (+9) |

LOLESTRA

Lolth's exarch is close to completing the ritual that sets Piranoth free. Each round, she uses a minor action to make a DC 30 Arcana check. On her first success, the pillar of stone releases a torrent of energy that slams into the earthen island beside Lolestra. When the blaze of energy clears, Earthshaker the earth titan reforms in that space and joins the battle. She needs to achieve three successes to complete the ritual.

| 3 Earth Archon Rumbler (R) | Level 17 Brute |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Medium elemental humanoid (earth) | XP 1,600 each |
| Initiative +12 | Senses Perception +13; tremorsense 20 |
| HP 204; Bloodied 102 | |
| AC 29; Fortitude 31, Reflex 28, Will 29 | |
| Immune disease, petrification, poison | |
| Speed 6 (earth walk) | |
| ⚡ Stone Warhammer (standard; at-will) ⚡ Weapon | |
| +20 vs. AC; 2d10 + 9 damage. | |
| ⚡ Avalanche Strike (standard; at-will) | |
| Close burst 2; +18 vs. Reflex; 1d10 + 9 damage, and the target is knocked prone. | |
| Thundering Might ⚡ Thunder | |
| An earth archon rumbler's attack deals 2d8 extra thunder damage if the rumbler is adjacent to more than one enemy. | |
| Alignment Chaotic evil | Languages Primordial |
| Str 24 (+15) | Dex 18 (+12) Wis 21 (+13) |
| Con 24 (+15) | Int 15 (+10) Cha 17 (+11) |
| Equipment warhammer | |

TACTICS

Lolestra's primary goal is to complete the ritual, unleash the power granted to her by Lolth, and leave to rejoin her mistress in the Demon Web Pits. Her first success in the ritual after the adventurers arrive releases the life essence of Earthshaker from the stone pillar. The second success starts a reaction in the pillars of ice and magma that will release the frost titan and fire titan over the next two encounters. The third success completes the ritual, unleashing a torrent of energy from the spider amulet that hangs around her neck. This energy flows through the divine engine and into the step pyramid, starting a chain reaction that will set Piranoth free in **Encounter P3** (see page 158).

Lolestra needs to use a minor action each turn to continue the ritual. She doesn't stand idly by so that the adventurers can attack her with impunity, however. She begins combat by using *bow before me* to grant her elemental allies combat advantage. Then she spends an action point to throw *Lolth's tangle* at the adventurers. It subsequent round, Lolestra uses double attack to hurl *poison bolts* or to strike with her quarterstaff if an opponent has gotten too close.

Lolestra, Exarch of Lolth (L) Level 19 Elite Controller

Medium fey humanoid, drow

XP 4,800 each

Initiative +10

Senses Perception +14; darkvision

Spider Queen's Blessing aura 5; enemies within the aura take a -2 penalty to all defenses.

HP 360; Bloodied 180

AC 33; Fortitude 29, Reflex 31, Will 33

Saving Throws +2

Speed 7

Action Points 1

⚔ **Quarterstaff** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

+24 vs. AC; 2d6 + 7 damage, and the target loses any immunity or resistance to poison until the end of the encounter.

☞ **Poison Bolt** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Poison**

Ranged 10; +23 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 7 damage, and ongoing 10 poison damage and the target is slowed (save ends both).

⚔ **Double Attack** (standard; at-will)

Lolestra makes two quarterstaff or poison bolt attacks.

☞ **Lolth's Tangle** (standard; recharge [1]) ♦ **Necrotic, Zone**

Area burst 1 within 10; webs full of spectral spiders cover the zone (drow and spiders are immune); +22 vs. Reflex; the target is restrained (save ends). The zone is difficult terrain until the end of the encounter. Any creature that starts its turn in the zone takes 15 necrotic damage.

☞ **Bow Before Me!** (standard; encounter) ♦ **Charm, Poison, Psychic**

Close burst 10; targets enemies; +22 vs. Will; the target falls prone. The target grants combat advantage and takes ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends both)

Alignment Chaotic Evil

Languages Common, Giant, Elven

Skills Arcana +21, Bluff +23, Insight +18, Religion +21, Stealth +20

Str 15 (+11)

Dex 22 (+15)

Wis 18 (+13)

Con 20 (+14)

Int 24 (+16)

Cha 26 (+18)

Equipment quarterstaff

If Lolestra completes the ritual, as soon as she becomes bloodied she decides to leave the battle. She rushes to the nearest magic circle, prays to Lolth, and disappears. Feel free to utilize Lolth and her servant Lolestra in future adventures.

The earth archon rumblers emerge from the rocky ground to attack the adventurers and keep them busy so that Lolestra can work without interruption.

Earthshaker the earth titan vows revenge against the insignificant mortals as he returns to life. He hurls rocks for a round or two before wading in to make double attacks against the character that issued the killing blow in their earlier battle.

DEVELOPMENT

If Lolestra fails to complete the ritual, Lolth steps in. Should Lolestra get three failures, Lolth appears in spectral form, emerging from the spider amulet. She casts her spell into the divine engine, then turns upon Lolestra. "You have failed your mistress for the last time!" Lolth proclaims, and Lolestra disappears under a mound of black spiders. Then Lolth's image fades away as well.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Bright light.

Magic Circles: These glowing inscriptions come into play in later encounters. The adventurers arrive in and adjacent to the runes labeled "1" on the map.

Elemental Sea: Characters can attempt to jump from island to island. Note that the wind and bursts of energy in the space between the islands makes leaping through the space harder. Treat all attempts to jump as though the characters were making standing jumps.

A character can attempt to "swim" through the elemental sea. This requires a DC 22 Athletics check. On a success, the character moves at half speed through the elemental sea. There are other effects related to the elemental sea, depending on the element encountered, as described below.

Lava: Creatures moving through the lava take 10 fire damage for every square of lava they enter. When a character emerges from the lava, he or she must make a DC 22 Endurance check. If the check fails, the character loses 1 healing surge.

Lightning: Creatures moving through the lightning take 10 lightning damage and emerge onto an island dazed (save ends).

Treasure: When Earthshaker is defeated, his rocky form breaks apart. A search of the remains reveals 29 1,000 gp gems.



ENCOUNTER P2: FROZEN TERROR

Encounter Level 20 (14,600 XP)

SETUP

- 1 frost titan (T)
- 2 ice archon rimehammers (R)
- 6 frostfell harrower (H)

Use the poster map when running this encounter.

The adventurers have time to take a short rest as an eerie quiet falls across the area. The churning elements and the crackle of energy playing across the adamantine platform are the only sounds. As soon as the short rest comes to an end, read:

A bolt of lightning bounces from the step pyramid, shattering the divine engine and apparently blowing it to bits. Then energy erupts from the pillar of ice, striking one of the frozen islands. A cloud of ice and snow billows up from where the energy hit the ground, and as it clears you see a huge frost titan appear as if from the bolt of energy itself. "Once more, we shall do battle!" the titan bellows, raises one hand and calling forth icy creatures from the frozen islands. "Piranoth, grant us strength!"

Perception Check

DC 27: You notice that the five pieces of the divine engine each appear in a different magic circle.

DIVINE ENGINE

The adventurers might decide to gather the pieces of the divine engine so that they can attempt to mend it to use against Piranoth. Determine which magic circles the five pieces appear in, and also decide which three pieces are the real pieces. A character can collect a piece by moving adjacent to the magic circle. A DC 22 Religion check allows a character to determine if the piece is real or a replica.

2 Ice Archon Rimehammers (R) Level 19 Soldier

Medium elemental humanoid (cold) XP 2,400 each

Initiative +15 Senses Perception +12

Icy Ground (Cold) aura 1; enemies treat the area within the aura as difficult terrain.

HP 185; Bloodied 92

AC 35; Fortitude 35, Reflex 32, Will 31

Immune disease, poison; Resist 30 cold

Speed 6 (ice walk)

⚔ **Maul** (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold, Weapon

+25 vs. AC; 2d6 + 7 damage plus 1d6 cold damage, and the target is slowed (save ends). Against a slowed target, the rimehammer deals an extra 2d6 cold damage.

Alignment Chaotic evil Languages Primordial

Str 24 (+16) Dex 18 (+13) Wis 16 (+12)

Con 25 (+16) Int 14 (+11) Cha 15 (+11)

6 Frostfell Harrowers (H) Level 20 Minion Skirmisher

Medium elemental magical beast (cold) XP 700 each

Initiative +19 Senses Perception +14

Frostfield aura 1; each enemy within the aura takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls.

HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.

AC 34; Fortitude 32, Reflex 34, Will 31

Immune disease, poison

Speed 5, fly 8 (hover)

⚔ **Ice Claw** (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold

+23 vs. Fortitude; 15 cold damage.

Ice Slide (immediate reaction, when a melee attack misses the frostfell harrower; at-will) ♦ Cold

The attacker takes 7 cold damage and slides 3 squares.

Alignment Unaligned Languages Primordial

Str 16 (+13) Dex 24 (+17) Wis 19 (+14)

Con 21 (+15) Int 10 (+10) Cha 6 (+8)

Frost Titan (T) Level 20 Elite Brute

Huge elemental humanoid (cold, giant) XP 5,600

Initiative +14 Senses Perception +16

Fimbulwinter Breath (Cold) aura 2; enemies treat the aura's area as difficult terrain. Each enemy that starts its turn within the aura takes 5 cold damage.

HP 466; Bloodied 233; see also *furios swipe*

AC 32; Fortitude 34, Reflex 29, Will 33

Resist 15 cold

Saving Throws +2

Speed 8 (ice walk)

Action Points 1

⚔ **Icy Greataxe** (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold, Weapon

Reach 3; +23 vs. AC; 2d8 + 9 (crit 4d8 + 25) cold damage, and ongoing 10 cold damage (save ends).

✦ **Furios Swipe** (free, when first bloodied and again when the frost titan drops to 0 hit points)

The titan makes an icy greataxe attack.

✦ **Cold-Blooded Kick** (minor 1/round; at-will)

Reach 3; +21 vs. Reflex; 1d8 + 9 damage, and the target is pushed 2 squares and knocked prone.

➤ **Ice Bolts** (standard; recharge [2][3])

Ranged 20; targets one or two creatures; +21 vs. Fortitude; 1d8 + 9 cold damage, and the target is slowed (save ends).

⚡ **Blast of Winter** (standard; encounter)

Close blast 5; +21 vs. Reflex; 3d8 + 6 cold damage, ongoing 10 cold damage (save ends), and the target is immobilized until the end of the frost titan's next turn. Miss: Half damage.

Glacial Footing

When an effect pulls, pushes, or slides a frost titan, the titan moves 4 squares less than the effect specifies. Also, a frost titan can make a saving throw to avoid being knocked prone.

Alignment Evil Languages Giant, Primordial

Skills Athletics +24

Str 28 (+19) Dex 19 (+14) Wis 23 (+16)

Con 23 (+16) Int 12 (+11) Cha 16 (+13)

Equipment greataxe

TACTICS

The frostfell harrowers slide among the adventurers, striking with *ice claws* before slipping away to attack a different target. Whenever an attack misses a harrower, it uses *ice slide* to deal some damage and slide away.

The ice archon rimehammers set themselves between the adventurers and the titan. They pound on the most dangerous of the adventurers, especially concentrating on characters that employ fire attacks.

Glacier the frost titan remembers the humiliating defeat he suffered at the hands of the adventurers. He is not inclined to repeat that result. He starts out by hurling *ice bolts*, all the while seeking the character that caused him the most pain in their previous battle. Once he spots that character, Glacier charges forward to make *icy greataxe* attacks. Don't forget to deliver *cold-blooded kicks* to knock enemies into the swirling elements surrounding the islands.

If Glacier is defeated, he makes a final *furious swipe* attack and calls, "Piranoth, avenge your servant!"

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Bright light.

Ice: The ice islands are difficult terrain. If a creature without ice walk moves more than 2 squares with a move action, it needs to make a DC 22 Acrobatics check or fall prone (which ends that move action).

Elemental Sea: Characters can attempt to jump from island to island. Note that the wind and bursts of energy in the space between the islands makes leaping through the space harder. Treat all attempts to jump as though the characters were making standing jumps.

A character can attempt to "swim" through the elemental sea. This requires a DC 22 Athletics check. On a success, the character moves at half speed through the elemental sea. There are other effects related to the elemental sea, depending on the element encountered, as described below.

Frost: Creatures moving through the frost take 10 cold damage for every square of frost they enter. Upon emerging from the frost, the character must make a DC 22 Endurance check. If the check fails, the character loses 1 healing surge and is slowed (save ends).

Lava: Creatures moving through the lava take 10 fire damage for every square of lava they enter. Upon emerging from the lava, the character must make a DC 22 Endurance check. If the check fails, the character loses 1 healing surge.

Lightning: Creatures moving through the lightning take 10 lightning damage and emerge onto an island dazed (save ends).

Water: Swimming through the turbulent waters is harder, requiring a DC 27 Athletics check.

Wind: Creatures moving through the turbulent wind must make a DC 27 Endurance check when they emerge or else lose 1 healing surge.

Treasure: When Glacier is defeated, his frozen form breaks apart. A search of the remains reveals 15 2,000 gp gems.



ENCOUNTER P3: THE WORLD MOVER

Encounter Level 22 (21,900 XP)

SETUP

Piranoth (P)

1 fire titan (T)

7 elemental spawn (S)

Use the poster map when running this encounter.

Once again, quiet falls over this portion of the Elemental Chaos, and the adventurers have the opportunity to take a short rest. When the short rest ends, Piranoth emerges from the step pyramid. Read:

The energies playing around the pyramid and between the pillars suddenly flares in power and intensity, and a strong wind begins to blow across the surface of the islands. Large creatures that appear to be amalgamations of different elements rise out of the islands, and a bolt of energy from the pillar of magma releases a fire titan onto the island nearest the adamantine platform.

As the elemental creatures turn their attention toward you, the pyramid emits a burst of devastatingly bright light. As the light fades, a huge creature composed of fire, frost, and earth steps forward. While its shape is that of a great giant, its form seems to flow from one element to the next with no apparent pattern. "I. Am. Free." The creature says, its voice like fire and ice. "I. Am. Piranoth."

| Fire Titan (T) | Level 21 Elite Soldier |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Huge elemental humanoid (giant) | XP 6,400 |
| Initiative +18 | Senses Perception +21 |
| HP 398; Bloodied 199 | |
| AC 39; Fortitude 36, Reflex 33, Will 33 | |
| Resist 30 fire | |
| Saving Throws +2 | |
| Speed 8 | |
| Action Points 1 | |
| ⚔ Fireraging Greatsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire, Weapon Reach 3; +26 vs. AC; 2d6 + 9 damage plus 4d6 fire damage, and the target is pushed 2 squares and marked until the end of the fire titan's next turn. | |
| ⚔ Double Attack (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire, Weapon The fire titan makes two fireraging greatsword attacks. | |
| 🔥 Hurl Lava (standard; recharge ☞ ☞) ♦ Fire Requires a source of lava; ranged 20; +24 vs. Reflex; 4d6 + 6 fire damage, and the target is immobilized until the end of the fire titan's next turn. A flying creature hit by this attack crashes (Dungeon Master's Guide 47). | |
| 🔥 Burning Wave (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire Close burst 5; +24 vs. Reflex; 2d10 fire damage, and ongoing 10 fire damage (save ends). Miss: Half damage, and no ongoing damage. | |
| Alignment Evil | Languages Giant, Primordial |
| Skills Intimidate +20 | |
| Str 29 (+19) | Dex 23 (+16) Wis 23 (+16) |
| Con 23 (+16) | Int 10 (+10) Cha 21 (+15) |

| 7 Elemental Spawn (S) | Level 18 Minion Brute |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Large elemental magical beast | XP 500 each |
| Initiative +13 | Senses Perception +12 |
| Elemental Storm aura 1; each enemy that starts its turn within the aura takes 5 cold, fire, and lightning damage. | |
| HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion. | |
| AC 30; Fortitude 30, Reflex 28, Will 27 | |
| Immune disease, poison; Resist 10 cold, 10 fire, 10 lightning | |
| Speed 6 | |
| ⚔ Elemental Smash (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold, Fire, Lightning +22 vs. AC; 12 cold, fire, or lightning damage, determined randomly each time an attack hits. | |
| ⚡ Elemental Explosion (free action, when the elemental spawn is reduced to 0 hit points) ♦ Cold, Fire, Lightning Close burst 2; +21 vs. Reflex; 12 cold, fire, and lightning damage. | |
| Alignment Unaligned | Languages Primordial |
| Str 20 (+14) | Dex 18 (+13) Wis 16 (+12) |
| Con 22 (+15) | Int 8 (+8) Cha 9 (+8) |

| Piranoth (Diminished State) | Level 19 Solo Skirmisher |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Huge elemental beast (primordial) | XP 12,000 |
| Initiative see triple mind | Senses Perception +21; darkvision |
| Cloud of Elemental Chaos aura 3; each enemy that starts its turn in the aura takes damage; roll 1d6: 1-3, 10 fire damage; 4-5, 10 cold damage; 6, 15 cold and fire damage. | |
| HP 752; Bloodied 376 | |
| AC 30; Fortitude 31, Reflex 30, Will 32 | |
| Saving Throws +5 | |
| Immune attacks by characters below level 15; | |
| Resist 10 cold, 10 fire | |
| Speed 6 | |
| Action Points 2 | |
| ⚔ Magma Strike (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire Reach 4; +24 vs. AC; 3d6 + 8 fire damage. | |
| 🔥 Arctic Whip (standard; at-will) ♦ Cold Ranged 30; +22 vs. Fortitude; 2d6 +7 cold damage, and the target is slowed (save ends). | |
| ⚡ Earthen Storm (standard; at-will) Close blast 5; +20 vs. Reflex; 1d10 + 8 damage, and the target is pushed 3 squares. | |
| 🔥 Icefire Slash (immediate reaction, when an attack misses Piranoth; at-will) ♦ Cold, Fire Reach 4; +24 vs. AC; 1d10 + 8 cold and fire damage. | |
| 🔥 Elemental Torrent (standard; recharges each time Piranoth spends an action point) ♦ Cold, Fire Area burst 3 within 20; +20 vs. Fortitude; 4d8 +7 cold and fire damage, and the target slides 2 squares and is immobilized (save ends). | |
| Chaos Jump (move; at-will) Piranoth teleports 10 squares. Any enemies adjacent to Piranoth when he teleports are dazed (save ends). | |
| Earth Shift (minor; at-will) Piranoth shifts 3 squares. Any enemies adjacent to Piranoth when he shifts are knocked prone. | |
| Triple Mind Piranoth acts three times in a round, on initiative counts 35, 25, and 15. It cannot delay or ready actions. On each turn, it can use one action, either a minor, a move, or a standard. It can use one immediate action between each turn. | |
| Alignment Chaotic Evil | Languages Primordial |
| Str 26 (+17) | Dex 28 (+18) Wis 25 (+16) |
| Con 28 (+18) | Int 14 (+10) Cha 19 (+13) |

TACTICS

As soon as Piranoth appears, the adventurers are each randomly teleported to a magic circle (roll 1d6).

The elemental spawn shamble to engage the adventurers. Remember that their aura deals damage to characters that start their turn within it, and that they utilize *elemental explosion* when they are defeated.

The fire titan Wildfire leaps from island to island, ignoring the effects of the elemental sea. He just wants to destroy the adventurers and clear the way for Piranoth to return to the natural world.

Piranoth, even in its diminished state, is a terror to behold. Its aura deals damage across a wide area. It gets to act three times in a round. It refuses to waste one moment of its newfound freedom, and it won't allow insignificant mortals to challenge it. Piranoth fights with the fury of a primordial of old, even if it isn't yet up to its full level of power.

SKILL CHALLENGE

If one of the characters wants to restore the divine engine to working order, he or she engages in the skill challenge described on page 152. Success in this challenge provides attack bonuses for the party, some much-needed healing, and the divine engine can be used to imprison Piranoth once the primordial is bloodied. This takes the form of a special attack.

Standard action; ranged 10; +21 vs. Will. *First Hit:* All of Piranoth's defenses are reduced by 2 and parts of its elemental form begin to flow back into the pyramid. *Second Hit:* All of Piranoth's attack rolls are reduced by 2 and it is pulled to a square adjacent to the pyramid. *Third Hit:* Piranoth screams as its elemental form flows into the pyramid and disappears.

needs to make a DC 22 Acrobatics check or fall prone (which ends that move action).

Elemental Sea: Characters can attempt to jump from island to island. Note that the wind and bursts of energy in the space between the islands makes leaping through the space harder. Treat all attempts to jump as though the characters were making standing jumps.

A character can attempt to "swim" through the elemental sea. This requires a DC 22 Athletics check. On a success, the character moves at half speed through the elemental sea. There are other effects related to the elemental sea, depending on the element encountered, as described below.

Frost: Creatures moving through the frost take 10 cold damage for every square of frost they enter. Upon emerging from the frost, the character must make a DC 22 Endurance check. If the check fails, the character loses 1 healing surge and is slowed (save ends).

Lava: Creatures moving through the lava take 10 fire damage for every square of lava they enter. Upon emerging from the lava, the character must make a DC 22 Endurance check. If the check fails, the character loses 1 healing surge.

Lightning: Creatures moving through the lightning take 10 lightning damage and emerge onto an island dazed (save ends).

Water: Swimming through the turbulent waters is harder, requiring a DC 27 Athletics check.

Wind: Creatures moving through the turbulent wind must make a DC 27 Endurance check when they emerge or else lose 1 healing surge.

This encounter is continued on the next page.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Bright light.

Magic Circles: The energies that released Piranoth have affected the magic circles. When a creature enters a circle, it randomly teleports to another circle (roll 1d6).

Fire Stone: The islands of red-hot rock deal 10 fire damage to any creature that starts its turn here.

Ice: The ice islands are difficult terrain. If a creature without ice walk moves more than 2 squares with a move action, it



This encounter continues from the previous page.

Step Pyramid: The step pyramid, crafted from solid adamantine rising from the octagonal platform, is 15 feet tall. Supernal runes and divine sigils cover every surface of the pyramid. A DC 22 Religion check allows a character to notice the raw divine energy flowing through the pyramid, and a DC 27 Religion check recognizes the healing potential within that energy. Any non-elemental creature that begins its turn adjacent to the pyramid regains 15 hit points.

Stone Pillar: The pillar that held the life essence of Earthshaker has an additional property. Any creature that begins its turn adjacent to the pillar can regain any one encounter power that it has already expended in this encounter. The pillar functions once in an encounter for any particular creature.

Ice Pillar: The pillar that held the life essence of Glacier has an additional property. Any creature that begins its turn adjacent to the pillar takes 15 cold damage and is slowed (save ends).

Magma Pillar: The pillar that held the life essence of Wildfire has an additional property. Any creature that begins its turn adjacent to the pillar can regain any one daily power that it has already expended this day. The pillar functions once per day for any particular creature.

DEFEATING PIRANOTH

The adventurers have two primary methods for defeating Piranoth the World Mover. They can fight Piranoth to the death. This requires the adventurers to reduce Piranoth's hit points to 0 or fewer. If the adventurers accomplish this, read:

As you deliver a last, mighty strike, Piranoth staggers and falls. The very fabric of the Elemental Chaos seems to shudder as the ancient primordial gasps a final time and falls still. Suddenly, the various elements flowing through the World Mover's form slide apart and separate, rejoining the elemental sea until nothing remains of the mighty primordial.

The second, potentially easier method is to use a skill challenge to repair the divine engine. Once Piranoth's Bane is functional, it can be used as a weapon against the bloodied primordial. Each successful hit with the divine engine weakens Piranoth. On the third hit, Piranoth is sent back into its step pyramid prison. When this occurs, read:

As Piranoth's Bane unleashes a third blast of divine energy into the primordial, Piranoth screams in rage and terrible pain. Its elemental form flows like streams of liquid, rushing back into the glowing step pyramid despite Piranoth's obvious struggle to hold itself together. Within moments, as the angry screams fade, Piranoth seeps back into the adamantine and disappears. The very fabric of the Elemental Chaos seems to shudder as the prison seals, once again trapping Piranoth within its extradimensional space.

CONCLUSION

With the defeat of Piranoth, the titan lords, and the giant leaders, the alliance of giants and elementals falls apart. This threat has been averted. As the adventurers stand upon the islands in the elemental sea, Torugar or another exarch of Moradin appears. Beside him stands an exarch of Erathis. The two figures bow before the adventurers. Read:

"Well done, champions of Argent," the exarchs say, talking in perfect synchronicity. "For the service you have rendered, accept these gifts. We shall take Piranoth's Bane and hide it away for a time when it is needed again. Tell Obanar that his time is done. We shall welcome him into the court of the gods after he has had one last chance to speak with you."

The exarchs disappear, leaving behind a chest filled with 50 astral diamonds, a level 21 magic item, and a level 22 magic item.

The adventurers can return to Argent with the Argent Portal ritual. Obanar thanks them, tells them that the city is now in their care. "Watch over the world, my friends," he says, and then he closes his eyes and finally succumbs to the ravages of age.

The adventurers can use Argent as a base of operations, or they can leave the city to the torrians and abandon their new role as champions of Argent. Of course, destiny is not easily denied, and as they strive toward the epic levels, they will always be known as those that wear the Silver Cloaks.

What happens next? That's up to you, as the Dungeon Master. And it depends on what the adventurers want to do next.



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