

SPEC2-1 H3

THE MORNINGLORD'S LAUGHTER

A DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® *LIVING
FORGOTTEN REALMS* ADVENTURE

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Three years ago the outpost of Fort Morninglord underwent a terrible catastrophe, and the leaders of Elturgard proclaimed that any who even approached the haunted place would be arrested. Now it appears that something locked inside the sealed fortress might be needed for an upcoming battle. A *Living Forgotten Realms* adventure set in Elturgard for characters levels 7-10.

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

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OFFICIAL D&D PLAY

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

To schedule a game for public play, you must be enrolled in the Wizards Play Network. Information on enrolling in the program can be found at www.wizards.com/wpn. If you are scheduling the game for private play, you do not need to be enrolled in the Wizards Play Network. The person who schedules the event, called the organizer, is in charge of making sure the event is scheduled before play, runs smoothly on the date scheduled, and gets reported back to Wizards in a timely manner. The person who runs the game is called the table Dungeon Master (or usually just DM). Sometimes (and almost all the time in the cases of home events) the organizer is also the table DM. You don't have to be enrolled in the Wizards Play Network to DM this adventure if you are not the organizer.

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

To learn more about event scheduling and DM REWARDS, visit the D&D Events website at www.wizards.com/dnd and click on "Events."

PREPARING FOR PLAY

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

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

Along with this adventure, you'll find a session tracking sheet. If you're playing this adventure as part of an officially scheduled event, complete and turn in this sheet to your organizer directly after play.

READING MONSTER STAT BLOCKS

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

IMPORTANT DM INFORMATION

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

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

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

- **You are empowered to make adjustments to the adventure and make decisions about how the group interacts with the world of this adventure.** This is especially important and applicable outside of combat encounters, but feel free to use the "scaling the encounter" advice (usually for adjusting to different-sized groups) to adjust combat encounters for groups that are having too easy or too hard of a time in an adventure.
- **Don't make the adventure too easy or too difficult for a group.** Never being challenged makes for a boring game, and being overwhelmed makes for a frustrating game. Gauge the experience of the players (not the characters) with the game, try to feel out (or ask) what they like in a game, and attempt to give each of them the experience they're after when they play D&D. Give everyone a "chance to shine."
- **Be mindful of pacing, and keep the game session moving along appropriately.** Watch for stalling, as play loses momentum when this happens. At the same time, make sure that the players don't finish the adventure too early; provide them with a full play experience. *Living Forgotten Realms* adventures are designed to be played within 3.5 - 4 hours; try to be very aware

of running long or short. Adjust the pacing accordingly.

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

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

APPROPRIATE CHARACTER LEVELS

This adventure is designed for player characters (PCs) levels 7-10. Characters that fall outside of the level range may not participate in the adventure. Make certain to check the levels of the PCs before beginning play to ensure that they are the proper level.

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

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

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

FAILING TO DEFEAT AN ENCOUNTER

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

CHARACTER DEATH

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

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

MILESTONES

No matter if the characters succeed or fail in an encounter, they reach a milestone if it is the second encounter they've had since the start of the adventure or their last extended rest. **Encounters that do not give**

out experience points do not count for purposes of reaching a milestone. Make certain to mention this information to the players when applicable, as it gives each PC another action point and affects how some magic item powers are used.

LASTING EFFECTS

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

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

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

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

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Three years ago something happened to the inhabitants of Fort Morninglord, a military outpost an hour's ride from Elturel, Elturgard's capital city. A paladin named Jarveph Hothbrite rode to the outpost to deliver morning orders, and he found the fort had turned

completely black and all the entrances were sealed by an unknown force.

Something Jarveph encountered at the site drove him mad. When he staggered back to Elturel and his condition was discovered, the paladins took immediate action. Magical wards and enchanted bricks were used by the followers of Torm to seal the fort completely. The High Observer decreed that anyone even approaching the vicinity of Fort Morninglord would be arrested and thrown into the Dungeon of the Inquisitor.

Unbeknownst to the High Observer, an artifact of great power—a gauntlet called Loyalty's Sacrifice—had arrived at Fort Morninglord just before the outpost was overrun and subsequently sealed. The copper dragon Tyrangal knows of the presence of the artifact, and she believes the item's power is needed in the upcoming battles against the forces from the plagueland.

DM'S INTRODUCTION

The truth about Fort Morninglord impacts this adventure, but it is not completely disclosed here, either for the players or for the DM. The past happenings at Fort Morninglord remain a mystery, and this adventure does not allow the PCs to enter the fort: the action takes place outside of the fort. The magical wards—and the forces still locked inside Fort Morninglord—make entry impossible.

The hook for this adventure sees a mysterious stranger, the shape-changed copper dragon Tyrangal, asking the PCs to look for an artifact sealed inside Fort Morninglord. She claims that the artifact is going to be instrumental in the paladins' incursion against the forces of the plagueland. However, she admits that the area is off limits, and entering the area would be breaking the laws of Elturgard.

Some PCs might balk at the prospect of breaking the law, so they are asked by a representative of the High Observer to agree to undertake the mission as spies for Elturgard. This should satisfy all the PCs, getting them involved and moving into the subsequent encounters. Once the hooks are set, the action of the plot eliminates the tension between the mission instigated by Tyrangal and the laws of Elturgard.

Note: Tyrangal appears in the novel *The Edge of Chaos* by Jak Koke and the adventure "The Edge of Chaos: Gregor's Tangent" by Shawn Merwin (*Dungeon Magazine* 172). These sources provide additional background information that might be useful, but is not required, when running this adventure.

THE COMPANION

The second sun of Elturel, called the Companion (also known as Amaunator's Gift), is harmful to undead that come near the city of Elturel, and its sight is unpleasant to them anywhere in the region of Elturgard. Because of the possibility of undead PCs in LFR, the following is included for undead within the city limits. As no combat occurs within Elturel for this adventure, the impact should be roleplaying only. You should feel free to emphasize this from a roleplaying standpoint but do not allow it to delay or derail the adventure.

The touch of the Companion's light is quite uncomfortable to undead creatures. Undead player characters suffer a -1 penalty to attack rolls, ability and skill checks, and damage rolls while fighting within the area of the Companion's influence. The light does not visibly burn or otherwise mark undead PCs, so they are still able to attend meetings, participate in the roleplaying, and so forth. This effect is less than what occurs to normal undead monsters.

Undead PCs are required to disguise themselves while traveling in the city to avoid being attacked on sight by clerics and paladins of Amaunator and Torm. Any reasonable disguise will succeed as the city is not in a state of high alert (no check required). During this adventure, players cannot negotiate on this point; being attacked within the city limits is beyond the scope of this adventure and would waste too much time to deal with, so the player of an undead PC can either agree that the character makes an effort to disguise his or her true nature, or wait outside the city.

For more information on Elturgard, see page 124 of the *Forgotten Realms Campaign Guide*.

PLAYER'S INTRODUCTION

Read or paraphrase the following to the players:

The call for adventurers to join a campaign against the threat of the plagueland in southern Elturgard has definitely not gone unanswered. The number of adventurers—both experienced and neophyte—who have come to Elturgard's capital city is astonishing. The paladins who rule this nation on behalf of the High Observer are probably having second thoughts about that call: even while they make plans for their impending expedition to explore the plagueland, they have been spread thin while trying to keep the peace. A sea of tents has appeared outside the city proper, and many have been forced to stay in surrounding towns while everyone waits for further instructions from the paladins.

You, however, have connections. Because of your countless successes and the powerful people who can vouch for your skill, you received an invitation to stay at a fancy hostel in the center of the capital.

Give each PC a copy of **Handout 1**, or present one to PCs belonging to an adventuring company or who previously traveled or adventured together.

In addition, share or refer to **Appendix 1** so the players can know more about Elturgard.

When the PCs arrive at Minerla's Hostel and Eatery, they find a very finely appointed inn with a large dining room, a sophisticated bar, and a score of guestrooms. The place is currently housing several adventurers of various races, classes, and backgrounds, all the guests of Tyrangal. Most look out of place in such a setting, and the staff of the establishment are trying their best not to look completely unnerved at having such rough company as clientele.

If the PCs ask about Tyrangal, they are shown to a sitting room. Standing at the back of the room, looking out a window, is a strange-looking creature. She has elven features, but she is easily a head taller than a human. Her skin is the color of copper, and when the PCs enter she turns and takes them in with gold-colored eyes. Her long, flowing dress is the color of rust.

Because of Tyrangal's shapechange, a Nature skill check will not identify her as a dragon. PCs can learn more about Tyrangal with the following checks:

Arcana DC 20: Tryangal looks distinctly different from most eladrin (known as moon or sun elves) you have met in your travels through Faerun, but she may be native to the Feywild, a magical world that is the motherland of all fey.

Insight DC 20: Tryangal seems trustworthy and is not attempting to deceive you.

Arcana DC 35: A shapechange might explain Tyrangal's appearance.

History DC 35: A copper dragon named Gaulauntyr lost her mind and caused great devastation during the Rage of Dragons (1373 DR). It is said the dragon recovered and returned after Mystra's death, using the name Tyrangal instead. She involves herself in many affairs but primarily those involving the Spellplague. Her motives are cloaked in mystery and she often acts through intermediaries.

Tyrangal speaks when the PCs enter, and her voice has a melodious lilt that is nearly mesmerizing.

"Ah, excellent! Please, make yourselves comfortable. I know your time is valuable, and so I will not waste it. I am Tyrangal, a collector of antiquities, as

well as a patron of those who seek to fight against the forces of chaos and destruction. I have taken an interest in this battle that the forces of Elturgard plan to wage against the creatures of the plagueland to the south of here.

“I believe that there is an item of significant power that could be of great use in the upcoming battle. I have consulted sages and bards in searching for the item, and I believe the last known location of the item is nearby. Unfortunately, that location is the cursed fortress called Fort Morninglord. It was abandoned and sealed three years ago under mysterious circumstances and the rulers of this land have forbidden any to even approach the fort.

“I have spoken to the paladins about this item and its location, and I was told in no uncertain terms that I was not to even consider searching for it. However, I think the paladins are not fully aware of the test they are about to face, and they are going to need all the help they can get, including this item. Your discreet investigation into the matter could be the difference between success and failure in the coming days.”

Use the bullet points below to answer any questions:

- Tyrangal is not sure of the exact nature of the item of power currently trapped in Fort Morninglord, but she knows that it is very powerful, is most likely some sort of armor, and is dedicated in some way to the god Torm.
- She is convinced that the item is necessary and is obtainable, but cannot be more specific than that. She also refuses to discuss her sources of information.
- No one is entirely sure what happened at Fort Morninglord, which is an hour’s ride southwest of the city. It once acted as an outpost for those who guard this land. All of the inhabitants disappeared one night, and the entire fortress was literally blackened by whatever took place within. The paladins sealed the entire fortress and set wards against anything entering or leaving the fortress.
- A paladin named Jarveph Hothbrite found the fort that morning. He was delivering orders. Whatever he saw that morning broke his mind. He now lives with his family as a ward of the state, unable to perform any duties. It is possible that talking to him might be helpful.
- The punishment for being caught in the vicinity of Fort Morninglord is one year in the Dungeon of the Inquisitor. However, Tyrangal instructs the PCs that since no one ever goes there—not even

the paladins—it is highly unlikely that the PCs would get caught. And if they did get caught, she can make arrangements to have the charges dropped.

- As payment for their help in this matter, Tyrangal offers each PC 180/240 gp for simply agreeing to look into this. If they are able to find the item and show it to her, she will offer a greater reward: either more coin or access to some of the magical items from her vast collection. She emphasizes that the PCs must bring the item to her first, before showing it to anyone else.
- If the PCs have any concerns that Tyrangal will try to keep the artifact for herself, she assures them that she intends to turn it over to the leaders of Elturel so that it can fulfill its purpose (whatever that may be) in the upcoming battle. She just wants to look it at for herself first, because it is such an interesting and historically significant object.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

The PCs are free to seek an interview with Jarveph Hothbrite in Encounter 1, or they can go directly to Fort Morninglord.

Any PCs who are divine worshippers of Torm or any other Lawful Good or Good deity, who refuse to agree to Tyrangal’s request, or who go to the authorities to report Tyrangal, also get **Handout 2**. If you think that any of the PCs may have a problem with Tyrangal’s proposal, you can provide **Handout 2** to them before they speak to her.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs get no XP for this encounter, and it does not count toward a milestone.

TREASURE

The PCs get 180/240 gp each if they agree to the mission. Tyrangal gladly trusts the word of such experienced and renowned adventurers that they will indeed undertake the task.

ENCOUNTER 1: LOYAL FURY'S MADNESS

SETUP

At this point, the PCs may wish to speak to someone about what happened at Fort Morninglord three years ago. No one who knows anything pertinent is willing to relay any information to the PCs, and seeking out general knowledge only reveals what Tyrangal has already told them.

The PCs may wish to speak with Jarveph Hothbrite, the paladin who first witnessed the changes to Fort Morninglord three years ago. Unfortunately, what he saw at the fort affected his mind. He is now quite insane, cared for by his wife and son with support from the paladins of Elturgard.

The PCs can learn where Jarveph and his family live with a **DC 10 Streetwise** check. They are pointed to a small home on the outskirts of the city. It is very small and sparsely furnished but in good repair.

The paladins have instructed Annabella Hothbrite, Jarveph's wife, not to let anyone speak to her husband about what he saw at Fort Morninglord. If the PCs approach the home and make themselves known, they are greeted by Annabella, a short, slight human with brown hair and gray eyes.

She is polite but does not ask the PCs into her home, instead asking them what they want. If they ask to speak to her husband, she refuses, insisting that he is not well and does not take visitors.

The PCs can use a variety of techniques to gain an audience with Jarveph. The most obvious are using a variety of skills: **Bluff**, **Diplomacy**, **Intimidate** and **Stealth** would be the most appropriate. If they attempt to use these skills to sneak into the home or convince Annabella to let them enter, use **DC 15** as the target. As long as the PCs do not resort to outright violence, allow them to enter after some roleplaying.

Once the PCs enter the home, they find Jarveph sitting in a rocking chair in a dimly lit room. He rocks furiously. A boy of no more than 12 years sits next to his father: this is Jarveph's son Noeri. The boy plays a flute.

The boy does not speak unless spoken to. He tells the PCs that he hopes to one day be a paladin like his father. The boy spends most of his time reading history, numbers, and the teachings of Torm, as well as studying swordplay and other martial lessons. When he is not taking his schooling, Noeri plays music and reads to his father, which calms the man.

Both Annabella and Noeri know little about what happened at the fort. They know that whatever Jarveph

saw caused him to come unhinged. He mostly sits or rocks in a stupor, except for rare occasions when the man rants and shrieks in a frantic stream of nonsense. All attempts to heal him have failed.

Jarveph himself appears as a typical paladin of Torm: mid-30s in age, in excellent shape, and handsome. When the PCs address Jarveph directly, mentioning Fort Morninglord, his rocking becomes more frantic and he begins whispering. The whispering gets louder and louder, until the man is screaming:

“Laughter. Black stone. Headache. Headstone. Black ache. Heartache. I saw it. Felt it all. The writing was on the wall.”

“The fallen stone must stand. The origin of the folly of man’s thinking. The origin of the power of all nature. The origin of the honor of Torm. In order.”

“They war without rest. Their minds are assaulted. They are trapped, but they trap as well.”

After shouting this, Jarveph falls from his chair and collapses to the ground. Noeri steps between the PCs and his father, scowls, and demands that the PCs leave. The PCs can learn no more from Jarveph or his family. **Handout Four: Jarveph’s Ramblings** contains the boxed text above.

PCs may ask to attempt checks to see if there is anything about Jarveph’s rantings that makes any sense. The only thing they can learn requires a **DC 15 Religion** check unless they are followers of Torm. Worshippers of Torm should be given this information without a check. A success reveals that Tormite doctrine teaches that humanity has three virtues. The least virtue is intellect, which is held in the brain. The middle virtue is instinct, which comes from nature and is seated in the stomach. The highest virtue is honor, which is unique to higher beings and is seated in the heart.

This information is important to the skill challenge in the final combat encounter, so ***it is essential that the PCs gain this information*** if they make any attempt to figure out what it might mean, either now or later.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

After hearing Jarveph’s cryptic, delirious rant, the PCs can learn nothing more from him or his family. The only real option for the PCs at this point is to get prepared and head for the cursed site of Fort Morninglord.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

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

ENCOUNTER 2: THE WRITING IS ON THE WALL

SETUP

The trip from Elturel to Fort Morninglord takes just over an hour. The road that led to the fort has been left to become overgrown by the surrounding forest, but there is still a rough trail leading there.

As the PCs get within a mile of the cursed fort, they no longer hear any animals calling or moving through the forest. It is as if all of nature is shunning the fort.

When the PCs come out of the forest and into the clearing that surrounds the fort, read or paraphrase the following.

The forest opens onto a clearing that holds the northeastern corner of Fort Morninglord. Although the thick forest has reached the walls of most of the structure, part of the walls are visible. The walls have been sealed with bricks and mortar, and countless runes have been etched into the brick.

Near the walls, a granite obelisk has been erected. Like the walls, the obelisk is covered in runic etchings. Rubble formed from similar granite lays strewn about the ground between the obelisk and the fort.

A wavering field of some sort of energy, barely visible, passes from the obelisk to the walls. Collecting at the base of the fort's wall are countless bones. A number of dead animals, the corpses not yet rotted, lie strewn about the clearing.

A **DC 5 Nature** check reveals that the bones are from creatures that would normally inhabit the forest: mice, squirrels, skunks, raccoon, deer, bears, foxes, wild dogs, bobcats, and all other manner of natural beasts. It is impossible to tell what killed them, although a **DC 20 Heal** check reveals that the desiccation of the bones would suggest they have been dead for many years, but that is highly unlikely since the fort was abandoned only 3 years ago.

Closer inspection of the writing etched into the walls and obelisk reveals that the runes are actually in constant motion, and the effect is very disorienting. **DC 15 Arcana or Religion** checks reveal the runes on the walls and obelisk are definitely magical, and they call upon both arcane and divine power, as well as the power of nature, to offer some sort of warding or protection. If the PCs investigate the energy passing from the obelisk to the walls of the fort, allow them their choice of **DC 15 Arcana, Nature, or Religion** checks. Success in any of those checks reveals that the

corresponding sort of energy is present (arcane, primal, and divine, respectively). The different energies commingle to form a protective barrier that keeps things from passing into or out of the fortress. The PCs may now attempt a **DC 20 Arcana or Religion** check. If successful, they realize that they might be able to use the energy of the obelisks themselves.

When a PC gets within 5 squares of the fort, the etched writing on the wall moves more quickly, writhing and rearranging itself until a phrase appears in Common, written in smooth, flowing script: **“Are you sentient?”** This is reproduced in **Handout 3**, as are all future communications from the wall. For the best effect, cut Handout 3 up beforehand so that each piece of "conversation" can be shown by itself to the players.

The entity communicating with the PCs at this point is the collective consciousness of all of the good forces trapped within the fort. The good entity can sense life near the walls. Go ahead and draw the map of the area (see Encounter 3) and find out where everyone wants to stand. The only way for the PCs to communicate back with the entity is to stand next to the wall. When a PC stands in any square adjacent to the wall, he hears a diabolical, guttural laughter in his head. A **DC 14/16 Endurance** check is required, or the PC becomes dazed for one round and cannot communicate with the good entity. Other PCs may attempt to communicate, but only one PC at a time may succeed. Note that this check for approaching the wall does not need to be made during combat, although there are other consequences (good or bad) for being adjacent to the wall during each battle.

Once a PC approaches the wall and makes the Endurance check, they can speak to the good entity in the wall. All subsequent communication must take place in the same way: the PC talks and the good entity reforms the runes on the wall into writing. As soon as the PCs make contact with the wall, the next piece of writing appears, saying **“You are in great danger. Flee now before you release the evil.”**

At this point, the energy passing back and forth between the obelisk and the wall is interrupted briefly, and there is a high, piercing shriek. New writing appears on the wall in a new script: **“YOU WILL NOW DIE.”**

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

The presence of sentient life in the vicinity of the walls gives the evil forces within the fort a foothold into this realm. Go immediately to Encounter 3.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

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

ENCOUNTER 3: THE SPITEFUL

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 8/10 (1750/2500 XP)

SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures at the low tier:

2 reapers (level 8) (R)

1 reaper wraith eidolon (level 8) (E)

1 blood amniote (level 8) (B)

This encounter includes the following creatures at the high tier:

2 reapers (level 10) (R)

1 reaper wraith eidolon (E)

1 blood amniote (B)

After the PCs interact with the outer wall of the fortress for a short time in Encounter 2, some of the destructive forces inside the fort take control of the wall and slip out. Show the PCs the **Handout 3** message that says, "YOU WILL NOW DIE" and read:

The stone rubble near the fort begins to rumble and shift, and a creature formed of stone and shadow rises out of the boulder pile. Simultaneously, blood and gore oozes forth from the dead animals in the clearing, and a blob of unholy putrescence coalesces. Deep, maniacal laughter echoes from within the fort.

The forces of evil fighting against the paladins trapped within the fortress exert their will on this reality, pushing forth some of their own allies through the failing wards.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: If the PCs approach the fort during the day, the area is brightly lit. If they approach at night, the heavy clouds and light rain leave the area in total darkness. When the creatures attack, a dim light illuminates the clearing if the encounter takes place at night.

Rubble and Rocks: Areas marked with a triangle on the map count as difficult terrain. The boulders on the map count as impassable terrain that provides cover.

Forest: The forest is extremely thick and overgrown here. Entering a forest square counts as difficult terrain that costs 3 squares of movement to enter. Anyone in a

forest square has cover, but attacking from a forest square also provides cover to the target of those attacks.

Obelisk: The stone marker (above and to the right of the rock pile on the map) is a five foot tall, slender granite marker. There is room in the square for both a PC and the obelisk. A PC standing in this square gains resist 5 necrotic (this does not stack with other necrotic resistances), and the PC is protected from losing a healing surge when targeted by the blood amniote's *blood drain* power.

Also, if any of the enemy creatures in this encounter enter or start their turns in the square with the obelisk, that creature takes 5 points of radiant damage and is slowed until the end of its next turn.

The Wall: Creatures adjacent to the wall of the fortress feel an undeniable presence of evil take over during this encounter. Creatures other than the monsters that are adjacent to the wall take a -4 penalty on saving throws.

The Communicator: The PC who has most recently established communication with the good entity is granted a small bit of power by those forces. During the first round of combat that PC gains the knowledge of how to use the obelisk to end the insubstantial ability of the monsters. That PC can instruct others how to do this. As a standard action any PC that is either adjacent to or in the same square as the obelisk can attempt a DC 19/21 Arcana, Nature, or Religion check. A successful check removes the insubstantial quality of all the monsters until the end of that PC's next turn.

TACTICS

The reapers move out of the wall of the fort at the corner on their turn, so they cannot be targeted until they act. They use their *reap and fade* power to harry softer targets and remain insubstantial. They also use their *eye of impending doom* power each round against the most likely attacker.

The reaper wraith eidolon appears as close as possible to the boulders, as the creature is composed of both shadow and the stone in the piles. It uses its *sickle burst* as soon as it can, and as often as possible, to target at least 2 PCs. If it is being ignored early in the combat, it goes into its *unhallowed stance* to allow its allies to do more damage. For example, if the blood amniote is keeping most of the PCs occupied with its reach and grabbing powers, the eidolon can afford to go defensive and provide benefits to those attacks; particularly on the round the amniote is going to use its action point.

The blood amniote coalesces out of the bones and bodies of the dead creatures in the area, appearing as

close as possible to its start area on the map. It uses *body snatch* to start, pulling as many PCs as possible in close. It then uses *blood call* to grab a PC that was missed with *body snatch*. It ends its round with *blood drain* to take a healing surge from all grabbed PCs.

PCs that are grabbed may try to escape. As detailed in the *Player's Handbook*, a grabbed PC may use a move action to make an Acrobatics check vs. Reflex or an Athletics check vs. Fortitude. With a success they are no longer grabbed and can shift one square as a free action.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

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

Four PCs: Remove one reaper.

Six PCs: Add one reaper.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Among the remains of the reaper wraith eidolon and the blood amniote are a red ruby in the shape of a human heart and a clear diamond in the shape of a human brain. A **DC 15 Arcana check** reveals that both of these objects are magical, and they are components needed for some sort of protection ritual. These two items are necessary to perform the ritual in the final encounter to defeat the phoelarch mage and earn the artifact from the power within the fortress.

After the creatures have been killed and the PCs have had the chance to take a short rest and find the ruby and diamond, the good entity regains control of the walls, and attempts again to communicate with the PCs.

Make sure the PCs note the change in the appearance of the writing on the wall. The elegant, flowing script is the good entity, while the harsher script is that of the evil entity. Proceed to Encounter 4.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs each receive 350/500 experience points for defeating the creatures in this encounter.

TREASURE

There is no treasure in this encounter (the ruby heart and diamond brain dissolve if the PCs try to take them away from the area of the fortress).

ENCOUNTER 3: THE SPITEFUL STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

Reaper (Level 8)	Level 8 Lurker
Medium shadow humanoid (undead)	XP 350
Initiative +11 Senses Perception +6; darkvision HP 77; Bloodied 38 AC 22; Fortitude 20, Reflex 19, Will 18 Immune disease, poison; Resist 10 necrotic; Vulnerable 5 radiant Speed 5	
m Scythe (standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic, Weapon +13 vs. AC; 2d4 + 6 necrotic damage.	
M Reap and Fade (standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic, Teleportation, Weapon The reaper makes a scythe attack and then teleports up to 5 squares. The reaper becomes insubstantial and gains phasing until the start of its next turn; +11 vs. Reflex, 2d6 + 5 damage.	
C Eye of Impending Doom (minor 1/round; at-will) ♦ Fear, Gaze Psychic Close burst 3; targets one creature; +11 vs. Will; the target takes 10 psychic damage if it attacks the reaper (save ends).	
Alignment Evil Languages Common Skills Intimidate +9 Str 18 (+8) Dex 16 (+7) Wis 15 (+6) Con 17 (+7) Int 13 (+5) Cha 11 (+4) Equipment robes, scythe	

Reaper Wraith Eidolon (Level 8)	Level 8 Skirmisher (Leader)
Large natural animate (construct)	XP 350
Initiative +6 Senses Perception +6 Fearless Followers aura 5; allies in the aura are immune to fear. HP 64; Bloodied 32 AC 22; Fortitude 21, Reflex 18, Will 18 Immune disease, fear, sleep; Resist 10 necrotic, insubstantial Speed 5, fly 5 (hover), altitude limit 1, phasing	
m Shadow Sickle (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon Reach 2; +13 vs. AC; 2d6 + 4 damage.	
C Sickle Burst (standard; recharge 6) ♦ Weapon Close burst 2; +11 vs. AC; 2d6 + 4 damage. The reaper wraith loses phasing, insubstantial, and the ability to fly until it recharges this ability.	
C Harvest of Fear (immediate reaction, when an enemy moves out of this creature's reach; at-will) ♦ Fear, Necrotic Close burst 3; targets only the creature moving out of the reaper wraith eidolon's reach; +11 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 4 necrotic damage and target takes -2 penalty to attacks against the reaper wraith eidolon and its allies within its fearless follower aura (save ends).	
Unhallowed Stance (standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic The eidolon assumes a meditative stance. Until the end of its next turn, the eidolon gains resist 15 to all damage, and all allies in its line of sight deal an extra 1d8 necrotic damage on their melee attacks. If the eidolon moves, the effect ends	
Alignment Unaligned Languages -- Str 20 (+9) Dex 14 (+6) Wis 14 (+6) Con 21 (+9) Int 8 (+3) Cha 10 (+4)	

Blood Amniote (Level 8)	Level 8 Elite Soldier
Large natural animate (blind, ooze, undead)	XP 700
Initiative +11 Senses Perception +6; blindsight 10 HP 188 Bloodied 94 AC 26; Fortitude 23, Reflex 21, Will 22 Immune disease, gaze, poison Saving Throws +2 Speed 6, climb 4 Action Points 1	
m Blood Call (standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic Reach 3; +13 vs. Fortitude; 2d8 + 4 necrotic damage, and the target is grabbed. If the blood amniote scores a critical hit, the target loses a healing surge.	
C Body Snatch (minor; recharge 5 6) ♦ Necrotic Close burst 3; targets enemies; +13 vs. Fortitude; the target is pulled to a space adjacent to the blood amniote and is grabbed. See also <i>blood drain</i> .	
Blood Drain (minor 1/round; at-will) Targets each creature grabbed by the blood amniote; the target loses a healing surge (no attack roll required).	
Grasping Tendrils A blood amniote can sustain a grab as a free action.	
Alignment Unaligned Languages -- Skills Stealth +14 Str 24 (+11) Dex 20 (+9) Wis 15 (+6) Con 22 (+10) Int 1 (-1) Cha 1 (-1)	

ENCOUNTER 3: THE SPITEFUL STATISTICS (HIGH LEVEL)

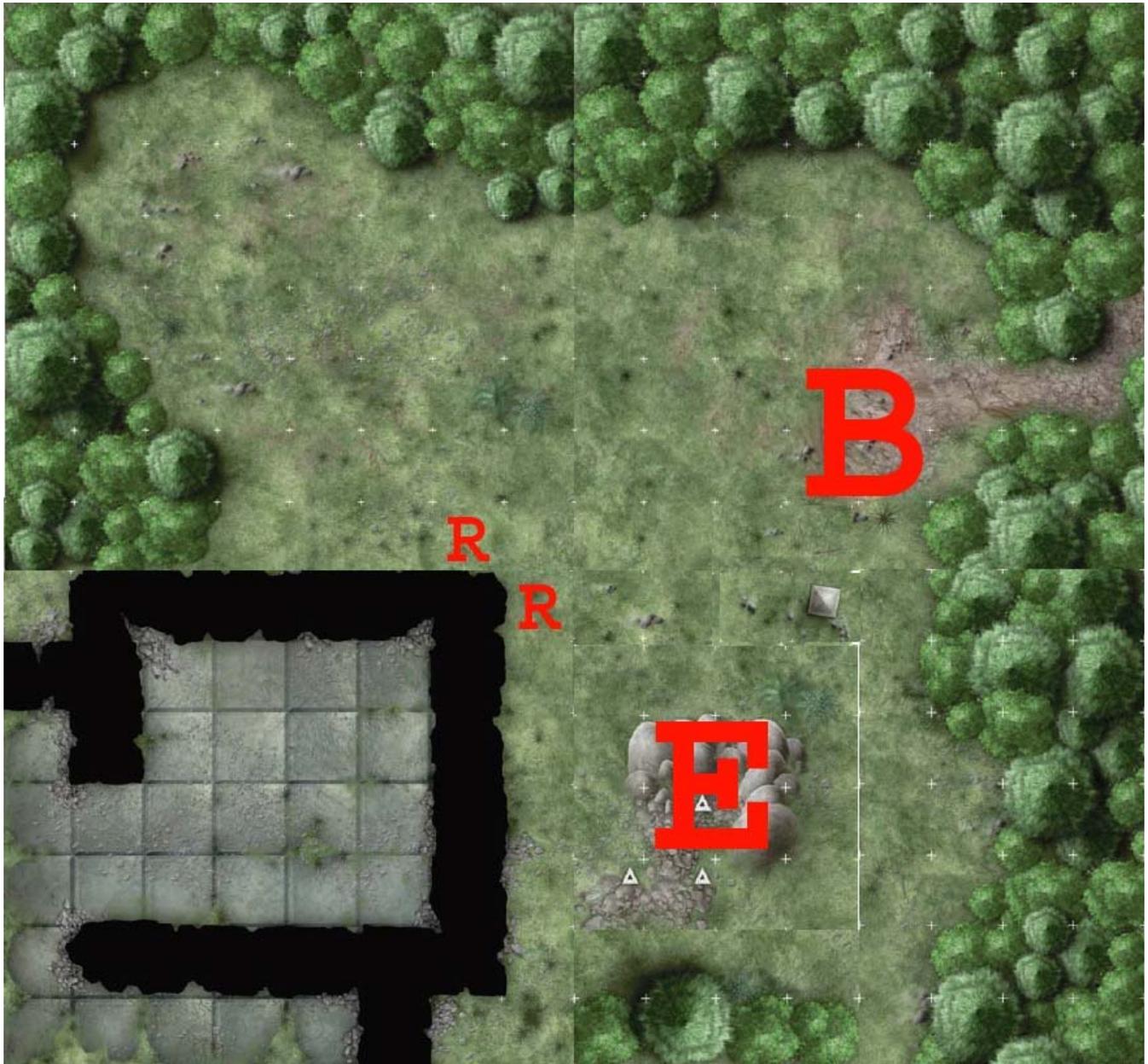
Reaper (Level 10)	Level 10 Lurker
Medium shadow humanoid (undead) XP 500	
Initiative +12 Senses Perception +7; darkvision	
HP 83; Bloodied 41	
AC 24; Fortitude 22, Reflex 21, Will 20	
Immune disease, poison; Resist 10 necrotic; Vulnerable 5 radiant	
Speed 5	
m Scythe (standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic, Weapon	
+15 vs. AC; 2d4 + 7 necrotic damage.	
M Reap and Fade (standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic, Teleportation, Weapon	
The reaper makes a scythe attack and then teleports up to 5 squares. The reaper becomes insubstantial and gains phasing until the start of its next turn; +13 vs. Reflex, 2d6 + 6 damage.	
C Eye of Impending Doom (minor 1/round; at-will) ♦ Fear, Gaze Psychic	
Close burst 3; targets one creature; +13 vs. Will; the target takes 10 psychic damage if it attacks the reaper (save ends).	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common
Skills Intimidate +10	
Str 18 (+9)	Dex 16 (+8) Wis 15 (+7)
Con 17 (+8)	Int 13 (+6) Cha 11 (+5)
Equipment robes, scythe	

Reaper Wraith Eidolon	Level 10 Skirmisher (Leader)
Large natural animate (construct) XP 500	
Initiative +7 Senses Perception +7	
Fearless Followers aura 5; allies in the aura are immune to fear.	
HP 80; Bloodied 40	
AC 24; Fortitude 23, Reflex 20, Will 20	
Immune disease, fear, sleep; Resist 10 necrotic, insubstantial	
Speed 5, fly 5 (hover), altitude limit 1, phasing	
m Shadow Sickle (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Reach 2; +15 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage.	
C Sickle Burst (standard; recharge 6) ♦ Weapon	
Close burst 2; +13 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage. The reaper wraith loses phasing, insubstantial, and the ability to fly until it recharges this ability.	
C Harvest of Fear (immediate reaction, when an enemy moves out of this creature's reach; at-will) ♦ Fear, Necrotic	
Close burst 3; targets only the creature moving out of the reaper wraith eidolon's reach; +13 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 5 necrotic damage and target takes -2 penalty to attacks against the reaper wraith eidolon and its allies within its fearless follower aura (save ends).	
Unhallowed Stance (standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic	
The eidolon assumes a meditative stance. Until the end of its next turn, the eidolon gains resist 15 to all damage, and all allies in its line of sight deal an extra 1d8 necrotic damage on their melee attacks. If the eidolon moves, the effect ends.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages --
Str 20 (+10)	Dex 14 (+7) Wis 14 (+7)
Con 21 (+10)	Int 8 (+4) Cha 10 (+5)

Blood Amniote	Level 10 Elite Soldier
Large natural animate (blind, ooze, undead) XP 1000	
Initiative +12 Senses Perception +7; blindsight 10	
HP 204; Bloodied 102	
AC 27; Fortitude 24, Reflex 22, Will 23	
Immune disease, gaze, poison	
Saving Throws +2	
Speed 6, climb 4	
Action Points 1	
m Blood Call (standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic	
Reach 3; +14 vs. Fortitude; 2d8 + 4 necrotic damage, and the target is grabbed. If the blood amniote scores a critical hit, the target loses a healing surge.	
C Body Snatch (minor; recharge 5 6) ♦ Necrotic	
Close burst 3; targets enemies; +16 vs. Fortitude; the target is pulled to a space adjacent to the blood amniote and is grabbed. See also <i>blood drain</i> .	
Blood Drain (minor 1/round; at-will)	
Targets each creature grabbed by the blood amniote; the target loses a healing surge (no attack roll required).	
Grasping Tendrils	
A blood amniote can sustain a grab as a free action.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages --
Skills Stealth +14	
Str 24 (+11)	Dex 20 (+9) Wis 15 (+6)
Con 22 (+10)	Int 1 (-1) Cha 1 (-1)

ENCOUNTER 3: THE SPITEFUL MAP

TILE SETS NEEDED
DU5 Sinister Woods x2



ENCOUNTER 4: THE HOPEFUL

SETUP

After the PCs have defeated the creatures in the previous encounter, the energy field between the obelisk and the fort is reestablished, and the good entity regains control of the walls. It attempts to communicate again. If the PC who established communication originally was killed or cannot communicate for some reason, another PC may attempt to establish communication using the same criteria as before.

Before you begin this encounter, find out where each PC wishes to stand. These are the positions that they will be in at the beginning of the next combat encounter. As before, at least one PC must be adjacent to the wall in order to attempt to communicate with the spirits within.

More words in flowing, elegant script appear. “You must leave this area. Your presence allows the creatures within to escape. Warn others to stay away.”

At this point, the good entity does not want to engage in a long conversation. It only wishes the PCs to leave the area as quickly as possible. If the PCs wish to engage in a discussion, most questions or comments are answered with a simple plea: **“For the sake of the Morninglord and all that he holds dear, please leave.”**

However, if the PCs ask the proper questions, the good entity briefly relays the following information, always followed by the plea for the PCs to leave:

- The entity is the collective spirit of those who were trapped in the fort when an attack took place. (Any questions about what attacked go unanswered.)
- There is a battle taking place within the fort between the forces of good (the paladins and their allies) and the forces of evil (whatever forces invaded Fort Morninglord three years ago).
- The forces of good are not sure how much time has passed since the invasion. It feels like only hours have passed, but they are aware that whatever happened also altered the passage of time.
- There is some sort of magic within the keep that keeps the forces of good from escaping, but there also seem to be similar powers keeping the forces of evil trapped as well.

If the PCs mention that they are seeking an item of great power, possibly armor dedicated to Torm, this elicits a

positive response from the entity: **“Yes, we have Loyalty’s Sacrifice. Can you help us? Are you pure?”**

Here the PCs may answer whatever they wish. However, at this point the energy coming from the obelisk expands to fill the entire area. This energy seeks out the impurity within the spirits of each of the PCs, triggering the next encounter. The evil entity regains control of the walls, and the harsh script forms the words: **“YOU ARE NOT PURE.”**

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

The impurities within the PCs' spirits are forced from their bodies, in the forms of the enemies in the next encounter. Proceed immediately to Encounter 5.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

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

ENCOUNTER 5: THE IMPURE

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 9/11 (1950/2850 XP)

SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures at the low tier:

3 spectral panthers (P)

1 shadow-warped troll (level 6) (S)

4 troll shades (level 6) (T)

This encounter includes the following creatures at the high tier:

3 spectral panthers (level 11) (P)

1 shadow-warped troll (level 8) (S)

4 troll shades (T)

When this encounter is triggered, read:

A terrible agony shoots through your bodies. The wracking pain intensifies as shadowy forms rip themselves from within your very souls. The shadows grow to large, twisted monstrosities with long arms and wicked claws. One of the forms, slightly larger than the rest, chuckles and says in Common, "What irony! To be killed by your own imperfections!"

The shadow-warped troll and troll shades emerge from random PCs. This is treated as a surprise round, but it consumes the monsters' entire turn, so roll initiative normally. The shadow-warped troll appears as close as possible to his starting place on the map. The troll shade minions appear adjacent to whatever PC they came out of. (Each PC should have at least one shadow creature erupt from his or her body.) On the first round, two of the minions appear and attack, and then the other two appear on the same initiative count in the second round. Also note that the shadow-warped troll can create more minions, which are in addition to the ones listed above and are not worth additional XP.

In the second round, when the troll shade minions emerge, each affected PC can make a DC 10/12 Charisma check. If successful, the PC can choose which adjacent square the minion appears in. If unsuccessful, you choose which square they appear in. It counts as a move action for a troll shade minion to pull itself out of a PC and enter its starting square, but these move actions do not provoke opportunity attacks or count as movement that could trigger powers or other effects.

The shadow panthers come out of the wall on their first turn in the initiative order and immediately attack

(so they do not act during the surprise round, but they also are not visible to PCs who beat them on initiative during the first round of combat).

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: If the PCs approach the fort during the day, the area is brightly lit. If they approach at night, the heavy clouds and light rain leave the area in total darkness. When the creatures attack, a dim light illuminates the clearing if the encounter takes place at night.

Rubble and Rocks: Areas marked with a triangle on the map count as difficult terrain. The boulders on the map count as impassable terrain that provides cover.

Forest: The forest is extremely thick and overgrown here. Entering a forest square counts as difficult terrain that costs 3 squares of movement to enter. Anyone in a forest square has cover, but attacking from a forest square also provides cover to the target of those attacks.

Obelisk: As a standard action a PC that is either adjacent to or in the same square as the obelisk can attempt a DC 19/21 Arcana, Nature or Religion check. A successful check removes the insubstantial ability of the monsters until the end of that PC's next turn.

In addition, beginning on the second round of combat, PCs that are adjacent to or in the same square as the obelisk notice that it is glowing with a fiery radiance. Any character adjacent to or in the same square as the obelisk may use a minor action to draw upon this holy fire. With a successful DC 19/21 Arcana, Nature, or Religion check, the PC's next attack made before the end of his turn gains the Fire and Radiant keywords and all damage dealt by that attack is treated as fire and radiant damage.

The Wall: The good entity commands the wall during this battle. (If none of the PCs are aware of this, the good entity writes something like "stand over here!" on the wall to catch their attention.) PCs gain a +4 damage bonus when they make an attack while adjacent to the wall.

The Communicator: The PC who has established communication with the good entity is tainted in this encounter as a result of not being pure. As a free action once on its turn, the shadow-warped troll can slide that PC one square (nothing can increase or decrease the number of squares slid). Additionally, any ally next to the tainted PC takes a -2 penalty to all defenses. Finally, all the monsters may count the tainted PC as an ally for determining flanking (and only for this purpose).

As before, the Communicator gains automatic knowledge of how to tap the obelisk's power, and may communicate this information to the other PCs.

TACTICS

Both the spectral panthers and the shadow-warped troll gain a bonus to damage when they have combat advantage, so they use the troll shade minions (and the tainted PC) as flankers whenever possible. Unless the players wish for a greater challenge, refrain from continually using the spectral panther's *spectral form*.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

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

Four PCs: Remove one spectral panther and one troll shade.

Six PCs: Add one spectral panther and one troll shade.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

When the shadow-warped troll is defeated, the creature disappears. A fist-sized green emerald in the form of a natural creature's stomach rests in the square where the creature disappeared. A **DC 15 Arcana check** reveals that this emerald is magical, and it is a component needed for some sort of protection ritual. This object, in conjunction with the ruby and diamond found earlier, is necessary to perform the ritual in the final battle to defeat the phoelarch mage invoker and earn the artifact from the power within the fortress.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs each receive 390/570 experience points for defeating the creatures in this encounter.

TREASURE

There is no treasure in this encounter (the emerald stomach dissolves if the PCs try to take it away from the area of the fortress).

ENCOUNTER 5: THE IMPURE STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

Spectral Panther	Level 9 Lurker
Medium shadow beast	XP 400
Initiative +13 Senses Perception +10; low-light vision	
HP 76 Bloodied 38	
AC 23; Fortitude 22, Reflex 24, Will 20	
Speed 7	
m Claws (standard; at-will)	
+14 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage.	
M Tail Spike (immediate interrupt, when an enemy moves or shifts into a square adjacent to the spectral panther, at-will)	
+14 vs. AC; 1d6 + 2 damage.	
Combat Advantage	
The spectral panther deals an extra 2d6 damage against any target it has combat advantage against.	
Invisibility (standard, usable only while in spectral form; at-will)	
✦ Illusion	
The spectral panther is invisible until it makes an attack. It can end this effect on its turn as a free action.	
Spectral Form (standard; at-will)	
The spectral panther becomes insubstantial. It gains a +5 power bonus to Stealth checks but deals only half damage with its attacks. It can end this effect on its turn as a free action.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages
Skills Stealth +14 (+19 in <i>spectral form</i>)	
Str 15 (+6)	Dex 21 (+9) Wis 13 (+5)
Con 16 (+7)	Int 2 (+0) Cha 12 (+5)

Troll Shade (Level 6)	Level 6 Minion
Large shadow animate	XP 63
Initiative +3 Senses Perception +5; darkvision	
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.	
AC 18; Fortitude 20, Reflex 15, Will 15	
Speed fly 8	
m Claw (standard; at-will)	
Reach 2; +9 vs. AC; 7 damage.	
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Giant
Str 21 (+8)	Dex 11 (+3) Wis 11 (+3)
Con 21 (+8)	Int 4 (+0) Cha 6 (+1)

Shadow-Warped Troll (Level 6)	Level 6 Elite Brute
Large shadow humanoid	XP 500
Initiative +7 Senses Perception +10; darkvision	
HP 140; Bloodied 70	
Regeneration 10 (if the troll takes acid or fire damage, regeneration does not function until the end of his next turn).	
AC 19; Fortitude 21, Reflex 18, Will 16	
Saving Throws +2	
Speed 8	
Action Points 1	
m Claw (standard; at-will) ✦ Necrotic	
Reach 2; +11 vs. AC; 2d8 + 5 damage.	
M Double Attack (standard, at-will)	
The troll makes two claw attacks; +9 vs. AC; 2d6 + 4 damage.	
M Frenzied Attack (free, when the troll's attack bloodies an enemy, at-will)	
The troll makes a claw attack.	
R Shadow Blind (standard, encounter)	
Ranged 5; +8 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage, and the target is blinded (save ends).	
Call Troll Shade (minor; 4/encounter) ✦ Conjuration	
The troll reaches into the shadow within and conjures a troll shade within 5 squares. The troll shade acts independently just after the troll in the initiative order.	
Combat Advantage	
The troll deals an extra 2d6 damage against any target it has combat advantage against.	
Troll Healing ✦ Healing	
If the troll is reduced to 0 hit points by an attack that does not deal acid or fire damage, the troll rises on his next turn (as a move action) with 10 hit points.	
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Giant
Skills Athletics +14	
Str 22 (+9)	Dex 16 (+6) Wis 14 (+5)
Con 20 (+8)	Int 5 (+0) Cha 10 (+3)

ENCOUNTER 5: THE IMPURE STATISTICS (HIGH LEVEL)

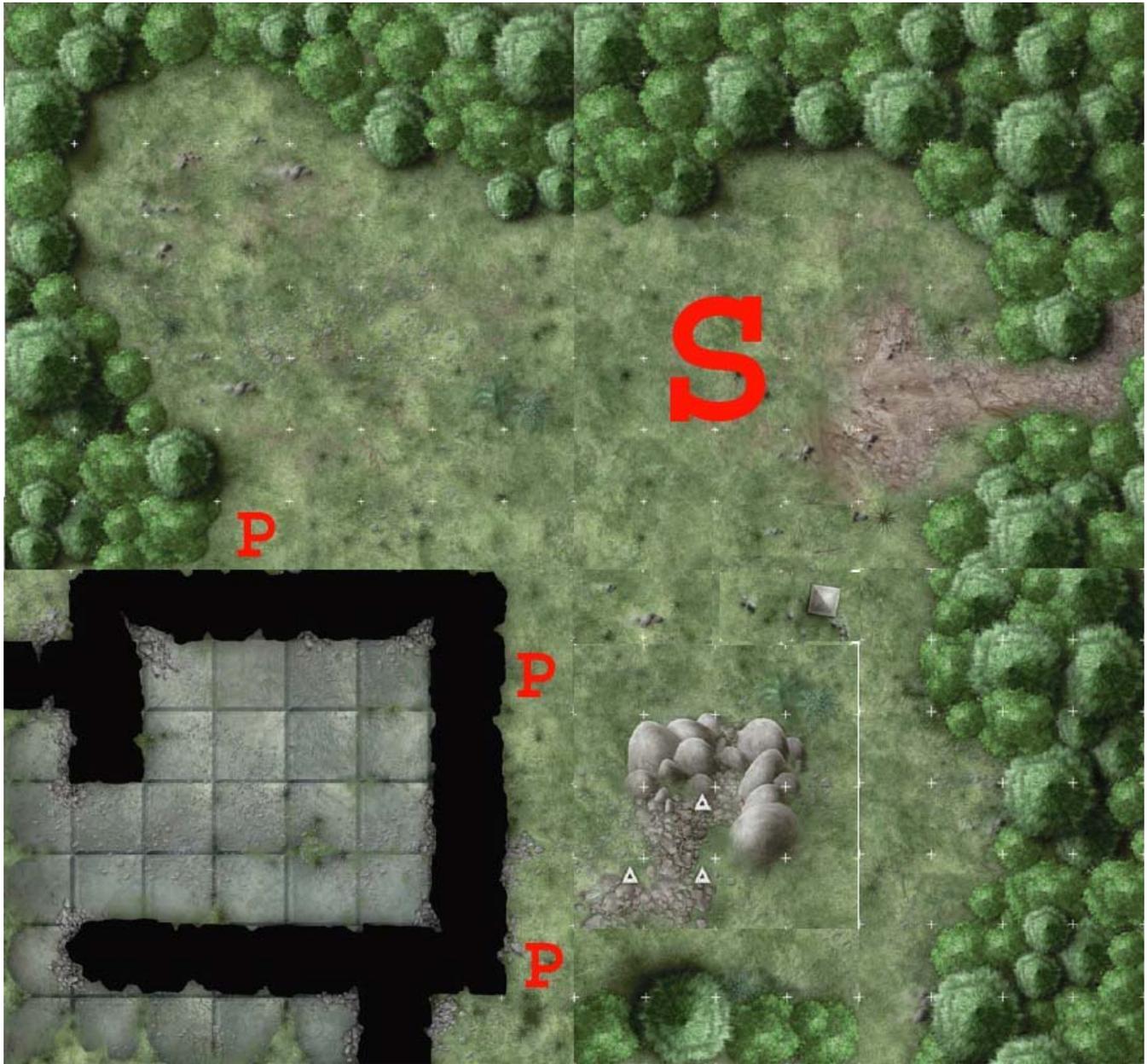
Spectral Panther (Level 11)	Level 11 Lurker
Medium shadow beast	
XP 600	
Initiative +14 Senses Perception +11; low-light vision	
HP 88; Bloodied 44	
AC 25; Fortitude 24, Reflex 26, Will 22	
Speed 7	
m Claws (standard; at-will)	
+16 vs. AC; 2d6 + 6 damage.	
M Tail Spike (immediate interrupt, when an enemy moves or shifts into a square adjacent to the spectral panther, at-will)	
+16vs. AC; 1d6 + 3 damage.	
Combat Advantage	
The spectral panther deals an extra 2d6 damage against any target it has combat advantage against.	
Invisibility (standard, usable only while in spectral form; at-will)	
✦ Illusion	
The spectral panther is invisible until it makes an attack. It can end this effect on its turn as a free action.	
Spectral Form (standard; at-will)	
The spectral panther becomes insubstantial. It gains a +5 power bonus to Stealth checks but deals only half damage with its attacks. It can end this effect on its turn as a free action.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages
Skills Stealth +15 (+20 in <i>spectral form</i>)	
Str 15 (+7)	Dex 21 (+10) Wis 13 (+6)
Con 16 (+8)	Int 2 (+1) Cha 12 (+6)

Troll Shade	Level 8 Minion
Large shadow animate	
XP 88	
Initiative +4 Senses Perception +6; darkvision	
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.	
AC 20; Fortitude 22, Reflex 17, Will 17	
Speed fly 8	
m Claw (standard; at-will)	
Reach 2; +11 vs. AC; 8 damage.	
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Giant
Str 21 (+9)	Dex 11 (+4) Wis 11 (+4)
Con 21 (+9)	Int 4 (+1) Cha 6 (+2)

Shadow-Warped Troll (Level 8)	Level 8 Elite Brute
Large shadow humanoid	
XP 700	
Initiative +8 Senses Perception +11; darkvision	
HP 180; Bloodied 90	
Regeneration 10 (if the troll takes acid or fire damage, regeneration does not function until the end of his next turn).	
AC 22; Fortitude 24, Reflex 21, Will 19	
Saving Throws +2	
Speed 8	
Action Points 1	
m Claw (standard; at-will) ✦ Necrotic	
Reach 2; +13 vs. AC; 2d8 + 6 damage.	
M Double Attack (standard, at-will)	
The troll makes two claw attacks; +13vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage.	
M Frenzied Attack (free, when the troll's attack bloodies an enemy, at-will)	
The troll makes a claw attack.	
R Shadow Blind (standard, encounter)	
Ranged 5; +10 vs. AC; 1d8 + 6 damage, and the target is blinded (save ends).	
Call Troll Shade (minor; 4/encounter) ✦ Conjuration	
The troll reaches into the shadow within and conjures a troll shade within 5 squares. The troll shade acts independently just after the troll in the initiative order.	
Combat Advantage	
The troll deals an extra 2d6 damage against any target it has combat advantage against.	
Troll Healing ✦ Healing	
If the troll is reduced to 0 hit points by an attack that does not deal acid or fire damage, the troll rises on his next turn (as a move action) with 10 hit points.	
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Giant
Skills Athletics +15	
Str 22 (+10)	Dex 16 (+7) Wis 14 (+6)
Con 20 (+9)	Int 5 (+1) Cha 10 (+4)

ENCOUNTER 5: THE IMPURE MAP

TILE SETS NEEDED
DU5 Sinister Woods x2



ENCOUNTER 6: THE AGREEMENT

SETUP

After the PCs succeed in the previous encounter, the forces of good within the walls regain control of the runes.

The runes rearrange themselves on the wall again, and you see the words “We are relieved that you survived” in a smooth, flowing script.

At this point, the PCs can converse with the forces of good within the walls. If the PCs did not learn about what is happening inside the fort in a previous encounter, they can learn that now. Those points are repeated below, in addition to new points. If there is time, this can be roleplayed through the PCs asking questions and the answer appearing on the wall as the runes change into words. However, if time is an issue, feel free to summarize.

- The entity is the collective spirit of those who were trapped in the fort when an attack took place. (Any questions about what attacked go unanswered.)
- There is a battle taking place within the fort between the forces of good (the paladins and their allies) and the forces of evil (whatever forces invaded Fort Morninglord three years ago).
- The forces of good are not sure how much time has passed since the invasion. It feels like only hours have passed, but they are aware that whatever happened also altered the passage of time.
- There is some sort of magic within the keep that keeps the forces of good from escaping, but there also seem to be similar powers keeping the forces of evil trapped as well.
- The enemies they are fighting keep being reborn, making victory impossible.
- The artifact the PCs seek is being used in the battle. Parting with the artifact would greatly weaken the forces of good. However, if the artifact is needed for a battle outside the fort, a compromise might be reached.
- It would be possible, if some of the more dangerous forces of evil were released from the battle within the fort, that the forces of good might be able to gain the upper hand. This would make it possible to release the artifact to the PCs without jeopardizing the battle inside the fort.

- There is a prophecy tied to the artifact, which is a gauntlet called Loyalty’s Sacrifice. It is said that those who are pure, or who make themselves pure, are destined to bring the artifact out of the fort and use it in a great battle. By fighting the shadow creatures of their own spirits, they have made themselves pure and deserve to take ownership of Loyalty’s Sacrifice.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

If the PCs are able to make it known to the good entity within the fort that the artifact is needed in a coming battle, a compromise is reached. The PCs can take possession of the artifact, with the understanding that they must face some of the evil forces about to be released from within the fort.

When this agreement is reached, it is time for the final combat. However, the PCs can arrange for a delay of the combat if they want to take an extended rest. They simply must back off approximately 1 mile and take their extended rest. When they return to the area the combat starts. They will need to move into the area and communicate with the wall to let the “good guys” know that they are back.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

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

TREASURE

There is no treasure in this encounter.

ENCOUNTER 7: THE PROMISE KEPT

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 10/12 (2550/3800 XP)

SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures at the low tier:

- 1 **psychic phoelarch mage invoker (level 8)** (I)
- 1 **fading dream fearmonger (level 11)** (F)
- 3 **psychic phoelarch warriors (level 8)** (W)

This encounter includes the following creatures at high tier:

- 1 **psychic phoelarch mage invoker (level 10)** (I)
- 1 **fading dream fearmonger (level 12)** (F)
- 4 **psychic phoelarch warriors (level 10)** (W)

After the PCs reach an agreement with the forces of good within the fort, they must fulfill their end of the bargain. The power of the obelisk is momentarily squelched, allowing some of the forces of evil within the fort to escape. The PCs must destroy these powerful entities in order to fulfill their part of the bargain.

When the obelisk's power is deactivated, read:

The pearly white energy that passes from the obelisk to the walls blinks out of existence, and the very ground begins to shake. The obelisk topples over. A human-sized creature appears on the far side of the clearing. Energy pulses from its form, causing a high, shrieking sound that makes your head ache and vision blur. Similarly shaped creatures, wielding what look like curved swords made of sound waves, emerge from the fort's walls. A voice like metal scraping on metal comes from the first creature. "I do not know how we escaped, but your deaths will be just as satisfactory as those of the ones we battle within the fortress."

At the same time, words appear on the wall in flowing script. "You must repair the obelisk and renew its power. Otherwise these creatures cannot be defeated."

At the end of the first round of battle (delaying until everyone else has acted), the fading dream fearmonger moves out of the wall in an area far from any melee PCs, and it attacks. The creature should be described as a large brain with legs and a mouth.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: If the PCs approach the fort during the day, the area is brightly lit. If they approach at night, the heavy clouds and light rain leave the area in total darkness. When the creatures attack, a dim light illuminates the clearing if the encounter takes place at night.

Rubble and Rocks: Areas marked with a triangle on the map count as difficult terrain. The boulders on the map count as impassable terrain that provides cover.

Forest: The forest is extremely thick and overgrown here. Entering a forest square counts as difficult terrain that costs 3 squares of movement to enter. Anyone in a forest square has cover, but attacking from a forest square also provides cover to the target of those attacks.

Obelisk: The obelisk has no power in this encounter until the PCs are able to re-establish its power via the skill challenge. (See **Skill Challenge: Breaking the Cycle** below.)

The Wall: The struggle for control over the wall is ongoing during the encounter. On odd-numbered rounds, the evil forces are in control, and the PCs are negatively affected. On even-numbered rounds, the forces of good are in control and the PCs' foes are negatively affected. When a creature is adjacent to the walls when the opposing force is in control, it suffers a -2 penalty to all defenses and to saving throws.

The Communicator: The PC who has established communication with the good entity gains some control over the phoelarchs and any phoera spawned. As a minor action on his turn, that PC can choose one phoelarch or phoera and either remove that creature's resistance to psychic damage or change its cold vulnerability to a different energy type until the start of the PCs next turn (no skill check required).

SKILL CHALLENGE: BREAKING THE CYCLE (INCLUDED IN OVERALL EL)

Goal: Raise the obelisk and re-establish its protective properties.

Complexity: 1 (4 successes; failure cannot end)

Primary Skills: Arcana, Athletics, Nature, Religion

Other Skills: Insight

Victory: The power of the obelisk is restored. The phoelarch mage invoker and phoelarch warriors are unable to be reborn as phoera when they reach 0 hit points, and their *rise from the ashes* power deals half damage. Also, the zone is not created. As a standard action a PC that is adjacent can use the obelisk with a DC 19/21 Arcana, Nature, or Religion check to destroy one zone that was already created.

Defeat: The PCs cannot fail this skill challenge (if they fail a given skill check, they simply have to keep trying until they succeed). Failure does not force the PCs to start over and repeat earlier skill checks. However, if they do not attempt the checks in the right order, they cannot succeed. Give them as many clues as needed.

If necessary, remind the PCs of Handout 4 and of what they learned from considering the madman's ravings (Encounter 1): *Tormite doctrine teaches that humanity has three virtues. The least virtue is intellect, which is held in the brain. The middle virtue is instinct, which comes from nature and is seated in the stomach. The highest virtue is honor, which is unique to higher beings and is seated in the heart.*

Athletics DC 14/16 (1 success, 1 maximum)

Before any of the other skills can be attempted, the obelisk must be set upright. It is a standard action to attempt this check or to assist on the check. None of the other checks can be attempted until someone succeeds at this check.

Arcana DC 14/16 (1 success, 1 maximum)

The second step in the skill challenge must be an Arcana check taken as a standard action, and the primary attempter must be in a square with the obelisk, or adjacent to it. The primary attempter must also have possession of the clear diamond brain. Neither the Nature nor Religion checks can be attempted until someone succeeds at the Arcana check.

Nature DC 14/16 (1 success, 1 maximum)

The third step in the skill challenge must be a Nature check taken as a standard action, and the primary attempter must be in a square with the obelisk, or adjacent to it. The primary attempter must also have possession of the emerald stomach. The Religion check cannot be attempted until someone succeeds at the Nature check.

Religion DC 14/16 (1 success, 1 maximum)

The final step in the skill challenge must be a Religion check taken as a standard action, and the primary attempter must be in a square with the obelisk, or adjacent to it. The primary attempter must also have possession of the ruby heart.

Insight DC 14/16 (no successes, no maximum)

If the PCs did not speak to Jarveph, or if they cannot figure out his riddle, they do not know how to complete the skill challenge. In this case, the forces within the wall try to communicate that information to the PCs. As a standard action, a PC can attempt to make mental

contact with the wall. Each successful Insight check gives the PCs one step in the ritual: set the obelisk upright, prime it with an Arcana check, empower it with a Nature check, and activate it with a Religion check.

TACTICS

All of the creatures in this encounter are beings of psychic energy that are part of the forces which invaded Fort Morninglord but are trapped therein. While roughly humanoid in shape, their forms pulse and waver with psychic power.

The phoelarch mage invoker and phoelarch warriors appear generally in the areas designated on the map, although the DM should alter these positions based on the positions of the PCs at the encounter's start. The fearmonger emerges (as a move action) from the walls, hopefully at the rear of the battle.

The warriors try to stay between the PCs and the mage invoker, although their *burning step* allows them to move past defenders wary of taking the damage on an opportunity attack.

Until the PCs have successfully completed the skill challenge, all of the psychic phoera are considered to have *rise from the ashes* instead of death burst as their "reduced to 0 hit points" power. This means that the PCs basically have to keep killing psychic phoera over and over again until they complete the skill challenge. To be clear, the PCs only have to kill the "tougher" versions of these creatures (the mage invoker and the warriors) one time. Thereafter, they must kill the phoeras over and over again until they complete the skill challenge.

Note also that the 5 psychic damage from multiple overlapping zones created by *rise from the ashes* and/or *death burst* does not stack.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

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

Four PCs: Remove the fading dream fearmonger.

Six PCs: Add another fading dream fearmonger.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

When the last enemy falls, continue to Encounter 8.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs each receive 510/760 XP for defeating the creatures in this encounter. (This includes both the XP value of the monsters and the skill challenge.)

TREASURE

There is no treasure in this encounter.

ENCOUNTER 7: THE PROMISE KEPT STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

Psychic Phoelarch Mage Invoker (Level 8) Medium natural humanoid (psychic)	Level 8 Elite Artillery XP 700
Initiative +8 Senses Perception +10	
Phoenix Agony aura 1; each creature that enters the aura or starts its turn there takes 5 psychic damage	
HP 156; Bloodied 78	
AC 21; Fortitude 20, Reflex 20, Will 22	
Resist 10 psychic; Vulnerable 5 cold	
Saving Throws +2	
Speed 6	
Action Points 1	
m Mind Blade (standard; at-will) ♦ Psychic, Weapon +12 vs. AC; 2d6 + 3 psychic damage.	
r Phoenix Ray (standard; at-will) ♦ Psychic Ranged 20; +13 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 3 psychic damage.	
A Grasping Shards (standard; at-will) ♦ Divine, Implement, Radiant Area burst 1 within 10; +11 vs. Fort; 5 radiant damage, and the target is slowed until the end of the invoker's next turn.	
C Rise from the Ashes (when the phoelarch mage drops to 0 hit points; encounter) ♦ Psychic, Zone Close burst 2; +9 vs. Reflex; 3d8 + 3 psychic damage. <i>Effect:</i> The burst creates a zone of white light that lasts until the end of the encounter. Each creature that enters the zone or starts its turn there takes 5 psychic damage. In addition, when the phoelarch mage's next turn would occur, a psychic phoera appears within the zone.	
C Rebuke Undead (standard; encounter) ♦ Divine, Implement, Radiant Close blast 5; +11 vs. Will; 3d10 + 4 radiant damage, and the target is pushed 2 squares and dazed until the end of the phoelarch mage invoker's next turn. <i>Miss:</i> Half damage.	
A Scream of the Phoenix (standard; recharge 5 6) ♦ Psychic Area burst 2 within 20; +11 vs. Reflex; 1d8 + 3 psychic damage, and ongoing 5 psychic damage (save ends).	
R Visions of Paradise (standard; daily) ♦ Charm, Divine, Implement Range 10; +13 vs. Will; target is unable to make attacks (save ends). Whenever the target is attacked, it can make a saving throw against this effect. <i>Miss:</i> target is unable to make attacks until the end of its next turn. If the target is attacked before the end of its next turn, this effect ends.	
R Bolt of the Rising Sun (standard; encounter) ♦ Divine, Implement, Radiant Range 10; +13 vs. Reflex; 1d10 + 10 radiant damage. Until the end of the phoelarch mage invoker's next turn, the target doesn't have line of sight to any creature more than 3 squares away from it.	
Demand Justice (immediate interrupt; encounter) ♦ Divine When a creature within 10 squares of the phoelarch mage invoker attempts a saving throw, the invoker can force the creature to reroll the saving throw and use the new result.	
Shroud of Warning (no action; daily) ♦ Divine At the beginning of the encounter, the invoker and all allies within 10 squares of it can add a +6 bonus to their initiative checks.	
Alignment Unaligned Languages Common, Primordial	
Skills Diplomacy +13, Insight +15	
Str 13 (+5)	Dex 19 (+8) Wis 22 (+10)
Con 15 (+6)	Int 16 (+7) Cha 18 (+8)
Equipment dagger	

Psychic Phoera (Level 8) Medium elemental magical beast (psychic)	Level 8 Skirmisher XP --
Initiative +12 Senses Perception +6	
Phoenix Agony aura 1; each creature that enters the aura or starts its turn there takes 5 psychic damage	
HP 82; Bloodied 41	
AC 22; Fortitude 19, Reflex 21, Will 21	
Resist 15 psychic; Vulnerable 5 cold	
Speed 6, fly 10	
m Claw (standard; at-will) ♦ Psychic +13 vs. AC; 1d4 + 3 damage, and ongoing 5 psychic damage (save ends).	
C Echo of Feathers (standard; recharge 4 5 6) ♦ Psychic Close blast 4; +11 vs. Reflex; 3d6 + 3 psychic damage.	
Flyby Attack (standard; encounter) The psychic phoera flies its speed without provoking opportunity attacks, and it makes a claw attack or an echo of feathers attack at any point during the move.	
C Death Burst (when the phoera drops to 0 hit points) ♦ Psychic, Zone Close burst 2; +9 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 3 psychic damage. <i>Effect:</i> The burst creates a zone of white light that lasts until the end of the encounter. Each creature that enters the zone or starts its turn there takes 5 psychic damage.	
Alignment Unaligned Languages Common, Primordial	
Str 13 (+5)	Dex 23 (+10) Wis 14 (+6)
Con 10 (+4)	Int 10 (+4) Cha 18 (+8)

Note: If the PCs have not completed the skill challenge when the level 8 psychic phoera is killed, then it uses the level 8 psychic phoelarch mage's *rise from the ashes* power instead of its own *death burst* power. This creates another level 8 psychic phoera (infinite rebirth).

If the PCs have completed the skill challenge when the phoera is killed, then it uses *death burst* as normal.

Psychic Phoelarch Warrior (Level 7)		Level 7 Skirmisher
Medium natural humanoid (psychic)		XP 300
Initiative +11	Senses Perception +5	
Phoenix Agony aura 1; each creature that enters the aura or starts its turn there takes 5 psychic damage		
HP 74; Bloodied 37		
AC 21; Fortitude 18, Reflex 20, Will 20		
Resist 10 psychic; Vulnerable 5 cold		
Speed 7		
m Mental Falchion (standard; at-will) ♦ Psychic, Weapon		
+12 vs. AC; 2d4 + 3 psychic damage (crit 4d4 + 11 psychic damage).		
C Rise from the Ashes (when the phoelarch warrior drops to 0 hit points; encounter) ♦ Psychic, Zone		
Close burst 2; +8 vs. Reflex; 3d8 + 2 psychic damage. <i>Effect:</i> The burst creates a zone of white light that lasts until the end of the encounter. Each creature that enters the zone or starts its turn there takes 5 psychic damage. In addition, when the warrior's next turn would occur, a psychic phoera appears within the zone.		
Mental Backlash ♦ Fire		
Any creature that hits the phoelarch warrior with an opportunity attack takes 3d6 psychic damage.		
Alignment Unaligned		Languages Common, Primordial
Skills Acrobats +14, Athletics +9		
Str 13 (+4)	Dex 23 (+9)	Wis 14 (+5)
Con 10 (+3)	Int 10 (+3)	Cha 18 (+7)
Equipment falchion		

Fading Dream Fearmonger (Level 11)		Level 11 Artillery
Medium fey humanoid, eladrin		XP 600
Initiative +11	Senses Perception +10, low-light vision	
HP 92 Bloodied 46		
AC 23; Fortitude 22, Reflex 22, Will 24		
Immune fear; Resist 5 psychic		
Saving Throws +5 against charm effects		
Speed 6		
m Dreamblade (standard; at-will) ♦ Psychic		
+18 vs. AC; 2d6 + 2 damage, and the target takes ongoing 5 psychic damage (save ends).		
r Nightmare Bolt (standard; at-will) ♦ Fear, Psychic		
Ranged 20; +16 vs. Will; 1d8 + 2 psychic damage, the fearmonger pushes the target 3 squares, and the target takes ongoing 5 psychic damage (save ends).		
R Humbling Terror (standard; encounter) ♦ Fear, Psychic		
Ranged 10; targets a creature taking ongoing psychic damage; +16 vs. Will; 3d10 + 4 psychic damage, and the target is knocked prone (save ends).		
R Terrifying Vision (standard; recharge 4 5 6) ♦ Fear, Psychic		
Ranged 10; targets a creature taking ongoing psychic damage; +13 vs. Will; 2d8 + 3 psychic damage, and the target is dazed (save ends).		
Dark Step (move; encounter) ♦ Teleportation		
The fading dream fearmonger teleports 5 squares and gains a +2 bonus to all defenses until the end of its next turn.		
Alignment Evil		Languages Common, Elven
Skills Bluff +17, Intimidate +22, Stealth +15, Thievery +15		
Str 14 (+7)	Dex 21 (+10)	Wis 18 (+9)
Con 20 (+10)	Int 18 (+9)	Cha 24 (+12)

Psychic Phoera (Level 7)		Level 7 Skirmisher
Medium elemental magical beast (psychic)		XP --
Initiative +11	Senses Perception +5	
Phoenix Agony aura 1; each creature that enters the aura or starts its turn there takes 5 psychic damage		
HP 74; Bloodied 37		
AC 21; Fortitude 18, Reflex 20, Will 20		
Resist 15 psychic; Vulnerable 5 cold		
Speed 6, fly 10		
m Claw (standard; at-will) ♦ Psychic		
+12 vs. AC; 1d4 + 3 damage, and ongoing 5 psychic damage (save ends).		
C Echo of Feathers (standard; recharge 4 5 6) ♦ Psychic		
Close blast 4; +10 vs. Reflex; 3d6 + 3 psychic damage.		
Flyby Attack (standard; encounter)		
The phoera flies its speed without provoking opportunity attacks, and it makes a claw attack or an echo of feathers attack at any point during the move.		
C Death Burst (when the phoera drops to 0 hit points) ♦ Psychic, Zone		
Close burst 2; +8 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 3 psychic damage. <i>Effect:</i> The burst creates a zone of white light that lasts until the end of the encounter. Each creature that enters the zone or starts its turn there takes 5 psychic damage.		
Alignment Unaligned		Languages Common, Primordial
Str 13 (+4)	Dex 23 (+9)	Wis 14 (+5)
Con 10 (+3)	Int 10 (+3)	Cha 18 (+7)

Note: If the PCs have not completed the skill challenge when the level 7 psychic phoera is killed, then it uses the level 7 psychic phoelarch warrior's *rise from the ashes* power instead of its own *death burst* power. This creates another level 7 psychic phoera (infinite rebirth).

If the PCs have completed the skill challenge when the phoera is killed, then it uses *death burst* as normal.

ENCOUNTER 7: THE PROMISE KEPT STATISTICS (HIGH LEVEL)

Psychic Phoelarch Mage Invoker (Level 10) Level 10 Elite Artillery	
Medium natural humanoid (psychic)	XP 1,200
Initiative +9	Senses Perception +11
Phoenix Agony aura 1; each creature that enters the aura or starts its turn there takes 5 psychic damage	
HP 180; Bloodied 90	
AC 23; Fortitude 22, Reflex 22, Will 24	
Resist 10 psychic; Vulnerable 5 cold	
Saving Throws +2	
Speed 6	
Action Points 1	
m Mind Blade (standard; at-will) ♦ Psychic, Weapon +14 vs. AC; 2d6 + 4 psychic damage.	
r Phoenix Ray (standard; at-will) ♦ Psychic Ranged 20; +15 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 4 psychic damage.	
A Grasping Shards (standard; at-will) ♦ Divine, Implement, Radiant Area burst 1 within 10; +13 vs. Fort; 6 radiant damage, and the target is slowed until the end of the invoker's next turn.	
C Rise from the Ashes (when the phoelarch mage drops to 0 hit points; encounter) ♦ Psychic, Zone Close burst 2; +11 vs. Reflex; 3d8 + 5 psychic damage. <i>Effect:</i> The burst creates a zone of white light that lasts until the end of the encounter. Each creature that enters the zone or starts its turn there takes 5 psychic damage. In addition, when the phoelarch mage's next turn would occur, a psychic phoera appears within the zone.	
C Rebuke Undead (standard; encounter) ♦ Divine, Implement, Radiant Close blast 5; +13 vs. Will; 3d10 + 5 radiant damage, and the target is pushed 2 squares and dazed until the end of the phoelarch mage invoker's next turn. <i>Miss:</i> Half damage.	
A Scream of the Phoenix (standard; recharge 5 6) ♦ Psychic Area burst 2 within 20; +13 vs. Reflex; 1d8 + 4 psychic damage, and ongoing 5 psychic damage (save ends).	
R Visions of Paradise (standard; daily) ♦ Charm, Divine, Implement Range 10; +15 vs. Will; target is unable to make attacks (save ends). Whenever the target is attacked, it can make a saving throw against this effect. <i>Miss:</i> target is unable to make attacks until the end of its next turn. If the target is attacked before the end of its next turn, this effect ends.	
R Bolt of the Rising Sun (standard; encounter) ♦ Divine, Implement, Radiant Range 10; +15 vs. Reflex; 1d10 + 11 radiant damage. Until the end of the phoelarch mage invoker's next turn, the target doesn't have line of sight to any creature more than 3 squares away from it.	
Demand Justice (immediate interrupt; encounter) ♦ Divine When a creature within 10 squares of the phoelarch mage invoker attempts a saving throw, the invoker can force the creature to reroll the saving throw and use the new result.	
Shroud of Warning (no action; daily) ♦ Divine At the beginning of the encounter, the invoker and all allies within 10 squares of it can add a +6 bonus to their initiative checks.	
Alignment Unaligned Languages Common, Primordial	
Skills Diplomacy +14, Insight +16	
Str 13 (+6)	Dex 19 (+9) Wis 22 (+11)
Con 15 (+7)	Int 16 (+8) Cha 18 (+9)
Equipment dagger	

Psychic Phoera (Level 10)		Level 10 Skirmisher
Medium elemental magical beast (psychic)		XP --
Initiative +13	Senses Perception +7	
Phoenix Agony aura 1; each creature that enters the aura or starts its turn there takes 5 psychic damage		
HP 98; Bloodied 49		
AC 24; Fortitude 21, Reflex 23, Will 23		
Resist 15 psychic; Vulnerable 5 cold		
Speed 6, fly 10		
m Claw (standard; at-will) ♦ Psychic +15 vs. AC; 1d4 + 4 damage, and ongoing 5 psychic damage (save ends).		
C Echo of Feathers (standard; recharge 4 5 6) ♦ Psychic Close blast 4; +13 vs. Reflex; 3d6 + 4 psychic damage.		
Flyby Attack (standard; encounter) The psychic phoera flies its speed without provoking opportunity attacks, and it makes a claw attack or an echo of feathers attack at any point during the move.		
C Death Burst (when the phoera drops to 0 hit points) ♦ Psychic, Zone Close burst 2; +11 vs. Reflex; 3d8 + 4 psychic damage. <i>Effect:</i> The burst creates a zone of white light that lasts until the end of the encounter. Each creature that enters the zone or starts its turn there takes 5 psychic damage.		
Alignment Unaligned Languages Common, Primordial		
Str 13 (+6)	Dex 23 (+11)	Wis 14 (+7)
Con 10 (+5)	Int 10 (+5)	Cha 18 (+9)

Note: If the PCs have not completed the skill challenge when the level 10 psychic phoera is killed, then it uses the level 10 psychic phoelarch mage's *rise from the ashes* power instead of its own *death burst* power. This creates another level 10 psychic phoera (infinite rebirth).

If the PCs have completed the skill challenge when the phoera is killed, then it uses *death burst* as normal.

Psychic Phoelarch Warrior (Level 8)		Level 8 Skirmisher
Medium natural humanoid (psychic)		XP 350
Initiative +12	Senses Perception +6	
Phoenix Agony aura 1; each creature that enters the aura or starts its turn there takes 5 psychic damage		
HP 82; Bloodied 41		
AC 22; Fortitude 19, Reflex 21, Will 21		
Resist 10 psychic; Vulnerable 5 cold		
Speed 7		
m Mental Falchion (standard; at-will) ♦ Psychic, Weapon		
+13 vs. AC; 2d4 + 4 psychic damage (crit 4d4 + 12 psychic damage).		
C Rise from the Ashes (when the phoelarch warrior drops to 0 hit points; encounter) ♦ Psychic, Zone		
Close burst 2; +9 vs. Reflex; 3d8 + 3 psychic damage. <i>Effect:</i> The burst creates a zone of white light that lasts until the end of the encounter. Each creature that enters the zone or starts its turn there takes 5 psychic damage. In addition, when the warrior's next turn would occur, a psychic phoera appears within the zone.		
Mental Backlash ♦ Fire		
Any creature that hits the phoelarch warrior with an opportunity attack takes 3d6 psychic damage.		
Alignment Unaligned		Languages Common, Primordial
Skills Acrobats +15, Athletics +10		
Str 13 (+5)	Dex 23 (+10)	Wis 14 (+6)
Con 10 (+4)	Int 10 (+4)	Cha 18 (+8)
Equipment falchion		

Fading Dream Fearmonger (Level 12)		Level 12 Artillery
Medium fey humanoid, eladrin		XP 700
Initiative +11	Senses Perception +10, low-light vision	
HP 98; Bloodied 49		
AC 24; Fortitude 23, Reflex 23, Will 25		
Immune fear; Resist 5 psychic		
Saving Throws +5 against charm effects		
Speed 6		
m Dreamblade (standard; at-will) ♦ Psychic		
+19 vs. AC; 2d6 + 3 damage, and the target takes ongoing 5 psychic damage (save ends).		
r Nightmare Bolt (standard; at-will) ♦ Fear, Psychic		
Ranged 20; +17 vs. Will; 1d8 + 3 psychic damage, the fearmonger pushes the target 3 squares, and the target takes ongoing 5 psychic damage (save ends).		
R Humbling Terror (standard; encounter) ♦ Fear, Psychic		
Ranged 10; targets a creature taking ongoing psychic damage; +17 vs. Will; 3d10 + 5 psychic damage, and the target is knocked prone (save ends).		
R Terrifying Vision (standard; recharge 4 5 6) ♦ Fear, Psychic		
Ranged 10; targets a creature taking ongoing psychic damage; +17 vs. Will; 2d8 + 5 psychic damage, and the target is dazed (save ends).		
Dark Step (move; encounter) ♦ Teleportation		
The fading dream fearmonger teleports 5 squares and gains a +2 bonus to all defenses until the end of its next turn.		
Alignment Evil		Languages Common, Elven
Skills Bluff +18, Intimidate +23, Stealth +16, Thievery +16		
Str 14 (+8)	Dex 21 (+11)	Wis 18 (+10)
Con 20 (+11)	Int 18 (+10)	Cha 24 (+13)

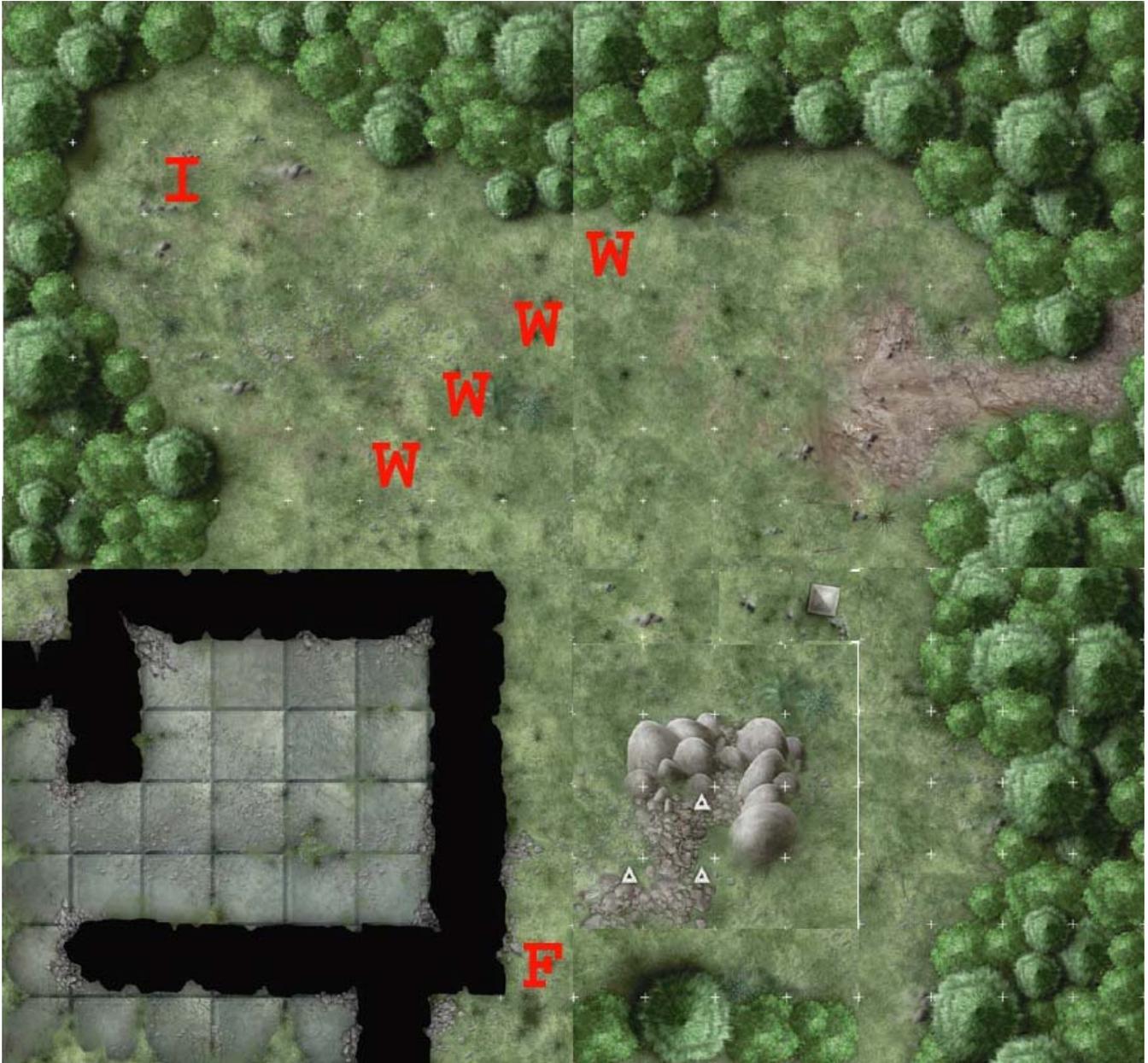
Psychic Phoera (Level 8)		Level 8 Skirmisher
Medium elemental magical beast (psychic)		XP --
Initiative +12	Senses Perception +6	
Phoenix Agony aura 1; each creature that enters the aura or starts its turn there takes 5 psychic damage		
HP 82; Bloodied 41		
AC 22; Fortitude 19, Reflex 21, Will 21		
Resist 15 psychic; Vulnerable 5 cold		
Speed 6, fly 10		
m Claw (standard; at-will) ♦ Psychic		
+13 vs. AC; 1d4 + 3 damage, and ongoing 5 psychic damage (save ends).		
C Echo of Feathers (standard; recharge 4 5 6) ♦ Psychic		
Close blast 4; +11 vs. Reflex; 3d6 + 3 psychic damage.		
Flyby Attack (standard; encounter)		
The psychic phoera flies its speed without provoking opportunity attacks, and it makes a claw attack or an echo of feathers attack at any point during the move.		
C Death Burst (when the phoera drops to 0 hit points) ♦ Psychic, Zone		
Close burst 2; +9 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 3 psychic damage. <i>Effect:</i> The burst creates a zone of white light that lasts until the end of the encounter. Each creature that enters the zone or starts its turn there takes 5 psychic damage.		
Alignment Unaligned		Languages Common, Primordial
Str 13 (+5)	Dex 23 (+10)	Wis 14 (+6)
Con 10 (+4)	Int 10 (+4)	Cha 18 (+8)

Note: If the PCs have not completed the skill challenge when the level 8 psychic phoera is killed, then it uses the level 8 psychic phoelarch warrior's *rise from the ashes* power instead of its own *death burst* power. This creates another level 8 psychic phoera (infinite rebirth).

If the PCs have completed the skill challenge when the phoera is killed, then it uses *death burst* as normal.

ENCOUNTER 7: THE PROMISE KEPT MAP

TILE SETS NEEDED
DU5 Sinister Woods x2



ENCOUNTER 8: THE GIFT

SETUP

After the PCs defeat the phoelarches and the fearmonger, a calm settles over the clearing. Read the following:

At first there is total silence as the last creature falls before you. Then what sounds like cheering and laughter can faintly be heard in the air, although it is impossible to tell the source of the noise.

Words appear on the walls in flowing script: "You have earned our thanks, and have proven yourselves more than worthy. Here is what you were promised. Use it well." A shining silver gauntlet appears at the base of the wall.

No more writing appears on the wall, although if the PCs remain in the area, more writing appears to warn the PCs to get away from the fort before more creatures take advantage of their presence to escape the fort. There are essentially an infinite number of monsters trapped inside the fort, so if the PCs linger, they will be attacked over and over again until they are finally driven off or killed.

The PCs are now free to return with the artifact to Tyrangal. (If necessary, remind the players that Tyrangal specifically asked them to bring the gauntlet to her before taking it to the paladins.) She examines the gauntlet and tells the PCs that this is indeed the item she has heard tales about, and she is very certain that it will play an important role in the upcoming battle against the creatures from the plagueland.

She then asks them to take it to the paladins of Elturgard so that they can put it to its proper use in the upcoming battle. She smiles and suggests that the paladins are likely to be quite grateful for the artifact's return; indeed this is the case, and upon delivering the artifact to any appropriate representative of Elturel, each PC is offered his or her choice of certain types of magic items (treasure bundles A and H) from the paladins' vast armories.

As promised, Tyrangal also offers the PCs a choice of several items (treasure bundles B through G; note that B is low-level only and G is high-level only) from her personal collection of unique and powerful magical items. If the PCs are not interested in any of the items she offers, she instead gives the PCs additional gold to reward them for their work. None of this is offered if the PCs fail to return with Loyalty's Sacrifice.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

If the PCs decide to keep Loyalty's Sacrifice for themselves, the artifact disappears of its own accord—it does not want to be associated with liars and thieves.

If the PCs give the item directly to the paladins instead of showing it to Tyrangal first as she asked, she is very displeased with them. In this case, none of treasure bundles B through G are available (but A and H are still unlocked by the grateful leaders of Elturel).

If any of the PCs were asked to spy on the mission for the paladins of Elturgard, they can go to the Blue Belle Bookseller and follow the instructions given earlier. Upon hearing the description of what happened at the fort, the man who contacted them tells them, "**You have done well. Your service to Elturgard will not go unnoticed. Knight-Commander Vessen will be told of this immediately.**"

PCs who brought Loyalty's Sacrifice back to Tyrangal get story award **SPEC23 Tyrangal's Thanks**. PCs who report back to the paladins do not get the previous story award, and instead earn story award **SPEC24 A Spy for the Paladins**.

Any character who communicated with the good entity inside the walls of Fort Morninglord or activated the obelisk at least once receives the story award **SPEC25 Words of Light and Darkness**. This may come into play should the mysteries of Fort Morninglord ever be unraveled in a future adventure.

TREASURE

If the PCs bring the artifact to Tyrangal before giving it to the paladins, she offers them treasure bundles B-G. If they take it directly to the paladins without showing it to her first, then none of these bundles are available.

For delivering the artifact to the paladins of Elturel, regardless of whether or not they take it to Tyrangal first, the PCs are offered their choice of magic items within certain parameters. This unlocks treasure bundles A (low-level only) and H (high-level only). If the PCs try to keep the item for themselves or give it to anyone other than the paladins (regardless of whether they show it to Tyrangal first), they do not get access to these bundles.

REWARDS SUMMARY

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

EXPERIENCE POINTS

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

Encounter 3: The Spiteful
350/500 XP

Encounter 5: The Impure
390/570 XP

Encounter 6: The Promise Kept
510/760 XP

Total Possible Experience
1250/1830 XP

Gold per PC
180/240 gp

(Player's Introduction: 180/240 gp)

Note: The XP and treasure awards in this adventure exceed the normal maximum for a levels 7-10 adventure. This is intentional, and the PCs may earn the full amounts listed if they achieve all of the objectives.

TREASURE

Each PC receives treasure in the form of gold pieces as well as one share from a treasure bundle. The treasure bundle may give the PC more gold, a magic item, or something else of value. Each player makes one and only one selection for their character; players may choose the same treasure bundle. Note that it is possible (and likely) that some characters will not select a bundle for each session of play.

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

receive 50% of the market price for ritual books and alchemical formulas.

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

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

EACH PC SELECTS ONE OF THE FOLLOWING BUNDLES:

Bundle A: Any weapon, implement, armor, or neck slot item of 9th level or lower from any player-legal source (low-level only)

Found in Encounter 8, only if the PCs return *Loyalty's Sacrifice* to the paladins of Elturel

Bundle B: *philosopher's crown* (level 7; AV 2) (low-level only)

Found in Encounter 8

Bundle C: *mindiron vambraces* (level 8; AV)

Found in Encounter 8

Bundle D: *vagabond's die* (level 8; AV 2)

Found in Encounter 8

Bundle E: *belt of raging endurance* (level 9; Dragon 380)

Found in Encounter 8

Bundle F: *boots of furious speed* (level 9; AV)

Found in Encounter 8

Bundle G: *diamond cincture* (level 10; AV 2) (high-level only)

Found in Encounter 8

Bundle H: Any weapon, implement, armor, or neck slot item of 11th level or lower from any player-legal source (high-level only)

Found in Encounter 8, only if the PCs return *Loyalty's Sacrifice* to the paladins of Elturel

More Gold: If a player doesn't want to select one of the bundles listed above for their character, they can choose to add 420/600 gp to their rewards from this adventure. That character (and only that character) receives more gold instead of any other treasure bundle.

STORY AWARDS

Award these if the PC completes the condition for the award in the adventure. Pass out certificates to the players for their story awards. In this adventure, each PC can either either SPEC23 or SPEC24, but not both, and any number of PCs can earn SPEC25 if they meet the specified criteria.

SPEC23 Tyrangal's Thanks

You undertook a mission on behalf of the strange creature known as Tyrangal, and you succeeded in returning the artifact called Loyalty's Sacrifice to her. She now knows that she can count on you to perform missions and trust her judgment. Her patronage may serve you well later in your adventuring career.

SPEC24 A Spy for the Paladins

You undertook a mission for the paladins of Elturgard, and at its conclusion you reported back your findings to them. Having their trust may serve you well later in your career.

SPEC25 Words of Light and Darkness

You have made contact with the mysterious powers that dwell (or are trapped) within the walls of Fort Morninglord in Elturgard. This experience may become important in the future should the paladins ever determine that another expedition to the abandoned Fort is in order.

ADVENTURE QUESTIONS

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

1. Did any of the PCs refuse to undertake the mission and need to be asked by the paladins?

- a. Yes.
- b. No.
- c. None refused, but I introduced the paladins' call for help anyway.

2. How many PCs died in the first battle?

- a. None.
- b. One.
- c. More than one.
- d. All of them.

3. How many PCs died in the second battle?

- a. None.
- b. One.
- c. More than one.
- d. All of them.

- e. They didn't make it this far.

4. How many PCs died in the third battle?

- a. None.
- b. One.
- c. More than one.
- d. All of them.
- e. They didn't make it this far.

5. Who did the PCs give the artifact to?

- a. They never got the artifact.
- b. They gave it to Tyrangal.
- c. They gave it to the paladins.
- d. They tried to keep it.
- e. They tried to give it to someone else.

NEW RULES

Belt of Raging Endurance

The amber glow spreading from this behemoth-hide belt swirls into the spirit aura of your rage, shielding you until the glow flares red.

Level: 9

Price: 4,200 gp

Item Slot: Waist

Property: You gain 1 healing surge.

Power (Encounter): Immediate Interrupt. *Trigger:* An enemy hits you and causes damage. *Effect:* You gain resist 15 against that attack, but you also take 10 damage at the end of your next turn.

Reference: *Dragon Magazine* 380

Boots of Furious Speed

When you are injured, these boots turn crimson and vibrate slightly.

Level: 9

Price: 4,200 gp

Item Slot: Feet

Property: Gain a +2 item bonus to speed while bloodied.

Power (Daily): Immediate Reaction. Use this power when you become bloodied. Shift a number of squares equal to half your speed.

Reference: *Adventurer's Vault*

Diamond Cincture

The diamonds on this platinum band grant great fortitude, which you can sacrifice for health.

Level: 10

Price: 5,000 gp

Item Slot: Waist

Property: This belt holds one diamond and you gain a +1 item bonus to Fortitude.

Power (At-Will ♦ Healing): Minor. When you use this power, one diamond on the belt cracks and darkens, becoming worthless. You regain hit points as if you had spend a healing surge, and the belt's item bonus is reduced by one. If there are no diamonds on the belt, you can't use this power. After an extended rest, each diamond destroyed by this power is restored.

Reference: *Adventurer's Vault* 2

Mindiron Vambraces

These smooth crystal bracers are shot through with purple veins that pulse when you attack.

Level: 8

Price: 3,400 gp

Item Slot: Arms

Power (Daily): Free Action. Use this power when you hit with a melee attack. Make a secondary attack against the target: +11 vs. Will; on a hit, the target is dazed until the end of your next turn.

Reference: *Adventurer's Vault*

Philosopher's Crown

This intricate golden crown ensures that the breadth of your knowledge is unparalleled.

Level: 7

Price: 2,600 gp

Item Slot: Head

Property: You gain a +1 item bonus to Arcana, Dungeoneering, History, Nature, and Religion checks.

Power (Daily): Free. *Trigger:* You make an Arcana, Dungeoneering, History, Nature, or Religion check and dislike the result. *Effect:* You reroll the check and use either result.

Reference: *Adventurer's Vault* 2

Vagabond's Die

This die is well used -- the images on its faces are almost worn away.

Level: 8

Price: 3,400 gp

Wondrous Item

Power (Daily ♦ Varies): Minor. You target a creature of your choice within 10 squares and roll a d6.

1: Drunkard's Mug. The target takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls until the end of its next turn.

2: Gambler's Dice. Roll a d20. If the result is even, the target takes damage equal to the result. If the result is odd, the target regains hit points equal to the result.

3: Jester's Chair: The target falls prone.

4-5: Soldier's Fist. The first attack that hits the target before the end of your next turn deals 2d6 extra damage.

6: Storm's Fury. The target and all creatures adjacent to it take 1d10 lightning damage.

Reference: *Adventurer's Vault* 2

APPENDICES AND PLAYER HANDOUTS

HANDOUT 1 – TYRANGAL’S INVITATION

[This invitation is written on expensive paper using a rare and valuable ink.]

Esteemed Friend,

While you do not know me, I have certainly heard of you and your many triumphs. I was pleased to hear that you were coming to Elturgard to join the honorable crusade against the growing threat of the plagueland. While you are in the city, I hope that you will agree to be my guest at Minerla’s Hostel and Eatery, which I have leased for the next few ten-days. I think you will find the accommodations are worthy of a hero of your stature.

In addition to the pleasure of your company, I have other business that I wish to discuss with you. I am sure what I have to say will interest you greatly, and you will learn that I am indeed,

Your Friend in Peace and Prosperity,

Tyrangal

HANDOUT 2 – A PALADIN’S REQUEST

As you travel through the city, a young knight dressed in the armor and tabard of the Paladins of Elturgard approaches you. He stands before you, looking at you as if to size you up. Then he speaks in hushed tones so that no one else can hear.

“Do not speak. Just listen. It has come to the attention of those who serve the High Observer that there are some who have come to our land with noble intentions but a deficiency of common sense. You may be asked by these people to undertake seemingly helpful missions that are in direct opposition to laws. If such an occurrence takes place, you are asked to pretend to accept the mission. Then, with permission from the High Observer, you are to perform the duties requested of you by your patron. In this case, you may investigate the structure in question, but if anyone in your group attempts to breach the structure, you are authorized and ordered to use any means necessary to stop that from happening.”

“When you have learned everything there is to learn about what your patron requested of you, meet me at the Blue Belle Bookseller. Tell the bookseller that you wish to peruse an ancient tome of unequalled radiance, and she will fetch me to speak with you.”

Before you can ask any questions, the knight turns abruptly and marches away.

HANDOUT 3

Are you sentient?

*You are in great danger. Flee now
before you release the evil.*

YOU WILL NOW DIE

*For the sake of the Morninglord and
all that he holds dear, please leave.*

Yes, we have Loyalty's Sacrifice.

Can you help us? Are you pure?

YOU ARE NOT PURE

We are relieved that you survived

HANDOUT 4: JARVEPH'S RAMBLINGS

“Laughter. Black stone. Headache. Headstone. Black ache. Heartache. I saw it. Felt it all. The writing was on the wall.”

“The fallen stone must stand. The origin of the folly of man’s thinking. The origin of the power of all nature. The origin of the honor of Torm. In order.”

“They war without rest. Their minds are assaulted. They are trapped, but they trap as well.”

APPENDIX 1: ELTURGARD

The following information from the *Forgotten Realms Campaign Guide* can be used for reference and shared with players.

ELTURGARD

Elturgard is a theocracy ruled by those who are certain they walk the path of righteousness. The paladins of this land take pride in their moral clarity and pursuit of good.

Elturgard is dominated by a “second sun” that hovers eternally in the sky above the city of Elturel, making this a realm of endless daylight. Creatures of darkness cannot abide even the sight of the city.

Unlike most countries, Elturgard has a state religion: Torm is revered in the temples that dot the landscape.

ELTURGARD LORE

A character knows the following information with a successful skill check.

History DC 15: Elturgard is a relatively small island of order and hope in an inhospitable swath of the Western Heartlands. Over the years, hundreds of people fleeing a mummy’s curse, a vampire’s service, or some other undead involvement have arrived here, settling in Elturel in particular. The forests surrounding this land have grown wild and dangerous.

A pocket of plagueland festering several miles to the south has a habit of spewing forth occasional monstrosities.

Streetwise DC 25: In some quarters, Elturgard has garnered a reputation for being too righteous. Many problems attend its inflexible laws, inquisitorial persecution of evil, and bold plans for “setting Faerûn aright.”

Streetwise or Religion DC 25: The high-ranking paladin Vessen is in charge of a large military operation. The exact nature of the operation is not known, but seems to have something to do with the plagueland to the south of Elturel. Volunteers both noble and mercenary have flocked to Vessen's banner in preparation for this dangerous expedition.

