Spears of Glip Dak

MENAGERIE PRESS

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On the front: Andrea Alemanno's art showing Stonejaws the behir from Blue Scales.
On the back: Andrea Alemanno's illustration showing Huul the soldier, held captive for her debts in Glip Dak.

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Optimized For: APL 3

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Optimized For: APL 3

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Introduction

Instructions on how to intertwine these standalone adventures as an interlinked story arc or campaign as well as insight into how they narratively fit together.

Playing the Glip Dak Story

The Glip Dak story arc consists of 3 adventures (8 hours) of Tier 1 and 1 adventure (2 hours) of Tier 2 play. Because of this, it's best to begin the series with level 2 or 3 characters, or else play Blue Scales later in the campaign.

By beginning with slightly higher level characters, a group can consecutively play through the entire Glip Dak story arc. Otherwise, there can be a disconnect between the Tier 1 and Tier 2 adventures.

See the table below for suggested Tier 1 adventures to play prior to beginning the Glip Dak series.

Suggested Prior Tier 1 Adventures

Adventure Code	Title
CCC-SFBAY-04-01	The Cornflower Hive
CCC-SFBAY-04-03	The Ashen Scar
CCC-KUMORI-01-01	Wreckers
CCC-KUMORI-01-02	Wretches

The KUMORI adventures contain direct hooks into the Glip Dak series, and the SFBAY adventures set the stage by including storyline elements.

Glip Dak

What to Add

The adventurers need a plausible hook to entice them to Glip Dak. Use the potential adventure hooks in the introduction. Once the adventurers have taken the job to rescue Elias Vandover, proceed as normal.

Post Adventure

Typically, a group can continue directly into Beneath Glip Dak. Alternately, another Thar-based adventure from the list below is an option for the group.

Alternate Tier 1 Adventures

Adventure Code	Title
CCC-SALT-01-01	Rumors of Riches
CCC-SALT-01-02	Moor Trouble
CCC-SALT-01-03	Broken Halls of Goldahroud
CCC-SCAR01-02	Glister By Light

Also, Xek-Durrin, the drow that bargains for Elias Vandover in the Worghide compound, is met again in CCC-DES-01-02: A Sanity Never Questioned. She plays a crucial role in that adventure.

Beneath Glip Dak

What to Add

As long as the adventurers have a story hook that lands them in Glip Dak, beginning Beneath Glip Dak is simple.

Post Adventure

A hint of the Citadel of Vlaakith can be introduced as a story element to set the stage. This can include a sudden flash of bright light, a meteor strike (the citadel striking the swamp), or another unusual event.

Citadel of Vlaakith

Add at the Beginning of the Adventure

If not already included, there may have been an omen, harbinger, or other clue that some extra-planar event is happening in the swamps of Thar.

What to Add

If the adventurers aren't Tier 2 by the end of Citadel of Vlaakith, consider running some of the previously mentioned Thar-based adventures until the group is advanced.

Blue Scales

What to Add

This is the finale of this Glip Dak storyline. It should feel properly heroic, especially if the adventurers have been in Thar for several adventures. By now, Glip Dak should be somewhat familiar to the group.

Post Adventure

Some suggested Tier 2 adventures are below.

Alternate Tier 2 Adventures

Adventure Code	Title
CCC-DES-01-01	Finding the Rabbit Hole
CCC-DES-01-02	A Sanity Never Questioned
CCC-SFBAY-02-01	Old Enemies Arise

Hobgoblin Society

Who are the Kroth Magg?

A decade ago, six hobgoblins adventurers discovered a Netheril ruin in the tip of the northern Troll Hills. What they found within caused a schism in the band. A brief battle ensued, resulting in the victors exiling two of their former comrades. The remaining four turned to the worship of the true hobgoblin deities. From there, they used treasure obtained through their explorations and sellswording to begin constructing a fort above the massive complex below.

This activity attracted Maelizarra, a curious blue dragon, who sought the secrets the ruins held. She saw potential in these hobgoblin adventurers and offered her wealth to back their endeavors if they swore fealty to her before their gods. They accepted and together they formed the Kroth Magg and built the fortress of Glip Dak to guard the ruins.

The Kroth Magg rose to prominence quickly, attracting many hobgoblins to their banner. With the dragon's clandestine guidance, they secured local resources and began to guard and tax the trade roads of the northern Moonsea.

Glip Dak is controlled by Maelizarra through her overlords, the remaining adventurers: Supreme General Korgoth Bayn, Iron Shadow Grand Master Kahl, Devastator Lord Balroth Sicar, and High Priestess Drakkla the Red. There are rumors of a fifth overlord, but such stories are violently refuted.

While powerful, the Kroth Magg have much to hide. They are apostates who have freed themselves from the leash of Maglubiyet and returned to the worship of Nomog-Geaya, their god of stoicism and conquest, and Bargrivyek, their god of duty and discipline. They keep this secret as such information would unite the goblinoids against them in a holy war, for Maglubiyet is ruthless and cruel and demands the same of his followers.

While the upper levels of the ruins have been opened to Glip Dak to serve as sewers and prisons, Maelizarra and her overlords continue to jealously guard the mysteries held deeper below, sealed by both gate and magic to all but themselves.

Glip Dak

A few years ago, a band of hobgoblins claimed a Netheril ruin as their stronghold. From that lonely outcropping of stone and crumbling battlements rose Glip Dak. Glip Dak is a lawful evil goblinoid fortress surrounded by a bustling city.

At the trade gate, there is a wooden sign in Common, Giant, Goblin, and Orc that says: "Glip Dak - Kill not; Steal not". Below the sign is a pile of humanoid skulls.

Outside the trade gates are stocks, manacles, and cages wherein criminals are punished. The gallows, dunking vats, and other public "spectacles" are near the market square.

Glip Dak Citizens

Hobgoblins make up the majority of Glip Dak residents. Life in Thar is challenging, and the weak perish.

- Glip Dak citizens include many races, from goblins to drow, but the Kroth Magg hobgoblins squarely control the city, as least ostensibly.
- Creatures such as aberrations, monstrosities, lycanthropes, and undead are considered vermin.

Justice and the Law in Glip Dak

Breaking the laws of Glip Dak is punishable by lost downtime or a fine, but it does not end the adventure nor does it prevent playing other Glip Dak modules.

Some Glip Dak specific story awards can cause social shifts during other Glip Dak modules – the adventurers are raising suspicions, have caused problems, or are decorated allies.

The Heinous Crimes of Glip Dak

These types of crimes are punishable by death.

- Killing Glip Dak citizens or non-citizens.
- Being caught stealing from a merchant or citizen.

Decorations in Hobgoblin Society

These decorations are given to those that aid Glip Dak.

- ***Vadd Narkoz, "Strong Warrior"***. In this public proclamation, the hobgoblins of Glip Dak acknowledge outsiders as worthy allies.
- ***Lozz Nying, "Pony Gift"***. In this public ceremony, a pony, bridle, and riding saddle are bestowed upon those who earned Lozz Nying.
- ***Fezik Melko, "Worthy Accord"***. A parade occurs, and those given the Fezik Melko are rewarded with a silver dagger.
- ***Pakk Vit, "Shield Bearer"***. Saving the life of a hobgoblin creates a blood debt. Until that debt is repaid, the hobgoblin who owes the debt is known as the Pakk Vit (shield bearer) to his or hers rescuer.

Earning Decorations

The decorations may be earned by completing quests for the Kroth Magg, DM's discretion. They grant one of the following benefits:

- Advantage on Charisma (Deception, Intimidation, and Persuasion) checks while interacting with the Kroth Magg.
- A point of inspiration.
- A particular item or set of items, depending on the decoration.

Glip Dak

The Kroth Magg hobgoblins run the trade city of Glip Dak in the Troll Hills of Thar. From there they have taken control of the trade routes along the northern Moonsea. A young noble has been captured for refusing to pay their tariffs and his house looks to hire adventurers to rescue him.

Tier 1 CCC-GLIP-01-XX can be played in any order.

A Two-Hour Adventure for 1st-4th Level Characters

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Adventure Code: CCC-GLIP-01-01

Optimized For: APL 3

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Introduction

Welcome to The Black Market of Glip Dak, a D&D Adventurers League™ adventure, part of the official D&D Adventurers League™ organized play system and the *Tomb of Annihilation*™ storyline season.

This adventure takes place in the Grey Wastes of Thar, within the hobgoblin market of Glip Dak.

This adventure is designed for **three to seven 1st-4th level characters** and is optimized for **five characters with an average party level (APL) of 3**. Characters outside this level range cannot participate in this adventure.

Adventure Background

Within the last decade, the Kroth Magg hobgoblins have risen to prominence within the Wastes of Thar, that cold land of nomadic tribes and warring clans. They have secured and fortified several strongholds in western and southern Thar and have gained access to the Moonsea itself. Their dominance is tied to the authority and secret leadership of the blue dragon Maelizarra, whose wealth and ambition are only matched by her cunning, who herself is the granddaughter of Iymrith, that wyrm of legend. Maelizarra tempers the warlike nature of the Kroth Magg and guides their aggression towards more constructive aims. To that end, the hobgoblins have taken control of key trade road across the northern Moonsea and have begun to not only tax them but also maintain and guard them, finding economic control and prosperity another facet of war.

The center of this budding kingdom is Glip Dak, the black-market city. Built within ancient Netheril ruins, Glip Dak has become neutral ground where all are welcome to barter and trade, but those who violet these edicts are made an example of.

The sudden rise of the hobgoblin realm has stirred concerns from the civilized nations and fiefdoms around the Moonsea. However, with the growth of Glip Dak, a curious benefit has befallen not only nearby settlements but cities across the sea as they have gained access to rarely seen commodities and noticed a drop in illicit trade in their own communities. This is a farseeing strategy of Maelizarra as she undercuts other black markets not only in prices but also in quality, variety, and quantity of merchandises. Glip Dak is now the place to go for good bargains on nefarious products. Everything is traded in the infamous black-market city, from mundane wares to exotic goods from locations as far flung as the Underdark and City of Brass. It is a place where frost giants trade mammoth ivory, where Thayan wizards secure rare components, and where heroes and scoundrels find all manner of information on the hidden and forbidden.

Recently, Elias Vandover, heir and representative of the powerful Vandover merchant house, has been captured and imprisoned by a Kroth Magg patrol accusing him of evading trade taxes. The punishment of such an offense is being sold into slavery.

However, the Kroth Magg don't seek to make enemies of the Vandover estate but to make a high-profile example to those who would skirt the laws. These demonstrations are needed to keep the goblinoids of Thar inline. In secret, the Lords' Alliance on behalf of the Vandover estate have made a deal with the Kroth Magg to retrieve Elias, but the Kroth Magg cannot simply hand him over without looking weak or lenient to their rivals within Thar. The hobgoblins have asked for a neutral party to intervene and "rescue" him, buying him as a slave.

Location and NPC Summary

The following NPCs and locations feature prominently in this adventure.

Elias Vandover (EL-eye-ess VAN-dove-err). Human male, heir to the Vandover merchant house. Captured by hobgoblins and now being held in Glip Dak by the Worghide clan. Impulsive, but magically talented.

Eileen Dormar (EYE-leen DOOR-mar). Officer of the Vandover estate. Tasks the adventurers with rescuing Elias. Dutiful servant of the merchant house. She expects Elias Vandover to die a terrible, yet well-deserved, death one day.

Huul (HOOL). Hobgoblin warrior. The adventurers may free her from the hanging cage outside of Glip Dak, upon release Huul swears to serve them and repay her debt. Huul stands by her honor, but sees ethical things in black and white.

Kroth Magg (KAH-roth MA-gag). A relatively new hobgoblin kingdom risen to power within the northern Troll Hills. They control the valuable trade city of Glip Dak, the center of trade within Thar.

Maelizarra (MA-lizz-are-ah). Adult blue dragon, ally of the Kroth Magg hobgoblins, and offspring of Chezzaran of Ascore. Gives magical power and knowledge to the Kroth Magg in return for tribute.

Manke (MAN-key). Hobgoblin quartermaster, owner of Arrk's blade, and an avid gambler and religious zealot. Cheats with a magical die.

Adventure Overview

Typically, a direct assault on Glip Dak would be suicidal, even by a powerful adventuring group. The role of the hobgoblin market is more an exotic, unfamiliar locale.

In the depths of Glip Dak, anything is available for a price. The adventurers could be sent to buy a merchant's freedom, act as spies, or otherwise engage with goblinoid civilization. Glip Dak's locale is a chance for persuasion, deception, sleight of hand, and intrigue. Ultimately, the hobgoblin market is an opportunity for roleplaying and encountering the strange, savage creatures and cultures of Faerûn in a place other than a battlefield.

The adventure is broken down into 5 parts:

Part 1. The adventurers are asked to visit Glip Dak and rescue Elias Vandover, heir to the Vandover merchant house in Tantras. Also, the adventurers are tasked with taking Manke's magical greatsword.

Part 2. The adventurers enter Glip Dak.

Part 3. Through fair means or foul, they need to obtain Elias Vandover's freedom from the Worghide.

Part 4. Optional events and encounters. These are included to expand the Glip Dak play experience.

Part 5. Conclusion.

Adventure Hooks

This adventure is part of a set of adventures located in the trade city of Glip Dak in the steppes of Thar. The Tier 1 GLIP adventures (CCC-GLIP-01-XX) are not part of a sequential storyline and can be played in any order.

Your players may recognize some of the NPCs or places from the other adventures. While that can give them a sense of familiarity with the locale, it won't spoil any surprises!

Recruited by the Vandover estate and Eileen Dormar. The adventurers are asked to buy Elias Vandover's freedom from the Kroth Magg imprisoning him. Elias is heir to the Vandover merchant house in Tantras.

Recruited by the Kroth Magg. The Vandover estate and the Lords' Alliance have reached out to the Kroth Magg to pay them for his release. However, the Kroth Magg cannot lose face by releasing the arrogant merchant prince and instead hire a neutral party to free him.

Part 1. The Vandover Heir

Story Beat

The adventurers are recruited by the Kroth Magg Captain Hrogar or Lady Eileen Dormar, a representative of the Vandover house, to rescue the reckless Vandover heir without either the Kroth Magg or Vandover estate losing face. The module is informed by story awards and events from previous Glip Dak adventures.

Estimated Duration: 15 minutes

Tip: Where to start

Depending on which (if any) Glip Dak story awards have been earned, this adventure can start in a number of ways:

- If a party member has the story award **Glip Dak Lawbreaker**, go to **Part A**.
- If a party member has the story award **The Bronze**, go to **Part B**.
- If any of the party is a member of the **Lords' Alliance**, go to **Part C**.
- If the party is newly arrived at **Glip Dak**, go to **Part C**.
- If none of the above fits the party, try to develop a narrative that will motivate them to take work from Hrogar or Eileen.

A. Glip Dak Lawbreaker

If a member of the party has the **Glip Dak Lawbreaker Story Award**, read the following:

> You have spent the last several days assigned to hard labor, breaking stone and hauling rocks. After an exhausting day, you are woken in the dark and called to the city watch barracks to stand before Captain Hrogar.

Adventurers with the Lawbreaker Story Award make a DC 11 Constitution saving throw or suffer a level of exhaustion that they start the adventure with. This is from being forced into hard labor as punishment for breaking the laws of Glip Dak.

Proceed to **B. Recruited by the Kroth Magg**.

B. Recruited by the Kroth Magg

Those with **The Bronze Story Award** are greeted with a friendly smile and talk of their deeds. Hrogar shows genuine friendship and trust with the adventurers, and adventurers with The Bronze Story Award gain a point of inspiration from knowing their actions have positively impacted the city and people.

Read or paraphrase the following:

> The Kroth Magg make a show of pragmatic and spartan standards of decoration. This chamber embodies those qualities. While sparingly furnished and only adorned with the Kroth Magg's banner and coat-of-arms—the silhouette of a dragon—the few objects furnishing the chamber are of excellent quality. The desk and chairs are imported blueleaf wood and the banners are woven from exotic silk and dyed in expensive cobalt color.
>
> Hrogar sits behind the desk, which is clean and organized, waiting for you to seat yourselves in chairs before him.
>
> "Greetings, mercenaries and adventurers, I have a sensitive matter to discuss with you, a matter of political importance to not only the Kroth Magg but to the city of Tantras, Hulburg, and even the Lords' Alliance.
>
> "A tenday or so ago, an arrogant noble named Elias Vandover of the Vandover noble house attempted to smuggle goods through the trade roads the Kroth Magg patrol and maintain to the benefit of all. When caught, he assaulted two guards before he was subdued. However, because of this man's standing as a merchant prince, we can't punish him accordingly and both the Vandover estate and the Lords' Alliance have reached out to us for his release.
>
> "The trouble is, we cannot simply release him without losing face and undermining the importance of law and order here in Thar. If the goblinoids tribes perceive the Kroth Magg as showing leniency or weakness, they will not obey our rule and Thar and the northern Moonsea will once more descend into a land of raiding warbands and violent tribes.
>
> "The current punishment for such violations is being sold into hard labor. This, of course, can't actually occur. On the behalf of the Vandover estate and the Lords' Alliance, we would like you, as a third party ostensibly unaffiliated with Hulburg, Tantras, or House Vandover, to buy Elias as a slave and return him to Hulburg. This appears to be the best solution. The denizens of Glip Dak see no one escapes justice, that no one is above the law, and the soft merchant is freed."

For those with the **Lawbreaker Story Award**, Hrogar offers to commute the sentence if they buy and free Elias Vandover. If an adventurer with the Glip Dak Lawbreaker Story Award completes Hrogar's mission, the story award can be removed with no downtime or gold deducted.

Proceed to **D. The Mission Details**.

C. Eileen Dormar's Request

Story Beat

The adventurers are called to Hulburg by a Lords' Alliance messenger on behalf of the Vandover noble house. The Vandover executor tasks them with rescuing Elias Vandover, the heir to the Vandover merchant house in Tantras.

If the adventurers have not played a Glip Dak module, here is an introduction to see them off.

> As you traveled the Moonsea region, a messenger on horseback intercepted you with a missive requesting your assistance in an important matter involving a merchant prince and a hobgoblin kingdom. The message was marked with the sigil of house Vandover and the Lords' Alliance. The scroll was vague, citing reasons of discretion, and the rider didn't know more concerning the matter. You are asked to meet with Lady Eileen Dormar at Hulburg. A reward is promised.

House Vandover and the messenger know the adventures by their descriptions, having obtained it from the adventurers' factions when House Vandover sought aid.

A successful DC 10 Intelligence (History) check recalls that the Vandover noble house is centered in Tantras and controls a powerful merchant company with extensive trade throughout the Moonsea and even into the Sea of Fallen Stars. The ruling family was recently killed, and the heir is a young and reckless noble named Elise Vandover who fancies himself a hunter of exotic beasts. He is also a wizard.

Travel to Hulburg should be fairly uneventful and quick, placing the adventurers in the meeting with Lady Eileen herself at an upscale inn.

> Once you reach Hulburg, a man wearing the heraldry of House Vandover intercepts you, asking you to follow him to a fine inn to meet with Lady Eileen Dormer.
>
> You are led into a meeting hall upstairs in the Bright Crown, one of Hulburg's grandest inns. A pair of guards stands at attention outside the chamber. The private hall is well lit, and luxurious food and drink has been laid out. At the head of the table sits a middle-aged human woman dressed in fine clothes. She stands as you enter.
>
> After she watches you a few moments, she speaks, "I am Lady Eileen Dormar, officer of House Vandover. I hope your travels have been well and I apologize for the abruptness and secrecy around this matter."
>
> She motions for you all to relax and eat before sitting herself. "I will not waste more of your time with needless preamble. A tenday ago, Lord Elias Vandover, my lord and heir apparent to the Vandover name and estate, was captured by hobgoblins while overseeing the movement of goods from Hulburg to a new contact in Thentia. During the journey, his caravan was taken by a hobgoblin mounted detachment, the Worghide Company who patrols the northern trade routes to the benefit of all, or so they say. Uncouth extortionist." She sighs, "They accused him of smuggling and evading taxes. He was taken to Glip Dak, a city in southern Thar at the tip of the Troll Hills. There he will be sold as a slave for punishment.
>
> "I'd like you to obtain his freedom by purchasing him. The Worghide is a mercenary company working for the Kroth Magg, a force recently arisen within Thar. The Lords' Alliance on my behalf have reached out to the Kroth Magg overlords, who were surprisingly diplomatic. They agreed to his release; however, there is a catch. The Kroth Magg cannot afford to look weak or lenient before their vassals or rivals and have requested a third party unaffiliated with House Vandover, Tantras, or Hulburg to intervene and buy him as a slave. The Vandover estate will provide you with the coin you need."
>
> With that, Eileen pulls out a hefty-looking cloth pouch and drops it on the table with a metallic thump.
>
> "Once you reach Glip Dak, you are to meet with a Kroth Magg officer named Hrogar. This is to make sure Elias is sold to the right people."

On a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Insight) check, adventurers notice that Lady Eileen Dormar (human noble) is telling the truth about Elias Vandover, but also is frustrated with the merchant heir. If asked, Eileen explains this isn't the first time she has extracted Elias from dangerous situations.

Proceed to **D. The Mission Details**.

D. The Mission Details

Either Lady Eileen Dormar or Guard Captain Hrogar (depending on which introduction is used) provide the following information:

- Elias Vandover is being held at Glip Dak in the Worghide compound. He is being sold for 350 gp. His noble blood, rank, and arcane training assure a high price.
- The Kroth Magg have no issue cooperating with Tantras, Hulburg, the Lords' Alliance, and even House Vandover because it is in the Kroth Magg's interest to maintain its control of trade in the northern Moonsea region, and that requires partners and those who don't see them as a threat. If the Kroth Magg were to ever control territory through traditional military means, that would quickly ally the cities of the Moonsea against them.
- Glip Dak serves a purpose in the Moonsea. It gives a place for black market goods to be bought and sold away

from civilized lands, and also serves as a meeting place for sensitive political dealings with goblinoids, drow, frost giants, and even dragons.

The Kroth Magg and the City of Glip Dak

The Kroth Magg control a hobgoblin kingdom in Thar.

- Leading the Kroth Magg are four hobgoblin overlords: Supreme General Korgoth Bayn, Iron Shadow Grand Master Kahl, Devastator Lord Balroth Sicar, and High Priestess Drakkla the Red, who were all members of an adventuring party before finding immense wealth in a Netherese ruin and starting a trade city open to all.
- The Kroth Magg keep the law with an iron fist, which is necessary in a land as wild and dangerous as Thar. It's crucial to avoid open conflict within the city. Discretion and subterfuge are the key.
- The Black Market City of Glip Dak is growing quickly, and resources are in high demand there, including slaves.
- The Kroth Magg run a lucrative enterprise, wherein nearly anything can be bought or sold in Glip Dak, and where all are welcome. In return, the hobgoblins tax all goods and services. They also patrol, maintain, and impose tariffs along northern trade routes. While many feel their expansion and repair of roads and heavy patrols are simply a pretense to tax travelers and merchants, the Kroth Magg patrols have made travel far safer if a bit more expensive. Most tariffs are reasonable.
- A successful DC 15 Intelligence (History) check reveals that "Kroth Magg" means "the azure dragon" in Ghukliak, the goblin tongue. Anyone fluent in Goblin automatically succeeds on this check. The Kroth Magg iconography is that of a silhouette of a blue dragon. Glip Dak means "fetch that" in Goblin and is an idiom for shopping.

Elias Vandover and House Vandover

Elias Vandover is the last surviving heir of House Vandover. His parents and older brother died recently in a suspicious accident.

- He is the second son of the recently deceased Vandover lord and lady. His brother and sister-in-law were also killed in the attack that took the lives of his mother and father, leaving him the unprepared heir of the Vandover estate and business interests. He also spends his time learning arcane magic to assist in this. He fancies himself a hunter of exotic beasts.
- He is naive and arrogant but has the potential to be a true leader and powerful wizard.
- The Vandover noble house is centered in Tantras and controls a powerful merchant company with extensive trade throughout the Moonsea and even into the Sea of Fallen Stars.

Equipment and Ransom Money

Either Eileen or Hrogar gives the adventurers a pouch containing 400 gp and arranges a set of cold weather gear for each adventurer. The stated purpose of this money is to buy Elias Vandover as a slave and secretly release him back to Hulburg. The price for a slave of noble blood and one learned in wizardry magic is 350 gp, but the price may fluctuate for unseen reasons.

As well, the adventurers receive a map of the region around Glip Dak, featuring local highlights and miscellaneous landmarks.

Reward

Eileen or Hrogar gives the adventurers a briefing on Glip Dak society and law. Give the players **Player Handout 1**.

If successful, each adventurer is promised 100 gp.

Eileen Dormer's Recruits

She hands the adventurers a scroll, which contains the Kroth Magg sigil and grants entry into the city, and she tells them to meet with the Kroth Magg representative, Guard Captain Hrogar, once they reach Glip Dak. After all, the Kroth Magg need to make sure Elias is being sold to the correct group.

Reaching Glip Dak requires several days travel through the northern Moonsea and eastern Thar regions, after which the adventurers finally arrive at the trade city of Glip Dak. Travel is not covered in this adventure because of time constraints. If time isn't an issue, the arctic encounters (levels 1-4) from *Xanathar's Guide to Everything* can be used, page 92.

Eileen provides each adventurer with cold-weather gear, see the Extreme Cold sidebar below.

Proceed to **Section B. Recruited by the Kroth Magg**. This may be summarized as the hobgoblin captain goes over details, filling them in on anything they may have missed speaking with Eileen.

Manke, the Disruptive Guard

Once Hrogar goes over the information about buying Elias, he asks the adventurers to assist with a different matter.

Read or paraphrase the following:

> While you are here within Glip Dak, there is a second task I would ask of you, which also carries a risk and a reward.
>
> There is a hobgoblin officer named Manke who is seeking followers. That isn't an issue by itself as we encourage ambition and leadership. The issue is that he is a zealot of the Maglubiyet. And like all zealots, he is a disruptive bully. He believes by the mere merit of his fervor in Maglubiyet that he should be given a high standing within Glip Dak.
>
> Manke possess an enchanted greatsword that aids him in attracting others to his banner. He believes this sword was a gift from Maglubiyet and he can never lose it. Take this sword

from him, prove him wrong. You can keep it for yourselves.

The Mission

Hrogar can share the following information with the adventures about Manke:

- Find Manke, take the sword from him anyway you can, humiliate or kill him, whatever suits your style. Killing him won't violate the laws of Glip Dak. Hrogar will see to that.
- He has been attempting to convert others to his banner, forming a sort of church militant.
- It is important to the functioning of Glip Dak that one religion does not rise to control the city. A theocracy would be devastating, especially one as violent as Maglubiyet.

A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Religion) check recalls that hobgoblins are supposed to worship Maglubiyet with fanatical zeal, with few exceptions. Glip Dak hosts few religious shrines or temples. The Kroth Magg say this is an issue of attracting trade and making others feel comfortable and safe within Glip Dak as Maglubiyet demands sacrifices.

About the Sword

The sword has quite the history. It was once wielded by the troll mercenary Arrk before he disappeared into the ruins below Glip Dak.

- The sword was recovered from there not long ago and fell into the possession of Manke.
- The sword is of Netherese make and when drawn, the blade bleeds. From what little we know, this must be some kind of benign curse, well, unless you're squeamish around blood.
- At the center of its guard is a magical gem, which once allowed the sword to capture and cast powerful magic. However, something unusual is now within the sword preventing this ability.

Part 2. Glip Dak

Story Beat

The adventurers move through Glip Dak, the Black Market City of Thar, seeing the exotic sights. During this time, they encounter a potential ally in a cage, who they can free. Then they go to the Worghide compound to buy Elias and then they confront Manke.

Estimated Duration: 30 minutes

General Features

There is a sprawling tent city surrounding the fortress of Glip Dak. This tent city is composed of numerous elements, including less wealthy merchants, nomads who have come to trade, outcasts and refugees, and mercenary companies for hire. Located here are the public punishments such as stocks, hanging cages, dunking pools, etc.

Terrain. The tent city sprawls for several acres around the trade fort of Glip Dak. The ground throughout has been churned into mud. Dry grass has been scattered on the main paths, but the clinging earth and constant foot traffic make the paths difficult terrain.

Weather. Thar is high plateau terrain, harsh and cold. It snows most of the year. Light snow covers the ground, piling into taller snowdrifts in less traveled areas. During the day, it is cold. At night, it drops to freezing.

Light. Every merchant or camp has some kind of fire going, which serves as a heat source, cooking method, and light.

Smells and Sounds. The pungent scent of horses and other animals mixes with the smell of rare medicinal herbs, roasting meat, and brewing beer.

Nighttime in Thar

Extreme Cold. Whenever the temperature is at or below 0 degrees Fahrenheit, a creature exposed to the cold must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw at the end of each hour or gain one level of exhaustion. Creatures with resistance or immunity to cold damage automatically succeed on the saving throw, as do creatures wearing cold weather gear, and creatures naturally adapted to cold climates.

A. The Markets of Glip Dak

As the adventurers near the merchant gates, they merge with the constant foot traffic coming in and out of the fortress.

At the trade gate, there is a sign in Common and several goblinoid languages that reads "Glip Dak - Kill not; Steal not". Below the sign is a pile of humanoid skulls.

A cobblestone road starts at the gate and leads into the merchant quarter. Food stalls sell fermented mare's milk, smoked meats, wheels of cheese, and baked flatbreads.

Carts and wagons are everywhere, displaying goods such as fur pelts, pottery, and clothing. Orcs, hobgoblins, and bugbears hawk their wares and shout in Goblin and Common, enticing passersby to stop and look.

There are even drow merchants, who glare out at the brightness of day from the gloom of their tents, and frost giants selling mammoth ivory and furs, their deep voices heard above the crowd.

B. The Hanging Cages

Story Beat

At some point as the adventures move through Glip Dak, either leaving Guard Captain Hrogar's office or arriving from Hulburg or elsewhere, the adventures spot a cluster of hanging cages for public punishments. These displays are both crime deterrents and symbols of authority.

Quick thinking adventurers may free Huul, a hobgoblin, and obtain a local guide and ally.

Read or paraphrase the following:

> Even in the tent city outside the walls, there are signs of hobgoblin law. You spot the stocks and hanging cages. Most of the cages contain corpses clothed in tattered remnants, but one cage holds an ochre-skinned hobgoblin. Her shouting in Common and Goblin indicates she's alive, and angry. Nearby an ogre and a handful of goblins squat around a fire occasionally snapping at her to be quiet.
>
> Her yellow eyes stare directly at your motley group, and she shouts in Common, "Soft folk. You look scared, out of place here. Pay my debt, buy my freedom. You need my help, and I need your coin."

The Goblinoid Guards

There are three **goblins** and an **ogre** guarding the cages. They are arranged around a fire pit, passing a jug of barley wine and telling stories in Goblin.

Attacking these guards, especially in such a public place, alerts The Bronze, the hobgoblin military police. Even after leaving Glip Dak, the adventurers will be hunted until justice is delivered. After the adventure, each adventurer earns the **Glip Dak Lawbreaker Story Award (Player Handout 2)**.

Freeing the Prisoner

The guards are cold and bored. If asked, they tell the adventurers that the imprisoned hobgoblin is named Huul, and she stuck a dagger in a goblin during a bar fight. Because of this murder, she owes a blood debt of 50 gp to the goblin's family, but she refused to pay and so was thrown into the cage for a tenday.

A successful DC 11 Wisdom (Insight) check gleans that this is mostly true. If Huul is asked why she's in the cage, she explains:

> "That filthy cur tried to steal my *Fezik Melko*, an honor gift for valor in battle, a silver dagger. So, I killed the dog with it.
>
> "I owe his family far more than the filth was worth. Even if I had the gold, I wouldn't pay it." She spits. "I have nothing but my honor, my dagger, and my value as a soldier. Buy my freedom, and I'll owe you. Buy my freedom, and I will be your Pakk Vit, your shield."
>
> She smiles at you, showing surprisingly clean, sharp teeth, and holds her hand out to you through the bars. "I am Huul, and I wish for a warrior's death, not to die in this cage, stabbed by goblin spears in the night. Killed like a rat in a cage."

Huul (unarmored **hobgoblin** armed with a silver dagger) is desperate to get out the cage. She fears that the goblin's kin will arrive and bribe the guards to look the other way while they get revenge.

The guard can be easily bribed with a successful DC 12 Charisma (Persuasion or Deception) check and 25 gp or 10 days' worth of rations to release Huul. Intimidation checks are made with disadvantage in this situation.

Clever, non-lethal tactics should also work, such as a *sleep* spell, setting a small fire as a distraction, lying about a fight to draw the guards away, or drugging their food. Lethal measures should be acceptable if the adventurers are exceptionally careful.

Huul and the Pakk Vit

If her freedom is obtained, the ogre laughs. He puts down the jug, unlocks Huul's cage, and throws open the door. The guards sit down and begin arguing about how to split their coins or food. Anyone who speaks Goblin overhears the ogre tell the goblins: "Huul made us extra gold coin. That's twenty for me, and five for you lot."

Read the following if Huul's debt is paid:

> Huul clambers down and stretches. She's taller than you initially thought. She says in Common, "I owe you a debt. I am your *Pakk Vit*, your shield warrior, until my debt is repaid.

> "You picked a good day to die in Glip Dak. Glad I get to see this fun." She starts laughing at her joke, and then abruptly stops. "Who are you, and why are you here in Glip Dak?"

When the adventurers free her, she cuts her hand with a silver dagger bearing a symbol, swearing an oath to them. On a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Religion) check, the adventurers identify the symbol on the dagger as that of Bargrivyek, the hobgoblin god of duty and discipline, who was defeated and enslaved by the goblin god Maglubiyet.

Huul and Her Blood Debt

Huul owes the adventurers a debt, and she's eager to even the score and be free. She will follow non-suicidal orders and throws herself into combat with fervor. Once she has partaken in one combat with the adventurers, she declares that her debt is paid, and attempts to leave.

After her debt is settled, Huul can be persuaded to stay and act as a guide. In payment, she asks for a martial weapon and armor. If armed and armored, she keeps these items at the end of the adventure and does not return them.

For purposes of *Glip Dak*, Huul does not count as an NPC regarding experience earned.

Huul knows where the Worghide villa is located. If the adventurers are open about their goal to rescue Elias Vandover, she's able to guide them. She is also familiar with Manke, owner of Arrk's greatsword, by reputation only—that of a bully and zealot.

If Huul is not freed, she is no longer in the hanging cage when the adventurers pass back this way. If asked, the guards laugh and mention the goblins came and took vengeance for their slain kin.

Huul will not willingly give up her silver dagger. The dagger is a symbol of her honor and prowess. The only way to take it is by her death.

Where to Now

The adventurers can proceed to Manke or to free Elias in any order.

Treasure

If Huul dies any time during Glip Dak, her dagger can be claimed. It is a non-magical silver dagger that bears the rune of Bargrivyek, the hobgoblin god of duty and discipline, and is worth 75 gp if sold.

Part 3. The Heir's Rescue

Story Beat

The adventurers come to the Worghide compound to free Elias Vandover. There they meet the Worghide hobgoblin cavalry company leader, Danate. If the adventurers seek to purchase Elias, a surprise visit from a third-party barterer challenges them for Elias.

Estimated Duration: 30 minutes

The Worghide compound is located along the eastern edge of the market, nestled against Glip Dak's walls.

There are a handful of interconnected buildings where the Worghide hobgoblins live. Elias Vandover is being held prisoner here, under the orders of Danate, the Worghide matriarch. Danate's not-so-secret weapon is Klugg, a female ettin.

General Features

The Worghide hall has the following general features.

Terrain. The compound is surrounded by a 20-foot stone wall, which is part of an ancient Netherese ruin and bares that strange architecture. There is an arched gateway with a heavy door that's closed. A copper bell sits outside the door.

Weather. The snow has abated for now, but the wind carries a mix of dust and snowflakes. Visibility is lightly obscured past 60 feet.

Light. There is light visible within the compound from a variety of fire sources.

Smells and Sounds. There is laughter and fearful yelling in Common. Deep, booming voices occasionally yell a string of epithets in Goblin (Klugg, arguing with herself over a sheep carcass).

A. The Worghide Compound

The Worghide compound is located along the eastern edge of the fort, nestled against Glip Dak's walls.

> There are a handful of interconnected buildings where the Worghide hobgoblins live. A large, tattered wolf pelt is affixed to the gate of the compound and a sigil in Ghukliak (Goblin) marks the lintel above the gate. There's a verdigris-hued copper bell with a rope attached hanging to the side. You suspect this is how visitors get the inhabitant's attention.
>
> Inside you hear deep guttural yelling in Goblin mixed with terrified screaming in Common.

On a successful DC 10 Intelligence (Nature) check, the pelt is identified as a worg's hide. The sigil in Goblin also reads "Worghide".

The compound does not have guards along the perimeter, as Glip Dak is a civilized fortress and the Kroth Magg constantly patrol the city. Spending a minute or two observing the compound reveals that there's one person speaking Common, multiple voices speaking Goblin, and there's a pair of deeper baritone voices (this is Klugg).

Anyone who understands Goblin understands the gist of what's being said on a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check:

- There are at least a dozen hobgoblins inside and at least a score of attendants (emphasize this is a military compound with numerous soldiers).
- Most of the force is out on patrols with their worg mounts, so only a fraction is present.
- The hobgoblins mention Danate and Klugg by name, and that there are new slaves who need to be trained and sold, including a whiny human in dapper clothes.

A1. Knocking on the Worghide Gate

If the gate bell is rung (or an adventurer uses *thaumaturgy* or similar sound amplification to announce their presence), the yelling and screaming stops, and 1 minute later a male hobgoblin opens a shutter in the gate. In Common, he brusquely asks what the adventurers want.

If they mention Elias Vandover, the guard denies knowing where he's at. A successful DC 11 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals he's lying.

On the other hand, if the adventurers mention they are interested in purchasing slaves or that they're here to visit Danate or Klugg, the hobgoblin starts muttering under his breath in Goblin and opens the Worghide compound gate, barring it again once the adventurers have entered.

If Huul is with the party, the gate guard salutes her. Those who have earned the silver dagger are known for

their battle prowess in Glip Dak. The guard does make a joke about her being "thrown in a cage." Huul isn't amused, but the other hobgoblin laughs all the louder.

Proceed to **Section B1**, below.

A2. Besieging the Compound Gate

A more visible and risky option is to knock the gate down and charge in. The wooden gate is 10 feet wide and has AC 15, 75 hp, and is immune to psychic and poison damage. A *knock* spell will unbar the gate.

If Huul is with the party, she informs the adventurers that this is "a stupid way to knock on the front gate," and "just because you can knock down the gate, doesn't mean you must." This leads to **Section B2**, below.

Breaking down the Worghide gate in an obvious fashion, and without clever disguises, alerts The Bronze, the hobgoblin military police. Even after leaving Glip Dak, the adventurers will be hunted until justice is delivered. After the module, each adventurer earns the **Glip Dak Lawbreaker Story Award (Player Handout 2)**.

A3. Sneaking into the Compound

The compound wall can be scaled with a successful DC 12 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check. Failure means that the adventurer falls, taking 7 (2d6) bludgeoning damage. The inhabitants of the compound are busy with their duties, feeding and cleaning their mounts, storing and maintaining equipment, watching the slave pens, and arguing with each other, and fail to notice outsiders.

Once inside, the gate can be unbarred without difficulty.

If Huul is with the party, she mutters that she's "fallen in with vagabonds." For the next few minutes, she continues to complain quietly about her newfound companions' lack of honor. This leads to **Section B3**, below.

Tricks of the Trade

Play Time. There's little inherent reward for combat in Glip Dak. It's possible that the players just buy Elias and be on their way.

Play Styles. Get a feel for how players want to approach Glip Dak encounters. It's possible to play Glip Dak and not engage in fighting. Conversely, players may desire combat. Accommodate different play styles when possible.

B. The Worghides and the Heir

Danate sits in the compound's main hall. Attending her are a handful of the Worghide hobgoblins. Klugg is out back, feasting on a sheep.

B1. The Diplomatic Introduction

Read or paraphrase the following if the adventurers rang the gate bell or if they are escorted by a Worghide:

> You notice the compound is clean and orderly. This section of Glip Dak consists mostly of intact Netherese buildings. You are escorted to a great hall, which, long ago, may have been a temple.
>
> Passing through two sets of double doors, you come to a large chamber. There you see a silver-haired hobgoblin sitting in front of a blazing hearth fire. Flanking her are two hobgoblin guards in the heraldry of the Worghide.
>
> Along one wall are a dozen large cages holding prisoners waiting to be sold. In one corner, there is an iron cage containing a young human man dressed in tattered finery. A young goblin is poking him through the bars with a stick.

> The silver haired hobgoblin looks up at you as you enter. Her uniform carries the insignia of a captain. "Yes?"

Danate (**hobgoblin captain**) and two **hobgoblins** are gathered here as well as a dozen noncombatant servants cleaning and feeding the slaves, mostly hobgoblins and goblins. Elias Vandover (human **apprentice wizard**) is in the cage being taunted by a juvenile goblin. Outside to the north, Klugg the **ettin** is eating a sheep.

Glip Dak is growing fast and slaves are in demand, especially those with valuable skills or knowledge. Danate is expecting visitors from a number of Glip Dak factions and groups seeking to purchase slaves, so the adventurers are not out of the ordinary.

Danate cares little who or what the adventurers are as long as their coin is good. She is happy to be rid of the arrogant, whiney human noble. However, just as the adventurers begin to bargain for his release, read or paraphrase the following:

> The doors to the chamber fling open and cold air rushes through, pulling at the fire. A drow woman in opulent purple garb steps in. She is flanked by three scowling drow warriors.
>
> "Hello, Danate, how are you, my dear friend?" she asks sweetly. Danate rolls her eyes.
>
> "What are you looking for, Xek-Durrin?" demands the hobgoblin captain. "Just tell me directly this time, and don't waste my time."
>
> The drow smiles sharply, "Don't tell me you're getting old and impatient. But very well. I heard you have a noble from Tantras for sale. I need something like that."
>
> Danate looks to you, "That slave is already spoken for by these, uh, fine customers."
>
> Xek-Durrin shakes a silken bag, which rattles with coin. "Maybe I'd like to pay more?"

The Bartering

The bidding price for Elias starts at 350 gp. A chosen adventurer makes a DC 14 Charisma (Persuasion) check three times. Each failed check raises the price by 50 gp while each success holds the price still. Good roleplaying should grant advantage to these rolls. These rolls represent the mechanics of bartering and bidding. However, the exchange can be purely roleplay with one or no rolls, DM's discretion.

After three checks, or when it is appropriate, the drow woman looks sour and stomps away, leaving the door open.

"Good riddance," Danate mutters. To Danate, this is strictly business, selling slaves. Elias Vandover, however, harbors deep hatred against his captors.

Elias Vandover's Demeanor and Spells

Elias is a haughty nobleman and fledgling wizard. At the same time, he's terrified for his life. Once the adventurers free him, his arrogance may get the best of him. On the other hand, he's likely to flee in panic and try to get back to Hulburg as quickly as possible.

Elias Vandover has only cantrips available. He has expended all his spell slots and has no spell book.

If Elias is released and unbound, he's livid. Adventurers with a Passive Perception of 12 or higher realize he's going to attack Danate. Elias can be stopped via a successful DC 12 Charisma (Persuasion, Intimidation, or Deception) check.

Unless stopped, he'll blast Danate with a *fire bolt*, upon which the mood of the room changes:

> When Elias is released from the cage and unbound, he stands up and begins shouting at the hobgoblin matron in Common.
>
> Suddenly, his words in Common change to arcane incantations and a bolt of flame streaks across the room.
>
> With that, the mood changes. The hobgoblins charge forward, and the matriarch snarls in Common, "Soft-skinned whelp. You wish to die so soon? Klugg, come here!"
>
> The rest of the Worghide hobgoblins begin yelling and rushing out of the chamber as quickly as they can.

Danate is not amused by the *fire bolt* she just received and wants to make an example out of the Vandover heir. On a successful DC 15 Charisma (Deception or Persuasion) check, Danate will allow the adventurers to immediately leave. If the adventurers offer the Worghides 20 gp or more as a peace offering, they have advantage on this skill check. Likewise, *charm person* or similar tactics may defuse the situation long enough for the adventurers to leave.

If Elias is prevented from assaulting Danate and the hobgoblins are paid, Danate wishes the adventurers well and recommends an inn that is welcoming to "soft-skins." If the adventurers refuse to immediately leave, Danate will summon Klugg and engage in combat, yelling about "insolent soft-skinned whelps" the whole time.

If combat does begin, Klugg pushes her way into the compound on the second round. Read the following when the ettin enters:

> You hear heavy footsteps, and then the double doors to the west burst open as a two-headed ogre-kin rushes in.
>
> Both of the ettin's heads simultaneously howl in a mish-mash of Common and another, guttural tongue. The hobgoblin matron points at you. "Klugg, kill them all!"
>
> You notice that instead of weapons, the ettin is clutching half a sheep carcass in each hand. Chunks of mutton hang from the mouth of one head.

Klugg speaks basic Common, Giant, and Goblin, and she is yelling in a mixture of all three. Klugg is already riled

up, since the ettin's heads were arguing with each other over the sheep carcass.

Klugg's Improvised Weapon (Sheep Carcass)

Replace the ettin's two attacks with the following:

Multiattack. Klugg makes two attacks with the sheep carcass.

Sheep Carcass. *Melee Weapon Attack*: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit*: 10 (2d4 + 5) bludgeoning damage.

B2. The Siege

If the adventurers besiege the compound, the hobgoblins order Klugg inside and bar the compound doors. The non-combatants flee to the western-most hall. Danate (**hobgoblin captain**), Klugg (**ettin**), and six **hobgoblins** prepare to defend their barracks and its support buildings.

The compound double-doors are 15 feet wide and have AC 15, 75 hp, and are immune to psychic and poison damage. They are barred from the inside. A *knock* spell will unbar the doors.

In the case of an outright siege, Klugg is armed with her normal weapons.

This can be a difficult and deadly battle if the adventurers are not ready or have made plans, such as having infiltrators poison the hobgoblins' food or set fires that spread quickly.

If Klugg and/or Danate are slain, the remaining goblinoids try to broker a deal. They'll exchange Elias Vandover for sparing the lives of the remaining Worghide troop members.

B3. Sneaking Around the Compound

If one or more adventurers sneak into the compound, they can peek through the slatted windows. Depending on which way they go, they may spot Klugg eating her mutton just north of the compound. They may also find the cistern and well to the west.

Sneaking into the main hall requires a contested Dexterity (Stealth) check against Danate's Wisdom (Perception) roll.

The padlock on the cage can be unlocked with a successful DC 12 Dexterity check using thieves' tools. In this scenario, Elias will attempt to quietly escape without being noticed by the goblinoids. If either Elias or the adventurers are spotted, Elias will run. See the **Elias Vandover's Demeanor and Spells** sidebar above for notes about Elias Vandover.

Contests (Sneaking around the Compound)

Both participants in a contest make ability checks appropriate to their efforts. They apply all appropriate bonuses and penalties, but instead of comparing the total to a DC, they compare the totals of their two checks. The participant with the higher check total wins the contest. The adventurer or monster either succeeds at the action or prevents the other one from succeeding. The adventurer wins ties for this specific contest.

C. After Freeing Elias Vandover

Once Elias is freed, he demands to know who sent them. His goal is to escape Glip Dak as swiftly as possible, but he'll accompany the adventurers if they demand it. He alternates between complaining about Glip Dak and bragging about being a brave hunter of exotic beasts, regaling the adventurers with a recent cockatrice hunt.

After Elias arrives safely in Hulburg, he proceeds to tell everyone in detail about how he assisted the adventurers in their challenges.

If the adventurers successfully rescue Elias Vandover and he returns to Hulburg, each adventurer earns 150 experience points.

If Elias dies or otherwise fails to return to Hulburg, the adventurers do not earn the reward from Eileen Dormar, and they do not earn the story award nor experience points. They can still complete the side quest.

If Huul is with the adventurers after Elias Vandover is freed, she declares her debt fulfilled and attempts to part ways, seeking her fortunes elsewhere. See the **Huul and her Blood Debt** sidebar above for specifics about Huul.

Tricks of the Trade

Tough Fight. This has potential to be a tough encounter for players who like to go in guns blazing. Diplomacy and tact can win where force leads to failure. If the adventurers start losing badly, the hobgoblins allow them to surrender, but take their gold and refuse to release Elias Vandover.

The Drow. The purpose of the drow is to create dramatic tension, a sudden wrench in the players' plans. If time is running low, this part of the encounter should be ignored. However, this part may also be expanded if time is not an issue. Xek-Durrin the drow isn't too interested in a bidding war at the moment; she is simply looking to make trouble at the expense of others.

The Other Slaves. If the adventurers purchase the freedom of all the other slaves, each adventurer earns a point of inspiration and 50 experience points. Each slave should be fairly cheap, 5 gp each. There are ten prisoners.

Part 4. Manke's Blade

Story Beat

Manke can be found in his legion's barracks or in the shrine to Maglubiyet. He spends his time there pontificating Maglubiyet's will, or his version of it. Otherwise he can be found gambling in the barracks. Manke loves to gamble and will throw dice over anything, including his sword, which he believes he cannot lose. He cheats with his magical die.

Estimated Duration: 30 minutes

General Features

Terrain. The barracks is filled with bunk beds and tables.

Weather. It is snowing outside, but the chamber is warm.

Light. There is light coming from several wooden rods placed in sconces and enchanted with continual flame. If the rods are removed from their sconces, they cease working. There is also a cast-iron heater and oven at the far end.

Smells and Sounds. The sound of clattering dice and deep voices shouting in Goblin can be heard from the entrance. It smells like sweat, oil, and leather inside the room.

A. The Blue Shadow Legion

Manke is quartermaster of the Blue Shadow legion of hobgoblins. He handles the logistics for their supplies and movements and ensures that his troops are fed and paid on time.

> As you push your way through the doorway of the barrack hall, you see a handful of hobgoblins sitting around a table in the back, drinking and playing dice.
>
> One of the hobgoblins catches your attention. He is loud, brawny, and tattooed. Shouting, he pounds the table hard enough that the mugs jump, and then scoops a pile of coins off the table into his pouch.
>
> The others start to argue, but the tattooed hobgoblin unsheathes his great sword and lays it on the table. Immediately, blood starts to drip from the blade and pool on the table. When that happens, the other hobgoblins cease yelling, quietly staring at the bloody blade.

Manke (**hobgoblin captain**) and four **hobgoblins** from the Blue Shadow Legion are here, off duty. Manke is always willing to throw dice given a decent bet. If the adventurers are willing to put 100 gp against his sword, he's willing to throw dice for the greatsword, best two out of three games. This price may be haggled for dramatic effect.

Manke insists on using his own dice. These six-sided dice contain a *charlatan's die*, granting Manke advantage on checks using dice sets.

Adjusting the Fight

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

Very Weak: Remove one **hobgoblin captain**. Remove one **hobgoblin**. Manke is one of the three normal **hobgoblins**.

Weak: Remove two **hobgoblins.**

Strong: Add two **hobgoblins**.

Very Strong: Add four **hobgoblins**.

The Dice Game

Given the opportunity, Manke is happy to take bets for Arrk's blade. While playing, he heckles the adventurers in Common, mocking their 'bad luck' and gloating when he wins. As long as Manke uses his *charlatan's die*, he has advantage on all rolls associated with its use. It is paired with a mundane die to blend in.

A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) or Intelligence (Investigation) check notices the number on the dice magically change after the roll.

Tactics to Win

- ***Moving the Dice***: Using a spell to change or shift the dice, such as *minor illusion* or *mage hand*.
- ***Swapping the Dice***: A successful DC 12 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check swaps Manke's dice for another set, if one is owned. If the attempt to replace Manke's dice fails, Manke will flip the table and attack, accusing the adventurers of "cheating badly." If Manke's dice are successfully swapped, it becomes a straightforward Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) contest. If an adventurer has proficiency in dice gaming sets, remember to add the adventurer's proficiency bonus. In the case of a tie, reroll the contest as the dice game continues.

Contests (The Dice Game)

Both participants in a contest make ability checks appropriate to their efforts. They apply all appropriate bonuses and penalties, but instead of comparing the total to a DC, they compare the totals of their two checks. The participant with the higher check total wins the contest. The adventurer or monster either succeeds at the action or prevents the other one from succeeding.

Winning the Bet

In the case that Manke loses the bet, he is befuddled. After two rounds, or if the adventurers gloat, Manke orders his soldiers to attack and launches himself bare-handed at whomever is holding his sword.

> Manke stares at the dice, his eyes going wide. "This, this can't be." He then looks up at you. "You did this! You cheated! Fight me in single combat, any of you! I dare you, cowards. This sword was gifted to me by Maglubiyet, and no other but me shall wield it!"

> The other hobgoblins look surprised, then tense, slowly standing, their hands near their sheathed weapons. One hobgoblin quickly chugs his drink, afraid of losing it should the table be flipped.

Manke prepares to attack the adventurers, rallying his troops to his side. The other hobgoblins aren't particularly fond of Manke and can be convinced to stand down with a successful DC 14 Charisma (Intimidation) check. Adventurers possessing a Glip Dak honor award (as outlined in the **Hobgoblin Society** section) have advantage on this check.

Losing the Bet

If Manke wins, he insists on being a lousy winner, mocking the adventurers while waiting for his gold. At this point, the adventurers can either attack him, attempt to use *charm person* or similar magic, or pay the hobgoblin. If Manke isn't paid his winnings, he becomes outraged and attacks.

If combat starts, read the following:

> The hobgoblin shrieks in fury and swings his magic greatsword. Blood flows from the blade and splatters across the wall. His allies leap to fight, kicking their stools over. One hobgoblin quickly chugs his drink, afraid of losing it should the table be flipped.

Treasure

Manke possessed Arrk's magic sword, a *+1 greatsword* that constantly drips blood when unsheathed (see **Player Handout 4**). As well, the hobgoblins have 100 gp worth of various coinage.

Tricks of the Trade

The Outcome. Manke is a constant gambler, and it is known around Glip Dak. If the adventurers slay Manke, the Blue Shadow preceptors just assume his antics finally got him into trouble. They aren't going to investigate or pursue the adventurers.

Part 5. Optional Event

Story Beat

The adventurers are mistaken as hired performers paid to perform on a stage near Jeweler's Row. The performance should be tied to adventurer's existing skills: music and performance for bards, juggling or acrobatics of rogues, magical displays for casters, feats of strength for fighters, etc.

A. Performing Show

> A tall, red-skinned woman wearing noble garments appears out of the crowded market. Her hair drifts around her as if caught in breeze. "Oh, there you are! Come! Hurry! Or we will be late." She smiles at you expectantly.

The woman introduces herself as Asasha al-Din Sahar (**fire genasi noble**).

She has mistaken the adventurers as a group of performers contracted for her show. If the adventurers explain they are not who she thinks they are, she waves that away as trivial and offers the adventurers 10 gp each to perform for her.

If the adventurers accept, she leads them to a wooden stage near the jeweler's and artisan's quarters. A boisterous crowd and several food vendors have already gathered.

Performing on Stage

Each performing adventurer chooses what their performing act will be. Examples include: Dexterity (Acrobatics or Sleight of Hand), Strength (Athletics), Charisma (Performance or Persuasion), or casting spells such as *thaumaturgy* or *prestidigitation*.

Bards, gladiators, and other entertainment-focused adventurers gain advantage on their checks. Spellcasters may use their spellcasting ability score in place of a skill for the check.

Some examples of different performing acts include juggling a dozen objects, lifting several audience members, balancing acts, or other daring deeds. For players who engage with the talent show and describe their performance, the DM can award Inspiration.

Performing Act Outcome

Skill Check Result	Outcome
5 or less	Angry, the crowd starts heckling and pelting the adventurer with rubbish.
6-10	The crowd fails to be impressed.
11-15	The performance goes well. The audience cheers and yells at appropriate parts.
16-20 (Minor Reward)	The audience is amazed at the show and throws 5 gp worth of random coins on stage.
21 or above (Major Reward)	The audience is swept up in the epic show. The adventurer is asked for autographs, has mugs of fermented mare's milk thrust upon them, and is given an extra 25 gp out of admiration.

Working the Crowd

Alternatively, as long as there is at least one performing act, an adventurer can instead decide to steal from a market stall or the audience members. In this scenario, the adventurer makes a DC 11 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) skill check. On a success, the conniving adventurer pilfers 25 gp worth of valuables. On a failure, the adventurer is discovered mid-theft, and the Glip Dak guards are called. This may require clever role-playing a quick escape. Optionally, see **The Justice of Glip Dak** sidebar, below.

After the Performance

If the adventurers avoided breaking the law while performing, Asasha thanks them and pays their wages. She also is able to give directions to any location in Glip Dak, such as the Worghide compound or any of the side quest locales.

If the adventurers are caught stealing, Asasha is furious and refuses to pay them, calling them "scallywags" and "thieves".

Treasure

Asasha pays the adventurers 10 gp each. Adventurers also have the opportunity to earn additional gp: a minor reward of 5 gp, a major reward of 25 gp, or use Sleight of Hand to earn an extra 25 gp.

The Justice of Glip Dak (Optional)

Included in The Black Market of Glip Dak are optional sidebars that explain the logical consequences for committing crimes within civilized territory.

If the adventurers are caught stealing in the market, or attack anyone, the adventurers will be hunted, and justice will be delivered. After the adventure, each adventurer earns the **Glip Dak Lawbreaker Story Award (Player Handout 1)**.

Part 6. Conclusion

Estimated Duration: 15 minutes

Recruited by Guard Captain Hrogar

Hrogar thanks the adventurers for their dutiful work and provides food and lodging for however long they remain in Glip Dak. Hrogar explains that reliable and competent outsiders are needed by the Kroth Magg.

Each adventurer also earns the **Vadd Narkoz Story Award (Player Handout 3)** and 100 experience points.

Recruited by Lady Eileen Dormar

Eileen is pleasantly surprised when Elias Vandover arrives back in Hulburg. She's less surprised when Elias claims that he rescued himself, and also became close friends with the adventurers. She's definitely not excited when Elias tells her that he's invited the adventurers on a cockatrice hunt. Eileen Dormar pays the adventurers 100 gp each and hesitantly, but dutifully, invites them on a safari to Thar with Elias.

The adventurers may have recovered a magical item from Glip Dak. There's also a distinct possibility that that the adventurers have broken hobgoblin law and ended up getting thrown into a burlap sack full of rats and tossed into a pond.

Each adventurer earns 100 experience points.

Rewards

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

Experience

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

Combat Awards

Name of Foe	XP Per Foe
Apprentice Wizard (Elias)	0
Drow	50
Ettin (Klugg)	1,100
Goblin	50
Hobgoblin	100
Hobgoblin Captain	700
Ogre	450

Non-Combat Awards

Task or Accomplishment	XP Per Character
Rescuing Elias Vandover	150
Completing Side Quest	100
Freeing Additional Slaves	50

The minimum total award for each character participating in this adventure is **450 experience points**.

The maximum total award for each character participating in this adventure is **600 experience points**.

Treasure

The characters receive the following treasure, divided up amongst the party. Treasure is divided as evenly as possible. Gold piece values listed for sellable gear are calculated at their selling price, not their purchase price.

Treasure Awards

Item Name	GP Value
Gold to purchase Elias Freedom	400
Manke's gambling winnings	100
Adventure reward	100 each
Performing Show Wages	10
Performing Show Reward (Minor)	5
Performing Show Reward (Major)	25
Performing Show Pickpocketing	25

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

Permanent magic items are divided according to a system detailed in the D&D Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide.

Arrk's Greatsword (+1 Greatsword)

Weapon, uncommon

You have a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon. This item can be found in **Player Handout 4**

Manke's Die (Charlatan's Die)

Wondrous Item, common (requires attunement)

Whenever you roll this six-sided die, you can control which number it rolls. This item can be found in **Player Handout 5**.

Potion of Healing

Wondrous Item, common

This item can be found in the *Player's Handbook*.

Story Awards

During the course of this adventure, the heroes may earn the following story award(s):

Glip Dak Lawbreaker. Glip Dak justice is brutal. You may have been stuffed into a burlap sack filled with rats and thrown in a pond, or perhaps you were held captive in the stocks while hobgoblins threw stones at you. Unless playing another Glip Dak adventure immediately after this one, the next 5 downtime days you earn are automatically expended surviving your punishment. More information can be found in **Player Handout 1**.

Vandover Obligation. Elias Vandover is the heir to a merchant house in Tantras. He arranges for a feast in your honor. As well, he tells you that he's in your debt for saving his life, and asks you along on a cockatrice hunt in Thar, near Glip Dak. Obviously, the errant merchant prince is either foolish or insanely brave. More information can be found in **Player Handout 2**.

Vadd Narkoz. Guard Captain Hrogar invites you to a private ceremony within the central hall of Glip Dak, a massive Netherese building of exotic stone. There he and other officers thank you for your service and discretion, awarding you Vadd Narkoz, "Strong Warrior", in this private proclamation. The hobgoblins of Glip Dak acknowledge you as a worthy and trusted ally. More information can be found in **Player Handout 3.**

Renown

Each adventurer receives one renown at the conclusion of this adventure.

DM Reward

In exchange for running this adventure, you earn DM Rewards as described in the D&D Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide (ALDMG).

Appendix A. Dramatis Personae

The following NPCs are featured prominently in this adventure:

Elias Vandover (EL-eye-ess VAN-dove-err). Human male, heir to the Vandover merchant house. Captured by hobgoblins and now being held in Glip Dak by the Worghide clan. Impulsive, but magically talented.

Eileen Dormar (EYE-leen DOOR-mar). Officer of the Vandover estate. Tasks the adventurers with rescuing Elias. Dutiful servant of the merchant house. She expects Elias Vandover to die a terrible, yet well-deserved, death one day.

Huul (HOOL). Hobgoblin warrior. The adventurers may free her from the hanging cage outside of Glip Dak, upon release Huul swears to serve them and repay her debt. Huul stands by her honor, but sees ethical things in black and white.

Maelizarra (MA-lizz-are-ah). Adult blue dragon, ally of the Kroth Magg hobgoblins, and offspring of Chezzaran of Ascore. Gives magical power and knowledge to the Kroth Magg in return for tribute.

Manke (MAN-key). Hobgoblin quartermaster, owner of Arrk's blade, and an avid gambler and religious zealot. Cheats with a magical die.

Appendix B. NPC Statistics

Apprentice Wizard (Elias)

Medium human, chaotic neutral
Armor Class 10
Hit Points 9 (2d8)
Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Arcana +4, History +4
Languages Common
Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)
Spellcasting. The apprentice is a 1st-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). It has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *fire bolt, mending, prestidigitation*
1st level (2 slots): *burning hands, disguise self, shield*

Actions

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

Appendix C. Worghide Compound (behind gate)

(1 square = 10 ft.)

Appendix D. Blue Shadow Legion Barracks

(1 square = 10 ft.)

Player Handout 1. Glip Dak

Hobgoblin Society

Glip Dak

• A few years ago, a clan of hobgoblins claimed a Netheril ruin as their stronghold. From that lonely outcropping of stone and crumbling battlements rose Glip Dak. Glip Dak is a lawful evil goblinoid fortress surrounded by a bustling tent city.

• At the trade gate, there is a wooden sign in Common, Giant, Goblin, and Orc that says: "Glip Dak - Kill not; Steal not". Below the sign is a pile of humanoid skulls.

• Outside the trade gates are stocks, manacles, and cages wherein criminals are punished. The gallows, dunking vats, and other public "spectacles" are near the market square.

Glip Dak Citizens

• Glip Dak citizens include many races, from goblins to drow, but the Kroth Magg hobgoblins squarely control the city, as least ostensibly.

• Creatures such as aberrations, monstrosities, lycanthropes, and undead are considered vermin.

Justice and the Law in Glip Dak

• Breaking the laws of Glip Dak is punishable by lost downtime or a fine, but it does not end the adventure nor does it prevent playing other Glip Dak modules.

• Some Glip Dak specific story awards can cause social shifts during other Glip Dak modules – the adventurers are raising suspicions, have caused problems, or are decorated allies.

The Heinous Crimes of Glip Dak

• Killing Glip Dak citizens or non-citizens.

• Being caught stealing from a merchant or citizen.

Decorations in Hobgoblin Society

• Vadd Narkoz, "Strong Warrior". In this public proclamation, the hobgoblins of Glip Dak acknowledge outsiders as worthy allies.

• Lozz Nying, "Pony Gift". In this public ceremony, a pony, bridle, and riding saddle are bestowed upon those that earned Lozz Nying.

• Fezik Melko, "Worthy Accord". A parade occurs, and those given the Fezik Melko are rewarded with a silver dagger.

• Pakk Vit, "Shield Bearer". Saving the life of a hobgoblin creates a blood debt. Until that debt is repaid, the hobgoblin who owes the debt is known as the Pakk Vit (shield bearer) to his or hers rescuer.

Player Handout 2. Story Award

During the course of this adventure, the adventurers may earn the following story award.

Glip Dak Lawbreaker

You broke the laws of the Black Market City. Because of this, you were captured by the Kroth Magg hobgoblins and punished.

While most punishment involves serving backbreaking labor until one faints from exhaustion, the Kroth Magg are known to be inventive with their punishments, which includes events such as being stuffed into a burlap sack filled with rats and thrown in a pond or forced to fight wyvern hatchlings barehanded to a jeering crowd.

Somehow you survived and were released by the Glip Dak hobgoblins. The guards have more important things to deal with.

Unless playing another Glip Dak adventure immediately after this one, the next 5 downtime days you earn are automatically expended surviving your punishment.

Player Handout 3. Story Award

During the course of this adventure, the heroes may earn the following story award.

Vadd Narkoz

Guard Captain Hrogar invites you to a private ceremony within the central hall of Glip Dak, a massive Netherese building of exotic stone. There he and other officers thank you for your service and discretion, awarding you Vadd Narkoz, "Strong Warrior," in this private proclamation. The hobgoblins of Glip Dak acknowledge you as a worthy and trusted ally.

For future Glip Dak modules, the adventurer has advantage on Charisma checks when interacting with Kroth Magg soldiers and guards.

Player Handout 4. Magic Item

During the course of this adventure, the heroes may find the following permanent magic item:

Arrk's Greatsword (+1 Greatsword)

Weapon (greatsword), uncommon

You have a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon.

Arrk was a troll mercenary known for his brutality, loyalty, and reliability. He worked throughout the Moonsea region and was infamous for carrying an enchanted greatsword that dripped blood whenever it was unsheathed, which Arrk would lick when he was bored or annoyed.

Arrk vanished decades ago while exploring an ancient ruin in the Troll Hills of Thar. His sword was recovered not long after the founding of Glip Dak. While the sword could once store and release powerful spells, something unusual is now stored within and refuses to be released.

The greatsword has a long, rune covered blade that drips blood whenever the sword is unsheathed. The wide blade is decorated with Netherese runes and the handle is wrapped in basilisk hide. A large gem pulses at the center of the cross guard.

This item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Player Handout 5. Magic Item

During the course of this adventure, the heroes may find the following permanent magic item:

Manke's Die (Charalan's Die)

Wondrous Item, common (requires attunement)

Whenever you roll this six-sided die, you can control which number it rolls.

This item can be found in *Xanathar's Guide to Everything*.

Beneath Glip Dak

A series of unusual heists has both the thieves' guild and city guard scrambling to uncover the culprits before the burglaries destabilize the thriving trade within the city, threatening the budding kingdom the Kroth Magg have fought and died to forge.

Tier 1 CCC-GLIP-01-XX can be played in any order.

A Two-Hour Adventure for 1st-4th Level Characters

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Introduction

"I smell a rat."

-Thomas Middleton

Welcome to Beneath Glip Dak, a D&D Adventurers League™ adventure, part of the official D&D Adventurers League™ organized play system and the *Tomb of Annihilation*™ storyline season.

This adventure takes place in the ruins underneath the hobgoblin trade fort of Glip Dak. Glip Dak is located in eastern Thar, just north of the Troll Hills.

This adventure is designed for **three to seven 1st-4th level characters** and is optimized for **five characters with an average party level (APL) of 3**. Characters outside this level range cannot participate in this adventure.

Adventure Background

In the ruins-turned sewers beneath the trade city of Glip Dak resides a tribe of xvarts. For many years, these creatures were content to squabble amongst themselves, stealing whatever ornate objects they could get their little blue hands on. Occasionally they will capture a resident of Glip Dak (mostly goblins, as they put up the least resistance) and sacrifice the creature to Raxivort, their god, who they often believe is angry with them.

A year ago, an ambitious xvart warlock named Uublix devised a plan to seize control of the tribe. The plan was simple – start a whisper campaign against Slobar, the tribe's speaker, questioning his loyalty to Raxivort. And bribery. Ublix bribed his fellow warlocks to stand with him against Slobar.

The plan worked. Uublix exiled Slobar a few tendays ago, banishing him to the sewers beneath Glip Dak. Now firmly ensconced as the tribe's new speaker, Uublix craves more power, and has enacted a plan to summon the xvart god. He has commanded an increase in the tribe's efforts to "acquire valuables" with which to compel an appearance of Raxivort. Glip Dak is a bazaar of the bizarre, and Uublix knows that eventually the tribe will amass enough treasure to lure their demigod out of hiding.

Unfortunately for the tribe, the increased pace of theft in the fortress market has alerted not only the hobgoblin constabulary but also the local thieves' guild as well.

Location and NPC Summary

The following NPCs and locations feature prominently in this adventure.

Grat Nying (GRAT NY-ing). "Night's Gift" is a goblin thieves' guild in Glip Dak.

Grimyton (GRIM-hy-ton). The name of the xvart village. No one can remember who named it, but everyone agrees it is appropriate.

Hrogar (ROW-gar). Hobgoblin captain of the guard. He may potentially hire the adventurers to stop a string of thefts.

Rattus (RAT-tuss). Big and dumb, Rattus is an abnormally large rat-beast who serves as the xvart tribe's strong-arm.

Raxivort (RACK-see-vort). The god of this the xvarts. He only appears to his worshippers long enough to claim their offerings.

Slobar (SLOW-bar). Slobar is the ousted speaker of Grimyton and is eager to find allies to help him reclaim the leadership of his tribe.

Strenkl (STR-ehn-cull). Strenkl is the "face" of the Grat Nying, a thieves' guild in Glip Dak. He may potentially hire the adventurers to investigate the thefts.

Kroth Magg (KAH-roth MA-gag). A relatively new hobgoblin kingdom risen to power within the northern Troll Hills. They control the valuable trade city of Glip Dak, the center of trade within Thar.

The Bronze (BRON-zz). The city guard of Glip Dak, so called because of their blue enameled bronze armor .

Uublix (OOB-lix). Warlock of Raxivort and speaker of the xvart tribe of the Glip Dak sewers.

Ghukuliak. Native language of goblinoids.

Adventure Overview

The adventure is broken down into three parts:

Part 1. Rats! The adventurers witness some rats dragging a coin purse down into the sewer. Later, depending on party composition, they are offered work by either the thieves' guild or the local law enforcement. The adventurers are asked to go beneath Glip Dak and investigate the thefts.

Part 2. Down We Go. The adventurers follow the trail of thieving rats into the sewers of Glip Dak. They encounter a gelatinous cube the xvarts refer to as "Old Sticky," and rescue the ousted xvart speaker Slobar in the process. Slobar presents them with an interesting offer.

Part 3. Showdown! The adventurers arrive in Grimyton to witness the culmination of Uublix's plan. Based on the choices the adventurers make, this could be resolved through diplomacy, or it could go really sideways!

Adventure Hooks

This adventure is part of a set of adventures located in the trade city of Glip Dak in the steppes of Thar. The Tier 1 GLIP adventures (CCC-GLIP-01-XX) are not part of a sequential storyline and can be played in any order.

Your players may recognize some of the NPCs or places from the other adventures. While that can give them a sense of familiarity with the locale, it won't spoil any surprises!

Fresh Off the Road. You have recently arrived at Glip Dak having come overland from Rashemen. The caravan master, Bomilcar Kustantina, has sold his shipment of *jhuild* (firewine in Common), and subsequently paid his guards.

Paying the Ransom. Several tendays ago, you set out from Hulburg with a mission to pay the ransom on Elias Vandover. Now that that mission is accomplished, you've been cooling your heels in Glip Dak, hoping to find a way back to Hulburg that doesn't involve you footing the bill.

Down Here at the Pawn Shop (Harper Assignment). Randyll Blackalbuck, while working at the family's Melvaunt store, Blackalbuck's Swap Shop, accidentally sold something he shouldn't have. Randyll sold an ornate box to a trader bound for Glip Dak. He belatedly realized it was the access key for the Melvaunt Harpers repository of knowledge (in a secret chest), and he has been frantically trying to get it back. Despite offers of coin ranging from reasonable to exorbitant, Randyll has had no luck getting the box back. He has called in for assistance! Give Harper players **Player Handout 1**.

Running this adventure at a convention

There is a lot to do in Beneath Glip Dak, but if you happen to be running it on a tight timeline, you will probably have to streamline it. Use the **Adventure Summary** on page 3 and the **Story Beats** for each part as a roadmap, and consider the below suggestions for running this adventure when you only have a two-hour slot.

- ***Part 1***: Have an NPC (Hrogar or Strenkl) give more of an info dump up front, and/or volunteer extra information during the roleplay encounter. If Harpers are in the group, give them the extra information that Strob was burgled and no longer has the box.
- ***Part 2***: Omit **2C**. Have Slobar give more of an info dump up front, and/or volunteer extra information during the roleplay encounter.
- ***Part 3***: Omit **3D**.

Part 1. Rats!

Story Beat

The adventure begins as the characters are headed for their inn. They spot an enterprising rat, which will later lead to a job offer from either The Bronze, the city watch, or Grat Nying, the thieves' guild. Either group asks the adventurers to go beneath Glip Dak to investigate who is behind the recent robberies and to search for missing watchmen or guildmates.

Estimated Duration: 25 minutes

General Features

The city is undergoing massive expansion and construction. Many buildings are webbed with gantries and scaffolding. Stone blocks have been piled near main thoroughfares to eventually lay solid streets, until then, the roads are muddy.

Terrain. The ground throughout has been churned into mud. Dry grass has been scattered on the main paths, but the clinging mud and constant foot traffic make the paths difficult terrain.

Weather. Thar is high plateau terrain, harsh and cold. It snows most of the year. Light snow covers the ground, piling into taller snowdrifts in less traveled areas. During the day, it is barely above freezing. At night, it is substantially colder.

Light. Every merchant or camp has some kind of fire going, which serves as a heat source, cooking method, and light.

Smells and Sounds. The pungent scent of horses and other animals mixes with the smell of rare medicinal herbs and exotic perfumes.

A. Precocious Vermin!

It is late evening as the adventurers take an alley shortcut (see **Map 1**) on the way back to their inn. There is enough light to see giant rats dragging what is obviously a coin purse down a drain in the middle of the alley.

Read or paraphrase the following:

> As you swing around the corner of the alley, you see, not more than 20 feet away, a pair of large rats the size of dogs, their teeth sunk into some poor beast they are dragging down the alley.
>
> A second glance at the "poor beast" reveals it to be a rather full coin purse. It looks like the rats are trying to drag it to a drain in the middle of the alley. The drain's grating is ajar.
>
> These two giant rats are busily dragging back the fruits of the day's labor. As the adventurers enter the alley, the rats' sense of urgency grows, and they begin to quickly wriggle toward the sewer access.

Left alone, the two **giant rats** will drag the purse into the sewer and not reappear.

If the adventurers intervene, one rat will stay and fight while the other uses its movement to go down the drain with the coin purse.

The drain is 2 feet wide and extends 5 feet down before opening in to a roughly circular room 20 feet in diameter. The opening has rungs affixed to the side that continue into the open section. The light filtering in from above bathes the area in dim light. The only exit is a gated drain on the south side of the chamber, 3 feet in diameter and set with iron bars. A Small creature can squeeze through the bars, finding itself in a lightless tunnel, 5 feet in diameter. A Medium creature will need to pass a DC 18 Strength (Athletics) test to open the bars enough to squeeze through. Adventurers who squeeze into this tunnel will find that it terminates 120 feet to the south in another circular chamber that has a ladder leading back up to a surface grate. At the midpoint of the 120-foot long tunnel, a passage east extends 300 feet before it terminates opposite the stairs down from section 2A.

Two **swarms of rats** wait with a readied action to attack any hostile creature who comes down the drain. Five more **giant rats** wait here, also with readied actions.

Adjusting this Encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

Very Weak: Remove two **swarms of rats** from the chamber.

Weak: Remove one **swarm of rats** from the chamber.

Strong: Remove two **swarms of rats** and two **giant rats** from the chamber. The remaining giant rats have been selectively bred for exceptional strength and savagery, treat as **giant hyenas**.

Very Strong: Remove two **swarms of rats** from the chamber. The remaining giant rats have been selectively bred for exceptional strength and savagery, treat as **giant hyenas**.

Tricks of the Trade

Consider the following guidance:

Giant Rats. Rats aren't particularly smart, though they know their teeth don't do as well against metal armor. They will use their Pack Tactics whenever possible. Given the chance, they will flee if reduced to half hit points or fewer, leaving behind the pouch.

Swarm of Rats. About even in the brains department with their rat-kin, a rat swarm will also flee if reduced to half hit points or fewer.

Treasure

The coin purse contains 12 gp worth of various denominations of coin. If the adventurers search the chamber thoroughly (i.e. with a light source), they find an additional 10 gp worth of coins.

Developments

Any character with a passive Investigation or Perception of 11 or higher who examines a giant rat body will notice that a crude brand in the shape of a hand wreathed in fire has recently been applied to the left haunch of the animal.

A successful DC 12 Intelligence (Religion) check will allow an adventurer to recall that the symbol of Azuth (LN, god of wizards) is a hand pointing up, outlined in fire.

If the Intelligence (Religion) check succeeds by 5 or more, that adventurer will recall that the xvart demigod Raxivort's symbol is a fiery blue hand.

Take a quick poll of your group: If you have a more law-abiding party, go to **B. The Bronze**. If you have a less law-abiding party, go to **C. Grat Nying**.

B. The Bronze

The hobgoblins of the Kroth Magg clan tolerate little lawbreaking in Glip Dak (see Hobgoblin Society in the Adventure Primer). What crime they do tolerate is petty theft toward outsiders. Any other criminal activity is ruthlessly punished by The Bronze.

For several tendays Glip Dak has been suffering a crime wave of burglaries, and The Bronze have not been able to solve it. As the adventures finish up their fight with the rats (or finish watching the rats disappear down the drain unchallenged), they hear a harsh voice from the mouth of the alley. Read or paraphrase the following:

> "Oi! You lot! You see them pesky fat rats, eh? They are mighty mischievous, ya? I wonder if I could interest you in some rat-slaying and sewer jack work. Dirty and dangerous, but it can help you lot make a name for yourselves as dependable and not afraid to get yer hands dirty. What say you?"
>
> You turn to find a hobgoblin in plate armor standing at the mouth of the alley, flanked on either side by six more hobgoblins, standing at attention. While none of them have their weapons drawn, they all carry stern expressions and watch you cautiously.
>
> The hobgoblin in bronze-enameled plate eases his posture, "Look, I am not stopping you from going where ya want to go, but I could use some help and my own men are stretched thin tending to other matters, mostly related to these cursed thefts."

The hobgoblin in plate armor is Hrogar, the watch captain, and he has a proposal for the adventurers. Hrogar has guards spread out watching for rats. Normally Hrogar doesn't trust the competency of outsiders, but the increase in thefts have left him tired and frustrated. Feeling that his back is to the wall, Hrogar is willing to trust mercenaries. It isn't that Hrogar is lazy, but he feels he can best serve the community by staying on the streets.

He knows the following:

- Roughly two tendays ago, burglary complaints in Glip Dak spiked, both from residents and non-residents.
- The stolen items are all on the small side—coins, gems, silverware, knick-knacks, etc. Taken together though, it amounts to a small fortune.
- Some of the burglary reports included claims of large rats being the offenders, dragging the stolen goods away into the night. Servants at three burglarized homes were found bitten to death. Hrogar has not made this information public.
- At first, Hrogar thought that Grat Nying, the city's thieves' guild, might be responsible, but quickly dismissed the idea. The guild has a good racket going and avoids doing anything to jeopardize it. The dead servants and reports of large rats have confirmed the notion that Grat Nying is not involved.
- Even though he doesn't think Grat Nying is involved, he has been leaning on them for information, and threatening them with formal charges if they don't turn up anything.
- Hrogar sent a patrol into the sewers beneath Glip Dak two days ago with instructions to mark their path and to return in two hours. They never returned. He has not reported this to his superiors. He is not keen on making that report with nothing to show for it.
- Hrogar wants to find out what is going on with these rat-thefts and what happened to his patrol. The loss of the patrol has left him short-staffed. He can't afford to send any more of his guards into the sewers without failing to man some of the posts under his watch.
- Hrogar offers the party 50 gp each to find out what happened to his patrol, and to find out who is behind these thefts. He offers an additional reward of 10 percent of the value of all stolen goods recovered.
- Hrogar asks the adventurers to meet at The Bronze's barracks with information before two days have passed.

Hrogar gives the adventurers directions to the sewer

access and a key to open the sewer door.

C. Grat Nying

Literally "Night's Gift" in Ghukliak, Grat Nying is the local gang of thieves, consisting mostly of goblin burglars (though they have employed bugbears and drow on limited-duration contracts when the situation warrants muscle or magic). Members of Grat Nying mainly prey on the non-goblinoids of Glip Dak and stick chiefly to non-violent pursuits. They also occasionally serve as the eyes and ears for The Bronze. This practice has led to unspoken non-aggression pact with the stalwart city guard.

As the adventures finish their fight with the rats (or watch the rats disappear down the drain), they hear a whisper from deeper in the alley.

Read or paraphrase the following:

> "Psst! Over here! Easy, easy! No need to get jumpy. I want to make you an offer."
>
> From the shadows steps a rather dapper goblin dressed in black silk. He bows, "Call me Strenkl, if you will. A funny name, I know, a moniker from my time as a street orphan. It keeps me humble, I like to think. Look, I need some help. Nothing dirty in the ethical sense I assure you, but it is dirty in the literal sense.
>
> "A group of giant rats have been acting a bit odd, stealing valuables and murdering people before retreating to the old ruins below. We tried looking into this ourselves, at the behest of Hrogar, the guard captain, but about a dozen of my lads have gone down and not come back up, if you know what I mean. I can't afford to send any more of my boys and gals down there as we are already suspected of committing the crimes and The Bronze knows the faces of my most reliable people, so," he bows again. "I turn to you."

The gang has a pair of watchers on this alley, waiting for signs of rats. One ran to fetch Strenkl when the rats appeared. The leadership of Grat Nying has discussed hiring outsiders (see below) and Strenkl makes the split-second decision to offer the adventurers a job.

Strenkl is the "face" of Grat Nying. He speaks roughly a dozen languages (all the standard languages as well as Undercommon and Draconic) and has a reassuring and polite manner.

Recently, the gang has noticed a lot more rat traffic under Glip Dak than is normally the case. Strenkl can tell the adventurers the following:

- The first indication they had of potential competition was Hrogar (see **B. The Bronze**, above) rousting their members, accusing them of stealing from citizens and even of murder.
- After professing their innocence, Hrogar enlisted them to find out what was going on beneath Glip Dak.
- In the following days, Grat Nying sent more than a dozen of its members to the sewers and ruins beneath Glip Dak. They were to follow any rats, mark the path, and report back. None of them have returned.
- Strenkl mentions that after Hrogar's visit, they observed that the increased rat traffic did include some large rats that stole pouches, candlesticks, silverware, and jewelry. He does not mention that Grat Nying has recovered some of this and plans to fence it far from Glip Dak.
- Hrogar is putting pressure on the gang for information and the goods. The leadership of the gang (including Strenkl) are at their wit's end. They have lost a quarter of their gang with no results to show for it. With their strength depleted, they cannot afford to lose face, or another gang

could topple them and take their place within the trade city.

- Strenkl offers nothing up front to find out what is happening beneath Glip Dak. However, he alludes to greater rewards: "Who can say what happened to all the stolen goods? I don't think all of it is recoverable." He winks as he says this, "if you know what I mean."
- Strenkl is anxious to get Hrogar off his back. He asks the adventurers to make haste, and report back before two days have passed.
- If asked about his nickname, Strenkl sighs, "I get asked that a lot. I'll tell you if you succeed."

Strenkl gives the adventurers directions to the sewer access and a key to open the sewer door.

Harper Faction Developments

Members of the Harper Faction may at this point want to track down Strob at the Pickled Crawler shop to steal back Randyll Blackalbuck's golden box. If they ask for directions, someone they encounter can point them to Strob's shop.

Read or paraphrase the following:

> Mixed in with the market shops are more unusual vendors.
>
> One shop in particular has a jar with a pickled carrion crawler head on display in the window, along with desiccated humanoid body parts and a selection of crisp-fried skewered rats. The sign above reads *Strave Stek Macga*, and bears an image of a carrion crawler.
>
> Inside you see a one-eyed duergar behind the counter. He looks up at you, squinting through a crystal monocle. "Eh, customers? How can old Strob help you all? Have you come looking for something?"

What Strob knows:

- He claims not to have the gold box anymore and says: "I should have sold it back! I'm out a small fortune on that dratted box!" If the adventurers are suspicious of Strob's claim, a successful DC 10 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals this to be true.
- If pressed, Strob will confess to his shop being burgled recently. He states the thieves stole only small things "that could easily be fenced somewhere else."
- After a few minutes of discussion, Strob will urge the adventurers to "buy something, or be on about your business!"

Part 2. Down We Go!

Story Beat

The adventurers follow the trail of thieving rats into the sewers of Glip Dak. Below the market fortress, they find strange and dangerous shrines. The adventurers encounter a gelatinous cube who the xvarts refer to as "Old Sticky", and possibly rescue the xvart Slobar in the process. There is also a barred passage to a deadly encounter.

Estimated Duration: 35 minutes

General Features for beneath Glip Dak

Glip Dak is built upon an ancient Netherese ruin, incorporating and repairing part of the structure for their own needs. The bulk of the Glip Dak fortress is a Netherese temple. The ruins seem to stretch endlessly below ground in a labyrinthine network of streets and crumbling buildings.

Terrain. The tunnels vary from wide to narrow, sometimes clogged with crumbled stonework, fungi, or corpses of strange things.

Weather. Quiet and damp.

Light. The underground sewers and ruins are dark.

Smells and Sounds. The slush and drip of running water fills the place. Despite being used as a sewer, it smells mostly of mold and damp earth.

Players Gonna Play

Your players might decide to use the drain-chamber in the first alley, or any random drain, to gain access to the sewers. In that case, consider DC 18 Strength (Athletics) checks to bend bars or lift gates, allowing them access to the ruins below Glip Dak. From there, start at **Section B. Following the Breadcrumbs**.

A. The Way Down

Following the directions given to them by Hrogar or Strenkl, the adventurers make their way to another part of the market city where there is easier access to the sewer. See **Map 2**.

> Following the provided directions leads you to the main sewer maintenance access, which is a stone building chipped and cracked from age. Neatly lettered on the iron-bound door in Common and Ghukliak are the words: "Keep out or be eaten."

The provided key fits neatly in the lock, which is well maintained, opening easily and quietly. Inside the 15-foot squat building is a work bench built against one wall and a roped-off area in the far corner.

On the workbench are various tools, nails, and scraps of wood and metal. Hanging on pegs above the work bench are a pair of bullseye lanterns.

As soon as the adventurers step into the building, they notice a set of spiral stairs descending into the dark below.

Treasure

A thorough search of the room yields two bullseye lanterns (full), two flasks of lamp oil, and a set of mason's tools.

B. Following the Breadcrumbs

The stairs down from the maintenance access building terminate at a 15-foot-wide passage of worked stone. Down the middle of the passage is a 5-foot-wide channel of effluent that flows west. A successful DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals that the channel is relatively new, being carved from the much older surrounding stone. The channel is 2 feet deep.

At various intervals and heights, pipes jut out of the walls, aimed toward the channel in the middle. Occasionally, a slug of fluid will gout from a pipe, and splash noisily into the channel.

At the bottom of the stairs, scrawled on the opposite wall, is the symbol of The Bronze, and directly beneath it a chalk arrow. Beneath that, on the stone floor, is another arrow pointing in the direction of the first.

Looking south down the tunnel (as far as darkvision or light sources allow), the adventurers can see arrows scrawled on the floor roughly every 30 feet.

After the adventurers have made their way approximately 60 feet down the tunnel, read or paraphrase the following:

> Ahead, waist high on the wall, you can see the flicker of candles. As you get closer, you see that someone has fashioned a rough shelf of wet clay. On the shelf are a dozen lit candles surrounded by loose copper pieces. Painted in blue behind the shelf is a stylized humanoid creature, arms outstretched, and a halo of light emanating from its head. An arc of words in Common above the creature's head reads: "All hail the coming of Raxivort. Prepare his way with gold!" Other sentences are painted on the wall in a different language.

The following messages are written on the wall in Abyssal:

- "Uublix commands you! Gather treasure for our lord!"
- "Rat-wardens, send forth your beasts to collect offerings to Raxivort!"
- "The joyous day of Raxivort's return approaches! He will reward the faithful!"

A successful DC 12 Intelligence (Arcana or History) check will reveal the following about Raxivort:

- Raxivort is the god of the xvarts, and his symbol is a flaming blue hand.
- Raxivort is greedy to a fault, a trait his progeny, the xvarts, exhibit as well.

Succeeding on the Intelligence (Arcana or History) by 5 or more reveals the following additional information:

- Xvarts often kidnap humanoids to sacrifice to Raxivort.
- Raxivort can be summoned to a xvart tribe if they accumulate enough wealth, the weirder or more esoteric the better. Raxivort will appear and take all the tribe's loot before fleeing.

The shrine here is trapped. The coins are coated with a contact poison that paralyzes the victim.

Poison Coins

Simple trap (level 1-4, deadly threat)

The Grimyton xvarts have built shrines to appease Raxivort, not to supply the greedy with spare change. By order of the Grimyton speaker, Uublix, the coins have been coated in a nasty poison.

Trigger. Any creature that touches the coins exposes itself to the poison.

Effect. The triggering creature must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the creature takes 11 (3d6) poison damage and is poisoned for one minute. While poisoned this way, the creature is paralyzed. On a successful save, the creature takes half damage and isn't poisoned.

Countermeasures. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals a clear viscous slime coating some of the coins in the pile. A successful DC 12 Intelligence (Nature) check confirms the slime to be poison. Dousing the coins with water, wine, or other liquid will wash away the poison or dilute it such that it is no longer dangerous.

Adjusting this Encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

Very Weak: DC 13 Constitution save and Wisdom (Perception) check; 7 (2d6) poison damage.

Weak: DC 14 Constitution save and Wisdom (Perception) check; 7 (2d6) poison damage.

Average: Use default.

Strong: DC 16 Constitution save and Wisdom (Perception) check; 14 (4d6) poison damage.

Very Strong: DC 17 Constitution save and Wisdom (Perception) check; 17 (5d6) poison damage.

Tricks of the Trade

Reading Abyssal. If no one in the party speaks Abyssal, can cast *comprehend languages*, or otherwise read the script in Abyssal, consider improvising an Intelligence skill check, or changing the script to another language.

Treasure

The shrine to Raxivort contains 300 cp (3 gp).

XP Award

For detecting and defeating the poison coin trap, award each character 50 XP.

C. Deeper into Darkness

If you have fewer than 80 minutes left to play, consider omitting this section. If playing in a two-hour slot, omit this encounter.

Eventually, the adventurers reach the end of the sewer system. See **Map 3**. Read or paraphrase the following:

> After following the tunnel for hundreds of feet, ducking under and stepping over various pipes and sluices, you come to a junction. The chalk arrows turn east, away from the effluent passage, continuing down another 10-foot tunnel. This one has no channel carved out of it.
>
> The tunnel with the effluent channel has been crudely walled off at this point. Rough-cut stones are mortared into a wall with bars set into it allowing the sewer muck to continue on its path. A large skull-and-crossbones has been painted on the wall, with what you presume to be a warning, written in Ghukliak.
>
> The smell here is truly awful, a cloying heaviness of filth that is stifling and choking.
>
> This wall, though crude, has been in place for some years. On the walls flanking the iron bars are painted skull-and-crossbones images. Lettered neatly underneath each is a warning, written in Ghukliak: "Do not go past this point. The garbage-eaters live beyond and eat everything!"

The bars are narrow enough that a Small creature can squeeze through. A successful DC 30 Strength (Athletics) check, or a cumulative strength of 50, is required to open the bars up enough for a Medium creature to squeeze through. Proficiency in mason's tools finds a leverage point, granting advantage on Strength (Athletics) check or reducing the strength requirement by 5.

If the characters are foolish enough not to follow the

chalk arrows and instead force their way past the bars, they will encounter an otyugh in a 30-foot by 50-foot chamber some ways down the passage. This is a very dangerous encounter. Give the adventurers considerable warning of the threat. A clever, and brave, adventurer can sneak into the otyugh lair to search for treasure. A DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check finds 50 gp worth of valuables and a *spell scroll of fireball* in a waterproof brass case.

Adjusting this Encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

Very Weak: The **otyugh** has 72 hit points

Weak: The **otyugh** has 102 hit points

Strong: The **otyugh** has 168 hit points

Very Strong: Add an **otyugh**. Each otyugh has 114 hit points.

Treasure

The otyugh lair holds 50 gp of valuables and a *spell scroll of fireball* in a waterproof brass case.

D. Old Sticky

As the party heads deeper into the ruins beneath Glip Dak, they encounter another shrine to Raxivort, and their first real threat. See **Map 3**.

> The farther you get from the sewer-tunnel, the more easily you find it to breathe. The stonework here appears to be very old, carved with glyphs you don't recognize.
>
> You soon come to another shrine, though this one is piled with silver pieces and has different writing around the image of the god.
>
> Looking down the tunnel, no more chalk marks are visible.

The following messages are written on the wall in Abyssal:

- "Slobar is outcast! He is denied fire and water within 100 miles of Grimyton!"
- "All hail Raxivort, lord-creator and holder of the blue flame!"
- "Give deeply to Raxivort, so that he may appear among us!"

The shrine here is trapped. The coins are coated with a contact poison that paralyzes the victim. See Poison Coins in **B. Following the Breadcrumbs**, above.

While the adventurers are examining the shrine, read or paraphrase the following:

> There is a sharp cry down the tunnel. From around the corner, running toward you, is a small blue humanoid clad only in a loincloth. It glances back over its shoulder, then looks back at you and shouts in Common, "Look out, Old Sticky is right behind me!"
>
> Looking behind the little blue creature, you can see the rough outlines of three or four armored shapes moving slowly down the passageway toward you.

The armored shapes the adventurers see are all that remains of Hrogar's hobgoblin patrol. They have been consumed by Old Sticky, a **gelatinous cube**, and all that remains of them are their plate armor, shields, and swords. It has been a few days since Old Sticky ate something, and adventurers are tasty.

The running creature is the deposed **xvart speaker**, Slobar. He squeezes past the adventures to put them between him and Old Sticky. If any of the adventurers are paralyzed from the poisoned coins, he chuckles under his breath.

Role-Play Opportunity

Slobar is supposed to present a roleplay opportunity for the players. He isn't intended to be too annoying, but rather helpful by providing important information, possibly an item, and an alternate means to accomplish the adventure.

Xvart Speaker

A xvart tribe has one speaker who serves as its leader. The speaker has the statistics of a normal xvart, except that it has an Intelligence of 13 (+1) and knows one additional language (usually Common or Goblin). In this case, Slobar knows Common.

Adjusting this Encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

- ***Very Weak***: Treat Old Sticky as a normal **gelatinous cube**.
- ***Weak***: Change Old Sticky's hit points to 100.
- ***Average***: Change Old Sticky's hit points to 120.

• ***Strong or Very Strong***: Change Old Sticky's hit points to 120 and the **gelatinous cube** gains advantage when making melee attacks.

Tricks of the Trade

Reading Abyssal. If no one in the party speaks Abyssal, can cast *comprehend languages*, or otherwise read the script in Abyssal, consider improvising an Intelligence skill check, or changing the script to another language.

Gelatinous Cubes. Literally mindless, the gelatinous cube just wants to consume. Have it use Engulf whenever possible. If the adventurers flee beyond range of its blindsight, have it wait there, blocking the tunnel.

Treasure

After defeating Old Sticky, the players find 40 gp worth of various coinage. All the items save for a *shield of expression* bearing a smirking face are damaged beyond use or value.

The shrine contains 30 gp worth of silver pieces.

XP Award

For detecting and defeating the poison coin trap, award each character 50 XP.

Developments

Slobar is delighted that the adventures have saved him, though he is slightly sad to see the end of Old Sticky. When opportunity knocks, however, Slobar always answers, and opportunity has just landed a squad of sword swingers in his lap.

Read or paraphrase the following:

> "Ah, from Glip Dak you've come? But not goblins, no, not goblins. Thank you for saving me from Old Sticky! I'm out here alone for the first time in a long time." He pauses for a second or two before continuing, "Glip Dak is the city of bargains, no? Why not make a bargain with Slobar?"

Slobar's offer:

• Slobar has recently been deposed from his position of speaker and banished from the tribe.

• Uublix, chief instigator and usurper, has assumed the position of speaker for the tribe.

• Uublix has persuaded the tribe to amass a hoard of treasure in the hopes that Raxivort, the xvart god, would appear before them.

• Slobar argued against this, fearing repercussions from those that "dwell above." Slobar believes a meek existence stealing food from above is the safest way for the tribe to survive. Besides, Glip Dak owes the xvarts for setting traps to keep away the "things from below", great beetle creatures who walk on two legs.

• Slobar asks the adventurers to dispose of Uublix in whatever fashion they can, allowing Slobar to become the speaker once more. In return, he offers to let them have half of the treasure the xvarts have recently stolen. Other things Slobar knows include:

• The flaming blue hand is the symbol of Raxivort.

• At Uublix's request, the xvarts have been using giant rats to steal from the surface.

• Slobar can demonstrate the xvarts' ability to speak with rats.

A successful DC 14 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals Slobar is, despite trying to hide it, fearful and frustrated. If questioned about this, he unconvincingly denies it: "No, no-no. I can't be afraid. Not now. Too soon for that. I have my tribe to save from that filth-traitor Uublix."

Success also indicates Slobar is hiding something, if pressed, he reveals that he knows the layout of the xvart tribe quite well but is hesitant to tell the adventurers earlier as he doesn't want that information used against him later. If the adventurers promise they will be good and not tell anyone, which requires a successful DC 14 Charisma (Persuasion or Deception) check, Slobar sketches a detailed map of the area in the grime on the floor.

This provides advantage to Dexterity (Stealth) and Wisdom (Perception) checks throughout the sewer complex.

Slobar offers the adventurers information and aid in exchange for gold. However, the adventurers may make several (see below) DC 14 Charisma (Persuasion or Deception) checks to convince the disposed xvart speaker that by helping them, he increases their chances of removing the usurper. Good roleplaying should grant inspiration.

Per 30 gp payment or each successful DC 14 Charisma (Persuasion or Deception) check, Slobar provides one of the following boons:

• Provides tactical information on the layout, defenses, and patrol routes of the xvart village. This information provides advantage on initiative checks in **Part 3. Showdown**!

• Offers a *potion of healing*.

• He offers some insights into the ruins below Glip Dak, saying they are quite extensive and go deep underground. The ruins far beneath are in better shape than the ones on the upper levels, but strange and frightening creatures lurk there. The xvarts set deadly traps to keep them away. Glip Dak owes the xvarts, and that is why they take food. It is compensation.

• The Kroth Magg, rulers of Glip Dak, worship foreign gods. They don't worship the goblin god, even though they pretend to. He has seen the Kroth Magg fighting other hobgoblins, ones wearing horned masks who fight with their fists.

If the adventurers are friendly towards Slobar, or genuinely apologize for being rude, he also provides them with a *potion of healing* (in addition to the one potentially earned above).

Role-Play Opportunity

Fleeing Home. Reminder, Slobar is supposed to present a roleplay opportunity for the players. He isn't intended to be too annoying, but rather helpful by providing important information, possibly an item, and an alternate means to accomplish the adventure. If the party kills him out of hand, it will be exceedingly difficult for them to learn what Slobar knew.

Part 3. Showdown!

Story Beat

The adventurers arrive in Grimyton to witness the culmination of Uublix's plan. Uublix, in full regalia of a speaker, and standing before a mound of treasure, is completing a summoning ritual that should bring forth Raxivort. Unfortunately, Uublix gets the ceremony wrong and summons an evil fey creature. But the xvart god makes a brief appearance!

Estimated Duration: 45 minutes

General Features for Grimyton

Grimyton is a dark, smelly warren in an ancient Netherese ruin. Above is the market city of Glip Dak.

The ruins seem to stretch endlessly below ground in a labyrinthine network of streets and crumbling buildings.

Terrain. The tunnels vary from wide to narrow, sometimes clogged with crumbled stonework, fungi, or corpses of strange things.

Weather. Warm and humid.

Light. Most of Grimyton is lit by torches.

Smells and Sounds. The slush and drip of running water fills the place. Despite being used as a sewer, it smells mostly of mold and damp earth. In the occupied spaces of Grimyton, the discordant buzz of xvart speech can be heard.

A. The Empty Guard Post

Slobar leads the adventurers the rest of the way through the ruins beneath Glip Dak to Grimyton, the xvart lair.

Read or paraphrase the following:

> Ahead you can see pair of heavy red-velvet curtains gaudily trimmed in gold embroidery. They are pulled back revealing a stone chamber lit by guttering torches spilling oily smoke.
>
> "That's not right!" Slobar says. "There should be sentries on duty! Uublix is a fool." With that, he starts toward the curtained opening.

The chamber is 15 feet by 10 feet.

The room is empty save for a pair of spears leaning against a wall. A large, filthy tapestry covers the floor. It is impossible to tell what the tapestry used to depict.

If the adventurers ask, Slobar can provide the following information:

- There are normally two sentries on duty here at all hours.
- There should be a giant rat cadre here as well.

Developments

Slobar stomps around this antechamber for a few minutes, muttering about "amateurs!" then heads deeper into Grimyton. When he reaches the fork between **Area B** and **Area C**, he waits, listening to the chanting coming from **Area C**.

B. Xvart Sleeping Chamber

This room in one of many xvart sleeping chambers in Grimyton. There is a 1 in 20 chance of this room being occupied by 1d4 sleeping xvarts; they are all supposed to be at the main chamber.

Read or paraphrase the following:

> Behind a crude wooden door is a roughly shaped room hacked out of the surrounding stone. It smells of stale sweat and spoiled food. Filthy sleeping pallets lie haphazardly on the floor.

C. Xvart Warlock Sleeping Chamber

This room is part of the ancient Netherese construction that makes up much of Grimyton. It is unoccupied, all the xvart warlocks are in the main chamber.

Read or paraphrase the following:

> Ancient carved double doors open in to a worked stone room. Though less crowded than the other sleeping chambers, this one still smells of old sweat and older food. Sleeping pallets lay on the floor.

D. The Speaker's Chamber (Optional)

If you have fewer than 30 minutes left to finish, omit the Speaker's Chamber combat encounter. If playing in a two-hour slot, omit this encounter.

The Speaker's Chamber lies just south of the passage leading from the guard post (**Area A**). Please read or paraphrase the following:

> Heavy gold-colored curtains close off the room at the end of the hall.
>
> Through a slight tear in the fabric, you can see this chamber is sparsely furnished, save for a massive four-poster bed that dominates the room. Pegs on a wall hold a few sets of gold robes, and a stack of what appear to be stilts leans nearby. Next to the bed, on a three-legged stool, rests a small gold box.

Listening outside reveals no sound from inside the chamber.

The gold box is the one that Randyll Blackalbuck is so anxious to recover. Uublix is using the box to store some of the choicest pieces of jewelry stolen by the tribe.

Adjusting this Encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

Very Weak: Two **xvarts** and a **xvart warlock of Raxivort**.

Weak: Four **xvarts** and a **xvart warlock of Raxivort**.

Average: Four **xvarts** and two **xvart warlocks of Raxivort**.

Strong: Five **xvarts** and three **xvart warlocks of Raxivort**.

Very Strong: Six **xvarts** and four **xvart warlocks of Raxivort**.

Tricks of the Trade

Consider the following guidance:

Slobar. If Slobar is present with the adventurers, it is possible he can command the patrol to stand down with a successful DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion or Intimidation) check. Failure by 5 or more will cause the patrol to "kill the traitor!"

Xvarts. Craven fighters, the xvarts will team up on the weakest looking adventurer. They will use their Low Cunning ability to Disengage whenever possible. They flee if more than half their number go down.

Xvart warlocks of Raxivort. Only slightly less cowardly, the xvart warlocks will barrage enemies with fire, most likely *burning hands*, but possibly *scorching ray*. They will then switch to cantrips, leaving their remaining spell slot for *expeditious retreat*, which they will cast if necessary. The warlocks flee if more than half the xvarts go down.

Treasure

Secreted under the giant bed is pouch filled with 150 gp worth of various coins. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Perception) reveals its hiding place in the bed's supports.

Retrieving the gold box completes the Harper Faction Assignment and nets the adventurers a 50 gp reward.

E. Raxivort, Arise!

In the main chamber of Grimyton, speaker Uublix (a **warlock of the Archfey**) is finishing the final steps in casting *conjure fey*, mistakenly thinking he will cause Raxivort to appear.

Read or paraphrase the following:

> In the main chamber, some two dozen xvarts are watching a tall gold-robed xvart standing atop a mound of coins, silverware, rugs, and the like, intoning words of power.
>
> Before him is a censer with scented smoke wafting towards the ceiling. Behind the xvart, partly concealed in the shadows, is the hulking figure of a giant rat-beast.
>
> You see the xvart lurch to the left suddenly, reaching down to grab his side. It is at this point you realize that he is standing on stilts, obscured by gaudy gold robes.

If Slobar is present, read or paraphrase the following:

> Slobar strides into the chamber imperiously, puffed up to his whole 3-foot height, interrupting the ceremony.
>
> "Uublix, your greed would be the downfall of our whole tribe if not for me!" Slobar cries. "Those who dwell above have sent a powerful force to destroy us, but I, Slobar, can save us all! I have turned enemies into allies, I have turned woe into weal! Uublix, your doom is upon you!"
>
> A stunned silence fills the chamber. Uublix, and many other xvarts, look as though they are seeing a ghost. Slobar pauses a few more seconds, and then turns to look towards where you are, surreptitiously waving you forward.
>
> "I said, Uublix, your doom is upon you!"

If Slobar is not present, and the adventurers do nothing to stop the ceremony, read or paraphrase the following:

> As the chanting reaches a crescendo, the gold-clad xvart thrust his hands directly out to his sides, and then swiftly brings them together over his head with a sharp clap. Echoing the clap is faint pop from the censer as a gout of smoke emerges and coalesces into something decidedly un-xvartlike.

Uublix

Add the following abilities Uublix's statblock:

At will spells: *alarm*.

Low Cunning. The xvart can take the Disengage action as a bonus action on each of its turns.

Overbearing Pack. The xvart has advantage on Strength (Athletics) checks to shove a creature if at least one of the xvart's allies is within 5 feet of the target and the ally isn't incapacitated.

Raxivort's Tongue. The xvart can communicate with ordinary bats and rats, as well as giant bats and giant rats.

At this point, the party likely has a chance to negotiate or fight.

Negotiate

Slobar wants to reclaim his place as the tribe's speaker; Uublix likes the status quo.

If Slobar is not with the adventurers, negotiating a peaceful conclusion will be much more difficult; Uublix has advantage on any Charisma checks made.

Consider the following guidance:

Negotiating Tactics. The adventurers may use threats, non-verbal intimidation, the knowledge that they've been sent by those on the surface, or other ideas to make their arguments. For a good argument, grant them advantage on the check. For a particularly good argument, reward them with inspiration.

The Negotiation. Uublix and the party's negotiator will make three opposed Charisma (Persuasion) checks over the course of the negotiation. Two successful checks will win the negotiation. See **Roleplaying Uublix** for some of Uublix's favorite lines.

The Crowd. The xvart tribe is fickle and can tell which way the wind is blowing. Each successful Charisma check grants Uublix advantage on the next as the crowd hoots and hollers. Each failed Charisma check imposes disadvantage on the next as the crowd grows quieter and fidgety.

Winning. If the adventurers win the negotiation, the tribe tears him down from the pile of treasure, strips him of his robes, and chases him from the chamber with kicks and howls.

Losing. If the adventurers lose the negotiation, Uublix gives Slobar an evil smile, "I should have killed you last time. I won't make that mistake again." He tells the adventures they have until the count of ten before he unleashes "his mighty horde upon them!"

Roleplaying Uublix

Uublix has unwittingly made a warlock pact with an unknown otherworldly being but assumes the patron is really Raxivort. As speaker of the xvart tribe, Uublix has "supreme authority over Grimyton", and loves to let the other xvarts know it.

Quotes: "I am invincible!"

"Bow down before your new master!"

"You'll pay for this treachery!"

"Speaketh not the name of Raxivort!"

"Feel the wrath of Uublix the Mighty!"

Fight

If the party arrives at the xvart main chamber without Slobar, and doesn't stop the summoning ceremony, a fight is inevitable as Uublix cries out for his tribe to "destroy the intruders!"

If they do stop the ceremony, see the **Negotiate** section above.

At the completion of Uublix's ceremony, he casts *conjure fey,* believing he is summoning the xvart god. A number of things happen:

- A fey creature is summoned to the chamber. See "**Adjusting the Encounter**" below.
- If they haven't noticed them already, at this point, a few of the xvarts notice the adventurers and cry out in Abyssal: "Intruders, flee!" and "Intruders, get them!".
- Slobar joins the "intruders, flee!" crowd, encouraging his fellow xvarts to run away.
- The xvarts crying "intruders, get them!" flee as well, hoping that some of their fellow will indeed try and get the intruders, giving the rest a better chance of escape!

The ritual participants:

- Uublix, **warlock of the Archfey**. If he moves more than half-speed, he cannot cast spells with somatic components. His pride is such that he won't get off the stilts. However, if he is involuntarily removed from the stilts, he won't get back on them during the battle.
- Rattus, rat-beast. Rattus uses either the **ogre** or **half-ogre** stat block, depending on the party strength. Remove any ranged attacks and languages.
- Summoned fey creature could be a **meenlock**, **redcap**,

or **yeth hound**, depending on the party strength.

- Two dozen non-combatant **xvarts**, who flee as soon as possible.

Adjusting this Encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

Very Weak: Uublix, **warlock of the Archfey**, has 25 hit points. Rattus, **half-ogre**, has 15 hit points. Summoned fey is a **meenlock**.

Weak: Uublix, **warlock of the Archfey**, has 35 hit points. Rattus, **half-ogre**, has 20 hit points. Summoned fey is a **meenlock**.

Average or Strong: Uublix, **warlock of the Archfey**. Rattus, **ogre**. Summoned fey is a **redcap**.

Very Strong: Uublix, **warlock of the Archfey**. Rattus, **ogre**. Summoned fey is a **yeth hound**.

Raxivort Appears!

In the middle of the battle or negotiation, read or paraphrase the following:

> An audible pop sounds from just behind the mound of treasure. A nine-foot-tall xvart bedecked in jeweled trinkets wearing a crown too small for him appears out of thin air. He stands beside the pile, looking down at the treasures, licking his lips.

> He looks up momentarily and notices the confrontation in the chamber. His eyes go wide and he drops the sack he was carrying.

Despite Uublix's incompetence, Raxivort did appear to collect the treasures amassed for him. Upon seeing the conflict, he will *plane shift* away on initiative count 20.

If an adventurer manages to wound Raxivort with an attack (AC 20), steal from him with a successful DC 17 (Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) skill check, or scare him further with an DC 10 Charisma (Intimidation) skill check, he drops a trinket worth 100 gp before vanishing with an even louder pop.

Tricks of the Trade

Consider the following guidance:

Warlock of the Archfey. Uublix is completely insane and has made the broad leap that since he summoned an ally instead of his god, he must be a god! He is still a craven god, however, and will use his magic, outside of cantrips, mainly to keep away from danger by using misty step. The first time he takes damage, he will use Misty Escape. For offense, he uses *eldritch blast*.

Half-ogre/ogre. Rattus is a large, not-at-all-bright brute. Unbidden, he will attack the nearest creature who is not blue (Wild Magic sorcerers who have recently surged and rolled a 23-24 will find this to their advantage).

Meenlock. The meenlock will attack as Ublix commands. It will make use of Shadow Teleport as much as possible, mainly to get out of melee. If Uublix loses concentration, the meenlock will target him solely.

Redcap. The redcap will attack as Ublix commands. Given the chance, it will use Ironbound Pursuit, otherwise it will use its Wicked Sickle. If Uublix loses concentration, the redcap will target him solely, taking special delight if it can knock the xvart off his stilts.

Yeth hound. The yeth hound will alternate using its bay and its bite, attacking as Uublix commands. If Uublix loses concentration, the yeth hound will target him solely.

Xvart. Adventurers have stormed their home, and the speaker has summoned a monster instead of their god; the xvarts want to flee. They use their action to Dash, unless their way is blocked. In that case, they use Overbearing Pack to try and push a way through.

Xvart warlock of Raxivort. Adventurers have stormed their home, and the speaker has summoned a monster instead of their god; the xvarts want to flee. They use their action to cast *expeditious retreat*, trying to put as much xvart-fodder between themselves and danger as possible.

Treasure

The pile of treasure that was gathered to summon Raxivort has the following value, depending on which NPC the adventurers worked with.

The Bronze: 1200 gp

Grat Nying: 400 gp

Near the pile lies an empty *bag of holding*, left there by a terrified Raxivort.

If the adventurers missed **Area 3D**, add that treasure here.

Conclusion

The Xvarts. If it came to a fight, the xvarts, led by Slobar (if alive), fled deeper into the ruins under Glip Dak. They will eventually return to claim their lair, but not for many tendays.

The Bronze. Hrograr allows the adventurers to keep a 10 percent finder's fee (120 gold) as promised in addition to the 50 gold each.

Hrogar is pleased that the mystery of the missing goods and guards has been solved. The players have earned the story award **The Bronze.**

Grat Nying. When the adventurers report back to Strenkl, they find that the goblin is quite relieved. Rather than ask for a cut of the loot, he offers to fence the goods for no fee, allowing the adventurers to walk away with pure coin. The players earn the story award **Grat Nying**.

Harper Faction Assignment. If the adventurers recovered the gold box, Randyll Blackalbuck is grateful and gives a reward of 50 gp.

Rewards

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

Experience

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

Combat Awards

Name of Foe	XP Per Foe
Gelatinous Cube (Old Sticky)	450
Giant Hyena (Mutant Giant Rat)	200
Giant Rat	25
Half-Ogre (Rattus)	200
Meenlock (Summoned Fey)	450
Ogre (Rattus)	450
Redcap (Summoned Fey)	700
Swarm of Rats	50
Xvart	25
Xvart Speaker (Slobar)	25
Xvart Warlock of Raxivort	200
Xvart Warlock of the Archfey	1,100
Yeth Hound (Summoned Fey)	1,100

Non-Combat Awards

Task or Accomplishment	XP Per Character
Avoiding the poison coin trap	50

The adventures minimum and maximum XP awards are located on the Adventure Rewards document. Note that DDAL adventures award a maximum of the "target XP" award. Only epics may grant the "maximum" amount.

The minimum total award for each character participating in this adventure is **450 experience points**.

The maximum total award for each character participating in this adventure is **600 experience points**.

Treasure

The characters receive the following treasure, divided up amongst the party. Treasure is divided as evenly as possible. Gold piece values listed for sellable gear are calculated at their selling price, not their purchase price.

Treasure Awards

Item Name	GP Value
Gold Box	50
Giant Rat's Coin Purse	12
Old Sticky's Contents	40
Payment (The Bronze)	50 (each)
Raxivort Shrine (Copper)	3
Raxivort Shrine (Silver)	30
Reward (The Bronze)	120
Reward (Grat Nying)	400
Sewer's Loose Coinage	10

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

Permanent magic items are divided according to a system detailed in the D&D Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide.

Bag of Holding

Wondrous Item, uncommon

This bag has an interior space considerably larger than its outside dimensions. This item can be found in **Player Handout 4**.

Shield of Expression

Armor (shield), common

The front of this shield is shaped in the likeness of a face. This item can be found in **Player Handout 4**.

Potion of Healing

Potion, common

This item can be found in the *Player's Handbook*.

Spell Scroll of Fireball

Scroll, uncommon

This item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Story Awards

During the course of this adventure, the characters may earn the following story award:

The Bronze. Hrogar, a captain in The Bronze, is pleased with the work you did for him. More information can be found in **Player Handout 2**.

Grat Nying. You have done Grat Nying a favor, and you can expect one in return. Strenkl, one of the elders of Grat Nying has given you the location of a safe house in Glip Dak. "Only one time mind you!" he admonishes you.

More information can be found in **Player Handout 3.**

Renown

Each character receives **one renown** at the conclusion of this adventure.

Members of The Harpers that recover Randyll Blackalbuck's missing gold box receive **one additional renown point.**

DM Reward

In exchange for running this adventure, you earn DM Rewards as described in the D&D Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide (ALDMG).

Appendix A. Dramatis Personae

The following NPCs are featured prominently in this adventure:

Grat Nying (GRAT NY-ing). "Night's Gift" is a goblin thieves' guild in Glip Dak.

Hrogar (ROW-gar). Hobgoblin captain of the guard. He may potentially hire the adventurers to stop a string of thefts.

Raxivort (RACK-see-vort). The god of this the xvarts. He only appears to his worshippers long enough to claim their offerings.

Slobar (SLOW-bar). Slobar is the ousted speaker of Grimyton and is eager to find allies to help him reclaim the leadership of his tribe.

Strenkl (STR-ehn-cull). Strenkl is the "face" of the Grat Nying, a thieves' guild in Glip Dak. He may potentially hire the adventurers to investigate the thefts.

The Bronze (BRON-zz). The city guard of Glip Dak, so called because of their blue enameled bronze armor .

Uublix (OOB-lix). Warlock of Raxivort and speaker of the xvart tribe of the Glip Dak sewers.

Appendix B. NPC Statistics

Meenlock (Summoned Fey)

Small fey, neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 31 (7d6 + 7)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
7 (-2)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +6, Survival +2
Condition Immunities frightened
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 14
Languages telepathy 120 ft.
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Fear Aura. Any beast or humanoid that starts its turn within 10 feet of the meenlock must succeed on a DC 11 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened until the start of the creature's next turn.

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

Shadow Teleport (Recharge 5–6). As a bonus action, the meenlock can teleport to an unoccupied space within 30 feet of it, provided that both the space it's teleporting from and its destination are in dim light or darkness. The destination need not be within line of sight.

Actions

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack*: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit*: 7 (2d4 + 2) slashing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 11 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Redcap (Summoned Fey)

Small fey, chaotic evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)
Hit Points 45 (6d6 + 24)
Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	13 (+1)	18 (+4)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	9 (-1)

Skills Athletics +6, Perception +3
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages Common, Sylvan
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Iron Boots. While moving, the redcap has disadvantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks.

Outsize Strength. While grappling, the redcap is considered to be Medium. Also, wielding a heavy weapon doesn't impose disadvantage on its attack rolls.

Actions

Multiattack. The redcap makes three attacks with its wicked sickle.

Wicked Sickle. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 9 (2d4 + 4) slashing damage.

Ironbound Pursuit. The redcap moves up to its speed to a creature it can see and kicks with its iron boots. The target must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or take 20 (3d10 + 4) bludgeoning damage and be knocked prone.

Xvart

Small humanoid, chaotic evil

Armor Class 13 (leather armor)
Hit Points 7 (2d6)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)	7 (-2)	7 (-2)

Skills Stealth +4
Senses darkvision 30 ft., Passive Perception 8
Languages Abyssal
Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Low Cunning. The xvart can take the Disengage action as a bonus action on each of its turns.

Overbearing Pack. The xvart has advantage on Strength (Athletics) checks to shove a creature if at least one of the xvart's allies is within 5 feet of the target and the ally isn't incapacitated.

Raxivort's Tongue. The xvart can communicate with ordinary bats and rats, as well as giant bats and giant rats.

Actions

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

Sling. *Ranged Weapon Attack*: +4 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit*: 4 (1d4 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

Xvart Speaker (Slobar)

Small humanoid, chaotic evil

Armor Class 13 (leather armor)
Hit Points 7 (2d6)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	7 (-2)	7 (-2)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	7 (-2)	7 (-2)

Skills Stealth +4
Senses darkvision 30 ft., Passive Perception 8
Languages Abyssal, Common
Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Low Cunning. The xvart can take the Disengage action as a bonus action on each of its turns.

Overbearing Pack. The xvart has advantage on Strength (Athletics) checks to shove a creature if at least one of the xvart's allies is within 5 feet of the target and the ally isn't incapacitated.

Raxivort's Tongue. The xvart can communicate with ordinary bats and rats, as well as giant bats and giant rats.

Actions

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

Sling. *Ranged Weapon Attack*: +4 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit*: 4 (1d4 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

Xvart Warlock of the Archfey (Uublix)

Small humanoid, chaotic evil

Armor Class 11 (14 with mage armor)
Hit Points 49 (11d8)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	13 (+1)	11 (+0)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Wisdom +3, Charisma +6
Skills Arcana +2, Deception +6, Nature +2, Persuasion +6
Condition Immunities charmed
Senses Passive perception 11
Languages Abyssal, Common
Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. The warlock's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma. It can innately cast the following spells (spell save DC 15), requiring no material components:
At will: *disguise self, mage armor* (self only), *silent image*, *speak with animals*
1/day: *conjure fey*

Spellcasting. The warlock is a 11th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). It regains its expended spell slots when it finishes a short or long rest. It knows the following warlock spells:
Cantrips (at will): *dancing lights, eldritch blast, friends, mage hand, minor illusion, prestidigitation, vicious mockery*
1st–5th level (3 5th-level slots): *blink, charm person, dimension door, dominate beast, faerie fire, fear, hold monster, misty step, phantasmal force, seeming, sleep*

Actions

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack*: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit*: 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

Reactions

Misty Escape (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). In response to taking damage, the warlock turns invisible and teleports up to 60 feet to an unoccupied space it can see. It remains invisible until the start of its next turn or until it attacks, makes a damage roll, or casts a spell.

Xvart Warlock of Raxivort

Small humanoid, chaotic evil

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)
Hit Points 22 (5d6 + 5)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	8 (-1)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)

Skills Stealth +3
Senses darkvision 30 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages Abyssal
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. The xvart's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma. It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:
At will: *detect magic, mage armor* (self only)\

Spellcasting. The xvart is a 3rd-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 11, +3 to hit with spell attacks). It regains its expended spell slots when it finishes a short or long rest. It knows the following warlock spells:
Cantrips (at will): *eldritch blast, mage hand, minor illusion, poison spray, prestidigitation*
1st–2nd level (2 2nd-level slots): *burning hands, expeditious retreat, invisibility, scorching ray*

Low Cunning. The xvart can take the Disengage action as a bonus action on each of its turns.

Overbearing Pack. The xvart has advantage on Strength (Athletics) checks to shove a creature if at least one of the xvart's allies is within 5 feet of the target and the ally isn't incapacitated.

Raxivort's Tongue. The xvart can communicate with ordinary bats and rats, as well as giant bats and giant rats.

Actions

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

Yeth Hound (Summoned Fey)

Large fey, neutral evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)
Hit Points 51 (6d10 + 18)
Speed 40 ft., fly 40 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	17 (+3)	16 (+3)	5 (-3)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)

Damage Immunities bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't silvered
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened
Senses darkvision 60 ft., Passive perception 11
Languages Common, Elvish, Sylvan understands but can't speak
Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Keen Hearing and Smell. The yeth hound has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

Sunlight Banishment. If the yeth hound starts its turn in sunlight, it is transported to the Ethereal Plane. While sunlight shines on the spot from which it vanished, the hound must remain in the Deep Ethereal. After sunset, it returns to the Border Ethereal at the same spot, whereupon it typically sets out to find its pack or its master. The hound is visible on the Material Plane while it is in the Border Ethereal, and vice versa, but it can't affect or be affected by anything on the other plane. Once it is adjacent to its master or a pack mate that is on the Material Plane, a yeth hound in the Border Ethereal can return to the Material Plane as an action.

Telepathic Bond. While the yeth hound is on the same plane of existence as its master, it can magically convey what it senses to its master, and the two can communicate telepathically with each other.

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack*: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit*: 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage, plus 14 (4d6) psychic damage if the target is frightened.

Baleful Baying. The yeth hound bays magically. Every enemy within 300 feet of the hound that can hear it must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened until the end of the hound's next turn or until the hound is incapacitated. A frightened target that starts its turn within 30 feet of the hound must use all its movement on that turn to get as far from the hound as possible, must finish the move before taking an action, and must take the most direct route, even if hazards lie that way. A target that successfully saves is immune to the baying of all yeth hounds for the next 24 hours.

Appendix C. Map 1

1 square = 10 ft.

Appendix D. Map 2

1 square = 10 ft.

Appendix E. Map 3

1 square = 10 ft.

Appendix F. Map 4

1 square = 10 ft.

Player Handout 1. Harper Faction Assignment

Friends,

I am in need of some discreet assistance with a matter of great import. Recently, I sold a small, ornate gold box to a trader bound for Glip Dak, a trading outpost in southern Thar. Shortly after the sale, I discovered that the box functions as an access key to the Melvaunt Harpers library of knowledge.

I must get it back! I have tried, through intermediaries, to buy it back from Strob, the duergar proprietor of The Pickled Crawler in Glip Dak, with no success. I fear he senses I am desperate and refuses to sell it. I AM desperate! Please retrieve the box and bring it back to Melvaunt, and I will reward you.

-Randyll Blackalbuck

Friends,

I am in need of some discreet assistance with a matter of great import. Recently, I sold a small, ornate gold box to a trader bound for Glip Dak, a trading outpost in southern Thar. Shortly after the sale, I discovered that the box functions as an access key to the Melvaunt Harpers library of knowledge. I must get it back! I have tried, through intermediaries, to buy it back from Strob, the duergar proprietor of The Pickled Crawler in Glip Dak, with no success. I fear he senses I am desperate and refuses to sell it. I AM desperate! Please retrieve the box and bring it back to Melvaunt, and I will reward you.

-Randyll Blackalbuck

Player Handout 2. Story Award

During the course of this adventure, the characters may earn the following story award. If you are printing these out for your characters, print as many as you may need to ensure that any eligible character receives a copy:

The Bronze

Hrogar, a captain in The Bronze, is pleased with the work you did for him. Your timely intervention has allowed him to put an end to the rash or burglaries in Glip Dak and allowed Hrogar to save face at the same time.

In future adventures in Glip Dak, characters with The Bronze story award will make any Charisma checks with members of the Bronze in Glip Dak at advantage.

Player Handout 3. Story Award

During the course of this adventure, the characters may earn the following story award. If you are printing these out for your characters, print as many as you may need to ensure that any eligible character receives a copy:

Grat Nying

You have done Grat Nying a favor, and you can expect one in return. Strenkl, one of the elders of Grat Nying, has given you the location of a safe house in Glip Dak that you can use sometime in the future.

In future Glip Dak adventures, characters with this story award can receive free healing and care at a Grat Nying safehouse (as per the acolyte background), though the character must provide any material components needed for spells.

Player Handout 4. Magic Item

During the course of this adventure, the characters may find the following permanent magic item:

Bag of Holding

Wondrous item, uncommon

This bag has an interior space considerably larger than its outside dimensions, roughly 2 feet in diameter at the mouth and 4 feet deep. The bag can hold up to 500 pounds, not exceeding a volume of 64 cubic feet. The bag weighs 15 pounds, regardless of its contents. Retrieving an item from the bag requires an action.

If the bag is overloaded, pierced, or torn, it ruptures and is destroyed, and its contents are scattered in the Astral Plane. If the bag is turned inside out, its contents spill forth, unharmed, but the bag must be put right before it can be used again. Breathing creatures inside the bag can survive up to a number of minutes equal to 10 divided by the number of creatures (minimum 1 minute), after which time they begin to suffocate.

Placing a bag of holding inside an extra-dimensional space created by a handy haversack, portable hole, or similar item instantly destroys both items and opens a gate to the Astral Plane. The gate originates where the one item was placed inside the other. Any creature within 10 feet of the gate is sucked through it to a random location on the Astral Plane. The gate then closes. The gate is one-way only and can't be reopened.

This item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Player Handout 5. Magic Item

During the course of this adventure, the characters may find the following permanent magic item:

Shield of Expression

Armor (shield), common

The front of this shield is shaped in the likeness of a face. While bearing the shield, you can use a bonus action to alter the face's expression.

This item can be found in *Xanathar's Guide to Everything*.

Citadel of Vlaakith

The adventurers are tasked with rescuing a group of heroes who vanished in the pearlescent fortress that manifested on the border between the Kroth Magg kingdom and the Varkonin empire in the Steppes of Thar.

Tier 1 CCC-GLIP-01-XX can be played in any order.

A Four-Hour Adventure for 1st-4th Level Characters

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Introduction

"The silver swords are a reflection of the Githyanki—deathly sharp, frighteningly quick, alien yet eerily familiar."

– Idris bryn Danin, How I Became an Adventurer

Welcome to Citadel of Vlaakith, a D&D Adventurers League™ adventure, part of the official D&D Adventurers League™ organized play system and the Tomb of Annihilation™ storyline season.

This adventure takes place in the swamp near the ruins of Yûlash, on the Moonsea coast. A Githyanki citadel teleported into the Material Plane, and the adventurers are sent to recover a failed expedition.

This adventure is designed for **three to seven 1st-4th level characters** and is optimized for **five characters with an average party level (APL) of 3**. Characters outside this level range cannot participate in this adventure.

Adventure Background

The Kroth Magg have many rivals in Thar. Chief amongst them are the Varkonin, a would-be hobgoblin empire controlling large swaths of the eastern steppes and sections of the resource-rich Galena Mountains, where their numerous slaves mine bloodstone, silver, and even adamantine.

The Kroth Magg and Varkonin have been locked in a cold war, fighting through mercenary proxies while both clans prepare for all out conflict, consolidating their forces, stockpiling supplies, and seeking allies. However, something has occurred that may expedient the brutal war to come – a mysterious fortress wrought of smooth opalescent stone has suddenly appeared in a bog along their border, right inside Varkonin territory. Few things are known about the edifice, but one thing is certain – the structure is of another plane.

The Kroth Magg, unwilling to forfeit the fortress to the Varkonin, have reached out to the Harpers and the Order of the Gauntlet, offering to share the fortress' secrets with them if they help secure it from the Varkonin as the Kroth Magg can't afford to openly antagonize the larger kingdom by sending their own troops. The Kroth Magg will finance and supply agents during the window of the operation.

The Harpers and Order, while hesitant to work with the hobgoblins, view the Kroth Magg as the lesser of two evils, and the enigmatic white fortress is an intriguing find, one they prefer not to fall into the hands of the Varkonin. After all, the enemy of my enemy . . . makes for strange allies.

The Harpers and Order immediately dispatched agents supported in secret by the Kroth Magg. It has been several days, and they are overdue in reporting in. Fearing the worst, the Harpers and Order prepare to send a second force to the mysterious complex.

Unbeknownst to those seeking the fortress is its true origins – it is a Gith citadel, and like most Gith structures, it was made with war in mind. The whole of it is carved from a titanic molar from a long-forgotten creature of the Far Realm. The material of this tooth is psionically conductive and the Gith formed a network of control crystals throughout the interior allowing them to shift the whole complex between the planes, delivering Gith warriors with surgical precision. During the citadel's last raid, the Gith seized a relic from an abandoned temple dedicated to an unknown entity. As the Gith prepared to leave, the relic awoke and corrupted the psionic network, forcing the temple into the Abyss. The citadel was soon besieged by demons. The last of the Gith managed to wrest control from the relic and shift back to their home realm where they died throwing the artifact into the Astral Sea.

The citadel has drifted quietly between the planes for centuries until it was recently caught in an astral storm and sent hurtling into the Prime material, crashing into Thar.

There the citadel quietly waits. In all this time, the Gith have not ceased searching for it and will claim what is theirs as they have always done.

Location and NPC Summary

The following NPCs and locations feature prominently in this adventure.

Varkonin (VAR-cone-in). A powerful hobgoblin kingdom in eastern Thar who controls rare and valuable resources within the Galena Mountains.

Kroth Magg (KAH-roth MA-gag). A relatively new hobgoblin kingdom risen to power within the northern Troll Hills. They control the valuable trade city of Glip Dak, the center of trade within Thar.

Citadel of Vlaakith (SIT-a-dell of VAH-lah-kith). A mobile barracks and temple of the Gith that can fly and shift through reality. It was thought lost many hundreds of years ago.

Adventure Overview

This adventure is part of a set of adventures located in the trade city of Glip Dak in the steppes of Thar. The Tier 1 GLIP adventures (CCC-GLIP-01-XX) are not part of a sequential storyline and can be played in any order.

Your players may recognize some of the NPCs or places from the other adventures. While that can give them a sense of familiarity with the locale, it won't spoil any surprises!

The adventure is broken down into four parts:

Part 1. The adventurers are recruited either by the Kroth Magg or a representative of the Harpers and Order of the Gauntlet.

Part 2. The adventurers reach the strange complex and enter it, finding the bodies of the missing adventurers and uncovering the alien nature of the citadel.

Part 3. The adventurers move to recover the last bodies of the fallen heroes and battle the Varkonin vanguard when the Githyanki masters of the citadel appear.

Part 4. Conclusion.

Adventure Hooks

The Tier 1 GLIP adventures (CCC-GLIP-01-XX) are not part of a sequential storyline and can be played in any order.

Investigate the Citadel. The adventurers hear rumor of hobgoblin scouts and a magical temple that appeared out of thin air. The adventurers choose (or are asked) to investigate.

Hired by the Harpers and Order of the Gauntlet (Faction Assignment). The Harpers and the Order of the Gauntlet have been contacted by the Kroth Magg, asking for assistance in searching a recently arrived planar structure that has "crashed" on the border between the Kroth Magg and the Varkonin kingdom on the Varkonin side. The Kroth Magg cannot risk antagonizing the larger kingdom by sending their troops so are asking the Harpers and the Order to search the strange complex. In return for sharing the discoveries, the Kroth Magg are supplying and financing the expedition.

Monstrosity Hunt (Faction Assignment). The local Emerald Enclave contact has spotted a nest of manticores. Preventing some or all of these monstrosities from establishing hunting domains will help preserve the natural order in the forest.

Zhentarim Spies (Faction Assignment). Zhentarim spies within Thar have uncovered information pertaining to the sudden arrival of a mysterious building. The Zhentarim are asking the adventurer to travel to this building by any means and gather information on it.

The Kroth Magg. If adventurers have been working for the Kroth Magg, this may be another mission offered to them by the hobgoblins.

Part 1. The Request

Story Beat

Here the adventurers are recruited and informed of the mission. After which, assuming the adventurers accepted, they are to travel deeper into Thar to the more untamed areas of the infamous steppes and cross the heavily patrolled border into Varkonin territory to the mysterious temple.

Estimated Duration: 15 minutes

Tip: Where to start

Depending on which (if any) Glip Dak story awards have been earned, this adventure can start in a number of ways;

If any of the party have the story award **The Bronze**, go to **Part A**.

If any of the party have the story award **Glip Dak Lawbreaker**, go to **Part B**.

If any of the party is a **member of the Harpers or Order of the Gauntlet**, go to **Part C**.

If the party is newly arrived at **Glip Dak**, **Part A** or **C** may be chosen.

If none of the above fits your party, try to develop a narrative that will motivate them to take this work from the Kroth Magg.

General Features

Eastern Thar has the following general features.

Terrain. The land is cold, windswept steppes and grasslands that stretch to the horizon. To the east are the peaks of the Galena Mountains.

Weather. Clear but cold.

Light. Bright during the day. Dark during the night with Selûne's stars casting faint light.

Smells and Sounds. The howls and stretches of strange creatures can be heard across the steppes, hidden in the tall grass.

A. Recruited by the Kroth Magg

If any of the adventurers have **The Bronze Story Award**, this introduction may be used.

Hrogar, a captain of the city guard, and Valrath Kahn, a hobgoblin devastator captain, meet with the adventurers to explain the mission.

> The Kroth Magg make a show of practicality and Spartan living. This chamber is no different. While sparingly furnished and only decorated with the Kroth Magg's banner and coat-of-arms – the silhouette of a dragon – what objects furnish the chamber are of high quality. The desk and chairs are imported blueleaf wood and the banners are woven from exotic silk and colored in expensive cobalt dye.
>
> Hrogar sits behind the desk, which is clean and well-organized, waiting for you to seat yourselves in chairs before him. Beside the desk stands a second hobgoblin officer who wears a different uniform. He carries a metal-shod staff and an armored book swings from his belt by a heavy chain.
>
> "Greetings, mercenaries and adventurers, I have a sensitive matter to discuss with you, a matter of security for the Kroth Magg and potentially the balance of power in Thar. Recently a curious fortress has 'crashed' just outside our borders but, unfortunately, within the lands of the Varkonin, our chief adversaries here in Thar. They are a rival kingdom controlled by my own kind. Tensions between us have been on the rise and open conflict is inevitable, but that is an issue for another day.
>
> "This is Valrath Kahn, a devastator captain and practitioner of arcane magic. He will tell you of what we know of this strange structure, and why it is important."

Valrath nods at Hrogar and steps forward.

Hrogar offers two *potions of healing* to the party, and cold-weather gear for each adventurer, to assist them on their journey.

Proceed to **D. The Mission Details**.

B. Lawbreakers

If any of the adventurers have the **Lawbreaker Glip Dak Story Award**, this introduction should be used.

> You have spent the last several days assigned to hard labor, breaking stone and hauling rocks. After an exhausting day, you are woken in the dark and called to the city watch barracks to stand before Captain Hrogar.

Adventurers with the **Lawbreaker Story Award** must make a DC 11 Constitution save or suffer a level of exhaustion he or she starts the adventure with. This is from being forced into hard labor as part of the sentence for breaking the laws of the Kroth Magg.

Go to **A. Recruited by the Kroth Magg** but don't award the potions or the cold weather gear.

C. Recruited by Randyll Blackalbuck, Harper Liaison

Randyll Blackalbuck comes from a family of Harper agents who work out of the family's store, Blackalbuck's Swap Shop, in Melvaunt. The shop is a cover for buying and selling gear and resources to Harper agents throughout the Moonsea.

> "Time is short and the situation is urgent. A joint venture among the Kroth Magg hobgoblins, the Harpers, and the Order of the Gauntlet is

underway to secure a planar structure from a mutual enemy, the Varkonin. While the Harpers aren't overly thrilled at the prospect of working with hobgoblins, the Varkonin pose a much greater threat to the Moonsea region." Randyll signs. "I am sure the Moonstars would laugh at us now for doing this, agreeing to work with hobgoblins, but the Kroth Magg have been surprisingly forthcoming. I would guess this is out of necessity as they are desperate to make sure the secrets of this strange complex do not fall into the hands of their chief opposition in Thar, the Varkonin hobgoblin kingdom."

The Harper liaison offers the adventurers a *potion of greater healing* and cold-weather gear.to assist them on their journey. The cold-weather gear is for each adventurer.

Proceed to **D. The Mission Details**.

D. The Mission Details

No matter the method the adventurers are recruited by, both Valrath Kahn, the Kroth Magg devastator mage, and Randyll Blackalbuck, the Harpers' envoy, provide the following information.

"What we have gathered through long-range reconnaissance suggests this structure is a fortress of some kind made from a material unlike anything we've encountered. The entire complex radiates an unknown magic and is powerfully guarded against divinations.

"From what we can ascertain, the fortress fell from the sky after shifting from an unknown plane. It crashed into a bog where it partially sunk. Despite the great distance it fell, it appears completely undamaged. Whatever this structure is, whatever it represents, or the power behind it, what is certain is that we can't allow it to be controlled by the Varkonin. And that is where you come in.

"As the temple landed within Varkonin territory, the Kroth Magg can't send troops without risking immediate war with them, a war the Kroth Magg are not yet fully prepared for, so we would ask that you go and secure the structure.

"We've already sent one group of agents comprised of Harper and Order members. They have failed to report in and we fear the worse.

"Each of you will be paid 25 gold coins for each missing agent you bring back, living or dead, plus 75 gold for information on this structure. There is a bonus in it for you if you keep this fortress out of the hands of the Varkonin, even if you have to destroy it."

Allow the adventurers to ask questions or purchase supplies, including *potions of healing* for 50 gp each.

Can we get more money?

A successful DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check – those with Kroth Magg accolades have advantage on this check – can increase the award amount to 50 gp for each missing adventurer.

Who are the Varkonin?

"The Varkonin are a hobgoblin clan who controls a section of eastern Thar and the western Galena Mountains. They are the Kroth Magg's chief rival and greatest threat. Both groups have been preparing for open war for months. The Varkonin remain one of the mightiest kingdoms in Thar, if not all of the northern Moonsea."

What is our mission?

"Our goal is to learn its secrets, recover what items we can, and make contact with those who built the temple before the Varkonin do. Additionally, there is evidence that this structure is capable of moving itself, as fantastic as that sounds. Or maybe not if you're familiar with Netheril.

"Of secondary importance is finding the first expedition."

If the structure is in enemy territory, won't the enemy simply take it back?

"The shallowest part of the bog faces us, which allows swifter and safer travel from Kroth Magg lands. The Varkonin must traverse the bog proper, a dreadful place of swallowing ground and hungry beasts."

What is this structure?

"We are uncertain, but it doesn't shed abyssal or infernal corruption, as far as we can tell. We fear it may be from the Far Realm, and if that is true, we have no idea of what to expect, but none of it is good."

Who is the other group sent before us?

"The group we lost contact with included Order members Yowen Kar and Darius Dawnguard and the Harper agents Vellona the Orphan and Lalitha Dae'Danin. They weren't chosen for their experience or skills, but simply for their proximity to the target as speed was our advantage.

"Should you find their bodies, bring them back to us and we can raise them. I am sure they would be indebted to you, which might be useful. You never know."

Additional details about this doomed adventuring group:

- Yowen Kar of Clan Vallahir is a hill dwarf warpriest who acts suspicious of elves. He hides his care for others behind a hard demeanor. His current companions complain of his surliness.
- Darius Dawnguard is a squire of the reborn Order of Dawnfire, a sect of Lathandar. He has made an oath to search for dangerous artifacts and dispose of them.
- Vellona the Orphan made a pact with a mysterious entity after she fled into a forest after the destruction of her village. She seeks to unlock the magic in her blood to sunder this bargain.
- Lalitha Dae'Danin is an elf noble and druid who dresses as a man to hide from an arranged marriage with a tyrannical and powerful high elf aristocrat.

The NPC providing the mission warns the adventurers that Thar can be quite cold this time of year, and to make sure to purchase cold-weather gear if they don't already have some or if it hasn't already been provided (see the **Extreme Cold** sidebar).

Extreme Cold

Whenever the temperature is at or below 0 degrees Fahrenheit, a creature exposed to the cold must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw at the end of each hour or gain one level or exhaustion. Creatures with resistance or immunity to cold damage automatically succeed on the saving throw, as do creatures wearing cold weather gear (thick coats, gloves, and the like), and creatures naturally adapted to cold climates.

Travel to the citadel is not covered in this module because of the adventure's time restraints. However, if time is not an issue, then the Level 1-5 Arctic Encounters Table can be used from *Xanathar's Guide to Everything*, page 92.

Tricks of the Trade

Travel: If handwaving travel runs against the style of game being played, travel may be a series of random encounters presented in *Xanathar's Guide to Everything* in addition to dealing with the challenges of cold weather (see **Extreme Cold** sidebar).

Part 2. Citadel of Vlaakith

Story Beat

Here the adventurers come to the mysterious citadel and discover the fate of those who came before them. During their exploration, they face the Varkonin vanguard as well as the secrets and traps of the citadel. Within are fragments of the citadel's origins and the history of those who created it.

Estimated Duration: 150 minutes

General Features

The Githyanki citadel has the following features.

Terrain. The citadel is sunken into the bog, tilting the entire structure. It is carved from a single, massive tooth. A successful DC 18 Intelligence (Arcana) check identifies that this molar-like tooth came from a titanic creature belonging to the Far Realm. Detect magic reveals that the tooth was shaped using immense psionic powers.

Weather. The inside of the citadel is dry and cold.

Light. All rooms (A-U) are brightly lit by red-hued orbs set into the ceiling. Occasionally the orbs flicker in unison, plunging the citadel into brief spasms of abject darkness and bright light.

Smells and Sounds. It smells like death throughout the citadel. Unless prevented, everyone within the citadel hears continuous telepathic whispering in Gith. The whispers are repeatedly telling the story of the citadel's final days (see the **Adventure Background**).

Tracks. There are numerous tracks, both humanoid and animal, throughout the area. They are fresh, within the last day or so (see **Tracks** below for more details).

A. The Mouth of Vlaakith

Read or paraphase the following as the adventurers approach the citadel:

> Traveling through the bog, you see a great white structure at least several stories, lodged in the mud. Muck is splattered high on the exterior.
>
> The whole structure is made from a flawless, seamless alabaster material. All along the outside are circular, looping whorls. It is difficult to tell what they are, but certain patterns repeat, as though it were a language. Interspersed among the round sigils are engraved runes and carved striations.
>
> The mud all around the building shows signs of heavy travel. Yet the structure, and all around it, is motionless and silent.
>
> On the south-facing side of the structure is a circular entranceway. The doorway sits on the tip of a spiked protrusion from the otherwise smooth exterior. A door like a nautilus shell is open, giving a glimpse of the interior.

Tracks

If the areas south or west of the temple are searched, a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Survival) check finds four tracks of footprints leading four horses and two mules heading from the direction of Kroth Magg land towards the entrance of the temple.

If the north or eastern side of the temple are searched, anyone proficient in Survival or Investigation finds tracks of numerous humanoids coming from Varkonin territory heading into the temple. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) check reveals at least two dozen humanoids, maybe more.

The circular whorls are Gith tir'su (runic writing) that tell the story of Vlaakith the Gith Queen and the history of the Gith's enslavement to the illithid and subsequent liberation. Along with the story are warnings and threats to all who would interfere with the Gith's crusades against the illithid. The engraved runes are Draconic mirroring the Gith writing for less erudite readers.

Read or paraphrase the following once the adventurers find the entrance:

> The great entrance hall is littered with corpses. There are seven dead hobgoblins as well as the bodies of four horses. Two mules stand huddled and terrified against a wall. Muddy tracks and blood coat the smooth, white floor.
>
> At the center of this chamber is a statue of a strange humanoid. The statue is kneeling with its arms raised before it, offering a glowing orb.

There is a muddy handprint on the orb.

The interior is the same as the exterior – faultless, smooth surfaces covered with circular, looping whorls. Interspersed among the round sigils are the same engraved runes.

The statue is marked with a star on the map. A closer inspection of the statue reveals the following:

The statue is depicted wearing a robe. Its hair is tied in a topknot and its face is flat. It has a larger head and longer arms than that of a human. On a successful DC 13 Intelligence (Arcana) check, the statue is identified as a Githyanki gish.

If the adventurers choose to open the great doors manually, they require a combined Strength of 25 and 1 minute to wedge open. In this case, the manticore in **Area D** is alerted to the adventurers' presence, and attacks with surprise (using its tail spikes) once the doors are opened.

A successful DC 13 Wisdom (Medicine) check reveals the following:

- The hobgoblins died from a collection of severe burns and stab wounds. Their uniforms are bloody and burnt but in passable condition.
- The horses are partially eaten by some large predator, their throats torn out.

Anyone inspecting the animals who is proficient in Medicine or Survival sees they were killed by tooth and claw. One of the horses has been partially eaten by some beast. Bloody pawprints nearby are like those of a large lion.

A successful DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) or Intelligence (Investigation) check discovers a campsite. If searched, the adventurers find the contents of two explorer's packs spread around the camp, and a diary belonging to Vellona detailing her joining the Harpers and being sent into Thar. She talks about her excitement to meet her traveling companions. The rest is soaked with blood and illegible.

A successful DC 13 Wisdom (Survival) check discovers that the four missing adventurers were camping in this chamber when they were attacked. Blood and mud indicate a fighting retreat deeper into the complex. The four were still alive and on their feet during this battle.

Treasure

The adventurers can gather content equivalent to two explorer's packs if they search the camp.

The Mouth of Vlaakith

While attuned and touching the statue's crystal, the controller can use an action to mentally command the crystal to shed light. A 60-foot-radius sphere of red light spreads out from the crystal. The sphere is bright light and sheds dim light for an additional 60 feet. The light effect stops if the controller moves more than 5 feet from the crystal.

Gith Crystals

The Githyanki citadel has numerous control crystals located throughout the structure. These crystals appear as clear, spherical orbs held by a statue of a Githyanki sage. They shed dim light in a 5-foot radius.

Anyone within 5 feet of a crystal sphere can touch it and attune to the crystal as an action. While touching a Gith crystal, the attuned creature can use an action to psychically strike one creature that they can see within 120 feet. The target must succeed on an DC 14 Intelligence saving throw or take 2d8 psychic damage, half as much on a successful save.

As well, each crystal has one or more specific functions that are also available while attuned and touching the crystal. Also, the repetitive telepathic Gith message (see **General Features** above) becomes obtrusive and loud.

The crystals require a successful DC 18 Strength (Athletics) check to remove. If removed, the crystal discharges a psionic pulse that does 9 (2d8) psychic damage to every creature within 10 feet and then crumbles to dust.

Adjusting the Crystals

These are not cumulative.

Very Weak: DC is 12, damage is 4 (1d8) psychic.
Weak: DC is 14, damage is 4 (1d8) psychic.
Average: Use default.
Strong: DC is 15, damage is 13 (3d8) psychic.
Very Strong: DC is 16, damage is 13 (3d8) psychic.

B. Outside the Great Doors

There is a statue flanking a wide circular doorway sealed by what appears to be a giant nautilus shell. The statue is of a tall, gaunt figure in robes. Its face is flat, and its head is larger than that of a human. It is unlike anything you've seen in Thar.

The statue holds a dimly glowing spherical crystal, which sheds a red light and has muddy handprints on it.

Outside the Great Door's Gith Crystal

The statue is marked with a star on the map. While attuned and touching the statue's crystal, the great doors at **Area B** can be mentally commanded to open or shut as an action.

C. Within the Great Doors

On the other side of the carved great doors is another statue. This statue also kneels in supplication and holds a crystal sphere. The interior of this space is brightly lit with a scarlet glow. The red light comes from dozens of orbs embedded in the ceiling.

Within the Great Door's Gith Crystal

This statue is also marked with a star on the map. While attuned and touching the statue's crystal, the great doors at

Area B can be mentally commanded to open or shut as an action.

D. The Hall of Thought

Read or paraphrase the following:

> This chamber is a massive octagon with eight circular doorways along the eight walls, including the one you've entered by. In each of the corner sections near a door stands a robed statue holding a crystal orb.
>
> In the center of the grand hall is a tall plinth. The base of this altar holds dozens of empty alcoves. A few contain crystal spheres humming with some resonance. Atop the altar is a large sculpture made of intertwined stone filaments. At certain points the filaments form hands holding the same crystal spheres that are resting in the plinth's alcoves. Several of the hands are empty.
>
> You suddenly hear a growl. A large beast with the body of a lion, dragon-like wings, and a humanoid head is perched in the central sculpture. Its long tail is full of vicious-looking spikes. Clenched in the monstrosity's mouth is the body of a half-elf woman.

The hobgoblin's ally, a **manticore**, is perched 20 feet up in the filament sculpture. The manticore only has six tail spikes left and refuses to drop the body of Vellona the Orphan, which it is planning to eat. The manticore speaks Common, and growls threats. It can be conversed with but knows little of the temple. It knows the following:

- The Varkonin main force is only two days out. The force currently holding the complex is a vanguard led by Captain Garkin.
- The manticore became separated from the hobgoblins when it grew board with the exploration of the citadel.
- The hobgoblins killed the four adventurers who were exploring the citadel. This one looks the tastiest.
- It doesn't know what this chamber is for, but the hobgoblins showed much interest in it.

It becomes quickly apparent that the dim-witted creature thinks the adventurers want the corpse for eating. Quick-thinking parties can speak with the monster (see **Tricks of the Trade**, below). Otherwise, the manticore will fire its tail spikes while perched on the sculpture.

After attacking with its tail spikes, the manticore attempts to fly out of the entrance doors carrying the body. If prevented, it will fight until an escape route is visible, and then flees. If cornered, it becomes a fearsome foe.

Adjusting the Fight

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

Very Weak: The **manticore** only has only three tail spikes remaining, has 45 hit points, and does not use its bite attack if forced into melee (it is holding the body in its maw).

Weak: The **manticore** only has six tail spikes remaining and does not use its bite attack if forced into melee.

Average: The **manticore** has all its tail spikes, and drops the corpse to engage with all melee attacks.

Strong or Very Strong: Add a **manticore**. Both have all their tail spikes, and the first manticore drops the corpse to engage with all melee attacks.

Tricks of the Trade

Battling the Manticore. The manticore will use its tail spikes and attempt to fly out of the chamber. If forced into combat, it can be a deadly opponent for weaker parties.

Feeding the Monster. The manticore speaks Common. If spoken with and given a decent quantity of meat (either dried or fresh), the monstrosity is willing to drop the corpse and leave the citadel without a fight. Award combat experience points as if the manticore was defeated.

Understanding the Map. The statues are marked in this specific chamber as circles while the plinth is the square at the room's center.

All War is Deception. If the adventurers took the uniforms from dead hobgoblins, they can deceive the manticore with a successful DC 16 Charisma (Deception) check. Only one adventurer need make the Deception check, but all the adventurers seen must be wearing a uniform unless they are acting as prisoners. If the adventurers resolve the encounter this way, award full combat experience.

The Psionic Library

Read after the manticore is dealt with:

> With the manticore dealt with, you can take a moment to better survey your surroundings. The octagonal chamber has eight sealed doors, each with a station of a robed figure holding a red-lit glob. These human-sized statues depict the now-familiar flat-faced, large-skulled figures you've seen elsewhere.
>
> In the center of the hall is a large skein of stone threads. They weave in and out of each other, forming a dense mesh. The alabaster sculpture stands twenty feet tall and is holding a half-dozen orbs at different heights, including the top.
>
> A dozen or so of the sculpture's arms have empty orb rests.

A successful DC 12 Intelligence (Arcana) check identifies the stone-skein sculpture as a stylized depiction of the Astral winds.

This chamber serves as a library and psionic training room. It is the heart of the citadel where the psionic network gains its power from the woven sculpture and imbued

orbs. Each Gith is tasked with charging these orbs with psionic energy to work as batteries. This method also instills the orbs with thoughts, memories, and emotions, most related to the history and triumphs of the Gith.

Any sentient creature touching an orb must make a DC 12 Intelligence save or suffer 4 (1d8) psionic damage, taking no damage on a successful save. A successful save also reveals fragments of Gith culture. The orbs were attuned to the Gith who charged it, so the images and emotions contained within are distorted and disordered for others. The save need only be succeeded once to handle all the orbs.

The history and fate of the citadel may be gleaned from the orbs held by the Astral wind sculpture:

- The structure is carved from a massive tooth from a Far Realms void leviathan, a legendary creature who swallows whole worlds.
- This place was forged on the Astral Plane by psionic power. The natural psionic conductivity of the material makes it ideal for Gith purposes. The material can be made to fly or teleport by an psionically capable mind.
- The Gith discovered a strange temple sealed and floating in the Astral Sea. They broke in and looted several relics, including a bizarre cylinder of melted glass containing a broken amethyst blade impaling a preserved hand.
- This relic awoke and forced the citadel into the Abyss, where the Gith were beset by demons. The siege lasted days until the Gith wrested control of the citadel and shifted back to the Astral where the few remaining Gith sacrificed themselves to hurl the relic from the temple.
- The Gith learned that the demons sought not to kill the Gith but destroy the relic. The relic knew this and used the demons to weaken the Gith so it could take the citadel. The Gith learned that the demons sought not to kill the Gith but destroy the relic. The relic knew this and used the demons to weaken the Gith so it could take the citadel. The relic belongs to an ancient entity known as the Harrowed King, a powerful empyrean who was betrayed by the gods and sacrificed to cause a temporary ceasefire with the lower planes. After his death, he rose as a powerful undead creature but was eventually imprisoned in a glacier of frozen blood.

Removing or Placings Orbs

When the adventurers remove orbs from the skein, the ceiling lights dim, flicker, and then wink out. If any orbs are removed, none of the lights, doors, or psychic effects of the citadel work. The whole complex is sunk into pitch blackness. In this case, doors must be manually opened with a combined Strength of 25 and 1 minute of effort. Replacing the orbs restores the ceiling light function.

Faction Assignments and Secret Mission

Taking any of these orbs counts as the faction assignment for the Harpers, Order of the Gauntlet, and Zhentarim.

E. Empty Room

Read or paraphrase the following:

> This chamber is empty save for large shelves, possibly bunks, carved into the walls. There is an unusual amount of dust. Red ceiling orbs illuminate this empty room.

Rooms marked as **Area E** are empty. They appear completely empty, dusty, or filled with debris or rubbish. Roll or choose from the table below:

Room Use

d6	Room Use
1-3	Dormitory
4	Cleansing chamber (bathroom/shower)
5	Training or study hall
6	Kitchen or larder

Tricks of the Trade

Nothing is Empty. Exploring empty chambers can be unsatisfactory, but because of time constraints, not all the rooms can contain interesting items. If time isn't an issue, objects telling of the Gith or evidence of the hobgoblins' ambush may be placed.

F. The Chamber of Time

Read or paraphrase the following:

> Yellow-skinned, tusked goblinoids are exploring this room. In the far corner of the chamber is a gaunt, human-sized statue clenching a crystal sphere. The walls of the chamber are covered with a mural depicting cities drifting in a colorful expanse, as well as more circular runic whorls and straight-cut sigils.
>
> A hobgoblin soldier is touching the statue's crystal sphere, which pulses under her touch.

There are four **hobgoblins** in the chamber. One hobgoblin has attuned to the crystal held by the statue. While the hobgoblin touches the crystal, she can use an action to psychically strike one creature that they can see within 120 feet. The target must succeed on an DC 14 Intelligence saving throw or take 2d8 psychic damage.

Adjusting the Crystals

These are not cumulative.

Very Weak: DC is 12, damage is 4 (1d8) psychic.
Weak: DC is 14, damage is 4 (1d8) psychic.
Average: Use default.
Strong: DC is 15, damage is 13 (3d8) psychic.
Very Strong: DC is 16, damage is 13 (3d8) psychic.

The Chamber of Time's Gith Crystal

While attuned and touching the statue's crystal, the crystal's controller knows the number of hours left before the next sunrise or sunset, and the exact number of days until the next solstice or equinox.

This chamber serves as a sundial and calendar for orientation to the Material plane. If any adventurer reads Gith or Draconic, this can be deduced by taking 10 minutes to study the circular runes and mural or 1 minute with a successful DC 14 Intelligence check.

Adjusting the Fight

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

Very Weak: There are two **hobgoblins**. One is touching the orb.

Weak: There are three **hobgoblins**. One is touching the orb.

Strong: There are five **hobgoblins**. One is touching the orb.

Very Strong: There are four **hobgoblins** and a **hobgoblin captain** (touching the crystal orb).

Interrogating the Hobgoblins

If sufficiently hurt, a successful DC 12 Charisma (Deception, Intimidation, or Persuasion) check may reveal the following:

- They are Varkonin soldiers sent here to secure and loot the structure. They are the vanguard of a much larger force due to arrive in a day or two. It numbers more than a hundred.
- Their scouting troop consisted of twenty hobgoblin soldiers, five Iron Shadow warriors, two captains, a devastator mage, and two manticores.
- They encountered four adventurers trespassing and meddling with Varkonin property. They were justly executed, but they gave quite a fight and slew half the hobgoblins, including the hobgoblin leader, the devastator mage.
- This structure is clearly magical, made from some kind of ivory, as far as the hobgoblins can tell. Based on the shape of the stairs and rooms, it was made and occupied by something human sized.

Treasure

The hobgoblin touching the statue's crystal wears a bloodstone pendant worth 50 gp.

Tricks of the Trade

All War is Deception. If the adventurers took the uniforms from dead hobgoblins, they can deceive these hobgoblins with a successful DC 16 Charisma (Deception) check. Only one adventurer need make the Deception check, but all the adventurers seen must be wearing a uniform unless they are acting as prisoners. If the adventurers resolve the encounter this way, award full combat experience.

G. The Hall of Cutting Swords

This is a Gith training hall. Read the following:

> This hall is lit by the same red ceiling orbs. Ascending stairs fill the mid-point of the chamber, and the eastern half of the hall is ten feet higher than the western half. At the east end of the hall stands an ornate, gaunt statue holding a crystal orb.
>
> All along the walls are statues of these gaunt warriors in different martial poses. Most of the effigies hold silvered greatswords while others have missing weapons. Several of the statues are bowing to each other. The swords are beautifully crafted with elegant looping sigils. Each is uniquely decorated.
>
> There are two hobgoblin bodies near the orb, neatly split in half. Gore coats the floor. Beside one is a shattered and bloodied greatsword. The weapon resembles the blades held by the statues.

When a non-Gith touches the statue's orb, or if the swords are disturbed, three **flying swords** launch from the hands of the statues. These swords use the standard flying sword stat block, even though they are flying greatswords.

Adjusting the Fight

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

Very Weak: The **flying swords** do only 4 (1d6+1) slashing damage and have disadvantage on attacks.

Weak: The **flying swords** have disadvantage on attacks.

Average: No changes.

Strong: Add two **flying swords**. They have advantage on attacks.

Very Strong: Add three **flying swords**. They have advantage on attacks.

The Hall of Cutting Swords Gith Crystal

While attuned and touching the statue's crystal, the crystal's controller can use an action to make a DC 15 Charisma ability check. On a success, the flying swords become inanimate and clatter to the ground. Award full combat experience in this case.

This hall is where Gith warriors practiced their combat skills (both physical and psionic). The adventurers do not have the training to safely animate the weapons.

Treasure

The statues hold two non-magical silver greatswords. The silver greatswords are worth 75 gp each.

H. Armory

Read or paraphrase the following:

This chamber also contains gaunt statues lining the walls save that they possess no weapons. These statues are much more rigid and many of them have tattered and rusted armor hanging from their alabaster frames, time having reduced the cloth and leather to scraps. One statue, however, bears a suit of gleaming silver-hued armor.

This was once a Githyanki armory. Time has turned most of the contents to dust. The Gith have a deep reverence for their weapons and armor, decorating them with fetishes symbolizing their victories. A successful DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) or DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check finds a number of valuable beads once decorating the armor within this chamber worth 100 gp.

Treasure

The armory contains a suit of *mithral half-plate* and 100 gp worth of baubles.

I. Healing Hall

The circular, shell-like door to this chamber is locked. It can be opened with a successful DC 15 Dexterity check using thieves' tools or forced open with a combined Strength of 25 and 1 minute of effort. Forcing it open alerts the hobgoblins in **Area G**, as well as other nearby sentient creatures.

Read or paraphrase the following:

This hall has shelves along the west wall. To the north is another statue. This tall, thin figure holds a dim-glowing crystal sphere above its head.

The Shelves

The shelves are labeled in circular Gith sigils indicating this was a place for mending and recovery. However, the centuries have rotten and spoiled the once impressive array of alchemical unguents and bandages. A successful DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) or DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check finds enough fragments to put together two healer's kits. It takes 10 minutes to assemble the two healer's kits from the contents of the room.

Healing Hall's Gith Crystal

The crystal has 10 charges. While attuned to and touching the statue's crystal, the controller can use an action to expend 1 or more of its charges to cast one of the following spells from it: *cure wounds* (1 charge) or *prayer of healing* (3 charges). The crystal regains 1d6+4 expended charges daily at dawn. If the controller expends the last charge, roll a d20. On a 1, the Gith crystal blackens, crumbles into dust, and is destroyed.

Treasure

The rest hall contains enough materials to form two healer's kits.

J. The Moving Hall

Read or paraphrase the following:

The walls of this chamber are ornately carved, appearing as woven stone. It displays a similar design to the filament statue in the central hall.

Against the west wall is a chair made from woven stone. In front of the chair kneels another gaunt statue holding a crystal sphere.

Across the middle of the floor is a massive, silver mirror. However, the mirror does not reflect the room or it occupants. It looks to be depicting a strange ship sailing through a star-lit void. Islands float in the distance.

Anyone with a passive Perception of 12 or higher notices the ship shifts and twists, and purple lightning flashes in the distance. On a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check, the mural's function is identified: it is an *arcane eye* showing an actual Githyanki ship sailing the Astral Plane.

The statue is marked with a star on the map.

The chair in this room overlooks the silver mirror and is the helmsman's station, moving the citadel through the void of the Astral Plane. Anyone sitting in the chair and attuned to the room's crystal (which is trapped, see below) hears a constant telepathic Gith message, which increases in intensity and fervor the longer one sits. The message is a repeating distress signal, telling of the citadel's fate and its location.

The Moving Hall's Gith Crystal

Attuning to this crystal also attunes a creature to the chair. While attuned and touching the statue's crystal or sitting in the chair, the crystal's controller can mentally command the second set of doors at **Area P** to open. If this is done, the doors stay open until commanded to shut using this crystal.

The controller of the crystal becomes aware of another ability: As a reaction, they can create a force bubble with a successful DC 12 Intelligence check. A sphere of transparent force encloses a 10-foot sphere centered on the chair for 10 minutes. Only breathable air can pass through the sphere's wall. The psychic wind can be felt, but creatures are immune to the psychic wind's effects while within the force bubble.

Psychic Wind

The Gith aren't foolish and have safeguarded the citadel's helm controls from being taken by non-Gith. Any non-Githyanki attuning to the crystal activates a defense mechanism, which unleashes a psychic wind throughout

all of **Area J**. The psychic wind is brief, but terrifyingly powerful.

> The citadel is plunged into momentary darkness as all the ceiling orbs flicker off in unison. The area becomes as black as a moonless night. In the darkness, you feel buffeting and shaking, as if the chamber itself was rebelling against your presence. At the same time, the entire chamber is filled with a storm of thought that batters your minds.

Psychic Wind

Magical trap (level 1-4, dangerous threat)

The Githyanki protected the crystal sphere against non-Githyanki attempting to take command of the citadel.

Trigger. When a non-Githyanki touches the crystal sphere, a psychic wind spills out and fills all of **Area J**, then dissipates after 3 rounds.

Effect. Any creature in **Area J** and not protected by the crystal's force bubble must make a DC 14 Intelligence saving throw or take 11 (2d10) psychic damage and be knocked unconscious for 5 (1d10) minutes. On a successful save, the creature takes half as much damage and isn't rendered unconscious. Even though the psychic wind lasts for 3 rounds, the effect occurs only the first time a creature enters the affected area or starts its turn there.

Countermeasures. A creature attuned to the crystal can generate a protective force bubble.

Adjusting this Encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

Very Weak: DC is 12, damage is 5 (1d10) psychic.
Weak: DC is 13, damage is 5 (1d10) psychic.
Average: Use default.
Strong: DC is 15, damage is 17 (3d10) psychic.
Very Strong: DC is 16, damage is 22 (4d10) psychic.

The Helm's Controls

Once attuned to the crystal and sitting in the chair, an adventurer may control the *arcane eye* to look outside the citadel or within it, spying on the hobgoblins or locating the missing adventurers' bodies.

The distress signal may also be changed or the Gith ship in the mirror contacted. The Gith will be quite surprised. A Githyanki gish aboard the Astral ship will cast tongues and converse with the adventurer, inquiring why they are in a Gith citadel. The Githyanki would very much like their property back.

Roleplay Opportunity

The Githyanki are by no means a friendly or hospitable race. They are vicious Astral raiders. However, they are not stupid nor rude. They pride themselves on their strict self-discipline and etiquette. The Gith would be willing to ally with the adventurers to fight the hobgoblins and liberate the citadel. Remind the adventurers that a Varkonin army is enroute if they have uncovered that information. They could also learn it with the *arcane eye*.

If an adventurer asks for a reward for returning the citadel, the Gith flatly states that the adventurers won't be hunted into oblivion. That is reward enough. However, the Gith will make a deal to provide enough information to fulfill faction assignment requirements.

K. Commander's Chamber

Read or paraphrase the following:

> This chamber has several large alcoves carved into the wall with statues standing adjacent to them.
>
> Along the east wall are smaller alcoves holding a half-dozen crystal orbs like those from the entrance chamber's sculpture.

This was the Githyanki commander's quarters.

The commander kept the batteries for the control chair in this room. The six crystal orbs are the same psionic batteries charged and used by the Gith (see **Area D** for details). They may be taken for faction assignment requirements.

L. The Hall of Perception

Read or paraphrase the following:

> This grand hall is filled with bodies and rubble, chunks blasted from the walls are scattered across the floor. The once smooth, white walls are marred with burns and cracks.
>
> At the center of the chamber lies a dwarf in battered plate armor amid a circle of ten slain hobgoblins. In the dwarf's hand is a broken axe, the blade stuck in the head of a foe.
>
> Against the western wall are four more bodies collapsed in an ashen pile, burnt beyond recognition.
>
> For the room itself, numerous silver mirrors of different shapes and sizes dot the walls. Between them are faintly glowing letters.

The dwarf body clearly belongs to that of Yowen Kar, the dwarf warpriest. A successful DC 12 Wisdom (Medicine) check reveals the following:

- The dwarf died of numerous wounds, including some caused by a large beast or monstrosity. There is a spike stuck in him. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Nature or Arcana) check identifies this spike as belonging to a manticore. His axe and plate armor are too damaged to be salvaged.
- The ten hobgoblins around the dwarf died from deep slashing wounds.
- The four burnt bodies are hobgoblins.

Anyone proficient in Arcana recognizes the signs of a

magical battle while a successful DC 16 Intelligence (Arcana) check discovers the writing on the wall acts as a *spell scroll of comprehend languages*, which may be scribed into a spell book. If the writing is chiseled loose or removed, the spells are destroyed. Scribing the spells causes the stored magic to fade.

A statue marked with a star on the map opens and closes the doors for this chamber.

A successful DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) or DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check finds that the bodies have already been looted of most valuables save for a backup coin purse Yowen Kar keeps hidden on his person holding 10 gp of emergency drinking funds.

The Hall of Perception's Gith Crystal

The crystal has 10 charges. While attuned to and touching the statue's crystal, the controller can use an action to expend 1 or more of its charges to cast one of the following spells from it: *comprehend languages* (1 charge), *detect thoughts* (2 charges), or *tongues* (3 charges). Detect thoughts from the crystal, when used to detect the presence of thinking creatures, has a range of 300 feet (the entire citadel), and is not blocked by rock or metal.

The crystal regains 1d6+4 expended charges daily at dawn. If the controller expends the last charge, roll a d20. On a 1, the Gith crystal blackens, crumbles into dust, and is destroyed.

Treasure

The *comprehend languages* spell can be scribed from the wall, and 10 gp is found in the dwarf's pouch.

M. The Master of Travel's Chamber

Read or paraphrase the following:

> In an alcove set into the north wall is another gaunt statue. It is kneeling and holding forth a crystal orb. Standing before the orb are several hobgoblins, talking to each other.
>
> Amongst the goblinoids is a hobgoblin wearing a dark steel helmet inset with curled horns. This goblinoid has glowing red eyes.

There are five **hobgoblins** in the chamber. One hobgoblin (wearing a *dread helm*) has attuned to the crystal held by the statue. While the hobgoblin touches the crystal, they can use an action to psychically strike one creature that they can see within 120 feet. The target must succeed on an DC 14 Intelligence saving throw or take 9 (2d8) psychic damage.

Adjusting the Fight

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

Very Weak: There are two **hobgoblins**. One is touching the orb.

Weak: There are three **hobgoblins**. One is touching the orb.

Average or Strong: There are five **hobgoblins**. One is touching the orb.

Very Strong: There are seven **hobgoblins** and a **hobgoblin captain** (touching the crystal orb).

Adjusting the Crystals

These are not cumulative.

Very Weak: DC is 12, damage is 4 (1d8) psychic.

Weak: DC is 14, damage is 4 (1d8) psychic.

Average: Use default.

Strong: DC is 15, damage is 13 (3d8) psychic.

Very Strong: DC is 16, damage is 13 (3d8) psychic.

Interrogating the Hobgoblins

If a hobgoblin is captured and interrogated, a successful DC 12 Charisma (Deception, Intimidation, or Persuasion) check may reveal the following:

- They are Varkonin soldiers sent here to secure and loot the structure. They are the vanguard of a much larger force due to arrive in one or two days. It numbers more than a hundred.
- There force consisted of twenty hobgoblin soldiers, five Iron Shadow warriors, two captains, a devastator mage, and two manticores.
- They encountered four adventurers trespassing and meddling with Varkonin property. They were justly executed, but they gave quite a fight and slew half the hobgoblins' numbers including their leader, a devastator mage.
- This structure is clearly magical, made from some kind of ivory, as far as the hobgoblins can tell. Based on the

shape of the stairs and rooms, it was made and occupied by something human sized.

The Master of Travel's Gith Crystal

While attuned and touching the statue's crystal, the crystal's controller can mentally command the first set of doors at **Area P** to open. If this is done, the doors stay open until commanded to shut using this crystal.

On a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check, the adventurers realize this Gith crystal should allow a Githyanki to control the interior of the citadel, but it's mostly useless after the citadel's *plane shift*.

The hobgoblins have been stationed here to ensure that the hobgoblin strike force retains control of the citadel's shrine (**Area Q**) while they await reinforcements.

Treasure

The hobgoblin touching the statue's crystal wears a necklace with a bloodstone pendant worth 50 gp. This hobgoblin also wears a *dread helm*. This hobgoblin appears to have glowing red eyes because of the helm's power.

Tricks of the Trade

All War is Deception. If the adventurers took the uniforms from dead hobgoblins, they can deceive these hobgoblins with a successful DC 16 Charisma (Deception) check. Only one adventurer need make the Deception check, but all the adventurers seen must be wearing a uniform unless they are acting as prisoners. If the adventurers resolve the encounter this way, award full combat experience.

N. Chamber of Learning

Read or paraphrase the following:

> The far wall is completely covered in the same spirals and whorls as the whole complex, but these are colored. Several of the symbols gently glow.

The Lessons

The wall's Gith writing contains instructions on how the citadel functions. This knowledge is guarded by a a psychic trap, the Lesson of Madness.

The true instructions are psionically imprinted within the writing, and not the words themselves, which are a decoy.

Lesson of Madness

Magical trap (level 1-4, setback)

The lessons carved into the wall bear dangerous fruit for non-Gith.

Trigger. When a non-Gith attempts to read the wall or scribe the spell carved into the chamber wall, they risk madness.

Effect. When a non-Gith examines the Gith writing or scribes a spell from the wall, they must make a DC 13 Intelligence saving throw. On a failure, they suffer a bout of long-term madness ("The character experiences vivid hallucinations and has disadvantage on ability checks") for 1d10x10 hours.

Countermeasures. A *remove curse* spell will remove the madness. A *calm emotions* spell can suppress the effects of madness, while a *lesser restoration* spell can rid a character of a short-term or long-term madness.

What is Learned

When examined closely, the psychic power of the Chamber of Learning activates, transferring knowledge into the reader's mind. The full knowledge is unavailable, but information can be gleaned.

- The Githyanki have a rigid society. The Githyanki gish are psionic adepts who can shape psionically conductive material.
- Such material of this nature can be made with great effort and resources. These materials then can be empowered to perform various functions, such as flight, teleportation, or shifting between the planes.
- The Githyanki use crystal spheres capable of holding psionic energy as batteries. A consequence of the Gith's psionics charging these spheres results in the memories and emotions of the Gith doing the charging to be imbedded in the sphere.
- The Githyanki's techniques are primitive compared to the powers of the illithid, who created and enslaved the Gith.

This information counts as fulfilling faction assignment requirements.

The Chamber's Magical Secret

The chamber's wall also acts as a *spell scroll of mind spike*. If the whorls are chiseled loose or removed, the spell is destroyed. Scribing the spell causes the stored magic to fade, and triggers the Lesson of Madness trap, above.

Treasure

The mind spike spell can be scribed from the wall.

O. The Destroyed Chamber

Read or paraphrase the following:

> This chamber is another battlefield. Blood and scorch marks are splashed across the whole room. There are four and a half hobgoblin bodies strewn around the floor.
>
> The statue of a gaunt figure holding an orb was caught in the fighting and is now toppled and broken in two. The orb no longer glows.

Whatever purpose this room served has been lost. There are several smashed and exploded alabaster objects, but they are too fragmented to make sense of.

The doors leading from this room to **Area D. The Hall of Thought** are now stuck closed. A combined Strength of 25 and 1 minute of effort open it.

The equipment of the hobgoblins has been too damaged to be used or salvaged.

P. Doors to the Shrine of Vlaakith

If both sets of the shrine's doors haven't been opened using the crystals in **Area F** and **Area M**, read or paraphrase the following:

> This door is unlike any in the citadel you have seen so far. While it is still circular, it is smooth and the whole surface is engraved with a fierce warrior the same species of that of the statues. However, this figure is clearly female.

Otherwise, if both doors have been commanded to open, read or paraphrase the following:

> These doors are wide open, and you see within the chamber an altar and an ornate sculpture of a gaunt, female warrior.

Beyond the doors is **Area Q**, the shrine of the Githyanki Queen.

Part 3. The Showdown

Story Beat

Here the adventurers can recover the last two bodies of the missing adventurers as well as confront the leadership of the Varkonin vanguard. Also, a third faction comes into play as the Githyanki finally return to their wayward citadel.

Estimated Duration: 60 minutes

Q. Shrine of Queen Vlaakith

Read or paraphrase the following:

> The view into this chamber is partially blocked by a massive gleaming white altar in the center of the hall. Upon the stone altar is a giant crystal sphere, ten times the size of any other orb you've seen here.
>
> On a low dais to the south is a giant-sized statue of a fearsome, gaunt female warrior. The sculpture holds a two-handed sword aloft.
>
> In the northwest and northeast corners stand human-sized ornate statues holding glowing orbs. These statues are in the likeness of the same strange humanoids.
>
> Hobgoblins stand on the dais next to the pulsing orb. At the stairs ascending the dais are the bodies of an elf in green leather and a half-elf in chainmail. Beside them are half-a-dozen dead hobgoblins, including two in ornamental uniforms denoting higher-ranking soldiers.

When the adventurers open this chamber's doors, it alerts the current occupants, three **hobgoblins** and their **hobgoblin Iron Shadow** leader.

Adjusting the Fight (Hobgoblins)

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

Very Weak: Remove one **hobgoblin**, and remove the **hobgoblin Iron Shadow.**

Weak: Remove the **hobgoblin Iron Shadow.**

Strong: Add one **hobgoblin.**

Very Strong: Add two **hobgoblin Iron Shadows.**

The Portal

The Iron Shadow is attuned to the shrine's queen crystal (the altar orb). Unfortunately, during her attempts to control the shrine's queen crystal, the Iron Shadow activated the shrine's Astral portal.

On initiative 20 on round two, the center of the room is engulfed by an iridescent mist, and several Githyanki warriors step out of the yawning Astral portal. They immediately shout "For the glory of slaying the defilers of the citadel of Vlaakith" in Draconic and Gith and begin combat against the nearest targets.

If the adventurers made a pact with the Githyanki with the helmsman's chair, the Githyanki battle on the side of the adventurers. In this case, double the number of hobgoblins.

Adjusting the Fight (Githyanki)

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

Very Weak: The adventurers have to fight one **Githyanki warrior**, who flees back through the Astral portal after three rounds of combat.

Weak: The adventurers have to fight one **Githyanki warrior**, who flees back through the Astral portal after four rounds of combat.

Average: The adventurers have to fight two **Githyanki warriors.**

Strong: The adventurers have to fight three **Githyanki warriors.**

Very Strong: The adventurers have to fight four **Githyanki warriors.**

The Githyanki Recall the Shrine

The first action at least one Githyanki warrior takes is to activate the shrine's return sequence. This requires a Githyanki warrior to touch the altar orb and use their action activating the shrine's Astral plane shift.

As the strange, gaunt warrior touches the altar orb, the sphere shifts color and begins glowing a bright cerulean. The ceiling orbs also shift from red to blue.

In your mind, you hear a chanting sequence begin. It is reminiscent of a crowd's count-down before the hangman pulls the lever.

Within 5 minutes of the return sequence activating, the shrine is affected by plane shift. The entire shrine is transported to the Astral Plane, near a Githyanki fortress.

If an adventurer is still inside the shrine when it shifts into the Astral Plane, he or she receives the **Lost in Space Story Award**.

Siding with the Githyanki

Siding with the Githyanki at this point should be difficult. The Gith don't differentiate among non-Gith except for elves, who they have encountered in Astral space in elvish ships and who they view with annoyance instead of abject disdain.

A successful DC 18 Charisma (Deception, Intimidation, or Persuasion) check can make a case for a temporary alliance. Good roleplaying may grant advantage to this check.

Siding with the Varkonin Hobgoblins

This citadel is now Varkonin property and they will do nearly anything to keep it, including siding with the adventurers.

A successful DC 14 Charisma (Deception, Intimidation, or Persuasion) check can make a case for a temporary alliance. Good roleplaying may grant advantage to this check.

Delaying the Countdown Sequence

An adventurer must touch and attune to the control orb and succeed on a DC 18 Intelligence check as an action to increase the countdown sequence by 5 minutes. This check may be attempted once per adventurer. The countdown cannot be stopped, only delayed.

After the Battle

If a truce was proposed, a few allies survive the battle. They either flee or congratulate the adventurers on their valor (depending on the ally, combat events, and party play style).

The citadel's return sequence cannot be stopped. All that remains after the citadel vanishes in a glowing mist are scars and memories of the bizarre, alien structure.

Treasure

If the adventurers haven't already found the *mithral half plate* and *dread helm*, they can be found on the enemies defeated in this room. These treasures can only be awarded once, so if the armor or helm are found elsewhere in the citadel, it isn't found here.

The adventurers also find 55 gp in various coinage.

Part 4. Conclusion

The citadel is out of the hands of the Varkonin, and whatever mysteries or power the strange complex held, are now gone to all but the Githyanki, that enigmatic race of zealot warriors.

If the adventurers managed to retrieve the bodies of the adventurers, they can be brought back and raised from the dead by the factions. If all four adventurers are rescued, give the **Story Award In Your Debt**.

The Harpers and Order of the Gauntlet: Randyll Blackalbuck is sad to hear of the structure's disappearance, but such couldn't be helped. The Varkonin had a massive force arriving to secure it. As a Harper, he seeks to safeguard the Realms, gather knowledge, and make inroads to any and all cultures. When such an opportunity is lost, he can't help but feel melancholy.

The Kroth Magg: Hrogar and Valrath Kahn are not disappointed with the outcome. The Varkonin do not hold the citadel and what power it might have possessed. They consider the mission a fine success and congratulate the heroes. Award each adventurer the hobgoblin accolade Vadd Narkoz (see **Decorations in Hobgoblin Society** below for details).

If an adventurer already possesses Vadd Narkoz, he or she is awarded Lozz Nying. Lozz Nying may be earned multiple times.

The adventurers earn 75 gp for recovering information on the citadel as well as 25 gp for each missing adventurer recovered, 50 per missing adventurer if the adventurers successfully haggled.

Decorations in Hobgoblin Society

Vadd Narkoz, "Strong Warrior". In this public proclamation, the hobgoblins of Glip Dak acknowledge outsiders as worthy allies.

Lozz Nying, "Pony Gift". In this public ceremony, a pony, bridle, and riding saddle are bestowed upon those who earned Lozz Nying.

Fezik Melko, "Worthy Accord". A parade occurs, and those given the Fezik Melko are rewarded with a silver dagger.

Pakk Vit, "Shield Bearer". Saving the life of a hobgoblin creates a blood debt. Until that debt is repaid, the hobgoblin who owes the debt is known as the Pakk Vit (shield bearer) to his or hers rescuer.

Rewards

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

Experience

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

Combat Awards

Name of Foe	XP Per Foe
Flying Sword	50
Githyanki Warrior	700
Hobgoblin	100
Hobgoblin Captain	700
Hobgoblin Iron Shadow	450
Manticore	700

The minimum total award for each character participating in this adventure is **450 experience points.**

The maximum total award for each character participating in this adventure is **600 experience points**.

Treasure

The characters receive the following treasure, divided up amongst the party. Treasure is divided as evenly as possible. Gold piece values listed for sellable gear are calculated at their selling price, not their purchase price.

Treasure Awards

Item Name	GP Value
F. Bloodstone pendant	50
G. Silver greatswords (2)	150
H. Baubles	100
L. Dwarf's drinking money	10
M. Bloodstone pendant	50
Q. Coinage	55
Discovering Gith lore	75
Rescuing the adventurers (4)	25 (50) per body

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

Permanent magic items are divided according to a system detailed in the D&D Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide.

Dread Helm

Wondrous Item, common

This fearsome steel helm makes your eyes glow red while you wear it. This item can be found in **Player Handout 3**.

Mithral Half-Plate

Armor (half-plate), uncommon

This armor is obviously Githyanki in design. It is ornamented with tassels, ribbons, and bone fragments.

Mithral is a light, flexible metal. If the armor normally imposes disadvantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks or has a Strength requirement, the mithral version of the armor doesn't. This item can be found in **Player Handout 4**.

Potion of Healing

Potion, common

This item can be found in the **Player's Handbook**.

Story Awards

During the course of this adventure, the characters may earn the following story award:

Lost in Space. You were inside when the Shrine of Vlaakith shifted into the Astral Plane. More information can be found in **Player Handout 1**.

In Your Debt. You have successfully brought back the entire missing adventuring party. All four swear to repay their debt to you. More information can be found in **Player Handout 2**.

Renown

Each character receives **one renown** at the conclusion of this adventure.

Members of the Emerald Enclave that defeat or drive off the manticore earn **one additional renown**.

Members of the Harpers or Order of the Gauntlet that succeed in recovering Githyanki lore earn **one additional renown**.

DM Reward

In exchange for running this adventure, you earn DM Rewards as described in the D&D Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide (ALDMG).

Appendix A. NPC Statistics

Githyanki Warrior

Medium humanoid, lawful evil

Armor Class 17 (half plate)
Hit Points 49 (9d8 + 9)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Con +4, Int +3, Wis +3
Senses passive Perception 11
Languages Gith
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Innate Spellcasting (Psionics). The githyanki's innate spellcasting ability is Intelligence. It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no components:
At will: *mage hand* (the hand is invisible)
3/day each: *jump, misty step, nondetection* (self only)

Actions

Multiattack. The githyanki makes two greatsword attacks.

Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack*: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit*: 9 (2d6 + 2) slashing damage plus 7 (2d6) psychic damage.

Hobgoblin Iron Shadow

Medium humanoid (goblinoid), lawful evil

Armor Class 15
Hit Points 32 (5d8 + 10)
Speed 40 ft.

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

Skills Acrobatics +5, Athletics +4, Stealth +5
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12
Languages Common, Goblin
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Spellcasting. The hobgoblin is a 2nd-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). It has the following wizard spells prepared:
Cantrips (at will): *minor illusion, prestidigitation, true strike*
1st level (3 slots): *charm person, disguise self, expeditious retreat, silent image*

Unarmored Defense. While the hobgoblin is wearing no armor and wielding no shield, its AC includes its Wisdom modifier.

Actions

Multiattack. The hobgoblin makes four attacks, each of which can be an unarmed strike or a dart attack. It can also use Shadow Jaunt once, either before or after one of the attacks.

Unarmed Strike. *Melee Weapon Attack*: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit*: 5 (1d4 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

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

Shadow Jaunt. The hobgoblin magically teleports, along with any equipment it is wearing or carrying, up to 30 feet to an unoccupied space it can see. Both the space it is leaving and its destination must be in dim light or darkness.

Appendix B. Citadel Map

(1 square = 10 ft.)

Player Handout 1. Story Award

During the course of this adventure, the characters may earn the following story award. If you are printing these out for your characters, print as many as you may need to ensure that any eligible character receives a copy:

Lost in Space

You were inside when the Gith citadel shifted into the Astral Plane. The Astral Plane is a bizarre realm, timeless and devoid of gravity and direction.

You wander randomly throughout this surreal place, experiencing life beyond the Material Plane.

Finally, you're able to find a way back to Faerûn – but you're required to spend 50 downtime days in the process.

Player Handout 2. Story Award

In Your Debt

You have successfully rescued the bodies of four unfortunate adventurers:

Yowen Kar of Clan Vallahir is a hill dwarf warpriest who acts suspicious of elves. He hides his care for others behind a hard demeanor. His current companions complain of his surliness.

Darius Dawnguard is a squire of the reborn Order of Dawnfire, a sect of Lathandar. He has made an oath to search for dangerous artifacts and dispose of them.

Vellona the Orphan made a pact with a mysterious entity after she fled into a forest after the destruction of her village. She seeks to unlock the magic in her blood to sunder this bargain.

Lalitha Dae'Danin is an elf noble and druid who dresses as a man to hide from an arranged marriage with a tyrannical and powerful high elf aristocrat.

They express their enduring gratitude to you, some with tears and hugs, others (the grumpy dwarf) with a practical, gruff thank you of a job well done.

Should you die during any Glip Dak adventure, these heroes will tirelessly search for you and have *raise dead* cast upon your body. You pay only the material component cost (as per the acolyte background). Once you are rescued once, the debt is paid, but the friendship remains.

Player Handout 3. Magic Item

During the course of this adventure, the characters may find the following permanent magic item:

Dread Helm

Wondrous Item, common

This fearsome steel helm makes your eyes glow red while you wear it.

This item can be found in *Xanathar's Guide to Everything*.

Player Handout 4. Magic Item

During the course of this adventure, the characters may find the following permanent magic item:

Mithral Half-Plate

Armor (half-plate), uncommon

This armor is obviously Githyanki in design. It is ornamented with tassels, ribbons, and bone fragments.

Mithral is a light, flexible metal. If the armor normally imposes disadvantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks or has a Strength requirement, the mithral version of the armor doesn't.

This item can be found in the *Dungeon Masters Guide*.

Blue Scales

A behir has been hired to destroy the herds of aurochs necessary to feed the hobgoblin city of Glip Dak. Patrols and scouts continue to go missing, forcing the hobgoblins to hire mercenaries to track this behir as they recall their troops to the capital to maintain order as food riots break out.

Tier 2 CCC-GLIP-02-XX can be played in any order.

A Two-Hour Adventure for 5th-10th Level Characters

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Introduction

"Life in Thar can be a bloody business for it is a bloody land."

- Korgoth Bayn, Kroth Magg Overlord

Welcome to Blue Scales, a D&D Adventurers League™ adventure, part of the official D&D Adventurers League™ organized play system and the Tomb of Annihilation™ storyline season.

This adventure takes place in and around the Troll Hills of eastern Thar, and includes wilderness and underground encounters.

This adventure is designed for **three to seven 5th to 10th level characters** and is optimized for **five characters with an average party level (APL) of 8**. Characters outside this level range cannot participate in this adventure.

Adventure Background

As the Kroth Magg hobgoblins continue to expand their influence across southern Thar through shrewd diplomacy and subtle violence – often one and the same – a rival power is taking measures against this new threat. This adversary has sought to undermine the growth of the Kroth Magg capital of Glip Dak by cutting off their chief supply of food, auroch herds grazed on the verdant steppes south of the city.

This veiled foe has enticed a behir infamous for hunting dragons throughout the Sea of Fallen Stars beside the forces of Tymanther, where she earned a reputation for both her brutality and cunning. When the true leader of the Kroth Magg, the blue dragon Maelizarra, was revealed to the behir Stonejaws, she eagerly agreed and set out to meet with another agent, a duergar wizard named Yauch already fortified and waiting in the cliffs of the Troll Hills. There he has been observing Glip Dak since its founding, keeping track of its patrols and supplies from his hidden stronghold.

From this secret base, the behir and wizard began ravaging the herds rotated through the dreary grass lands, slaughtering the guards and herds alike and leaving their corpses to rot. These attacks have proven devastating to the stability of Glip Dak as the auroch meat is crucial to feeding the legions, slaves, merchants, and others hosted by the city. Yauch's knowledge of the area and the Kroth Magg's movements have allowed the pair to strike the most vulnerable targets and vanish quickly, using the terrain and his magic.

Even as the hobgoblins moved to reinforce their remaining herds, guards en route were ambushed before they could rendezvous and consolidate their strength.

As the first waves of hunger are felt in the capital, the Kroth Magg have to make a hard choice – keep their soldiers within the city to maintain order, or risk losing the city to find this enigmatic foe.

Not all as been misfortune and defeat. A unit of Iron Shadow monks witnessed one of these ambushes and followed the behir back to her Troll Hills lair before she vanished into a cliff. When the Iron Shadows reported back, the overlords decided to hire mercenaries to deal with this threat as they secure control of Glip Dak and what herds remain.

Location and NPC Summary

The following NPCs and locations feature prominently in this adventure.

Stonejaws (STOHN-jaws). A behir of above-average intelligence and an overdeveloped sense of grandeur. She is an experienced hunter of dragons.

Yauch (YOCH). A duergar wizard and skilled spy. He is a mercenary working with Stonejaws.

Glip Dak (GLIP DACK). The market fortress of the Kroth Magg clan of hobgoblins. Commerce is king in Glip Dak, and though all races are tolerated there, only goblinoids and their allies are fully welcome.

Hrogar (ROW-gar). Hobgoblin captain of the guard. Hires the adventurers to stop Stonejaws.

Kroth Magg (KAH-roth MA-gag). A relatively new hobgoblin kingdom risen to power within the northern Troll Hills. They control the valuable trade city of Glip Dak, the center of trade within Thar.

Vaws-fohaklyam (VOW FOE-bah-key-lie-am). A small river in the Troll Hills. The Ghukliak (Goblin) name translates to "Murderer's Creek" in Common.

Thashlohk (THAS-low-keh). A backwoods trail used for moving auroch and other livestock across Thar. The Ghukliak (Goblin) name translates to "Bloated Trail" in Common, an old drover's trail.

Adventure Overview

The adventure is broken down into three parts:

Part 1, A Little Help from My "Friends". The adventurers are hired to go after Stonejaws.

Part 2. Choose a Part 2 path below

Part 2a, Over the River. The adventurers follow the Vaws-fohaklyam (Murderer's Creek) as it goes underground where they must deal with predatory creatures and the harsh environment.

Part 2b, Through the Woods. Following up on a rumor, the adventurers travel to the Troll Hills and approach the cave hideout of the duergar wizard and behir.

Part 2c, Up the Cliff. Knowing the location of the cave hideout is the easy part. Climbing the cliff up to it is the hard part!

Part 3, In the Belly of the Beast. The adventurers infiltrate the hideout. Unfortunately, the duergar and behir are expecting such an incursion and have prepared accordingly.

Adventure Hooks

This adventure is part of a set of adventures that are located in the trade city of Glip Dak, in the steppes of Thar. Adventures in each CCC-GLIP tier (GLIP-01-XX, GLIP-02-XX, etc.) can be played in any order.

Your players may recognize some of the NPCs or places from the other Glip Dak adventures. While that can give

them a sense of familiarity with the locale, it won't spoil any surprises!

Fresh Off the Road. This is the adventurer's first time in Glip Dak arriving at the fortress market as part of a trading caravan, or as part the personal retinue of a minor Moonsea noble.

Now That the Mystery is Solved (CCC-GLIP -01-02). The adventurers recently befriended a Glip Dak faction with some work in the ruins below the city.

Paying the Ransom (CCC-GLIP-01-01). Some tendays ago, you set out from Hulburg with a mission to pay the ransom on Elias Vandover. Now that that mission is accomplished (for better or worse), you've been cooling your heels in Glip Dak, hoping to find a way back to Hulburg that doesn't involve you footing the bill.

Get Our Books Back (Lords' Alliance Faction Assignment). Prior to being hired to spy on Glip Dak, many years ago, the duergar mage Yauch stole a valuable collection of dragon-lore books from the Saj family in Mulmaster.

Yauch disguised himself as Lumin Fetterbond, a respected dwarf cleric from Hulburg. When representatives of the Saj family caught up to Lumin, the deception was uncovered. Lumin volunteered his keen divining talents to locate Yauch for the Saj. Refer to **Part 1**, section C, where Lords' Alliance players receive Player Handout 3.

Running this adventure at a convention

There are many paths to follow in Blue Scales, but if you are running it on a tight timeline, you will probably have to streamline it. Use the Adventure Primer on pages 3-4 and the Story Beats for each part as a roadmap and consider the below suggestions for running this adventure when you only have a two-hour slot.

Part 1: Ask upfront if anyone has story awards from GLIP 01-01 or -02. If not, run sections D and E (adding C if any Lords Alliance faction members are present). There are plenty of opportunities for roleplaying with Hrogar.

Part 2: Omit the Cave Fisher encounter from the chosen track.

Part 3: Remove Part B, or at least the gas spore, from that chamber.

If time is no object

If your play group has the time, this adventure can easily run four hours.

Part 1: Ask upfront if anyone has story awards from GLIP 01-01- or -02. If not, run sections D and E, (adding C if any Lords Alliance faction members are present.) There are plenty of opportunities for roleplaying with Hrogar.

Part 2: Run 2b followed by 2a. This will allow the adventures a trip through the Troll Hills, then the underground river to the final scene.

Part 3: Be careful about piling too much stuff in the final battle, this can easily become a deadly encounter.

Part 1. A Little Help

Story Beat

The adventurers are recruited (the method can vary based on the outcomes of other Glip Dak modules) and informed of the plight facing Glip Dak by the captain of the guard – a behir with unusual insight has been destroying the auroch herds needed to feed the city. The captain provides a map showing different routes to the behir's supposed lair.

Estimated Duration: 15 minutes

Tip: Where to start

Depending on which (if any) Glip Dak story awards have been earned, this adventure can start in a number of ways;

- If any of the party have the story award Glip Dak Lawbreaker, go to **Part A**.
- If any of the party have the story award The Bronze, go to **Part B**.
- If any of the party is a member of the Lords' Alliance, go to **Part C**.
- If the party is newly arrived at Glip Dak, go to **Part D**.
- If none of the above fits your party, try to develop a narrative that will motivate them to take this work from the Kroth Magg guards.

General Features

There is a sprawling city surrounding the fortress of Glip Dak. This tent city is composed of numerous elements, including less wealthy merchants, nomads who have come to trade, outcasts and refugees, and mercenary companies for hire. Located here are the public punishments such as stocks, hanging cages, etc.

Terrain. The tent city sprawls for several acres around the trade fort of Glip Dak. The ground throughout has been churned into mud. Dry grass has been scattered on the main paths, but the clinging earth and constant foot traffic make the paths difficult terrain.

Weather. Thar is high plateau terrain, harsh and cold. It snows most of the year. Light snow covers the ground, piling into taller snowdrifts in less traveled areas. During the day, it is cold. At night, it drops to freezing.

Light. Every merchant or camp has some kind of fire going, which serves as a heat source, cooking method, and light.

Smells and Sounds. The pungent scent of horses and other animals mixes with the smell of rare medicinal herbs, roasting meat, and brewing beer.

A. Glip Dak Lawbreaker

If a member of the party has this story award, read or paraphrase the following:

> You've been in this room for more than an hour now, waiting for the hobgoblin captain to return. Maybe this isn't a cell? But the door is locked and the room bare. They haven't brought something to eat in a while, and what they have brought has been watery gruel. There is begging for food coming from adjoining rooms, muffled by the stone. You have heard rumors of some sort of calamity befalling the great herds of auroch the city feeds itself with.
>
> A jangle of keys outside the room's one door announces the arrival of someone.
>
> A tall hobgoblin in blue-streaked plate armor strides in, stepping to the center of the room, and places his hands on his hips. Slowly, he surveys you. Finally, he extends his right hand, knife-like at [the character(s) with the Glip Dak Lawbreaker story award].
>
> "You have been judged by my peers and found guilty of breaking Glip Dak law. Normally your hands would be bound behind you, and a rat-filled sack tied about your head. Then you would be marched to the river and thrown in.
>
> "However, I find myself in a position to offer you an alternative."

Hrogar offers to commute the sentence of the offending character or characters if they find and slay the behir who has been menacing the Kroth Magg. **If an adventurer with the Glip Dak Lawbreaker story award completes Hrogar's mission, the story award can be removed**.

> "I have a dangerous task for you, and your companions, should they choose to join. At the base of the Troll Hills, just south of Glip Dak, a beast has been ravaging our auroch herds, and my patrols. I have too few legionnaires to spare at the moment as keeping order within the city at this time is paramount. So I've turned to lawbreakers."

Please proceed to **E. The Problem at Hand**.

B. The Bronze

If a member of the party has **The Bronze** story award, read or paraphrase the following:

> The streets are lined with beggars and breadlines as the hobgoblin military enforces strict rationing within the city. While Thar is too cold to ever be considered verdant, its steppes are often coated in grass good enough to graze larges herds with if one is careful with rotations. But citizens and merchants talk that some sort of catastrophe has befallen the herds to the south where the richest grazing can be found.
>
> While trying to make your way to one of Glip Dak's numerous tap houses, a hobgoblin guard approached you and presented you with a summons to report to Guard Captain Hrogar at "your earliest convenience." When a hobgoblin

guard-captain requests your presence at "your earliest convenience", it means "immediately".

On that premise, you soon find yourself in the anteroom of Captain Hrogar's office. You aren't there long before you hear a deep voice in harshly accented Common say, "Send them in!"

A goblin peeks his head out the door, waving you forward, nodding his head up and down rhythmically. "Come, come. Yes, yes. Come, come!"

As you enter, the tall hobgoblin behind the desk gets up, coming around to greet you. He extends a calloused hand. "Good to see you again," he says, broad smile revealing incongruously white teeth. You think he might even mean it.

"I am glad you are still around. I have another problem that outlanders with skills like yours might be able to handle.

"At the base of the Troll Hills, just south of Glip Dak, a beast has been ravaging our auroch herds, and my patrols. I have too few legionnaires to spare at the moment as keeping order within the city at this time is paramount. So I've turned to you."

Please proceed to **E. The Problem at Hand**.

C. The Missing Books

If any of the adventurers are members of the Lords' Alliance, hand them **Player Handout 3**, and read or paraphrase the following:

Seeing the Lords' Alliance recognition sign come from a hobgoblin was a bit of a surprise, but all the protocols were followed, and the seal on the scroll he gave you puts away any misgivings.

From here, have the party proceed to **Part A**, **B**, or **D**, whichever is most appropriate.

D. New in Town

If the adventurers are newly arrived to Glip Dak, read or paraphrase the following:

Well, they were right about one thing, Glip Dak is cold. There also doesn't seem to be much work in the market, at least for non-goblins, and the prices for even meager rations is absurd, nearly eightfold what they should be. The barkeep at your inn, sensing your dilemma, let you know that the Kroth Magg constabulary often has work that is open to "outlanders", especially now that the city is facing a food shortage crisis. Some speak of a calamity that has befallen the great herds of auroch south of the city.

Following that tip, you soon find yourself in the anteroom outside Guard-Captain Hrogar's office. You aren't there long before you hear a deep voice, in harshly accented Common say, "Send them in!"

A goblin peeks his head out the door, waving your forward, nodding his head up and down rhythmically. "Come, come. Yes, yes. Come, come!"

Behind a heavy wooden desk sits a large hobgoblin, resplendent in polished bronze plate.

"Outlanders, your presence here tells me you are looking for work. I have work that needs doing. Great risk for great reward.

"At the base of the Troll Hills, just south of Glip Dak, a beast has been ravaging our auroch herds, and my patrols. I have too few legionnaires to spare at the moment as keeping order within the city at this time is paramount. So I've turned to you."

Please proceed to **E. The Problem at Hand**.

E. The Problem at Hand

Hrogar relays the following information to the party during the meeting:

- A behir moved into Troll Hills south of Glip Dak a few tendays ago. Since then it has ambushed patrols and helped itself to the Kroth Magg auroch herds, feasting and then slaughtering what it couldn't gorge itself on.
- Patrols have been sent out to kill it, but with no success. If the patrol is too small (ten or fewer), they are attacked by the behir. If the patrol is larger, they find nothing but dead aurochs.
- The food shortage has already caused riots within the city, and the Kroth Magg have had to recall nearly all of their remaining patrols to the city to keep order, leaving their holdings outside vulnerable.
- Most recently, Kroth Magg Iron Shadows were able to follow the behir to the base of a 300-foot-tall cliff. They watched as the behir, half an auroch in its mouth, scaled the rock face. Up the cliff, a large stream exits a cave, water cascading from it. The scout continued to watch as the behir crawled into this cave.
- As a reward, Hrogar tells the adventures that in the behir's treasure is a fine shield, emblazoned with the Kroth Magg symbol. The leader of one of the ambushed Kroth Magg patrols had a magic shield that was missing when Hrogar's troops went out to recover the bodies. "You kill the behir, and that shield will be fair compensation!"
- He offers no additional pay, merely saying: "You can take the behir's treasure."
- He requests the adventurers bring the beast's head back to him as proof. If they object, he suggests bringing back its lower jaw. "It can't eat our herds missing half its mouth, ha!"
- Hrogar also suspects something more behind these

attacks. They are too surgical – well timed and accurate. He directs the adventurers to find clues as to the behir's true motives and if it has support.

- If asked about what possible wealth a behir could have from raiding auroch herds, the captain replies that it also ambushed and looted supply lines, including those carrying coin.

Hrogar suggests one of the following three approaches to the cave, and gives the adventurers a crude map (**Player Handout 4**) that shows the route to each:

- Following the Vaws-fohaklyam ("Murderer's Creek" in Common, so named because of the trolls that stalk the area) from its headwaters as it goes underground to eventually exit the cliff cave (**Part 2a. Over the River**).
- Follow the Thashlohk ("Bloated Trail" in Common, an old drover's trail) into the Troll Hills and look for Yauch, a duergar hermit who is rumored to know the hills inside and out (**Part 2b. Through the Woods**).
- If neither of those two options appeals to the party, Hrogar offers them two potions of climbing and suggests a frontal assault up the cliff. He laughs loudly at this idea (**Part 2c. Up the Cliff**).

Other things Hrogar knows that he may divulge to the adventurers:

- He suspects the behir has been lured to the area to cause trouble for the Kroth Magg, but not by whom.
- The behir is rumored to be named "Stonejaws". A successful DC 18 Intelligence (History) check (dragonborn and those with the sage or hermit background have advantage on this role) recall that Stonejaws is a behir infamous for hunting dragons throughout the Sea of Fallen Stars beside the forces of Tymanther, where she earned a reputation for both her brutality and cunning.
- Behirs are known to hate dragons, and the two creatures attempt to slay each other on sight.
- Signs of magic (unusual burning, acid puddles) were discovered around the sites of several of the raids. Hrogar is unsure of what this means. Either Stonejaw has magic at her disposal or she might have allies.

Part 2a. Over the River

Story Beat

The adventurers follow the map to a small lake that is the source of the infamous Murderer's Creek. They are to follow this waterway underground and eventually to the behir's lair. However, trolls and cave fishers stalk this region.

Estimated Duration: 45 minutes

General Features for the Troll Hills

Most of Thar is cold moor or grassy steppes save for a few especially verdant areas, such as the region of the northern Troll Hills.

Terrain. The land becomes increasingly rocky and sharp with periodic plateaus of rich grazing land. There are many frozen ponds and running streams woven through the ravines. Despite the harsh conditions, there are still trees growing in the steppes, forming small copses.

Weather. Cold and often overcast during the day but clear at night with a biting wind that pulls at anything in the open.

Light. Bright during the day and well illuminated at night by Selûne and her tears.

Smells and Sounds. The vibrant scent of damp earth fills the land, and the trickle of water from the many streams can be heard.

Extreme Cold

Whenever the temperature is at or below 0 degrees Fahrenheit, a creature exposed to the cold must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw at the end of each hour or gain one level or exhaustion. Creatures with resistance or immunity to cold damage automatically succeed on the saving throw, as do creatures wearing cold weather gear (thick coats, gloves, and the like), and creatures naturally adapted to cold climates.

A. There's Trolls in Them Thar Hills!

As the adventurers make their way higher into the Troll Hills, they learn why it has that name.

> Hrogar's map leads you higher and higher into the Troll Hills. At this elevation, the wind is bitterly cold, and all but the hardiest trees have given up.
>
> After hours of climbing, the land levels off. You come a frozen lake filling a small valley. It is marked as "Grim's Tarn" on your map. The lake is completely frozen over, except for what can only be the Vaws-fohaklyam creek meandering away down a ravine.

The lake and stream are 10 feet deep. The simplest way for the adventurers to get to the Vaws-fohaklyam is to cross the lake ice on foot. See **Map 1**.

As the party approaches the lake, four **ice trolls** pick up the adventurer's scents. The trolls are gnawing bones from their last meal and begin to follow the adventurers at a distance. The trolls are not very stealthy and are noticed on a successful DC 11 Wisdom (Perception) check.

If they are not noticed, or if the party ignores them, the trolls will follow until the adventurers reach the lake. At that point, the trolls will rush the party.

Environmental Hazard—Crossing the Ice

From the closest point on the shore, the mouth of the creek is 100 feet away. Moving across requires a successful DC 15 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check (small creatures have advantage while large creatures or those in heavy armor have disadvantage). Failure results with the creature plunging through the ice into the deadly cold water. Creatures fallen through the ice require a successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check to climb out.

Every round spent in the frigid water requires creatures to make a DC 12 Constitution save or they take 4 (1d8) cold damage and gain a level of exhaustion. Creatures take half as much damage and no exhaustion on a successful save. Creatures with resistance or immunity to cold damage automatically succeed on the saving throw with no ill effect.

Adjusting this Encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

Very Weak: Remove two **ice trolls.**

Weak: Remove one **ice troll.**

Strong: Add two **ice trolls.**

Very Strong: Add three **ice trolls.**

Tricks of the Trade

Consider the following guidance:

Ice Trolls. Ice trolls are not big on subtlety. They charge in and gang up on the weakest looking adventurer.

Using the Ice Against the Trolls. The trolls can be lured onto the ice with a successful DC 14 Charisma check, or if attacked at range. The trolls are large (disadvantage on their Dexterity (Acrobatics) checks to cross). The adventurers have advantage on attack trolls who have fallen through the ice, but the trolls are immune to the effects of the cold and water.

Treasure

The ice trolls have little that the adventurers would value. One troll, however, has a belt pouch with a *potion of diminution* he was too afraid to use (his fellows would have gobbled him up), 150 gp worth of uncut amber, and a set of humanoid knuckle bones that can be used as the material component for casting *augury*.

B. Down the Creek

The characters will be able to follow the creek on the bank for the first mile, but then it enters a low cave, and they must either wade in the river, or get clever!

Following the creek to the cave takes an hour, ensuring at least one Constitution save from the group for the freezing weather.

General Features for the Caverns

The area is rough. Mostly moss-covered rock. Vaws-fohaklyam, Murderer's Creek, cuts through a shallow ravine. Several copses of trees grow throughout the area.

Terrain. The creek nearly fills a shallow ravine, leaving little room along the shore. There are a few trees growing throughout area. The cave itself is smooth from eons of erosion, but the entrance is small.

Weather. Cold and often overcast during the day but clear at night with a biting wind that pulls at anything in the open. The air is still and far less frigid within the cavern.

Light. The caves are completely dark.

Smells and Sounds. Vaws-fohaklyam flows along with a quiet slushing and splashing. The air smells heavily of damp earth.

The shallow ravine the creek flows through leaves little room along the shore, forcing you into a single file. There are a few trees growing from the thin banks and on the lip of the ravine above.

Ahead, the creek flows into the mouth of a low cave and disappears into the darkness beyond. If Hrogar's scouts are correct, this creek leads to the behir's lair, and then out the cliff on the far side.

The creek water is very cold, only its movement keeps it from becoming ice. Figuring out a way to move down the creek while keeping dry is paramount.

The opening is 10 feet wide and 5 feet tall, but the cold water presses to the edges. The stream is 10 feet deep.

The party has many options to proceed down the creek:

- Tough it out and attempt to swim.
- *Tenser's floating disk*, *water walk*, or similar water transportation magic.
- *Fly*, *levitate*, a *flying carpet*, or similar magic.
- Build a raft from the surrounding trees.
- Try one of the other approaches Hrogar mapped out for them.

XP Award

For figuring out a way to move the party down Murderer's Creek without getting wet, award each adventurer 250 experience points.

Developments

Proceed to **Fishing in the Dark** (**Section B** of **Part 2b**) below. If you have less than 45 minutes left to play, skip **Fishing in the Dark**.

C. Into the Cave

Murderer's Creek runs another quarter of a mile underground before entering the behir's lair. Read or paraphrase the following:

> The creek widens and slows as it approaches a large cavern. The rocky area has stalactites and stalagmites reaching from the floor and ceiling. On the air, you catch the odor of rotten meat. On the far side of the cavern, roughly 150 feet away, the creek spills out of the cave mouth into the air.

From here, the creek leads to **Section A** in **Part 3**.

Part 2b. Through the Woods

Story Beat

The adventurers follow the Thashlohk ("Bloated Trail") into the Troll Hills. They pass through a dreary forest spotted with massive boulders until they come to Yauch's hut, but he is no longer the occupant – poachers have moved in. The poachers may hold important information. Yauch himself has been living in the cave for the last few years, as the cabin no longer afforded enough space for his research and spying. The duergar still keeps an eye on things at his old cabin via *clairvoyance*.

Estimated Duration: 45 minutes

General Features for Troll Hills

Most of Thar is cold moor or grassy steppe save for a few especially verdant areas, such as the region of the northern Troll Hills.

Terrain. The land is a rugged combination of rocky hills and copses of trees.

Weather. Cold and often overcast during the day but clear at night with a biting wind that pulls at anything in the open.

Light. Bright during the day and well illuminated at night by Selûne and her tears.

Smells and Sounds. The vibrant scent of damp earth fills the land, and the trickle of water from the many streams can be heard.

Extreme Cold

Whenever the temperature is at or below 0 degrees Fahrenheit, a creature exposed to the cold must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw at the end of each hour or gain one level or exhaustion. Creatures with resistance or immunity to cold damage automatically succeed on the saving throw, as do creatures wearing cold weather gear (thick coats, gloves, and the like), and creatures naturally adapted to cold climates.

A. Yauch's Hut

Getting to the hut takes two hours hiking south from Glip Dak along the Thashlohk. The boulders and trees block the chill wind – Constitution saves against the cold weather have advantage.

Read or paraphrase the following:

> The wind remains chill and cutting, but the trees and boulders block the worst of it.
>
> Hrogar's map, though simple, is eerily accurate. He said it would take about a quarter day walking the Thashlohk before you reached the hut. Sure enough, there is a small, rustic cabin just off the trail ahead.
>
> A small but steady column of smoke rises from the hut's chimney. Save for a lone raven cawing, it suddenly seems very quiet.

See **Map 2**.

The lone raven cawing is actually a hobgoblin poacher (**veteran**) signaling to her comrades the approach of the adventurers. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) check will identify the call as not avian in origin. Kenku or Aaracokra adventurers have advantage on this check.

Inside the hut are five poachers (**veterans**). The group has recently moved into the Troll Hills to trap crag cats for their pelts and hunt meat to sell back in Glip Dak at inflated prices. When the adventurers get within 60 feet of the cabin, one of the poachers calls out for them to stop and identify themselves.

The group's leader is Getha, a half-orc native of Thar. She and the rest of her crew are wary of strangers; they know they are operating in the Kroth Magg's fief and are not interested in paying duties on the furs they harvest.

While talking with the adventurers, the trappers in the hut have their crossbows trained on the party with readied Attack actions. If the adventurers initiate combat, the trappers will shoot.

Getha will start the interaction suspicious of the party and will press them with questions to make sure they are not associated with the Kroth Magg government. If the adventurers reveal they are working for Hrogar, she will turn aggressive, but not hostile.

Smooth talking will bring Getha back to merely suspicious. If the party offers valuables or goods (especially food) to the poachers, Getha will become friendly. If the party contains orcs or half-orcs, Getha will address those adventurers first. She will share the following information if asked:

Who are you?

"Getha's me name, and trappin's me game. And who do you be?"

Why do you sound like a pirate?

"I spent me youth aboard Windhammer raiding the Nelanther Isles. Eventually we were sunk, and I lost two of me best fingers. Well, that be a long story, and for another time."

How long have you been up here?

"Between two and three tendays, near as I can figure. Once word came of the slaughtered herds, we smelled trouble and set out on our own to hunt meat and sell it for a killing back in Glip Dak. Heh, get it? The joke I mean. Killing? No? I guess the cold can drain anyone's sense of humor."

Have you seen a dwarf/duergar around here?

"We've seen an old duergar from time to time. He passes by on the way up that trail," she says, pointing, "and glares at us as he goes by. Don't say a word to us, though. I think he used to live in the hut."

Why do you think he used to live in the hut?

"Well, 'cause I don't need the eye of Gruumsh to see the tables and such are all dwarf-sized!"

Where does he go?

"If ya follow the trail over there, it heads up farther into the hills. Just before it peters out, it passes a cave. I think that's where he goes, all mutterin' to his'self. I haven't been in it though, not gonna find crag cats in a cave, now are ya!"

Have you see strange tracks (or a behir, or aurochs)?

"Aye, we've seen some nasty beast's prints, and the slaughtered aurochs, and the slain patrols too. We stayed out of sight and far away. Don't want to be blamed for what we didn't have a hand in doing. Rumor is that it was from a behir, and I believe it too. I've seen the tracks with me own eyes. They lead towards the waterfall cliff, not far from here."

The Cabin

Inside the hut are the trappers' sleeping pallets, a pile of furs, and traps hanging on the walls. The table and chairs in the middle of the room are dwarf-sized.

Burned into the wooden beams are hundreds of strange characters. Adventurers who can read Draconic will recognize some of the characters as numbers and letters of the Draconic language, though arranged haphazardly, and not spelling out any words that make sense. Fully half of the images appear to be Draconic. The remaining glyphs are of unknown origin. A DC successful 19 Intelligence (Investigation) check (those proficient in thieves' cant or calligraphy tools have advantage) recognize it as a cypher explaining that Yauch has moved from here because the cabin became too small, and obvious, for him to carry out his assignments. He moved into a cave on a cliff with a waterfall.

If one of the party casts *detect magic* and searches the cabin, a small mammal skull, hanging on the wall, gives off an aura of divination magic. If asked, the trappers will say that the skull was hanging on the wall when they arrived. Yauch uses this skull as the target for the invisible sensor of his *clairvoyance* spell.

If the adventurers peacefully deal with the poachers, Getha offers the party a *potion of fire giant strength* if they promise to keep her bands' activities and whereabouts secret. If combat ensues, Getha will attempt to use the potion herself. If she is captured or killed before she has a chance to, the potion is in her belt pouch.

If beaten in battle and then captured, the poachers will reveal the above information, but in a sullen manner.

XP Award

For peacefully dealing with the poachers, award full combat experience.

Adjusting this Encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

- ***Very Weak***: Remove two **veterans.**
- ***Weak***: Remove one **veterans.**
- ***Strong***: Add two **veterans.**
- ***Very Strong***: Add three **veterans.**

Tricks of the Trade

Consider the following guidance:

Tactics. After warning her comrades, the poachers (**veterans**) will wait, hidden with their crossbows ready until hostilities commence before firing. They will target adventurers who are obvious spellcasters, the more lightly armored, the better. The poachers will remain in heavy cover (firing out of the cabin's windows, from behind boulders) unless forced out (for example, by a *stinking cloud*). They also will not pursue any adventures who break off contact.

Treasure

Fighting the Poachers. The poachers have a combined 150 gp worth of various coins and gems between them. One also possesses a dice set. Getha possesses a *potion of fire giant strength*.

Peaceful Resolution. Getha gives the adventurers a *potion of fire giant strength*.

Developments

Following the trail Getha mentioned will lead the adventurers to the mouth of a cave. This cave branch connects to the subterranean Murderer's Creek. From the cave entrance, it takes only 10 minutes of walking to reach the creek. Proceed to **B. Fishing in the Dark**, listed below.

Part B. Fishing in the Dark

Story Beat

The adventurers make their way down the river cavern, they pass through the feeding grounds of a cluster of four cave fishers.

If you have less than 45 minutes left to play, skip this section.

Read or paraphrase the following:

> As the creek rounds another bend, you can feel the air moving upwards. The ceiling is much higher here, at least 60 feet in some places.
>
> All along the floor are scattered bones, mostly animal, but some look humanoid.

See **Map 3**.

Adventurers don't need to make Constitution saves against the freezing weather while in the cave.

On either side of the creek, 50 feet above the river, are ledges on which four **cave fishers** perch. The creatures are difficult to spot, requiring a successful DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check. The cavern is completely dark, so unless the characters are projecting light 50 feet, possess devil's sight, or have darkvision, they cannot notice the cave fishers until the cave fishers attack.

On the cave floor below the fishers are the scattered bones from previous prey, including unfortunate adventurers. Mixed in with their remains are a silver amulet of Tymora, 60 gp worth of adventuring gear, 90 gp in various coins, a non-magical silver mace, and a quiver of 10 *+1 arrows*.

Adjusting this Encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

Very Weak: Remove two **cave fishers.**

Weak: Remove one **cave fishers.**

Strong: Add one **cave fisher**. Each has 70 hit points.

Very Strong: Add two **cave fishers**. Each has 90 hit points.

Tricks of the Trade

Consider the following guidance:

Cave Fishers. Using their stealth and blindsight, and likely with advantage, the cave fishers will use their Adhesive Filament action on the first turn, attempting to grapple a random adventurer.

On subsequent turns, they will use the Filament action to reel their prey up and attack it with their claws, provided the target weighs 200 pounds or less.

Treasure

Searching the pile of bones amassed by the cave fishers will yield 90 gp worth of various coins, 60 gp worth of adventuring gear, a silver holy symbol (amulet) of Tymora, a non-magical silver mace, and a quiver of 10 *+1 arrows*.

Developments

If playing from **Part 2a**, **Over the River** return to **Part 2a, Section D**. If playing from **Part 2b, Through the Woods** continue to **Section C** below.

C. Into the Cave

Murderer's Creek runs another quarter of a mile underground before entering the behir's lair. Read or paraphrase the following:

> The creek widens and slows as it approaches a large cavern. The rocky area has stalactites and stalagmites reaching from the floor and ceiling. On the air, you catch the odor of rotten meat. On the far side of the cavern, 150 feet away, the creek spills out of the cave mouth into the air.

From here, the creek leads to **Area A** in **Part 3**.

Part 2c. Up the Cliff

Story Beat

The adventurers make their way directly for the behir's lair, up the cold, hard cliffs to confront the enemies within. Along the way, they find a Kroth Magg scout battling for her life. Sometimes, adventurers like to do things the hard way!

Estimated Duration: 45 minutes

General Features for Troll Hills

The hills grow ever more sharp and precarious. Numerous tiny waterfalls splash throughout the area.

Terrain. The land becomes increasingly rocky and sharp with periodic patches of trees or small fields. There are many streams and falls woven throughout the region, most frozen solid.

Weather. Cold and often overcast during the day but clear at night with a biting wind that pulls at anything in the open.

Light. Bright during the day and well illuminated at night by Selûne and her tears.

Smells and Sounds. The vibrant scent of damp earth fills the land. Little can be heard over the whoosh and howl of frigid wind.

Extreme Cold

Whenever the temperature is at or below 0 degrees Fahrenheit, a creature exposed to the cold must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw at the end of each hour or gain one level or exhaustion. Creatures with resistance or immunity to cold damage automatically succeed on the saving throw, as do creatures wearing cold weather gear (thick coats, gloves, and the like), and creatures naturally adapted to cold climates.

It should take three hours to arrive by foot, unless methods are taken to shorten travel time. Each hour requires a succeeding on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw (see **Extreme Cold** above).

A. From the Bottom

Far above the adventurers is the lair of Stonejaws. From the bottom, there is nowhere to go but up. Read or paraphrase the following.

> Gone is the shelter brought by the trees and boulder-laden hills, which had blocked the freezing, clawing wind. You stand in the open below a wall of jagged stone pockmarked with caves. The largest is far above you, a waterfall cascades from its dark mouth. There are several smaller falls frozen into long sheets of ice. There look to be a few ledges along the way, but only a few.

The 240-foot climb facing the adventurers is not necessarily hard, but it is long. Characters with a climb speed do not need to make any checks. Those without a climb speed need to make a successful DC 10 Strength (Athletics) with disadvantage to complete the climb. If the characters are using climbing gear, rope tied off by climbers above, or the like, this check is made normally. On a failed check, the adventurer falls 10-60 feet (1d6 x10) and takes 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage for every 10 feet fallen.

Development

When the first character is halfway up the cliff, they hear the sounds of combat coming from a small cave in the cliff face. See **Section B**. below.

Tricks of the Trade

Taking too Long: If the party lacks a member who can climb quickly and reliably, or who can fly, to anchor a rope for the group, halve the height of the cliff – it isn't heroic fun to plummet to death from a cliff face.

Make the Strong One Do It: An adventurer can pull the rest of the party up with a rope. The adventurer makes a successful DC 10 Strength (Athletic) check to heave a companion up the cliff. The character can pull two up at a time with a successful DC 15 check. If the rope isn't anchored, a failed roll results in a fall.

Players Gonna Play: This is Tier 2, and it is possible your adventurers will have a *flying carpet*, *winged boots*, the spell *fly*, etc., that afford them a means to ascend the cliff quickly and easily. Let them flex this muscle here.

B. Halfway

When the first character is halfway up the cliff, they hear the sounds of combat coming from a small cave in the cliff face. Read or paraphrase the following:

As you pass one of the smaller caves, halfway up the cliff, a shout from inside grabs your attention. "Back, back! Back I say! I won't go out like this!" A woman's voice echoes through the cave, carrying a thick Thar accent.

A humanoid female stands near the entrance, throwing knife in one hand, the other outstretched before her as she slowly backs towards the entrance. Cautiously advancing, matching the woman step-for-step, are several massive, blue-tinted spiders.

As you watch, the air behind the woman shimmers, and a hulking blue and white spider materializes behind her.

The woman is Shallora, an undercover h**obgoblin Iron Shadow** keeping an eye on the behir's lair after her unit located it. She is garbed as a falconer. The Iron Shadows use falcons to communicate long distances. She is on the cliff investigating a cave that has spooked her falcons, making them hesitant to return to her and slowing down communications. Shallora stumbled onto a nest of six **phase spiders**, who now intend to make her their next meal.

Farther than 20 feet into the cave (see **Map 4)**, the surface of the cave is covered in webs per the *web* spell.

Adjusting this Encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

- ***Very Weak***: Remove three **phase spiders**.
- ***Weak***: Remove two **phase spiders**.
- ***Strong***: Add two **phase spiders**.
- ***Very Strong***: Add four **phase spiders**.

Once all the spiders are slain, and/or the area is secured, Shallora may provide information:

Who are you?

"My name is Shallora, a falconer and scout stationed here to observe the behir's movements. We keep in contact with the city with our falcons. I was told you would be arriving. It seems you came just in time, at least for me, for that I thank you." She offers the adventurers a *potion of greater healing* for the rescue.

What were you doing in the cave?

"My falcons were acting strangely, hesitant to come near this cliff, especially this cave. They wouldn't return to me unless I moved far enough away, which put my position at risk and slowed down communications. I wanted to investigate what might be spooking the falcons, so I climbed up to clear this cave when these monstrosities ambushed me."

How long have you been up here?

"We only have had success tracking the behir a few days ago. Since then, what scouts could be spared have setup in the area to keep track of the beast's movements while we wait for reinforcements from Glip Dak. I guess those are you. Not that I am complaining, you did just save me."

Have you seen a dwarf/duergar around here?

"Yauch? No, I haven't seen him. But I can tell you this – the behir doesn't appear to be working alone. Tracks were found accompanying it, walking beside it. Dwarf tracks. Also, signs of heavy magic use were discovered at several of the ambushes."

What do you know about the dwarf/duergar?

"He is supposedly an exile and sage, a hermit who keeps to himself, occasionally buying goods and arcane components from Glip Dak's markets. He has been in the area as long as Glip Dak has, which isn't saying too much as the city is fairly new."

How about the behir?

"The behir has been quiet the last two days. I don't know if this is because we have presented fewer vulnerable targets when we withdrew the remaining aurochs and soldiers to Glip Dak, or if it is waiting to attack, readying itself."

Treasure

The spider lair contains 250 gp worth of various trea-

sures. Potentially a *potion of greater healing* from Shallora.

Development

If she survives, Shallora is grateful for the timely rescue, and freely gives the party a *potion of greater healing*, listed above. From here, the adventurers must make their way up the rest of the cliff to the behir's cave.

Tricks of the Trade

Phase Spiders Tactics. The phase spiders will attempt to paralyze and attack immobilized creatures. They also use their Ethereal Jaunt to attack vulnerable targets, bypassing harder-to-hit opponents.

C. Into the Cave

As the characters climb onto the cave's ledge, the cavern mouth looms above them.

Read or paraphrase the following:

> A swift stream flows from deeper in the cave, spilling out of the mouth to fall hundreds of feet to the ground. The rocky cavern has stalactites and stalagmites reaching from the floor and ceiling. On the air, you catch the odor of rotten meat.

From here, the creek-side passageway leads to the behir's cave in **Part 3**.

Part 3. Behir, Done That

Story Beat

The adventurers infiltrate the lair of Stonejaws. Unfortunately for them, the behir and her duergar ally Yauch are more than ready for such an incursion. In a chest waits a correspondence between Yauch and the mysterious foe who hired the behir and him.

Estimated Duration: 60 minutes

General Features for Stronghold lair

The entrance is quite large. The cavern appears natural, cut by the gushing water. Mineral deposits have formed a number of formations, such as the large stalagmites and stalactites.

Terrain. Mineral formations dot the area in jagged groups. The ground is smooth from erosion, but wet and icy.

Weather. The massive cavern is damp and cold, but a reprieve from the wind.

Light. The cavern is gloomy. The large entrance permits enough ambient light to make the main chamber dim and all chamber directly connected to the main chamber.

Smells and Sounds. The loud rush of water fills the cavern, reverberating from the walls.

Draconic Glyphs

Yauch and Stonejaws know that someday the Kroth Magg will come in force and have prepared themselves and their lair. The duergar has seeded the lair with *magic mouths* and *glyphs of warding*. The *magic mouths* are to give warning. The magical glyphs are to either harm intruders or provide protections for the wizard and his behir ally.

Characters can spot a *glyph of warding* with a successful DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation) check. Once a glyph is spotted, a successful DC 14 Intelligence (Arcana) check will reveal the school of magic of the contained spell.

You choose where, how many, and what type of glyphs to use. Guidance on how many can be found in the "Adjusting this Encounter" sidebar. Where and what type guidance is given below.

Glyphs of Warding, what type? You can use the glyphs to directly damage the adventurers with lightning damage (Stonejaws is immune to lightning). Other offensive uses include a glyph with *web*, *stinking cloud, cloudkill, banishment, polymorph, wall of fire, confusion, darkness, Evard's black tentacles*, or other arcane spells.

If you are using a glyph to keep Yauch or Stonejaws alive, consider using *blur, blink, greater invisibility, stoneskin*, or similar defensive magic.

Glyphs of Warding, where? Yauch keeps a glyph near his workshop that casts *protection from energy* (lightning) on himself. Explosive lightning glyphs will be located at choke points. A *web* and *cloudkill* pair of glyphs is an effective way to lock down half of the cavern. By this point, you know your party and how best to challenge them.

Remember who the heroes are. It is possible to tailor the glyphs to completely shut down a party. Challenge your adventurers for sure, but make sure they have a chance to be the heroes. Giving Yauch and Stonejaws *greater invisibility* may be just fine for a party of six 9th-level characters but would be devastating for a party of five 5th level characters.

A. The Main Gallery

The party will end up entering the cave by one of two distinct routes. Yauch, a **duergar mage**, has set an *alarm* spell at the entrances to the main cavern. If any party member has *detect magic* in effect, that character will see a 20-foot-by-20 foot abjuration aura outlining the alarmed area. Dispelling the alarm will alert Yauch just as effectively as setting it off.

Read or paraphrase the following, depending on how the party gets to the main chamber:

> A large cavern opens up before you, roughly 110 feet by 60 feet, bisected north-south by a swiftly flowing stream. The cold, dark water pools on the east side of the cavern, near a cluster of stalagmites.
>
> On the northern wall is a large opening, leading deeper into the cavern. On the south end, the stream flows a short distance before spilling out of the mountainside.
>
> The west wall holds two ground-floor passages, and three ledges 20 feet off the ground that are 30 feet wide. One of the ledges has a passage leading away from it.

A successful DC 19 Wisdom (Perception) check spots the following ambush. Because of the magical wards installed

throughout the area, it is highly unlikely the adventures will get the drop on the readied wizard and behir, even if *invisibility* or *teleport* are used. An exception could be made for moving through border planes (Ethereal, Shadowfell, etc.) to gain surprise.

Alerted by Yauch's wards, the two have prepared an ambush. As the party enters the cavern, a number of things happen:

- Yauch, near passage split between E. and D., will cast *greater invisibility* on himself, then walk over a *glyph of warding* that will cast *protection from energy* (lightning) on him as well.
- Stonejaws (**behir**) hides on the ceiling in the mouth of the passage leading to area C.
- When the first adventurer gets within 10 feet of the ledge Stonejaws is hiding on, Yauch will launch a *fireball* at the party.
- At that signal, Stonejaws will descend from the ledge and attempt to constrict the nearest adventurer. Whether that works or not, the behir will then try to Swallow the same adventurer before retreating back up to the ledge.
- The stalagmite cluster on the east side of the pool contains a **roper** that will attack any creature except Stonejaws and Yauch within its 50-foot reach when combat breaks out. It will also attack any creature who moves within 5 feet of the water.

Tricks of the Trade

Consider the following guidance:

Yauch. Once shrouded in *greater invisibility*, the duergar wizard will *counterspell* or *fireball* where he can to support the behir rampaging about the cavern. If Stonejaws is defeated, Yauch will make his way to the cave mouth, drop *greater invisibility* and cast *fly*, trying to make good his escape.

Stonejaws. The behir prefers hit-and-run tactics. Once she has one creature in her gullet, she will continue to constrict, then bite anyone in her reach. Once a creature is grappled, she will drag it off into a passageway or onto a ledge, to kill it without interference. If she can line up two adversaries in a 20-foot line, she won't hesitate to use her Lightning Breath. If a lightning *glyph of warding* is nearby, Stonejaws will stay near it to lure in adventurers who will set it off, as she is immune to lightning damage.

Roper. The roper will attack any creature except Stonejaws and Yauch within reach.

Glyphs of Warding. The cavern is littered with *glyphs of warding*. DM's choice, see sidebar.

Adjusting this Encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

Very Weak: Yauch (**duergar mage**) has only one 4th level slot and no 5th level slots. Stonejaws (**behir**) has 100 hit points. Remove the **roper**. Two *glyphs of warding* are present.

Weak: Yauch (**duergar mage**) has no 5th level slots. Stonejaws (**behir**) has 128 hit points. Remove the **roper**. Three *glyphs of warding* are present.

Average: Yauch (**duergar mage**). Stonejaws (**behir**) has 128 hit points. **Roper**. Four *glyphs of warding* are present.

Strong: Yauch (**duergar mage**). Stonejaws (**behir**) has 200 hit points. **Roper**. Five *glyphs of warding* are present.

Very Strong: Yauch (**duergar mage**). Stonejaws (**behir**) has 240 hit points. **Roper**. Seven *glyphs of warding* are present.

Developments

After the brutal battle, the adventures have a chance to investigate the lair and gather treasure. Yauch has the key to the chest in **Area C**. in his belt pouch.

B. Spores, Molds, and Fungus

Only include this area if you are running this adventure in a time slot longer than 2 hours. This small cave lies off the main cavern.

Read or paraphrase the following:

> This passage way is dark, and leads to a smaller cavern, roughly 20 feet by 30 feet. The floor of the cavern is covered in mushrooms. Looking about you see nothing out of the ordinary until you look up. Above, you see the one central eye of a beholder gazing down at you!

The creature is a **gas spore**. Characters who don't immediately shoot it and instead choose to examine it will identify it as such on a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) check. Left alone, the gas spore will move to the nearest character and attempt to touch it.

C. Stonejaws' Hidey Hole

Stonejaws likes to hide in this passage, clinging to the roof.

Read or paraphrase the following:

> The floor of this passage is slick and wet, water dripping down from the ceiling. It extends downwards at roughly a 30-degree angle into the darkness.

Adventurers able to see more than 30 feet in the dark will see that the passageway opens into a chamber at the bottom of the slope.

The passageway is slick. Characters that attempt to walk down at more than half speed risk falling and sliding to the bottom. To move at normal speed requires a successful DC 15 Dexterity saving throw. On a failure, the character slides to the bottom of the passage, landing prone, but taking no damage.

Climbing back out is a challenge, requiring the same Dexterity saving through as above to move at more than half speed.

D. Yauch's Workshop

Yauch's workshop was both his bedroom and research lab.

> This chamber is surprisingly well furnished and clean with plush fur carpeting and a bed layered with soft pelts. There are heavy chests, a writing desk, and several benches and tables holding alchemist tools – bottles and beakers, crystals and mirrors, and powders and oils.

The lab is 25 feet by 15 feet. Yauch's correspondence with his employer were handled mostly through magical means; however, within the shop is a locked chest. The chest requires a successful DC 16 Dexterity check made using thieves' tools or a successful DC 20 Strength (Athletics) check to open, or Yauch's key. It contains detailed notes on the Glip Dak's growth and construction, movement of troops and goods, visiting envoys and people of prominence, and much more. There is also a cyphered letter.

The cypher requires a successful DC 19 Intelligence check to crack (grant advantage if the adventurers solved the previous one in the cabin). Proficiency in Thieves' Cant or calligrapher's tools grant advantage.

Although brief, the cyphered letter is a correspondence with the Varkonin hobgoblins in eastern Thar. This powerful kingdom is nestled against the Galena Mountains and is led by the infamous warlord Vercingetorix. They are the chief rivals of the Kroth Magg. The letter speaks about retaliating for the Kroth Magg's interference with the Varkonin's attempt to claim a mysterious ivory temple from another plane that crashed into a bog.

Treasure

The workbench holds 250 gp worth of spell components, alchemist's tools, and a healer's kit.

Developments

Laying on the writing desk is the set of dragon-lore books that Lords' Alliance faction members have been tasked to get back.

E. The Den of Stonejaws

Stonejaws uses her den to sleep and store her pilfered loot. Read or paraphrase the following:

The first thing you notice is the smell, putrid flesh. The second is the grizzly sight of bones. The floor is covered with remains in various states of decay. You see mainly auroch skeletons but more than a few are humanoid. Most of the bodies have been picked clean of flesh, testament to the ravenous nature of behirs.

Piled in the northern corner are barrels and crates with the Kroth Magg sigil, a silhouette of a dragon. In the eastern corner is a section clear of bones and refuse, clean except for a few shed scales.

The chamber is roughly 35 feet by 20 feet.

The behir slept in the cleared northern section and piled her loot in a large hole in the west wall. The piled loot comprises a number of trade goods, assorted coins, and captured jewelry worth 900 gp. In the loot is an *arrow-catching shield* that bears the Kroth Magg symbol.

Treasure

Stonejaws horde consists of 900 gp worth of trade goods, assorted coins, and jewelry stolen in her raids, and an *arrow-catching shield*.

Conclusion

Read or paraphrase the following:

You return to Glip Dak, once more braving the cold, rocky land. With the Kroth Magg soldiers recalled, the city remains orderly despite the riots throughout the last tenday.

Hrogar seems surprised to see you, then, after a long pause, pleased. “Sit, relax a moment. I would like to hear your report.” After listening he stands and salutes you. “You have my gratitude, and the gratitude of the city. I wish we could provide a better answer to your success and the trials you’ve overcame, but – for now – please accept these medals of honor. Carry them with you and know that if ever you need a haven to rest and resupply, Glip Dak shall remain open to you.”

Each adventurer receives the story award **Honor of the Kroth Magg**. If Yauch escaped, read the following:

Hrogar frowns. “That is unfortunate, but the threat has been eliminated, for the moment. I dislike the notion that the dwarf has escaped with such knowledge of our activities, but we will adapt as we always have.”

Each adventurer receives the story award **He Knows Your Faces.**

Rewards

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

Experience

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

Combat Awards

Name of Foe	XP Per Foe
Archer	700
Behir (Stonejaws)	7,200
Cave Fisher	700
Gas Spore	100
Ice Troll	1,800
Duergar Mage (Yauch)	2,300
Phase Spider	700
Roper	1,800
Veteran	700

Non-Combat Awards

Task or Accomplishment	XP Per Character
Crossing Murderer's Creek	250
Parlaying with the hunters	as per combat XP

The adventures minimum and maximum XP awards are located on the Adventure Rewards document. Note that DDAL adventures award a maximum of the "target XP" award. Only epics may grant the "maximum" amount.

The minimum total award for each character participating in this adventure is **2,250 experience points**.

The maximum total award for each character participating in this adventure is **3,000 experience points.**

Treasure

The characters receive the following treasure, divided up amongst the party. Treasure is divided as evenly as possible. Gold piece values listed for sellable gear are calculated at their selling price, not their purchase price.

Treasure Awards

Item Name	GP Value
Part 2a. Area A.	150 gp
Part 2b. Area A.	150 gp
Part 2c. Area B.	250 gp
Area C.	150 gp
Part 3. Area D	250 gp
Part 3. Area E	900 gp

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

Permanent magic items are divided according to a system detailed in the D&D Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide.

Arrow-Catching Shield

Armor (shield), rare (requires attunement)

While holding this shield, you have a +2 bonus to AC. This bonus is in addition to the shield's normal bonus to AC. In addition, whenever an attacker makes a ranged attack against a target within 5 feet of you, you can use your reaction to become the target of the attack instead. This item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

+1 Arrows

Ammunition (arrows), uncommon

This item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Potion of Diminution

Potion, rare

This item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Potion of Giant Strength (Fire)

Potion, rare

This item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Potion of Greater Healing

Potion, uncommon

This item can be found in the *Player's Handbook*.

Potion of Climbing

Potion, common

This item can be found in the *Player's Handbook*.

Story Awards

During the course of this adventure, the characters may earn the following story awards:

Honor of the Kroth Magg Story Award: While most of the civilized world views hobgoblins as no better than orcs or goblins, you have learned otherwise. While they can be cruel and tyrannical, there is also a deep honor and profound discipline to them. They seek to pay back all debts and they find lying to be beneath them.

More information can be found in **Player Handout 1**.

He Knows Your Face Story Award: Yauch remains alive and active, plotting and preparing as he always has, but now he knows your face and has sworn vengeance against you.

More information can be found in **Player Handout 2**.

Renown

Each character receives **one renown** at the conclusion of this adventure.

Members of the Lords' Alliance that recover Yauch's notes earn **one additional renown point**.

DM Reward

In exchange for running this adventure, you earn DM Rewards as described in the D&D Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide (ALDMG).

Appendix A. Dramatis Personae

The following NPCs are featured prominently in this adventure:

Stonejaws (STOHN-jaws). A behir of above-average intelligence and an overdeveloped sense of grandeur. She is an experienced hunter of dragons. Stonejaws has been recruited by an unknown (at this point) rival of the Kroth Magg. Convincing her was easy once she learned that the hobgoblins' patron was one of the behir-kind's ancient enemies, a blue dragon.

Yauch (YOCH). A duergar wizard and skilled spy. He is a mercenary working with Stonejaws. Yauch has been a surface dweller for more than 50 years and being out in the sunlight no longer hinders him.

Yauch is an avaricious wizard and hopes that this assignment will allow him access to a defeated dragon's hoard.

Hrogar (ROW-gar). Hobgoblin captain of the guard. He has been on many campaigns with the Kroth Magg legion, but his job now is law and order. Proud but practical, Hrogar will ask for help to get a job done. He is by-the-book and can be counted on to keep his word. As civilized and cultured as he might appear, he is a cunning warrior at heart.

Appendix B. NPC Statistics

Cave Fisher

Medium monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)
Hit Points 58 (9d8 + 18)
Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	3 (-4)	10 (+0)	3 (-4)

Skills Perception +2, Stealth +5
Senses blindsight 60 ft., passive Perception 12
Languages --
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Adhesive Filament. The cave fisher can use its action to extend a sticky filament up to 60 feet, and the filament adheres to anything that touches it. A creature adhered to the filament is grappled by the cave fisher (escape DC 13), and ability checks made to escape this grapple have disadvantage. The filament can be attacked (AC 15; 5 hit points; immunity to poison and psychic damage), but a weapon that fails to sever it becomes stuck to it, requiring an action and a successful DC 13 Strength check to pull free. Destroying the filament deals no damage to the cave fisher, which can extrude a replacement filament on its next turn.

Flammable Blood. If the cave fisher drops to half its hit points or fewer, it gains vulnerability to fire damage.

Spider Climb. The cave fisher can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

Actions

Multiattack. The cave fisher makes two attacks with its claws.

Claw. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage.

Filament. One creature grappled by the cave fisher's adhesive filament must make a DC 13 Strength saving throw, provided that the target weighs 200 pounds or less. On a failure, the target is pulled into an unoccupied space within 5 feet of the cave fisher, and the cave fisher makes a claw attack against it as a bonus action. Reeling up the target releases anyone else who was attached to the filament. Until the grapple ends on the target, the cave fisher can't extrude another filament.

Hobgoblin Archer

Medium humanoid (hobgoblin), lawful evil

Armor Class 16 (studded leather)
Hit Points 75 (10d8 + 30)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)

Skills Acrobatics +6, Perception +5
Senses passive Perception 15
Languages Common, Goblin
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Archer's Eye (3/Day). As a bonus action, the archer can add 1d10 to its next attack or damage roll with a longbow or shortbow.

Actions

Multiattack. The archer makes two attacks with its longbow.

Shortsword. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage.

Longbow. Ranged Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. Hit: 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage.

Ice Troll

Large giant, chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 84 (8d10 + 40)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	13 (+1)	20 (+5)	7 (-2)	9 (-1)	7 (-2)

Skills Perception +2
Damage Immunities cold
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12
Languages Giant
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

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

Regeneration. The ice troll regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn. If the troll takes acid or fire damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of the troll's next turn. The ice troll dies only if it starts its turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

Actions

Multiattack. The ice troll makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its claws.

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage.

Claw. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage.

Appendix C. Map 1

(One square = 5')

Appendix D. Map 2

(One square = 5’)

Appendix E. Map 3

(One square = 5')

Appendix F. Map 4

(One square = 5’)

Appendix G. Map 5

(One square = 5')

Player Handout 1. Story Award

During the course of this adventure, the characters may earn the following story award. If you are printing these out for your characters, print as many as you may need to ensure that any eligible character receives a copy:

Honor of the Kroth Magg Story Award

While most of the civilized world views hobgoblins as no better than orcs or goblins, you have learned otherwise. While they can be cruel and tyrannical, there is also a deep honor and profound discipline to them. They seek to pay back all debts and they find lying to be beneath them.

In future Glip Dak adventures, the heroes have advantage on Charisma (Persuasion) checks with the Kroth Magg, and goods 25 gp and under can be bought at half price in Glip Dak.

Player Handout 2. Story Award

During the course of this adventure, the characters may earn the following story award. If you are printing these out for your characters, print as many as you may need to ensure that any eligible character receives a copy:

He Knows Your Face Story Award

Yauch remains alive and active, plotting and preparing as he always has, but now he knows your face and has sworn vengeance against you.

Because of Yauch's thoroughness and foresight, adventurers have disadvantage on the first saving throw against a spell Yauch casts the next time they battle the duergar. This only occurs once.

Player Handout 3. Magic Item

During the course of this adventure, the characters may find the following permanent magic item:

Arrow-Catching Shield

Armor (shield), rare (requires attunement)

While holding this shield, you have a +2 bonus to AC. This bonus is in addition to the shield's normal bonus to AC. In addition, whenever an attacker makes a ranged attack against a target within 5 feet of you, you can use your reaction to become the target of the attack instead.

This bronze-inlaid shield bears the marching dragon symbol of the Kroth Magg hobgoblin clan.

This item can be found in the *Dungeon Masters Guide*.

Player Handout 4. Lords' Alliance Faction Assignment

Greetings,

I need a Cloak or Redknife to track down some missing tomes that are rumored to be in area of Glip Dak. Three volumes of the Encyclopedia Draconica were stolen from the Saj family of Mulmaster. The Alliance has been charged with recovering them. Fortune has favored us; the famous augur of Hulburg, Lumin Fetterbond, has used his divining talents to discover the whereabouts and identity of the thief. His name is Yauch, and he is a duergar.

Lumin's spells have located Yauch in Glip Dak. My messenger knows the signs of our order and will present this missive to the first Alliance agent he sees.

Find this Yauch, secure the books, and bring them back to the messenger. "Encourage" Yauch not to steal from the Saj family again.

-Lord Pyotr Iredale

Greetings,
I need a Cloak or Redknife to track down some missing tomes that are rumored to be in area of Glip Dak. Three volumes of the Encyclopedia Draconica were stolen from the Saj family of Mulmaster. The Alliance has been charged with recovering them. Fortune has favored us; the famous augur of Hulburg, Lumin Fetterbond, has used his divining talents to discover the whereabouts and identity of the thief. His name is Yauch, and he is a duergar.

Lumin's spells have located Yauch in Glip Dak. My messenger knows the signs of our order and will present this missive to the first Alliance agent he sees.

Find this Yauch, secure the books, and bring them back to the messenger. "Encourage" Yauch not to steal from the Saj family again.

-Lord Pyotr Iredale

Player Handout 5. Hrogar's Map

Adventures & Rewards

Adventurers' League guidelines for determining APL (average party level) and party strength, as well as instructions on how to convert earlier season Adventurers' League content to new rewards system.

Running The Adventures

These adventures provides suggestions in making adjustments for smaller or larger groups, characters of higher or lower levels, and characters that are otherwise a bit more powerful than the adventure is optimized for. You're not bound to these adjustments; they're here for your convenience.

To figure out whether you should consider adjusting the adventure, add up the total levels of all the characters and divide the total by the number of characters (rounding .5 or greater up; .4 or less down). This is the group's APL. To approximate the party strength for the adventure, consult the following table.

Determining Party Strength

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

Some encounters may include a sidebar that offers suggestions for certain party strengths. If a particular recommendation is not offered or appropriate for your group, you don't have to make adjustments.

Before Play at the Table

Before you start play, consider the following:

- Read through the adventure, taking notes of anything you'd like to highlight or remind yourself of while running the adventure, such as a way you'd like to portray an NPC or a tactic you'd like to use in a combat. Familiarize yourself with the adventure's appendices and handouts.

Gather any resources you'd like to use to aid you in running this adventure – such as notecards, a DM screen, miniatures, and battlemaps.

Ask the players to provide you with relevant character information, such as name, race, class, and level; passive Wisdom (Perception), and anything specified as notable by the adventure (such as backgrounds, traits, flaws, etc.)

Playing the Dungeon Master

You have the most important role – facilitating the enjoyment of the game for the players. You provide the narrative and bring the words on these pages to life.

To facilitate this, keep in mind the following:

You're Empowered. Make decisions about how the group interacts with the adventure; adjusting or improvising is encouraged, so long as you maintain the adventure's spirit. This doesn't allow you to implement house rules or change those of the Adventurers League, however; they should be consistent in this regard.

Challenge Your Players. Gauge the experience level of your players (not the characters), try to feel out (or ask) what they like in a game, and attempt to deliver the experience they're after. Everyone should have the opportunity to shine.

Keep the Adventure Moving. When the game starts to get bogged down, feel free to provide hints and clues to your players so they can attempt to solve puzzles, engage in combat, and roleplay interactions without getting too frustrated over a lack of information. This gives players "little victories" for figuring out good choices from clues. Watch for stalling – play loses momentum when this happens. At the same time, make sure that the players don't finish too early; provide them with a full play experience.

Converting Adventures

For later season Adventurer's League games, rewards are distributed at the end of a play session using the following guidance:

Advancement Checkpoints

Characters playing in a hardcover adventure earn one checkpoint for each hour played in pursuit of the adventure's stated goals (rounded down). Other adventures award checkpoints as determined by their season:

Season 8 and Later

The characters earn one or two checkpoints for each story or bonus objectives they complete depending on the adventure's duration – as directed by its adventure's reward section.

Seasons 7 and Earlier

The characters earn one checkpoint per hour spent playing the adventure (to a maximum of the adventure's duration in hours).

Treasure Checkpoints

Characters playing in a hardcover adventure earn one treasure checkpoint for each hour played in pursuit of the adventure's stated goals (rounded down). This reward is doubled for tier 3 and 4 characters. Other adventures award checkpoints as determined by their season:

Season 8 and Later

The characters earn one to four checkpoints for each story or bonus objectives they complete determined by the adventure's duration and tier – as directed by its reward section.

Seasons 7 and Earlier

The characters earn one checkpoint per hour spent playing the adventure (to a maximum of the adventure's duration in hours). This reward is doubled for tier 3 and 4 adventures.

Gold and Mundane Treasure

Any entry of a treasure or award with a monetary value is ignored. Other mundane equipment can be used (but not sold) by the characters until the end of the session but is lost at the end of the session. Some nonmagical items encountered in hardcover adventures may be unlocked for purchased using treasure checkpoints. The ALCC will contain adventure-specific information regarding these items as well as when to award rewards that serve as exceptions to this paragraph. Any spellbooks recovered by the characters may be kept by one character at the table (determined randomly in case of contention).

Magic Items

Unless stated otherwise in the ALCC, magic items specifically mentioned in an encounter become available for the characters in some fashion, depending on its type:

Consumable Magic Items

Potions, scrolls, and magical ammunition are kept and divided among the characters – encouraging equitable distribution. If more than one player wants an item and the disagreement can't be resolved, determine the item's owner randomly (such as by rolling a die).

Permanent Magic Items. Permanent magic items aren't kept; they're instead unlocked for purchase.

Story Awards/Effects/Items

Characters may acquire special items or effects (mundane or magical) that are essential to a hardcover adventure's storyline that are only useable of in effect during sessions of the adventure in which they're awarded. These are identified in the Adventurers League Content Catalogue.

Awarding Downtime

Characters earn five downtime days for every two advancement checkpoints they earn.

Awarding Renown

Characters earn one renown for every four advancement checkpoints they earn.