



# ADVENTURERS LEAGUE™

## ESCAPE FROM PHLAN

Three important citizens of Phlan, who stand against the tyrannical dragon that rules, seek to escape and find refuge across the Moonsea. Can you extricate those that are vital to the factions before it's too late? An adventure for 5th-10th level characters.

**Adventure Code: DDEX1-14**

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# EXPEDITIONS™

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## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to *Escape from Phlan*, a D&D Expeditions™ adventure, part of the official D&D Adventurers League™ organized play system and the *Tyranny of Dragons*™ storyline season.

This adventure is designed for **three to seven 5th-10th level characters**, and is optimized for **five 6th level characters**. Players with 4th level characters may spend 20 downtime days to level up to the start of 5th level. Characters outside this level range cannot participate in this adventure.

The adventure is set in the Moonsea region of the Forgotten Realms, in the town of Phlan.

## THE D&D ADVENTURERS LEAGUE

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

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

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

For more information on playing, running games as a Dungeon Master, and organizing games for the D&D Adventurers League, please visit the [D&D Adventurers League home](#).

## PREPARING THE ADVENTURE

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

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

## BEFORE PLAY AT THE TABLE

Ask the players to provide you with relevant character information. This includes:

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

Players that have characters outside the adventure's level range **cannot participate in the adventure with those characters**. Players can play an adventure they previously played or ran as a Dungeon Master, but not with the same character (if applicable).

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

If you have time, you can do a quick scan of a player's character sheet to ensure that nothing looks out of order. If you see magic items of very high rarities or strange arrays of ability scores, you can ask players to provide

documentation for the irregularities. If they cannot, feel free to restrict item use or ask them to use a standard ability score array. Point players to the [D&D Adventurers League Player's Guide](#) for reference.

If players wish to spend downtime days and it's the beginning of an adventure or episode, they can declare their activity and spend the days now, or they can do so at the end of the adventure or episode.

Players should select their characters' spells and other daily options prior to the start of the adventure, unless the adventure specifies otherwise. Feel free to reread the adventure description to help give players hints about what they might face.

## ADJUSTING THE ADVENTURE

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

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

This adventure is **optimized for a party of five 6th-level characters**. To figure out whether you need to adjust the adventure, do the following:

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

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

## DETERMINING PARTY STRENGTH

Party Composition	Party Strength
3-4 characters, APL less than	Very weak
3-4 characters, APL equivalent	Weak
3-4 characters, APL greater than	Average
5 characters, APL less than	Weak
5 characters, APL equivalent	Average
5 characters, APL greater than	Strong
6-7 characters, APL less than	Average
6-7 characters, APL equivalent	Strong
6-7 characters, APL greater than	Very strong

**Average party strength** indicates no recommended adjustments to the adventure. Each sidebar may or may not offer suggestions for certain party strengths. If a particular recommendation is not offered for your group, you don't have to make adjustments.

## DUNGEON MASTERING THE ADVENTURE

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

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

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

- You are empowered to make adjustments to the adventure and make decisions about how the group interacts with the world of this adventure. This is especially important and applicable outside of combat, but feel free to adjust the adventure for groups that are having too easy or too hard of a time.
- Don't make the adventure too easy or too difficult for a group. Never being challenged makes for a boring game, and being overwhelmed makes for a frustrating 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, since

play loses momentum when this happens. At the same time, make sure that the players don't finish too early; provide them with a full play experience. Try to be aware of running long or short. Adjust the pacing accordingly.

- Read-aloud text is just a suggestion; feel free to modify the text as you see fit, especially when dialogue is present.
- Give the players appropriate hints so they can make informed choices about how to proceed. Players should be given clues and hints when appropriate so they can tackle puzzles, combat, and interactions without getting frustrated over lack of information. This helps to encourage immersion in the adventure and gives players "little victories" for figuring out good choices from clues.

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

## DOWNTIME AND LIFESTYLE

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

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

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

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

## SPELLCASTING SERVICES

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

Alternatively, if the party finishes an adventure, they can be assumed to return to the settlement closest to the adventure location.

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

### SPELLCASTING SERVICES

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

### ACOLYTE BACKGROUND

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

## CHARACTER DISEASE, DEATH, AND RECOVERY

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

### DISEASE, POISON, AND OTHER DEBILITATING EFFECTS

A character still affected by diseases, poisons, and other similar effects at the conclusion of an adventure can spend downtime days recuperating until such time as he or she resolves the effect to its conclusion (see the recuperating activity in the D&D basic rules). If a character doesn't resolve the effect between sessions, that character begins the next session still affected by the debilitating effect.

## DEATH

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

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

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

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

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

## ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Having wiped out Phlan's leadership and wrested control of the city from the Lord Regent, Vorgansharax has set about on a campaign of oppression previously unknown to its resident, as war-torn as they might be. Even under the control of the nefarious Zhentarim of old, the city has never been so bereft of hope.

More commonly known as the "Maimed Virulence," Vorgansharax is a green dragon on the older end of adulthood whose massive size is overshadowed only by

his even larger ego. Despite the grievous injury sustained at the claws of a bronze dragon as a wyrmling that left him with a tattered and maimed right wing, Vorgansharax cuts quite the imposing figure. He is stout of build and terrifyingly strong; far more so than other dragons of his age.

## THE THICKET

Most recently, Vorgansharax has lent his considerable will toward turning Phlan into his lair. He has surrounded the city in an impenetrable magic thicket of brambles and briars that has grown to completely subsume the city walls as well as provide a dense canopy overhead. This leaves Phlan shrouded in dim shadow even on the brightest of days, and at night the only light available is that created by fire and magic.

In addition to surrounding the city, Vorgansharax has also caused his thicket to envelop specific locations throughout the city that have either caused him trouble directly, or pose as threats to his despotic reign. Specifically, Mantor's Library and the entire temple district are overgrown and inaccessible by conventional means.



### THICKET PROPERTIES

It is possible to teleport into Phlan, but the magic of the thicket prevents teleportation out. Teleportation is possible within the city, though only if you are able to see your destination. Attempting to teleport out of the city or to a place in the city that you cannot actually see, causes the spell or ability to fail, and the backlash stuns the offending creature for 1 minute. The creature can use an action on their turn to make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw to recover from being stunned.

Any creature entering the thicket or attacking it with a melee weapon, takes 4 (1d8) piercing damage from large spiky thorns. Additionally, the creature must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or be restrained by the thicket's grasping vines. On their turn, a restrained creature can use their action to attempt a DC 15 Dexterity (Acrobatics) or Strength (Athletics) check to escape the thicket, though any creature doing so takes an additional 4 (1d8) piercing damage.

Any attack on the thicket, physical or magical, causes a spray of putrescent vapors to envelope the attacking creature. Even those that attack from range are at risk, as the spray erupts directly from the ground around them. A creature so affected must make a successful DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or be charmed, preventing them from attacking the thicket further until they make a successful DC 15 Wisdom saving throw to overcome the effect, which can be made at the end of their turn each round.

Additionally, if the thicket takes 50 or more damage in a single round it produces a **shambling mound** to protect it. Continued attacks of this magnitude on the thicket can produce an unlimited number of these creatures.

The thicket has an AC 10 and it takes 50 hit points of damage to clear a 5-foot cube of its mass. The thicket is vulnerable to fire damage, resistant to bludgeoning and piercing damage, immune to psychic damage, and regenerates 15 hit points at the beginning of each round. The thicket is 50 feet thick in most parts, but can be up to 100 feet thick depending on where you attack it, though it is impossible to tell how thick it will be at any given point along its span.

The portions of the thicket that surround impounded buildings is 10 feet thick, and share the same properties as the main body, except attacking one of these will not produce a shambling mound. It instead produces 2d6 **vine blights**.

### POISON MIST

Free-floating clouds of poisonous gas float throughout the city. Any creature entering or beginning its turn in one of these must make a successful DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned. It is easy enough to avoid these pockets, though adventurers may decide to experiment.

### VORGANSHARAX'S EDICT

The dragon is capable of projecting his voice throughout his lair, which encompasses everything inside the thicket.

From time to time Vorgansharax makes announcements to the general populace. He does this to remind the citizens of his presence and keep them in a constant state of terror and dread.

### ROLEPLAYING THE MAIMED VIRULENCE

Vorgansharax is used to getting his way. Even from a young age, he outstripped other dragons in terms of size and physical strength. As such, he has grown accustomed to using force as a means to exact his will, but that is not to say that he is not cunning. He is patient and understands that some problems require a more delicate touch.

He is tremendously smug, with an ego larger and deeper than the Moonsea, and his speech reflects this; each word drips with sarcasm, and contempt.

### THE TEARS OF VIRULENCE

Before the Maimed Virulence took Phlan, a number of Knights of the Black Fist were covertly enlisted to his cause and that of the Cult of the Dragon. Only the most morally and ethically corrupt members were so subverted and on the night of the dragon's attack, they strode into the night and committed the ultimate betrayal—striking down their brethren of the Black Fist; those that had been deemed unworthy of service.

The Tears of Virulence wear the armor of a Knight of the Black Fist, though it is splashed with bright green paint, the symbol of their betrayal to their kin and their home. They also wear masks of green cloth over their noses and mouths. While the masks create a rather imposing visage, it also protects them from the clouds of poisonous gas that float around the city. So long as they are worn, the Tears of Virulence are not affected by the clouds.

### OVERVIEW

Escape from Phlan is divided into three parts.

**Part 1: Ghosts in the Night.** The adventures are recruited by the leaders of the various factions to undertake a desperate mission to rescue three key citizens from the city. Though it would be nice to save all good peoples trapped by Vorgansharax and his servitors, these three in particular are the best hope for Phlan and must be preserved. The PCs enter the city under cover of night and encounter will-o'-wisps that lead them into an encounter with a shambling mound.

**Part 2: To the Rescue.** The adventurers can now set to their task of locating and rescuing Madame Freona, the Lord Sage, and Jhessail Greycastle—a Knight of the Black Fist-turned-revolutionary. It is up to the players to decide what order they do this in, though finding Madame Freona and the Lord Sage are easier to locate than Jhessail. During this part of the adventure, Ellison Berenger (DDEX1-6 *The Scroll Thief*), who has managed to become trapped in Phlan, shadows the adventurers looking for an opportunity to find escape from the city.

Particularly sharp-eyed characters may notice the Scroll Thief and enlist his aid.

**Part 3: Escape from Phlan.** Once the adventures have located and freed each of their targets, it is up to them to find a way out of the city. Jhessail knows a way, though it may take some diplomacy to convince her not to launch a full frontal assault on Vorgansharax and accompany the group. High level parties may be tempted to attack the dragon at this point, though such an undertaking is foolhardy at best. It is also unnecessary in order to achieve success.

## ADVENTURE HOOK

Many folk, the adventurers included, managed to escape Phlan prior to its final sublimation by Vorgansharax's thicket. Unfortunately, most residents of the town were not so lucky. In particular, three residents instrumental to the resistance against the dragon are still trapped within the city proper. For once the leaders of all five factions agree unanimously that they must be rescued from the inevitable wrath of their jailor. When play is ready to begin, read or paraphrase the following.

The light of the teleportation circle's runes fade as its power wanes. In their dying light, you reminisce on the events that have brought you here. The sacking of Phlan by the dragon Vorgansharax was a nightmarish experience; though it paled in comparison to watching the thicket begin to rise from the ground to envelop Phlan.

You remember horrified townsfolk, yourselves included, fleeing from the city, most barely making it out alive. You also remember the screams of those who unlucky enough to caught in the thicket itself and torn apart by the thorns. And the worst memory of all, the unwanted sight of their blood being drawn into its mass, absorbed as nutriment by the thicket wall.

But that is the past. Here you stand, in the city once more to rescue three prized individuals that weren't so lucky as to be able to escape, but whose value far exceeds the risk of reentering Phlan for what may very well be the last time.

The three individuals to be rescued are as follows.

**Madame Freona.** The halfling proprietor of Madame Freona's Tea Kettle has led the effort for rescuing and hiding individuals sought after by the Tears of Virulence and the dragon. Vorgansharax would dearly love the opportunity to make a morsel out of Madame Freona, but wants to destroy her place of business first.

**The Lord Sage.** There is simply too much knowledge in the Lord Sage to allow him to remain under the dragon's control. For the time being, Vorgansharax is content to have impounded Mantor's Library with the Lord Sage still trapped within. The dragon isn't entirely willing to simply eliminate him, as he, too, appreciates the sage's wealth of knowledge—provided the old half-elf learns his place.

**Jhessail Greycastle.** A former captain of the Black Fist, Jhessail led a rebellion against Vorgansharax early in the dragon's rein that may have been successful, were it not for the betrayal of her fellow officers. All of her former Black Fist have either been turned with promises of reward for service, or have been eaten by the new ruler of Phlan. Vorgansharax is taking great pleasure in having the former office slowly tortured, however.

## THE PLAN

It is up to the adventurers to find a way out once they have rescued these three key individuals. The city, as well as their base of operation within Denlor's Tower has been lost and the faction leadership that remains would like to leave their sole-remaining base within the bowels of Sokol Keep free from the dragon's attention.

In addition to the read-aloud text provided, there are notes regarding the individuals the adventurers are meant to rescue. While it may be possible for the adventurers to rescue others as well, it should be made clear to them that these three individuals are the priority. Additional DM Notes are included in regards to the motivations of key individuals throughout the adventure.

Though the mission goals are fairly straight forward, how they are to be achieved is left largely up to the characters. Once the information in the read-aloud text and the names of their targets has been revealed, give the players should be afforded the opportunity to introduce their respective characters and describe them to the rest of the group.

## THE REWARD

In exchange for the characters accepting the mission to re-enter Phlan, each character's faction leader has provided up-front compensation in the form of a Letter of Writ redeemable for 700 gp from the factions's leadership in the city of Mulmaster. In addition, they provide 100 gp in coin for each "key citizen" retrieved from the town.

Those characters that do not belong to a faction are instead provided a writ redeemable for a like amount of gold coin to be paid by a faction of the character's choosing and additional gold coins upon the safe return of the key citizens.

## GENERAL FEATURES

Now that the town has been completely taken over by the dragon Vorgansharax, these are the prevailing conditions throughout Phlan unless otherwise noted.

**The Streets.** Phlan has become a ghost town and those residents that were left behind remain indoors as much as possible. During the day there may be small groups moving quickly through the streets, attempting to reach whatever their destination might be in the quickest, quietest manner possible. Nobody ventures out at night however, except those members of the Tears of Virulence; former members of the Black Fist that have sworn loyalty to their purse and their own well-being, and to a lesser extent, the dragon.

**Light.** During the day, Phlan is shrouded in the shadow of the thicket and is dimly lit (lightly obscured). During the night, the streets are dimly lit by soft orange lamplight. Unless you are within 5 feet of a lamp however, the area is shrouded in complete darkness (heavily obscured). The darkness is emphasized by a light, acrid fog that hangs over the entire town like a clammy blanket.

**Sounds.** Distant, muted screams of pain and fear. The sound of running, heavily booted footsteps. Leathery wings flying overhead. Otherwise, the town is deathly quiet.

**Smells.** Chlorine. Rotting vegetation (like fetid lawn clippings). Fresh rain.

**Inns & Taverns.** The Laughing Goblin (inn), The Cracked Crown (inn), Nat Wyler's Bell (tavern), The Bitter Blade (inn)\*, The Velvet Doublet (fest hall)\*, Madame Freona's Tea Kettle (tavern)\*.

**Trade.** Cockburn's Grocery (adventuring gear)\*, Matteo the Weaponsmith\*, Ernst's Livery.

**Market.** Podol Plaza (bazaar)

\*These locations have been enveloped by the thicket and inaccessible. Additionally, all trade—including room and board at inns—has doubled in price, due largely in part to taxes imposed by the Tears of Virulence on the dragon's behalf. Since this adventure is meant to be a surgical strike that occurs over the course of a single evening, this shouldn't play a large role in their success or failure.

### COMMERCIAL REBELS

The remaining business owners of Phlan have covertly united against Vorgansharax—each working against the dragon in whatever way that can that also avoids drawing his direct attention. Below is a listing of the remaining business owners with some basic information for roleplay purposes. Each of them has access to the tunnels beneath the city.

**The Laughing Goblin (Inn).** Near the docks, the proprietor of this inn is a dwarf named Durnam Goblinkicker. In the past, Durnam has been frequently absent from his business, leaving the day-to-day operations to Imizael (a human woman). However, with Imizael's departure from Phlan, he has been forced to maintain the business on his own, and is surly about the entire affair. Durnam would love to see the dragon get his comeuppance, though he doesn't have the wherewithal to strike out directly. He is very helpful for quite operations however. Tunnel Access - Hollowed out keg, leading to a hole in the floor of the inn.

**The Cracked Crown (Inn).** Located in Podol Plaza, the proprietor of this inn is a female gnome tinker named Ellywick Dongolin. Ellywick inherited her business from her father, and is hopping mad at the drop in business that the dragon's presence has caused. She is however, a maudlin tinker and is directly responsible for the creation of the tunnel sleds (see Part 2), and a fantastic brewer and baker. She has a fierce maternal streak, like a miniature grizzly bear mother. Tunnel Access - Back floor of a utility closet that is marked for staff only. The trapdoor is hidden beneath a rug and piles of cleaning implements.

**Nat Wyler's Bell (Tavern).** Mid-city, north of the temple district, Grig Wyler, a human man is the quiet, thoughtful proprietor. Though not officially a priest of the city, Grig has been known to engage in lively debate with the clergy, and is considered an accomplished student of theology. When it comes to worship, Grig is pantheistic, and been known to pray at any good-aligned temple. A secret door in his root cellar conceals an entrance to a complex network of tunnels beneath the city. The door is behind a swinging book shelf.

**Ernst's Livery and Stable.** This livery and stable is maintained by Tross, an older half-orc who cares very deeply for animals. Tross has the most direct contact with the Tears of Virulence, for whom he assists with maintaining their mounts and associated gear. Thought to be brutish and dumb, it isn't uncommon for the Tears of Virulence to speak openly in front of Tross, who plays this up. He is a good resource for information in the city, and he especially hates key members of the dreaded constabulary for their ill treatment of animals. Tunnel Access - Beneath a massive pile of hay in the last stall, which houses Tross' own steed, a fiery warhorse named Daisy-Bell.



# PART 1: GHOSTS IN THE NIGHT

The adventure begins in the basement of an unmarked Welcomer safehouse in the northwest corner of the city.

## TO CRY WOLF

After the players have had an opportunity to introduce their characters, read or paraphrase the following.

The light and disorientation of the teleportation clears and you find yourself standing in a dark room with no windows and only one door. The fading light from the activated teleportation circle on the floor is muted by a heavy layer of dust and cobwebs. The room is otherwise empty.

There isn't much for the adventurers to do here except leave the room. The door leads into an adjacent cellar, and when closed melds extremely well with the wall. The cellar is filled with all shape and size of box and crate, all filled with straw, and here largely for show. In addition to the dust, the smell of cold, burnt timbers is pervasive here, and some of the boxes show some small signs of blackening.

There is a staircase that leads up into the darkness of a burnt down house on an empty alleyway. As the characters exit the cellar into the street, there are a number of things that are readily discernible.

- It is dark. In the distance they can see the amber glow of a streetlamp, but even that seems muted with the light fog that blankets the town.
- Sickly green, vaporous clouds drift along the streets. A character succeeding at a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check notices that the fog discolors anything it touches.
- The air is warm for this time of night, and smells of fetid lawn clippings—likely due to the presence of the thicket.
- It is dead quiet here. The kind of quiet that is so pervasive that it can actually be heard, like a buzzing in your ears.

Give the adventurers an opportunity to get moving in a direction of their choice before you provide them with the below boxed text. Likely destinations include Madame Freona's Tea Kettle (1. Madame Freona) or Mantor's Library (2. The Lord Sage). If the players seem a little lost, it is okay to remind them that these are locations

where they will most likely find one or more of their intended targets.

As you move out into the street, you hear a cry for help ring out in the distance. It is faint, but is nearly deafening due to the near complete absence of ambient noise. Bobbing torch lights appear at the far end of the street, rapidly moving away, with the sounds of alarm echoing down the empty street behind them.

The bobbing lights are will-o'-wisps; newly accepted denizens of Phlan since Vorgansharax's newly established administration. These pesky critters have observed the presence of the adventurers and intend to lead them into a trap so they might feed upon their life essence. 6 will-o'-wisps bob in and out of sight about 3 to 4 feet off of the ground, making noises of children in distress to get the adventurers to give chase. Due to the light fog, however, it is not possible for the characters to see the true nature of the lights.

Assuming the adventurers give chase, the will-o'-wisps lead them toward the thicket. At this point the creatures enter the thicket and make sounds as though they are children trapped within. As the adventurer's approach the thicket, the will-o'-wisps attack it in unison with their *shock*, dealing 54 points of damage to the thicket and then turn invisible. The damage causes a **shambling mound** to emerge which, unable to see the now-invisible will-o'-wisps, engages the adventurers. Four of the will-o'-wisps panic and flee at this point while two **will-o'-wisps** remain behind. The remaining will-o'-wisps move behind the party, and enter combat by focusing their attacks on any characters that demonstrate spellcasting ability.

### ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

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

- **Very weak or weak party:** Remove the two will-o'-wisps
- **Strong party:** Add the other four will-o'-wisps
- **Very strong party:** Add a second shambling mound and a third will-o'-wisp

### DEVELOPMENTS

This is a good opportunity to introduce the adventurers to the thicket. You want to emphasize how it is charred by some kind of electrical attack, and then describe how it rapidly grows back over a few combat rounds.

Adventurers foolish enough to attack the thicket see immediate results as described in the Thicket Properties sidebar, above.

About 3 to 4 rounds after combat has begun, the voice of Vorgansharax can be heard booming across the city. He speaks out in a calm, smug, and officious manner.

"Someone is playing in the thicket. How delightful. The Tears of Virulence will be along to collect your remains shortly. I would tell you not to go anywhere, but the shambling mound has likely killed you already. That will be all."

This is the adventurer's cue to wrap things up as quickly as possible. Though since Vorgansharax doesn't believe that anyone remaining in the city is capable of defeating a shambling mound, it is at least 10 minutes before the Tears of Virulence arrive on the scene.

Assuming combat is resolved before this, the adventurers are free to proceed to their chosen destination. Taking a short rest here could be problematic however. A typical Tears of Virulence patrol consists of two **veterans**, a **knight**, and two **thugs**.

#### TREASURE

Any character searching the remains of the shambling mound finds a single, large emerald worth 200 gp.

## PART 2: TO THE RESCUE

This next section of the adventure can be run in whatever order the adventurers decide. There are three individuals to rescue and while there are two likely locations known, it doesn't take a particularly skilled investigator to figure out where Jhessail is, or to confirm the location of the other two. Each time Vorgansharax strikes out against rebellious individuals he makes an announcement to the general populace. The dragon's incredible ego forbids him from keeping mum about his triumphs.

### THE SCROLL THIEF

While traversing the city, unbeknownst to them, the adventurers have picked up a shadow. **Ellison Berenger** (DDEX1-6 *The Scroll Thief*) managed to become trapped in Phlan when the thicket went up. At some point during this section of the adventure (DM's discretion) he notices the adventurers traipsing about the town. Realizing that they're on a mission (and potentially recognizing one or more of them) he decides to follow the adventurers, hoping that they'll inadvertently show him the way out.

At the end of each rescue, have the adventurers make an opposed Wisdom (Perception) check against Ellison's Dexterity (Stealth) check. If they succeed, let them know that they have picked up a shadow, and see how things play out from there. Ellison's information is provided with the other stats at the end of the adventure.

If asked what he is up to, Ellison is genuinely forthcoming; he has no reason to lie about wanting to leave the city. It is even possible to persuade Ellison to accompany them and help out in exchange for passage from the city. This requires a successful DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check. Any character that has the story award "Favor of Ellison Berenger" makes this check with advantage. Any attempts to Intimidate Ellison automatically fail.

If Ellison accompanies the adventurers, he is happy to assist in any way that doesn't put him directly in harm's way. He may involve himself in combat, but only from a range and only if doing so does not expose himself to danger. Ellison does his best to maintain a safe distance from the front line of any conflict.

Ellison has a modicum of arcane spellcasting ability. His statistics are identical to that of a **bandit captain**, with the following modification:

**Spellcasting.** Ellison is a 4th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 12, +5 to hit with its spell attacks). Ellison has the following spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *fire bolt, light, true strike, shocking grasp*  
1st level (3 slots): *chromatic orb, disguise self, expeditious retreat, shield*  
2nd level (2 slots): *mirror image, invisibility*

#### ROLEPLAYING ELLISON BERENGER

Ellison Berenger is intelligent and arrogant—an annoying and dangerous combination. But despite the fact that he has (now severed) ties to the Cult of the Dragon, he isn't a bad guy. His primary motivations are wealth combined with a strong sense of self preservation.

He has a casual grace that is easy to relate to and, were it not for his reputation, he's easy to grow enamored with. He has a skewed sense of honor and an inconveniently long memory. Those to whom he indebted may find a lasting ally, but those that cross him had best keep a wary eye on the shadows.

### I. MADAME FREONA'S TEA KETTLE

Madame Freona has quite literally been put out. Once the characters investigate her place of business, they find that it has been enveloped by the thicket. Madame Freona's daughters managed to escape Phlan before it was completely enclosed, but Madame Freona outright refused to go. For reference purposes, Madame Freona's Tea Kettle is located northeast of Scholar Square—near the bazaar in Podol Plaza.

As it turns out, she happened to be shopping, purchasing supplies and stock for the Tea Kettle as it were when the thicket burst forth from the ground and took Phlan. She could do nothing but watch in horror as the thicket rose to enclose the town. When the adventurers arrive at the tea house, read or paraphrase the following read-aloud text.

As you approach Madame Freona's Tea Kettle, you see that it has been completely subsumed by the thicket, which has risen up to encapsulate the entire structure. You can see the glow of a large fire reflected on the buildings opposite the establishment, and the acrid smell of smoke fills your nose.

Luckily, Madame Freona was outside her place of business when the thicket rose up to enclose the building. When she returned, she was completely aghast at the sight. She truly believed that her ability to hide key personages from Vorgansharax had gone largely unnoticed, but as it turns out the dragon has many eyes and ears throughout the city.

In a fit of anger, the halfling proprietor stalked off to collect on a favor, which involved supplying her with a rather large barrel of lamp oil. In the dark of night, Madame Freona sneakily rolled the barrel down the street, and then doused the thicket with its contents. She has managed to set the thicket on fire, and is working hard to keep the flames going with additional oil from the bottom of the barrel and what looks like the remnants of a door that she hammered out of the frame of a nearby building.

It should come as no surprise to the adventurers that Vorgansharax is aware of this attack upon the thicket, and has dispatched a Tears of Virulence patrol to this location to investigate. The wily dragon suspects that Madame Freona is involved, but is just as happy to arrest and make a meal of any other "residents" foolish enough to start a fire. In fact, he is rather looking forward to it.

The adventurers have a couple of options. If they have put two and two together, and are concerned about the Tears of Virulence arriving, they are likely to attempt to convince Madame Freona to abandon the Tea Kettle and accompany them. This requires a successful DC 20 Charisma (Persuasion) check, as Madame Freona's rage against the dragon is substantial. Any adventurer who has participated in **all five** missions of DDEX1-1 *Defiance in Phlan* has advantage on this check.

On the other hand, adventurers are frequently foolish, and seeing the halfling's efforts failing (you can literally watch as burning thicket is replaced with fresh foliage), they might try and help her. Either way, one round prior to the Tears of Virulence's arrival, Vorgansharax makes the following announcement.

"Fire has been expressly forbidden. If you're so eager to burn however, I will be happy to accommodate you. The Tears of Virulence are coming to deliver an invitation to dinner this evening. They will accept NO refusals."

At that point, the Tears of Virulence arrive. Their group includes two **veterans** and two **thugs** led by a **knight**. Any character who participated in the events of DDEX1-5 *The Courting of Fire* recognizes the knight as Lieutenant Cron Bolver—a former Knight of the Black Fist who is apparently doing quite well for himself in the service of Vorgansharax.

The Tears of Virulence attack anyone they find on the scene. They work together as a coordinated team to get their job done. The Veterans move to the front to attack the party, with the Knight following them up using its Leadership ability to good effect. The Tears of Virulence

thugs aren't evident at first, preferring to strike at the party from hiding at hiding and only then once the characters have engaged the other Tears in melee. They begin the combat hidden on nearby rooftops, firing their heavy crossbows with advantage at targets engaged with their allies. As a rule they tend to focus on other enemies using ranged attacks while their compatriots keep the others busy.

As the adventurers are fighting the Tears of Virulence, the thicket around the Tea Kettle is reacting to Madame Freona's attack. Two **vine blights** emerge from the thicket at the beginning of the third round of combat to engage the adventurers as well.

#### ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

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

- **Very weak or weak party:** Remove the two thugs
- **Strong party:** Add a third veteran
- **Very strong party:** Add a third veteran and a second knight

#### DEVELOPMENTS

Assuming the adventurers defeat the Tears of Virulence thugs, the attack is enough to convince Madame Freona to move on. She prefers to stay with the adventurers while out in the open at any rate.

Defeat is a one way ticket to getting captured. Any of the adventurers who are reduced to 0 hit points are instead knocked unconscious and turned over to Xynicynt, the dragon's blue slaad jailor. See *In the Jailhouse Now!*, below. They will be present in the final encounter, albeit a little worse for wear.

If Knight Lieutenant Bolver is taken captive, he pleads with the characters for mercy. According to him, he is a victim of circumstance; forced into the service of the dragon. Any character succeeding at a DC 10 Wisdom (Insight) check can see that he's lying, and badly at that. If confronted about his falsehood, he clams up and issues only scowls and an occasional mouthful of bloody spittle in response to questions—Bolver fears the great dragon too much to betray it.

#### ROLEPLAYING MADAME FREONA

Madame Freona is an officious halfling woman with a keen taste for the finer things in life. She is a renowned cook, a terrible gossip hound, and a terrifyingly skilled entrepreneur. Without the help of her five daughters, she has been struggling to keep the Tea Kettle open, and it has taken its toll on her. Her once highly polished appearance is shabby and tired, and she is more like to snap a barbed insult at a customer as she is to offer a kind word. Despite all of this, she loves Phlan and its people, and there is nothing she hates more in the world than Vorgansharax.

### ROLEPLAYING KNIGHT LIEUTENANT BOLVER

Lieutenant Bolver wields a lot of power in this back water town, and anyone who knows what's good for them respects that. He's got a sharp wit and a sharper tongue.

He has come to enjoy his position in Phlan, and is fiercely devoted to the current ruler of Phlan--whoever that might be. It just so happens that it is currently an adult green dragon.

### TREASURE

Knight Lieutenant Bolver carries a pouch containing 150 gp. Each veteran carries 100 gp worth of coins. The thugs each carry 25 gp in assorted coins and gems. Additionally, Madame Freona gives the characters a total of 100 gp for convincing her to leave her establishment.

### XP AWARD

If the adventurers prevent Madame Freona from being captured by the Tears of Virulence, award each player 100 XP.

## 2. MANTOR'S LIBRARY

Early on in his administration, Vorgansharax had the Lord Sage unceremoniously deposited in Mantor's Library by a contingent of newly converted Tears of Virulence. He then enveloped the entire building within the thicket, functionally imprisoning the potentially troublesome know-it-all.

Some players may head straight to Denlor's Tower as that is likely the last place they encountered the Lord Sage. Upon arriving at the tower, however, they find it wholly abandoned.

If the adventurers go to Mantor's Library, they discover the state of the building, and if they so choose, they could waste some time attacking the thicket and fighting vine blights as described in the Thicket Properties sidebar. For all they know however, the Lord Sage may not even be in the library. At this point, it is up to the adventurers to do some investigatory work.

This shouldn't be incredibly difficult. As Vorgansharax is psychologically incapable of not informing the remaining residents of his accomplishments, everyone in town knows where the Lord Sage is imprisoned. If either Madame Freona or Jhessail have already been located, they can tell the adventurers as such. However, only a handful of folks in the city know a possible way to get into the library, though none have been foolhardy enough to try.

Visiting any of these remaining businesses (The Laughing Goblin (inn), The Cracked Crown (inn), Nat Wyler's Bell (tavern), The Bitter Blade (inn), or Ernst's Livery) net the adventurers the information that they need. If they are accompanied by Madame Freona, then

all paths are open to them. Each of the proprietors of these establishments, along with Madame Freona, belongs to a newly formed liberation network.

If the adventurers are not accompanied by Madame Freona, it will take some persuasion on their part to convince whomever they're speaking to that they're not associated with the dragon, and that their intentions are good. A successful DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check is required. If the adventurers are not accompanied by Madame Freona and if they are accompanied by Jhessail Greycastle, they have disadvantage on the check.

Money and lies do not help with this crowd, and they're past the point of being intimidated. They're terrified of Vorgansharax, so a few roguish adventurers do not impress them. Assuming success, the adventurers can discover the following.

- A small group of business owners have been laying low and maintaining the appearance of compliance with the dragon's wishes.
- These business owners have formed a small cabal of liberators. They hide folks running from the Tears of Virulence, and pass along information to one another as needed.
- They have discovered a series of old tunnels underneath the city, and have been using these to pass rebels and information along to one another.
- It just so happens that there is a way into these tunnels from a back room or closet, located inside each of these businesses.
- The tunnels go all over the city, but the only ones they've been using are those that connect their respective businesses.
- A few that have traveled through unfamiliar tunnels have gone missing.
- They suspect that these were part of an older, more established Phlan that had some kind of working sewer system beneath the city.
- They know that there are tunnels headed in the general direction of Mantor's Library, but haven't had the opportunity or wherewithal to explore them further.
- The tunnels are small, three feet in diameter; though they have a number of small rolling sleds they've been using to slide themselves through the tunnels.



Assuming the adventures take this route, whichever proprietor they're speaking with is able to dredge up enough of the sleds for each of them to use in traversing the tunnels plus an extra one for the Lord Sage, should they succeed. They also provide the adventurers with directions or a rough sketch (assuming someone has ink, quill, and paper) for the tunnels they believe head toward the library. They do not however, under any circumstances, lead them down there. For that matter, neither do Madame Freona or Jhessail. They are content to wait it out at whatever establishment the adventurers use to access the tunnels. Once the adventurers have set off into the tunnels in search of passage to Mantor's Library, read or paraphrase the following read-aloud text.

Traversing the tunnels atop the rolling sleds is a fairly easy affair, as the earthen floor is packed to a smooth, stone-like consistency. The earthy-smelling tunnels are cool and dry and surprisingly clear of clutter or obstacles. The close confines force you to travel single file, and though occasionally the tunnel opens up into a wider junction, the tunnel never gets any taller. Following the directions isn't terribly difficult. It isn't long before you arrive at the unexplored section of tunnels, leading in the direction of the library. It's obvious that nobody has been down this way, as the tunnel is filled with cobwebs.

Other than being annoying and creepy to those with arachnophobia proclivities, there is nothing unusual or dangerous about the cobwebs. As the adventurers traverse this tunnel they might see a tiny spider here or there, but they are ordinary non-hostile spiders, fleeing in the wake of the rolling sleds which make quite a bit of noise as they trundle along.

It isn't long before the adventures come upon another intersection. This one has three other exits and is roughly 30 feet square and 3 feet high. There is a small jagged hole in the ceiling here that someone above has been using as a depository for their refuse. A horrid stench comes from the five-foot pile of moldering food stuffs and trash in the center of this chamber.

Unfortunately, this has attracted three **carrion crawlers** who have taken up residence here. These creatures attack the adventurers opportunistically. Unless they are small size, the adventures are forced to fight from prone.

### GENERAL FEATURES

**Light.** While in the tunnels or the library everything outside the area of the light the adventurers brought with them is heavily obscured.

### ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

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

- **Very weak or weak party:** Remove one carrion crawler
- **Strong party:** Add a fourth carrion crawler
- **Very strong party:** Remove one carrion crawler and add a black pudding

### DEVELOPMENTS

Assuming the adventurers defeat the carrion crawlers, it is a simple matter for them to determine which passage leads toward the library (straight across from the way they were already going).

The adventurers know they've reached the library when the passage comes to a dead end with an iron-wrought trapdoor clearly visible in the ceiling of the passage. The trapdoor has a lock built in, though it is old and rusted, likely from moisture above. A successful DC 20 Dexterity check with use of thieves' tools or a DC 20 Strength check is sufficient to get the door open. The door opens up in the back of a storage closet that has seen little use, within the library.

As the Lord Sage is the only one currently in residence, how difficult it is for the adventurers to find him depends largely on their approach. If they're capable of being stealthy, it takes them about 20 minutes before they locate him. He has a small lamp on in one corner of the library where he is passing the time reading.

On the other hand, if the adventurers are unsuccessful at being stealthy, or make no attempt, the Lord Sage panics, believing that the Tears of Virulence have come to take him to Vorgansharax. In this case, he douses his lamp and finds a relatively secure hiding place.

In this case, it takes the adventurers at least an hour to locate him. For each hour of searching they can make an Intelligence (Investigation) check; success is DC 20. Assuming they're all working together, this should be a single check made by the character with the best bonus, and made at advantage. If the characters do not identify themselves or their motives, the Lord Sage presumes that they are Tears of Virulence and lobs a book at one of the more imposing characters (+3 to hit, 1 damage).

It doesn't take the Lord Sage long to realize that the characters are not the Tears of Virulence, however. Assuming they can be marginally persuasive with regards to leaving the safety of the library in pursuit of a risk-laden trek for freedom, requiring a successful DC 10 Charisma (Deception, Intimidation, or Persuasion) check, the Lord Sage happily accompanies the adventurers.

### ROLEPLAYING THE LORD SAGE OF PHLAN

The Lord Sage is quite old but, thanks to his half-elven blood, still retains a bit of youthful vigor. Nevertheless, he is a taciturn and reserved man; slow to display his emotions. Any other man in his position would have cracked long ago, but the Lord Sage remains placid and stoic in his imprisonment. If anything, he's decided to take advantage of the idle time to catch up on some reading.

### XP AWARD

If the adventurers rescue the Lord Sage from the Thicket, award each player 100 XP.

## IN THE JAILHOUSE NOW

Jhessail Greycastle, former captain of the Black Fist is thought to be held in the prison within the Stojanow Gate. The day Vorgansharax's thugs managed to subdue such an accomplished warrior is remembered throughout the city. There was an elaborate series of betrayals that took place on that day, one of which resulted in Jhessail being knocked unconscious and taken into custody.

Vorgansharax was so proud of this accomplishment, he spent the entire next day making announcements and explaining the ruse to everyone in the city, intermingled with an extremely liberal dose of self-praise, and mocking his victims one by one until he reached the subject of Jhessail. Not only did he announce her capture, but he proudly let everyone know where she was being kept. Only a few have managed to work up the courage to attempt a rescue, and none of these have ever returned to tell the tale of their ultimate failure.

The entire thing is a ruse of course, meant to remove the last remaining vestiges of heroism from the city. If the adventurers ask folks what they know about Jhessail's location, anyone can tell them that she is being kept in the Stojanow Gate. They can even give the adventurers directions, but these are always accompanied by a stern warning, "*No one that has ever gone looking for Jhessail has ever returned!*"

### 1. SHEDDING TEARS

While the adventurers might be expecting to have to fight their way through a legion of Tears of Virulence veterans in order to get through to Jhessail Greycastle, nothing could be further from the truth. The Tears of Virulence aren't actually using this office as a base of operations. They are however, keeping tabs on the office from a distance, as they're using it to trap anyone who fancies themselves a hero. Feel free to lead the adventurers to believe that it appears well used, causing them to take all precautions or not, as the case may be.

Breaking into the office requires either a successful DC 10 check by someone with thieves' tools or a successful

DC 15 Strength check to break in the door. If a crowbar is used for this, grant advantage on the check per the *Player's Handbook*.

Once inside, the office looks like a normal, working office, with one exception. There are no members of the Tears of Virulence present. If the adventures sift through the papers on the duty officer's desk, they'll find paperwork indicating that Jhessail has been relocated to a newly developed cell block, beneath the station. It also indicates that she is to be thoroughly interrogated.

With guidance from Vorgansharax, our not-so-friendly local constabulary has created a trapdoor that is not-so-cleverly hidden (on purpose) beneath the duty officer's desk. Once this is located, requiring a successful DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check, there is a pad lock that must be either picked or broken. A successful DC 10 Dexterity check by someone with thieves' tools or a successful DC 15 Strength check using a crowbar or weapon, removes this obstacle. If using a crowbar, grant the adventurer in question advantage on the check, per the *Player's Handbook*.

Once open, the trapdoor opens to reveal a set of iron rungs that lead down 30 feet into the earth to a wide earthen passageway.

### 2. THE GREEN MILE

The passageway beneath the gate leads in one direction, toward Valjevo Castle. It is 10 feet wide by 10 feet high, and leads underneath the city to a massive enclosed pit beneath the castle. Sturdy wood supports are built into the passage at regular 20-foot intervals throughout its length, which is approximately a half mile.

About 1/3 of the way along the tunnel, a glyph of warding is set into the wood support set into the wall.

As the adventurers are walking down the passage, if they are using any kind of light source, a passive perception of 16 or higher allows the character in question to notice an odd discoloration in the stone of this passageway. It appears noticeably darker. This is the only clue to the adventurers that something is amiss.

Stonecunning reveals that, other than the discoloration, there is no difference in the stone from the rest of the passage. The discoloration is due to the use of a **glyph of warding** that triggers a *cloudkill* spell in this area.

## GLYPH OF WARDING

Simply passing this *glyph of warding* without speaking the pass phrase [Vorgansharax is my lord and master], is enough to trigger this trap. A successful DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check is required to notice the glyph prior to setting it off. If noticed prior to setting off the trap, a successful DC 16 Dexterity check with a set of thieves' tools is required to disable the trap.

If the trap is triggered, a *cloudkill* spell is cast, filling the passage 20 feet to either side of the wood support where the trap is set. Those caught in the area must succeed at a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or take 23 (5d8) poison damage; or half as much on a successful save.

The fog moves 10 feet toward the passage toward Valjevo Castle each round until it is dispelled or the duration ends 10 minutes later (1,000 feet later). Adventurers can attempt to get in front of this, but there won't be much time for resting while in the path of the moving spell.

After this trap has been bypassed one way or the other, the adventures can proceed without threat to the end of the passage. This isn't to say however that they won't feel compelled to look for traps as they go.

## 3. PIT FIGHTING FOR DUMMIES

As the adventurers reach the end of the passageway they note some lights up ahead. Read or paraphrase the following read-aloud text.

The passage opens up into what feels like a much larger space toward the end. A soupy mist fills the area ahead of you, making it impossible to see the entire space. The mist has an acrid smell, like burnt tar, becoming much stronger the closer you get.

The mist is not a magical effect. There are actually a number of iron canisters with burning tar in the chamber above the pit. This is done by Vorgansharax for dramatic effect, as the dragon loves a good show.

Once the adventurers have entered the arena pit, a steel gate drops down, sealing off the passageway they just came from, and the mist begins to clear. The voice of the dragon can be heard echoing throughout the chamber.

"What have we here? Heroes?! Excellent, we have need of such entertainment as you bring."

The mist begins to clear, affording you a better view of the chamber you're in, a large pit. The sides rise 20 feet to a steel lattice that allows you to see the chamber above, but that keeps you enclosed. Hanging on one wall of the pit from chains, is an unconscious woman dressed in a shredded uniform of the Black Fist.

In the pit with you, is a large blue, toad-like humanoid with wicked hooks protruding from its clenched fists. The creature is about the size of a large ogre, and is flanked on either side by an armed member of the Black Fist, each of which has a green cloth tied over its face, covering the nose and mouth.

"Allow me to introduce Xynicyunct, the jailor. If you can defeat him, and no one has, I'll allow you to leave."

An image of Vorgansharax (his head anyway) appears above the pit, along with a contingent of Tears of Virulence guards. They are all clearly an illusion, only appearing to view the fight set before them. The Tears of Virulence are leering and placing bets.

At this point the fight begins. The adventurers find themselves in a cage match with a **blue slaad** and two **veterans**. Additionally, a gout of poison gas spews from the wall or floor of the pit every other round, randomly affecting one of the characters, having the same effect as the poison mist described at the beginning of the adventure.

The floor of the 60-foot by 70-foot room has 5-foot-wide grates set equidistantly in the floors.

## POISON MIST

At the beginning of each round, roll 1d6. On a result of a 5 or 6, a 10-foot-radius sphere of poisonous gas seeps from the grates. At the end of each round, each cloud moves 10 feet in a random direction. Each cloud lasts for 3 rounds before dispersing. Any creature entering a cloud or starting its turn within one must make a successful DC 15 Constitution saving throw or take 4 (1d8) poison damage and be poisoned.

## ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

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

- **Very weak or weak party:** Remove the two veterans
- **Strong party:** Add one blue slaad
- **Very strong party:** Add one blue slaad and two veterans

## DEVELOPMENTS

Assuming the adventurers manage to defeat Xynicyunct and his lackeys, it should be very little trouble for them to free Jhessail. There are three options for doing so. They can pick the locks on her shackles, requiring they succeed at a DC 20 Dexterity check using thieves' tools; they can use force to free her (AC 17; 30 hit points per shackle, of which there are four); or if for whatever reason they decide to cut the slaad open they find the keys which he keeps hidden in a fleshy pouch at the back of this throat.

Jhessail is unconscious when freed by the characters and remains so unless healed. Once she is conscious, her first priority is to attempt to mete out her vengeance against Vorgansharax. **This is very likely a suicide mission, and she knows it.** At this stage, assuming that Jhessail is conscious, to save her life, the characters need to talk her out of attacking the dragon. Doing so requires a successful DC 20 Charisma (Deception, Intimidation, or Persuasion) check. If Jhessail has less than 10 hit points left this check is made with advantage. If the character attempting the check has the story award "Enmity of the Black Fist" from DDEX1-2 *Secrets of Sokol Keep*, the check is made with disadvantage.

The characters's level of success in this regard results in one of the following:

- **Unsuccessful.** The characters can either choose to accompany her or leave her to her fate. If they choose the latter, she shoots them a contemptuous glare and reveals the way out of Phlan (see Escape!, below). Once she has done this, she asks if any among the group is willing to die for the town. She dismisses those who are not as cowards and runs off towards Valjevo Keep to her death (see Part 3, below).
- **Successful.** Jhessail composes herself and reveals that she knows a way out of the city (see Escape!, below).

If Ellison is still with the group at this point, he adamantly refuses to accompany Jhessail to Valjevo Keep and vocally warns the characters to do likewise. If the characters are intent on accompanying Jhessail, Ellison bids them farewell and disappears into the night.

#### ROLEPLAYING JHESSAIL GREYCASTLE

Bullheaded and headstrong, Jhessail was a successful, high-ranking Knight of the Black Fist before Vorgansharax's arrival. She exemplified the corruption and cruelty that was synonymous with organization and prospered. But despite all of that, she was loyal to her city and the Lord Regent—a fatal flaw.

Her entire world came crashing around her when the dragon attacked. And when she was beset upon by her traitorous brothers and sisters in arms, it was the last straw.

Jhessail is terse in word and tone and would much sooner drive a sword through a problem than ask it to step aside. She has little time for pleasantries and makes no effort to deny it.

#### ESCAPE!

In her campaign against the dragon, Jhessail has discovered a way out of Phlan. She tells the characters about a tunnel that leads to the catacombs beneath Valhingen Graveyard. Characters that participated in the events of DDEX1-4 *Dues for the Dead* recognize it as the tunnel that was being excavated by the Red Wizard Rorreth and his undead minions. If the characters are successful in sating her rage, Jhessail leads the entire group out of the city. Otherwise, she gives a brief set of directions before departing. The instructions are specific enough that the characters have no problem in following them.

#### TREASURE

In addition to the key, the slaad also carries a single, flawless emerald worth 200 gp.

#### XP AWARD

If the adventurers convince Jhessail to postpone her assault, award each player 100 XP.

# PART 3: HOLDING COURT

This encounter is optional and only used if the characters pursue what is very likely a suicide mission against impossible odds. This isn't meant to be a fair fight at any level. However, if the players insist on pursuing this course of action, don't hold back. There is nothing to be gained at this time by attacking the dragon. However, if they insist, then allow the adventurers to have at it. If he is still with the party, Ellison refuses to go and cautions any characters that will listen to his warnings against it. A map is provided of what remains of the throne room of Valjevo Castle, which lay largely in ruins.

## THE CINNABAR THRONE

The Maimed Virulence is encountered in the inner-most sanctum of his new lair—the Hall of the Cinnabar Throne.

### GENERAL FEATURES

The Hall of the Cinnabar Throne has the following general features.

**Light.** The Hall is well-lit with dozens of torches.

**Sounds.** Distant, muted screams of pain and fear. The deep, resonant breathing of a great dragon. Cheers.

**Smells.** Chlorine. Rot.

Upon entering Valjevo Keep, read:

The massive throne room of Valjevo Keep is still impressive despite the sheer magnitude of damage wrought upon it by the great dragon.

Immense, graven pillars depicting valorous deeds by the throne's previous occupants line the walls and tattered tapestries emblazoned with the emblems of the House of Daoran hang from the cracked walls. Atop a plinth, the Cinnabar Throne remains largely intact.

Coiled around the throne and occupying much of the space behind it is the immense form of Vorgansharax, the Maimed Virulence and conqueror of Phlan.

The immense green dragon, **Vorgansharax**, is attended by a dozen Tears of Virulence guards (eight **veterans**, two **knights**, and two **cult fanatics**) at all times, as well as a **mage**—a Thayan Red Wizard Ambassador. The veterans begin the encounter in the two secret rooms flanking the throne. They emerge at the end of the first round.

The Maimed Virulence and his retinue of guards provide no mercy and kill any characters that fall before them. Those that die are consumed by the great dragon. They do not, however, give chase to those that flee. Provided they make it out of the keep alive, they are able to reunite with the rescued persons who have located a way out of Phlan by the time they arrive (see *Escape!* in Part 2, above).

### VORGANSHARAX'S LAIR ACTIONS

On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), the dragon takes a lair action to cause one of the following effects; the dragon can't use the same effect two rounds in a row.

- Grasping roots and vines erupt in a 20-foot radius centered on a point on the ground that the dragon can see within 120 feet of it. That area becomes difficult terrain, and each creature there must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be restrained by the roots and vines. A creature can be freed if it or another creature takes an action to make a DC 15 Strength check and succeeds. The roots and vines wilt away when the dragon uses this lair action again or when the dragon uses this lair action again or when the dragon dies.
- A wall of tangled brush bristling with thorns springs into existence on a solid surface within 120 feet of the dragon. The wall is up to 60 feet long, 10 feet high, and 5 feet thick, and it blocks line of sight. When the wall appears, each creature in its area must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw. A creature that fails the save takes 18 (4d8) piercing damage and is pushed 5 feet out of the wall's space, appearing on whichever side of the wall it wants. A creature can move through the wall, albeit slowly and painfully. For every 1 foot a creature travels through the wall, it must spend 4 feet of movement. Furthermore, a creature in the wall's space must make DC 15 Dexterity saving throw once each round it's in contact with the wall, taking 18 (4d8) piercing damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. Each 10-foot section of wall has AC 5, 15 hit points, vulnerability to fire damage, resistance to bludgeoning and piercing damage, and immunity to psychic damage. The wall sinks back into the ground when the dragon uses this lair action again or when the dragon dies.
- Magical fog billows around one creature the dragon can see within 120 feet of it. The creature must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or be charmed by the dragon until initiative count 20 on the next round.



## REWARDS

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

## EXPERIENCE

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

### COMBAT AWARDS

Name of Foe	XP per Foe
Will-o-wisp	450
Shambling mound	1,800
Thug	450
Veteran	700
Knight	700
Carrion crawler	450
Ellison Berenger	XXX
Blue slaad	2,900
Mage	2,300
Vorgansharax	13,000

### NON-COMBAT AWARDS

Task or Accomplishment	XP per Character
Rescue Madame Freona	100
Rescue the Lord Sage	100
Rescue Jhessail	100

The **minimum** total award for each character participating in this adventure is **3,000 experience** points.

The **maximum** total award for each character participating in this adventure is **5,000 experience** points.

## TREASURE

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

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

**Permanent magic items** are divided according to a

system. See the sidebar if the adventure awards permanent magic items.

### TREASURE AWARDS

Item Name	GP Value
Mission reward advance	700
Tears of Virulence patrol	400
Slaad's emerald	200
Madame Freona rescued	50
Lord Sage rescued	50
Jhessail Greystone rescued	50

### ROBE OF EYES

*Wondrous item, rare*

The eyelike patterns embroidered upon this dark blue robe glow faintly when within 100 feet of a source of strong elemental power, such as a gate to an elemental plane or a formidable elemental creature. A description of this item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

### SPELLBOOK

The Mage's spell book has the following spells in it that may be scribed into a character's spellbook using the rules in the Player's Handbook.

Cantrips (at will): *fire bolt, light, ray of frost, prestidigitation*  
1st level (4 slots): *detect magic, mage armor, magic missile, shield*  
2nd level (3 slots): *mirror image, invisibility*  
3rd level (3 slots): *haste, fireball, fly*  
4th level (3 slots): *ice storm, Evard's black tentacles*  
5th level (1 slot): *cone of cold*

## RENOWN

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All faction members earn one renown point for participating in this adventure.

## DOWNTIME

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

## DM REWARDS

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You receive **400 XP** and **10 downtime days** for running this session.

# APPENDIX 1: MONSTER/NPC STATISTICS

## BLUE SLAAD

*Large aberration, chaotic neutral*

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 123 (13d10 + 52)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	15 (+2)	18 (+4)	7 (-2)	7 (-2)	9 (-1)

**Skills** Perception +1

**Damage Resistances** acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

**Languages** Slaad, telepathy 60 ft.

**Challenge** 7 (2,900 XP)

**Magic Resistance.** The slaad has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

**Regeneration.** The slaad regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn if it has at least 1 hit point.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The slaad makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its claws.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6 + 5) piercing damage.

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6 + 5) slashing damage. If the target is a humanoid, it must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be infected with a disease called chaos phage. While infected, the target can't regain hit points, and its hit point maximum is reduced by 10 (3d6) every 24 hours. If the disease reduces the target's hit point maximum to 0, the target instantly transforms into a red slaad or, if it has the ability to cast spells of 3rd level or higher, a green slaad. Only a *wish* spell can reverse the transformation.

## CARRION CRAWLER

*Large monstrosity, unaligned*

**Armor Class** 13 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 51 (6d10 + 18)

**Speed** 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)	1 (-5)	12 (+1)	5 (-3)

**Skills** Perception +3

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

**Keen Smell.** The carrion crawler has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

**Spider Climb.** The carrion crawler can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The carrion crawler makes two attacks: one with its tentacles and one with its bite.

**Tentacles.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) poison damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 minute. Until this poison ends, the target is paralyzed. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the poison on itself on a success.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2d4 + 2) piercing damage.

## ELLISON BERENGER, BANDIT CAPTAIN

*Medium humanoid (human), neutral*

**Armor Class** 15 (studded leather)

**Hit Points** 65 (10d8 + 20)

**Speed** 30 ft.

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

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

**Skills** Athletics +4, Deception +4

**Senses** passive Perception 10

**Languages** Common, Draconic

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

### ACTIONS

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

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

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

### REACTIONS

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

## KNIGHT

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

**Armor Class** 18 (plate)  
**Hit Points** 52 (8d8 + 16)  
**Speed** 30 ft.

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

**Saving Throws** Con +4, Wis +2  
**Senses** passive Perception 10  
**Languages** any one language (usually Common)  
**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

**Brave.** The knight has advantage on saving throws against being frightened.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The knight makes two melee attacks.

**Greatsword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage.

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

**Leadership (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest).** For 1 minute, the knight can utter a special command or warning whenever a nonhostile creature that it can see within 30 feet of it makes an attack roll or a saving throw. The creature can add a d4 to its roll provided it can hear and understand the knight. A creature can benefit from only one Leadership die at a time. This effect ends if the knight is incapacitated.

### REACTIONS

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

## MAGE

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

**Armor Class** 12 (15 with *mage armor*)  
**Hit Points** 40 (9d8)  
**Speed** 30 ft.

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

**Saving Throws** Int +6, Wis +4  
**Skills** Arcana +6, History +6  
**Senses** passive Perception 11  
**Languages** any four languages  
**Challenge** 6 (2,300 XP)

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

Cantrips (at will): *fire bolt, light, mage hand, prestidigitation*  
1st level (4 slots): *detect magic, mage armor, magic missile, shield*  
2nd level (3 slots): *misty step, suggestion*  
3rd level (3 slots): *counterspell, fireball, fly*  
4th level (3 slots): *greater invisibility, ice storm*  
5th level (1 slot): *cone of cold*

### ACTIONS

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

## SHAMBLING MOUND

Large plant, unaligned

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)  
**Hit Points** 136 (16d10 + 48)  
**Speed** 20 ft., swim 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	8 (-1)	16 (+3)	5 (-3)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

**Skills** Stealth +2  
**Damage Resistances** cold, fire  
**Damage Immunities** lightning  
**Condition Immunities** blinded, deafened, exhaustion  
**Senses** blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius),  
passive Perception 10  
**Languages** —  
**Challenge** 5 (1,800 XP)

**Lightning Absorption.** Whenever the shambling mound is subjected to lightning damage, it takes no damage and regains a number of hit points equal to the lightning damage dealt.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The shambling mound makes two slam attacks. If both attacks hit a Medium or smaller target, the target is grappled (escape DC 14), and the shambling mound uses its Engulf on it.

**Slam.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

**Engulf.** The shambling mound engulfs a Medium or smaller creature grappled by it. The engulfed target is blinded, restrained, and unable to breathe, and it must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw at the start of each of the mound's turns or take 13 (2d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage. If the mound moves, the engulfed target moves with it. The mound can have only one creature engulfed at a time.

## THUG

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

**Armor Class** 11 (leather armor)  
**Hit Points** 32 (5d8 + 10)  
**Speed** 30 ft.

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

**Skills** Intimidation +2  
**Senses** passive Perception 10  
**Languages** any one language (usually Common)  
**Challenge** 1/2 (100 XP)

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

---

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The thug makes two melee attacks.

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

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

## VETERAN

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

**Armor Class** 17 (splint)  
**Hit Points** 58 (9d8 + 18)  
**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

**Skills** Athletics +5, Perception +2  
**Senses** passive Perception 12  
**Languages** any one language (usually Common)  
**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

---

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The veteran makes two longsword attacks. If it has a shortsword drawn, it can also make a shortsword attack.

**Longsword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage, or 8 (1d10 + 3) slashing damage if used with two hands.

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

**Heavy Crossbow.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d10) piercing damage.

## VINE BLIGHT

Medium plant, neutral evil

**Armor Class** 12 (natural armor)  
**Hit Points** 26 (4d8 + 8)  
**Speed** 10 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	8 (-1)	14 (+2)	5 (-3)	10 (+0)	3 (-4)

**Skills** Stealth +1  
**Condition Immunities** blinded, deafened  
**Senses** blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius),  
passive Perception 10  
**Languages** Common  
**Challenge** 1/2 (100 XP)

**False Appearance.** While the blight remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a tangle of vines.

---

### ACTIONS

**Constrict.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage, and a Large or smaller target is grappled (escape DC 12). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the blight can't constrict another target.

**Entangling Plants (Recharge 5–6).** Grasping roots and vines sprout in a 15-foot radius centered on the blight, withering away after 1 minute. For the duration, that area is difficult terrain for nonplant creatures. In addition, each creature of the blight's choice in that area when the plants appear must succeed on a DC 12 Strength saving throw or become restrained. A creature can use its action to make a DC 12 Strength check, freeing itself or another entangled creature within reach on a success.

## WILL-O'-WISP

Tiny undead, chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 19  
**Hit Points** 22 (9d4)  
**Speed** 0 ft., fly 50 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
1 (-5)	28 (+9)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)

**Damage Immunities** lightning, poison  
**Damage Resistances** acid, cold, fire, necrotic, thunder;  
bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons  
**Condition Immunities** exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, poisoned,  
prone, restrained, unconscious  
**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 12  
**Languages** the languages it knew in life  
**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

**Consume Life.** As a bonus action, the will-o'-wisp can target one creature it can see within 5 feet of it that has 0 hit points and is still alive. The target must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw against this magic or die. If the target dies, the will-o'-wisp regains 10 (3d6) hit points.

**Ephemeral.** The will-o'-wisp can't wear or carry anything.

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

**Variable Illumination.** The will-o'-wisp sheds bright light in a 5- to 20-foot radius and dim light for an additional number of feet equal to the chosen radius. The will-o'-wisp can alter the radius as a bonus action.

---

## ACTIONS

**Shock.** *Melee Spell Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 9 (2d8) lightning damage.

**Invisibility.** The will-o'-wisp and its light magically become invisible until it attacks or uses its Life Drain, or until its concentration ends (as if concentrating on a spell).

# VORGANSHARAX, ADULT GREEN DRAGON

*Huge dragon, lawful evil*

**Armor Class** 19 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 207 (18d12 + 90)

**Speed** 40 ft., fly 80 ft., swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	12 (+1)	21 (+5)	18 (+4)	15 (+2)	17 (+3)

**Saving Throws** Dex +6, Con +10, Wis +7, Cha +8

**Skills** Deception +8, Insight +7, Perception +12, Persuasion +8, Stealth +6

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** poisoned

**Senses** blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 22

**Languages** Common, Draconic

**Challenge** 15 (13,000 XP)

**Amphibious.** The dragon can breathe air and water.

**Legendary Resistance (3/Day).** If the dragon fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

---

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The dragon can use its Frightful Presence. It then makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its claws.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (2d10 + 6) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) poison damage.

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d6 + 6) slashing damage.

**Tail.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d8 + 6) bludgeoning damage.

**Frightful Presence.** Each creature of the dragon's choice that is within 120 feet of the dragon and aware of it must succeed on a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened for 1 minute. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a creature's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the creature is immune to the dragon's Frightful Presence for the next 24 hours.

**Poison Breath (Recharge 5–6).** The dragon exhales poisonous gas in a 60-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 18 Constitution saving throw, taking 56 (16d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

---

## LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The dragon can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The dragon regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

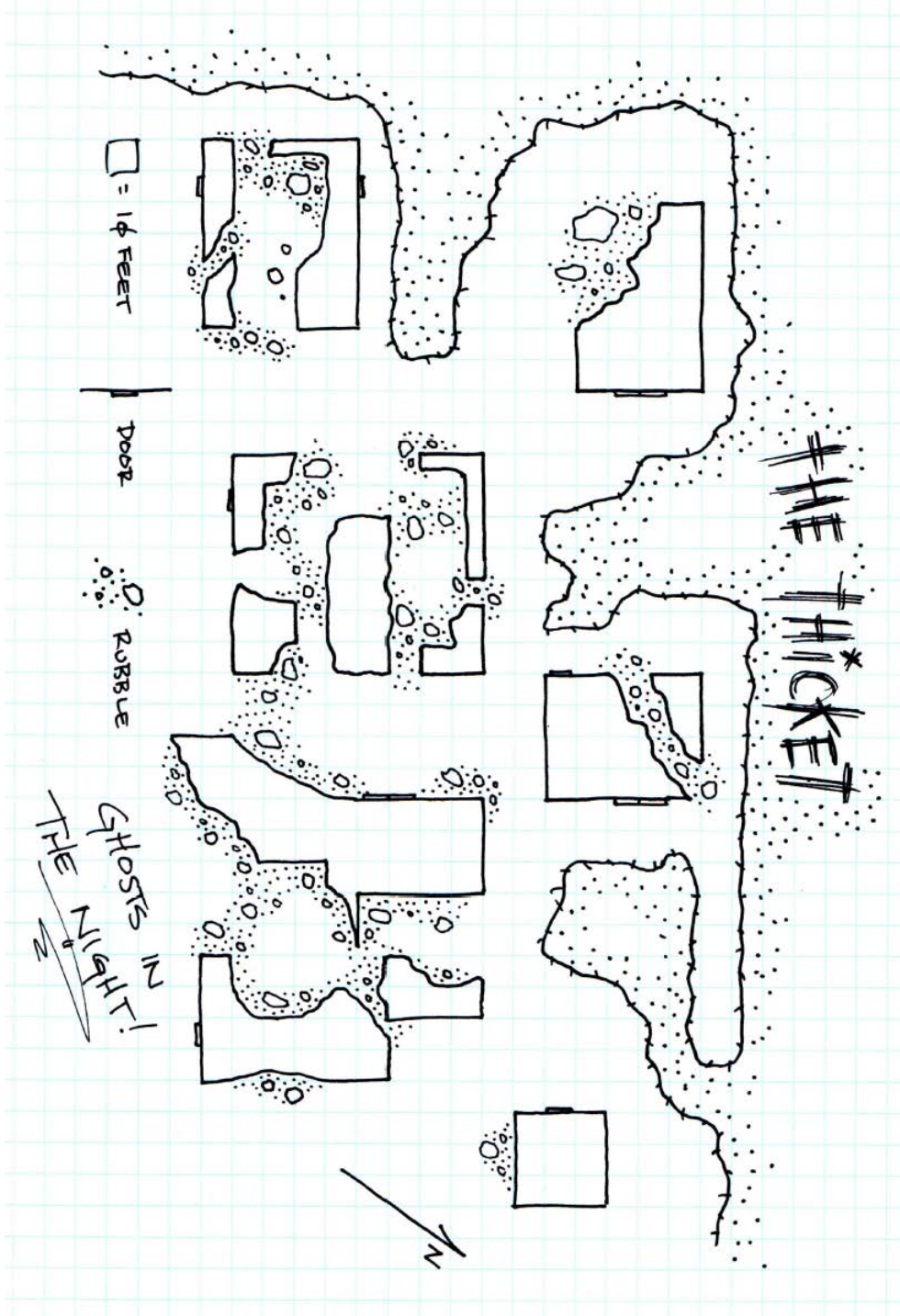
**Detect.** The dragon makes a Wisdom (Perception) check.

**Tail Attack.** The dragon makes a tail attack.

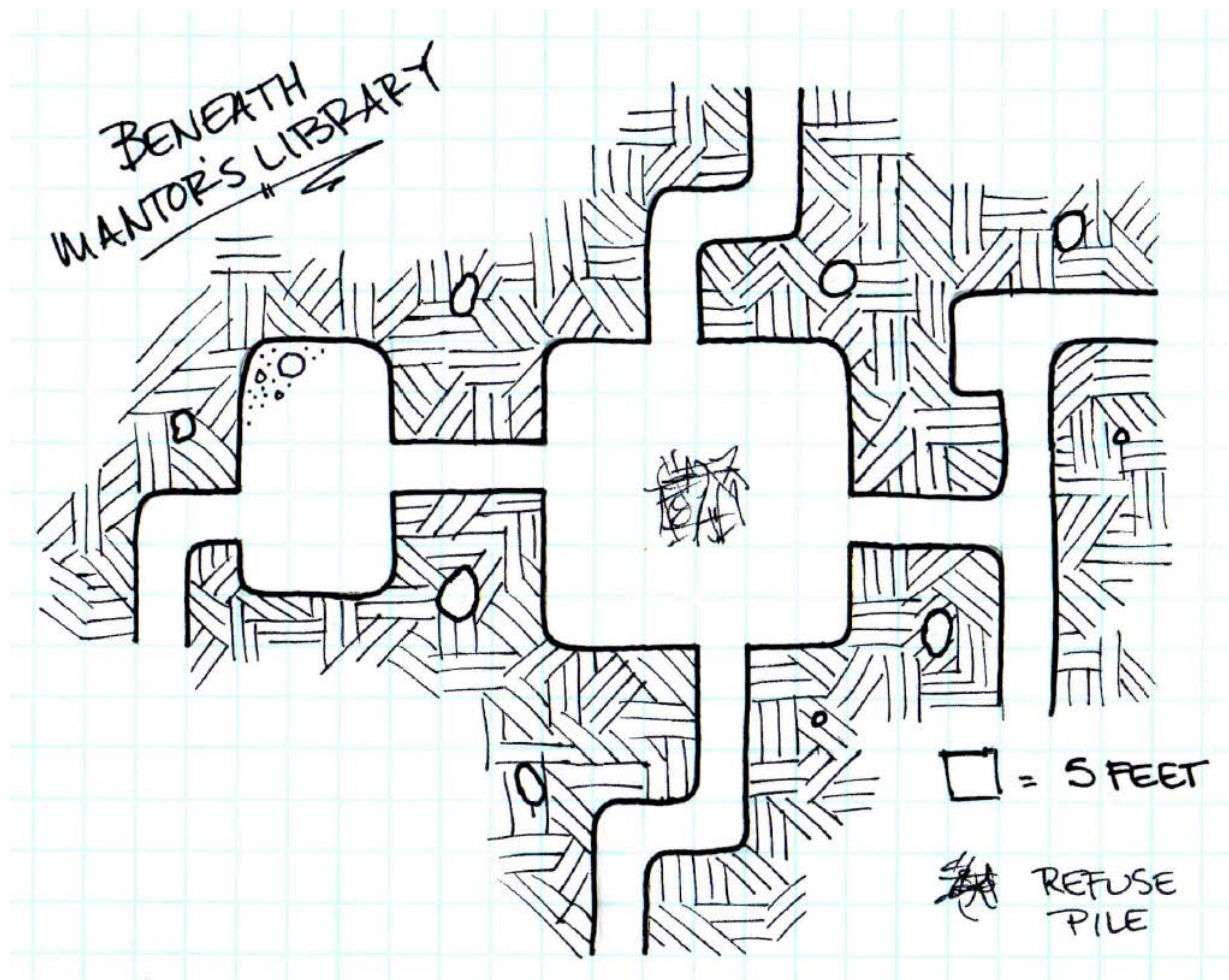
**Wing Attack (Costs 2 Actions).** The dragon beats its wings. Each creature within 10 feet of the dragon must succeed on a DC 19 Dexterity saving throw or take 13 (2d6 + 6) bludgeoning damage and be knocked prone. The dragon can then fly up to half its flying speed.



# MAP 1: GHOSTS IN THE NIGHT



## MAP 2: BENEATH MANTOR'S LIBRARY





# MAP 3: THE CINNABAR THRONE

