



ADVENTURERS LEAGUE™

THE COURTING OF FIRE

An exiled cultist and his kobold minions are spotted searching long-forgotten ruins in the Dragonspire Mountains. Rumors say he looks for a precious gift to give to a fearsome dragon that dwells there. What he hopes to attain with his gift is unknown, but can't be good for the citizens of Phlan. An adventure for 1st-4th level characters.

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to *The Courting of Fire*, 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 1st-4th level characters, and is optimized for five 2nd level characters. Characters outside this level range cannot participate in this adventure. Players with ineligible characters can create a new 1st-level character or use a [pregenerated character](#).

The adventure begins in the bustling frontier town of Phlan, but the adventurers soon find themselves trekking northwest into the treacherous Dragonspine Mountains.

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 with ineligible characters can make a new 1st-level character or use a pregenerated character. Players can play an adventure they previously played or ran as a Dungeon Master, but not with the same character (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 than 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 2nd-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*™ has more information on the art of running a D&D game.

DOWNTIME AND LIFESTYLE

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

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

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

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

The northern Moonsea region has a long and troubled history with dragons and secret cabals.

THE CIRCLE OF THE SCALE

The Circle of the Scale was a sect of druidic dragon worshippers who resided in the foothills of the Dragonspine Mountains. The Circle was led by Skovac, a self-titled Scalebinder, who claimed that he could subvert the will of dragons with nothing but his voice using a powerful relic, which legend held to be a scale from Tiamat herself.

Using magic and the labors of kobolds from the local area, they excavated a vast subterranean complex deep within the mountains in a plot to lure a dragon within and enslave it. The dragons of the region, however, would not be so easily subjugated.

Using a large host of orcs and kobolds, a red dragon called Scrolworyx (The Scorching Wind) attacked the Temple of the Scale and destroyed the sect within. Skovac sealed himself within along with the relic, both of which have remained within the ruins to this day.

THE CULT OF THE DRAGON

Recently, the Cult of the Dragon has learned about the fate of both the Circle of the Scale and the relic, but was unable to find the location of the ruins themselves. To learn more, they dispatched Tibeem and Spernik to Mantor's Library in Phlan. In the months following, the two cultists would eventually discover the site of the ruins located in the mountain foothills to the west.

With the relic in their possession, the cultists hope to deliver it to the red dragon, Scrolworyx, and gain her support.

TIBEEM AND SPERNIK

Mantor's Library is a busy place and there is always work to be done. To that end, it is known to traveling scribes that the library is an easy place to earn a few coins. The Lord Sage frequently hires such scribes to perform more menial (but ever increasing) tasks such as transcription. In exchange, the library provides room, board and a small stipend.

And so it was nothing out of the ordinary when two scribes named Tibeem and Spernik showed up looking for work. They were given a room to share and nothing more was thought about it. Unbeknownst to the Lord Sage, Tibeem and Spernik were agents of the Cult of the Dragon—sent to Phlan to claim the relic and deliver it to Scrolworyx.

For nearly four months, the scribes secretly scoured the library for information regarding the Circle. It wasn't

until they stole into the Lord Sage's personal library that they found what they were looking for; the location of the Temple of the Scale. To prevent others from discovering their plans, they created and planted forgeries of the tomes.

Unfortunately, however, they were caught sneaking out of the Lord Sage's office and fled the library in a panic, but not before the Black Fist was alerted. Spernik was able to escape Phlan, but Tibeem was not so lucky. He was captured by the Black Fist after killing a guard in his attempts to escape.

It wasn't until later, when the Lord Sage investigated Spernik and Tibeem's room, that the stolen books—and their clever forgeries—were discovered.

The adventure begins two days later. Tibeem "swings from Stojanow" and Spernik has a two-day head start on his pursuers.

OVERVIEW

In Part 1, The Lord Sage of Phlan has learned of a string of thefts and enlists the characters to bring the criminal to justice. After some investigation, they receive interesting news. The missing thief has been spotted with a group of kobolds camping at the druid circle ruins in the foothills of the Dragonspine Mountains, to which the Lord Sage provides the characters a map.

In Part 2, the characters discover that the cultist and his kobold minions have gained access to the entry of the druidic temple. The cultist has set a group of kobolds to guard the entrance while he and the rest of his entourage descend into the depths to recover the relic.

Retrieving the relic scale is a daunting task. The scale is locked behind a door that can only be opened by a multipart key; each guarded by a series of traps. Given enough time, Spernik will be able to collect the pieces of the key and reconstruct it, abscond with the relic, and make haste for Scorlworyx's aerie.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Adventurers are flocking to Phlan to seek their fortunes. The air is positively electric with possibility. The following adventure hooks can be used to draw the characters into the story.

Wanted Posters. Posters around Phlan offer a reward for capturing those responsible for a recent murder and theft from Mantor's Library.

The Lord Sage's Mission. The Lord Sage of Phlan requests that the party track down the thief and recover

any stolen books that might be in his possession.

If the characters already played DDEX1-6 *The Scroll Thief*, the Lord Sage has already met them and you can use this as the reason that he has sought them out.

Vendetta. An item the characters left at Mantor's Library has been stolen by cultists. Now, they must hunt down the perpetrators.

PART 1: STUDIES, INTERRUPTED

In Part 1 of the adventure, the characters approach the Lord Sage of Phlan to assist in tracking down a scribe who was caught stealing a pair of rare tomes.

During this portion of the adventure, the adventurers have the opportunity to gather information that may later help locate the cultist. Ideally, the characters should know enough about Phlan by this time to navigate to any points of interest. However, those who have mainly participated in the current Encounter season or are 1st level may need some additional clues regarding where to go to gain information. If, after an evening's worth of investigation, the characters are unable to piece together Spernik's location, the Lord Sage provides just the information the characters need.

The adventurers may begin their investigation anywhere they wish. The most likely place that the characters will go first, however, is Mantor's Library. From there, they may visit Stojanow Gate to speak to the Black Fist or Spernik's accomplice, or any number of different locations within the city.

Cool, early-evening air blows through a narrow street in Phlan. The streets are bustling with famished laborers out for a meal, vendors hawking their wares, and grimy sailors looking for moorage at barstools.

The evening's peace is broken as a burly Black Fist guard pushes his way through the rabble and drives a nail through a sheet of parchment with a stout hammer--affixing it to a signpost

It bold, black print it reads "Wanted for Thievery Most Cunning."

Provide or paraphrase the following information.

- The signpost has a number of similar signs nailed to it.
- The most recent addition describes the crimes and misdeeds of a man named Spernik.
- The sign bears the caricature of a young, male human. He appears to have protruding, rat-like ears and beady eyes. How much of this is attributable to artistic liberty is unknown.

- The sign displays a list of charges such as theft, breaching the peace, rendering aid and abetment to the enemies of Phlan and a slew of other, lesser offenses.
- The sign reads "Reward Promised by the Lord Sage of Phlan" and bears an official-looking seal.

GENERAL FEATURES

The story begins a few hours before dusk in the streets of Phlan.

The Streets. The avenues and byways are packed with townsfolk returning home from work or heading to taverns for the night. Wanted posters for the cultist at large are posted at most intersections.

Light. After sunset, the streets are dimly lit by soft orange lamplight.

Inns & Taverns. The Laughing Goblin (inn), The Cracked Crown (inn), Nat Wyler's Bell (tavern), The Bitter Blade (inn), The Velvet Doublet (festhall).

Trade. Cockburn's Grocery (adventuring gear), Matteo the Weaponsmith, Ernst's Livery, Jerome of Malvaunt (fence).

Market. Podol Plaza (bazaar).

MANTOR'S LIBRARY

It is likely that the characters begin their search at Mantor's Library; specifically with the Lord Sage.

Sun-bleached colonnades frame the austere façade of Mantor's Library. A solitary bench sits next to a tranquil pond at the fore of this property in the center of Scholar's Square. The grounds are well manicured and festooned with blooming flowers and other local flora.

Mantor's Library is the most prominent institution in Scholar's Square. The Lord Sage of Phlan has a seemingly inexhaustible reserve of energy which he devotes to curating and expanding the library's vast collection of encyclopediae, treatises, and compendiums. Mantor's Library is largely funded by the modest fees collected for performing research, transcribing, and translating, and is supplemented from donations from the city's wealthier citizenry.

THE LORD SAGE OF PHLAN

The Lord Sage of Phlan is a half-elven male of surpassing age. The Lord Sage's primary concern is recovering the tomes and other papers stolen by the cultists. To that end, he answers any questions he can

and allows the party to search the cultists' room and other appurtenances. The situation has given the Lord Sage insomnia so he is available at all hours.

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. It is plain to see, however, that he is not pleased with the theft.

The Lord Sage briefly describes the problem.

- Two days ago, Spernik and Tibeem—two scribes newly hired by the library—were caught sneaking out of the Lord Sage's Offices. When questioned as to their purposes, they fled. The Black Fist was summoned to bring chase.
- Spernik and Tibeem had been employed in the service of the library for just over four months, and while skilled, they were unexceptional workers.
- The Black Fist was called, and managed to capture Tibeem, but not before Tibeem slew one of the guardsmen. Spernik, however, escaped.
- The Lord Sage searched Spernik and Tibeem's room, and found two rare tomes that had previously been stored in the Lord Sage's personal library. When the books were taken back to be filed, two clever forgeries were already on the shelf in their place.
- The books were found packed in a large haversack along with other equipment typically associated with an extended expedition; extra clothes, rope, food and water, etc. There was, however, only one haversack despite the fact that two people lived in the room.
- Upon comparing the original tomes to the forged copies, each contained subtle factual inaccuracies; it seems that the two scribes intentionally changed the content of the forgeries.
- The original *The History of the North* had a chapter referencing the Circle of Scale, a sect of druids that sought to enslave dragons. This chapter was missing from the forgery.
- The original *Lex Geographica* contained an entry referring to a circle of standing stones located in the Dragonspine Mountains, at which a group of dragon-worshipping druids once resided. This entry was missing from the forgery.
- Tibeem was arrested after he murdered a guard while trying to flee the city. The Lord Sage visited the thief but Tibeem was tight-lipped and did not

reveal the details or reasons for the thefts.

- The Lord Sage believes that Spernik possesses other stolen books, and may have hidden them in remote places. Killing him ensures that they won't be found.
- The Lord Sage is prepared to offer the adventurers a total of 50 gp for bringing the thief to justice. He will also pay an additional 100 gp for the safe return of any other books or tomes that were stolen from the library.

DEVELOPMENTS

If the characters have already visited Stojanow Gate or return to the Lord Sage after doing so, he does not know what to make of the scrap of paper that Tibeem carried, but suggests that may be a shopping list of sorts.

If the characters have already visited Cockburn's Grocer or return to the Lord Sage after doing so, he confirms that the reference to a "red scale" in the notebook may very well reference the druidic sect mentioned in both of the books found in the cultists' chamber.

If the characters indicate to the Lord Sage that they know where the standing stones are and that they are planning to go, he offers an additional 150 gp if they bring back any items of significant academic worth (sketches, relics, rubbings, etc.) and recover any other works that the thief might have stolen from the library.

SCRIBE'S HALL

Rows of writing tables and high stools are arranged around the perimeter of the room. The din of quills scratching parchment fills the room as scribes work at their desks, though two are notably empty. The Lord Sage identifies the desks as being assigned to Spernik and Tibeem.

Simply by asking some of the scribes, the characters can glean the following information.

- Tibeem and Spernik had been working in the library for months but were very private; they rarely engaged in conversation with the other scribes.
- The cultists rarely ate at the library; they took their meals at one of the inns in town.
- Shhh!
- The cultists' desks have nothing out of place, but Tibeem's desk contains a strange item: a pillar folding compass—a tool most often associated with cartography.

SPERNIK AND TIBEEM'S ROOM

The Lord Sage has preserved the rogue scribes' room in the state they left it. He alone escorts the characters into their room.

- The room is rather small and furnished with a bunk bed, a narrow desk, and two small dressers.
- The desk contains what appears to be a list of things to be purchased from some of the stores in Phlan.
- The Lord Sage indicates that the two books were found in a haversack on the desk.
- A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check at one of the dressers reveals a false panel. Inside, there are two sets of black and purple clothing, each emblazoned with the livery of a low-ranking member of the Cult of the Dragon.

STOJANOW GATE

The Stojanow Gate is the headquarters of the Black Fist and houses the few prisoners that last more than a couple days before being released or hanged.

The massive walls of Valjevo Castle tower above you. The massive iron-bound doors of Stojanow Gate are spread wide open as they have been for over one hundred years. From the top of the wall, bodies hang from thick rope; twisting slowly in the breeze while ravens peck away at the tastier morsels.

A long line of people are lined up at a desk where a bored-looking guard thumbs through an enormous ledger.

The Knights of the Black Fist protect the Stojanow Gate, the only entrance to Valjevo Castle, and act as keepers of the gatehouse's crammed jail cells.

Unless a character has the favor of the Black Fist from a previous adventure or succeeds at a DC 15 Charisma (Deception, Intimidation, or Persuasion) check, they have to wait in line. Spending gold in bribes grants advantage on this check.

ROLEPLAYING KNIGHT LIEUTENANT BOLVER

Lieutenant Bolver wields a lot of power in this town, and anyone who knows what's good for them respects that. He gets a lot of pleasure out of his job, and isn't afraid to take a bribe. He's got a sharp wit and a sharper tongue.

- Knight Lieutenant Cron Bolver sits at a table with a long line of frustrated people standing before him, most of which appear to be petitioning the Lieutenant for his aid in freeing loved ones.

- Lieutenant Bolver confirms that Tibeem was arrested and with a chuckle, points to one of the bodies hanging from the Gate.
- Tibeem was interrogated for a whole day and a whole night, but divulged none of his secrets.
- If asked, he informs the characters that he has heard reports of a man fitting Spernik's description heading north along the Stojanow towards the Dragonspine Mountains, but admits that he hasn't investigated the rumors further because "They're out of my jurisdiction at this point."
- The only thing of note that Tibeem had on his person was a scrap of paper. It reads: "Sheaf of vellum (1), chalk dust (1lb sack), leather case."
- If asked about the paper, Lieutenant Bolver shrugs and suggests that is a shopping list of some sort.
- Lieutenant Bolver expresses an interest in the thief being captured alive. "We've got a spot waiting for him on the wall next to his friend."

DEVELOPMENTS

If the characters ask Lieutenant Bolver about the map in the notebook found at Cockburn's Grocery, he shrugs and states "I'm not a cartographer. Go find yourself one."

THE LAUGHING GOBLIN

The Laughing Goblin is one of Phlan's oldest and most famous inns. The quality of the food is second to none and has no less than 3 different brews on tap at any given time and, of course, their famous cabbage soup.

Merry pipes and thumping drums can be heard a block away from a tall timber-framed building. Your mouth waters as the smell of roast duck, flowing ale, and pipe smoke wafts from the brightly lit entrance. A woodblock sign hangs over the entry carved in the likeness of a grinning goblin's head. Every table, bench and stool is crowded with boisterous patrons and covered in flagons of ale.

While the Laughing Goblin is owned by a dwarf named Durnam Goblincicker, he is seldom seen there and leaves the daily operation of the place to Imizael, a human woman with a clearly elven name. Imizael, along with her employee Fat Mar (whose real name is Markoth), run a tight ship and have maintained the legacy of the inn's legendary cabbage soup.

Characters who sit at the bar have the opportunity to meet Imizael.

ROLEPLAYING IMIZAEI

Imizael is quite busy, but is attentive of her patrons' needs. She responds to questions curtly, nodding when it is polite and directing customers with a fondness for gossip to Fat Mar, whom she insists "should keep his equally fat nose out of other peoples' business."

If asked about the missing scribe/cultist, Imizael says, "I seem to recall something about those two... For one, they forgot to pay their tab."

Characters sitting at the tables may speak with the waiter, who breathlessly introduces himself as Fat Mar. If promised a juicy bit of gossip or a character succeeds on a DC 10 Charisma (Persuasion) check, the party can learn the following information from the gossip-monger.

ROLEPLAYING FAT MAR (MARKOTH)

Fat Mar clearly dislikes his nickname, but it is well-earned. He is a rotund man who sweats profusely. He has a sharp tongue and a foul mouth but warms up instantly to anyone who asks what his actual name is—introducing himself happily as Markoth Hasselpond.

- Tibeem and Spernik ate at the inn often and generally kept to themselves. They weren't the most social folks, though—they really didn't like other folks talking to them.
- Markoth tells the party that he heard from another patron that the pair arrived in Phlan a little over four months ago in a caravan.
- He also says that the duo was sometimes accompanied by a third person, but he hasn't seen him in a couple weeks. This third person was a male human who had the look of a scribe about him; Markoth never got his name.
- Upon hearing Varyll's descriptions of Spernik, Tibeem, and the unknown third person, any character that participated in DDEX1-2 *Secrets of Sokol Keep* may have recalled three people fitting that description dining at the Laughing Goblin before the bar fight broke out.

COCKBURN'S GROCERY

This grocer has been in business for quite a while. The owner, Tad Staslep, is the largest provider of provisions in Phlan.

The sign over the entrance of this building says simply—Grocery. Inside, exposed framing buttresses the high ceiling. The walls are stacked with shipping crates, sundry equipment, and milling clients. A middle-aged man with thinning grey hair beams a wide smile. "Welcome to Cockburn's Grocery."

ROLEPLAYING TAD STASLEP

Tad is a portly man with a big appetite. He is usually seen chewing on something or at least on his way to get something to chew on. That aside, he's a pleasant man who knows he's got a good thing going on, so he seldom risks being discourteous or disrespectful.

- While he doesn't remember the man from the wanted poster, he does remember a man who made several unusual orders over the last few months.
- Retrieving a ledger, Staslep, points out a few of the orders: vellum, chalk dust and a waterproof scrollcase.
- Two days ago, after his last visit, the man inadvertently left a notebook in the shop.
- The notebook has a couple pages ripped out and the rest of the pages are blank, save for the last one, onto which a crude map has been drawn. If the characters have it, the torn paper from Stojanow Gate perfectly matches one of the missing pages.
- The map leads to a location in the foothills of the Dragonspine Mountains; approximately two days' travel away.

FACTION ASSIGNMENT

Those characters who are members of the Zhentarim can take advantage of their organization's network of informants to gain additional information.

ZHENTARIM

As the adventurers prepare to depart Phlan, members of the Zhentarim are contacted by Chaab (male human). The Zhentarim has heard of the adventurer's plans to investigate a subterranean complex in the Dragonspine Mountains and the prospect of a future base of operations has piqued the Black Network's interest. Chaab asks members of the Zhentarim for a small favor.

Assignment. Discern the viability of a base of operations in the Temple of the Scale.

Success Condition. Fully exploring and mapping the Temple of the Scale fulfills the requirements for success in this assignment.

PART 2: THE TEMPLE OF THE SCALE

The Temple of the Scale is located in the lowland foothills of the Dragonspine Mountains.

1. THE STANDING STONES

The two day trip to the standing stones is uneventful. Finally, the characters arrive.

The rolling hills are peppered with large boulders, likely falling millennia ago from the mountains looming above. Finally, you reach a large clearing with a 60-foot-wide circle of 20-foot tall stones standing in the middle.

Dozens of recently-made footprints in the dusty soil lead toward the center of the circle.

From a distance, the circle of standing stones appears deserted, but danger lurks behind the megalithic stones.

FEATURES

The number of standing stones and other boulders in the area make obtaining cover fairly easy. See the map provided in the appendix for reference of this area.

The Circle of Standing Stones. Normally, the entrance to the temple is cunningly concealed in the center of the circle of stones, beneath a complex system of shifting stone; covered by centuries of dust and plant growth. It is now open, however, and a set of stairs—cut into the rock—lead down into darkness.

Standing behind these stones provides total cover.

Boulders. There are a number of low boulders in the area surrounding the circle of standing stones. There are enough boulders in the area to the degree that there is no more than 30 feet of space in-between each.

These boulders provide three-quarters cover to any Small-sized creature standing behind them and half cover to anyone Medium-sized or larger.

Light. If the characters arrive during the day, the area is well-lit. Otherwise the moon and stars shed dim light in the area.

Tracks. The tracks are mostly those of Small-sized creatures, but any character succeeding at a DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check notices one pair of tracks belonging to a Medium-sized creature that appeared to be wearing boots. A ranger or a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals that the tracks

were made about two days ago and gives the exact number of individuals.

DEVELOPMENTS

A contingent of the Spernik's kobold followers stayed behind to guard the entrance of the temple and fight off anyone who may be following Spernik or investigating his crimes. Eight **kobolds (K)** and two **winged kobolds (U)** saw the characters coming and are currently hiding behind the standing stones and boulders in the area surrounding the standing stones. The kobolds have had a fair amount of time to prepare and make their Dexterity (Stealth) check with advantage. Due to the number of kobolds, making this check in advance and in secret may be warranted. Roll one check for all the kobolds, and one separate check for all the winged kobolds.

The kobolds wait to attack until the party has entered the circle of stones in order to attack from range. If the characters move to engage in melee with the kobolds, the kobolds spread out and move behind other boulders and continue to attack from range. The kobolds prefer to attack from all directions and, when possible, focus their attacks on targets that appear to be unarmored before moving onto tougher foes. The urd (winged kobolds) prefer take to the air and drop rocks on unarmored foes.

Note that if the characters arrive during the day, the kobold's attacks are made with disadvantage.

If the party waits an hour or more before entering the circle, the guards assume the characters moved on and leave their hiding places.

ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

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

- **Very weak party:** remove four kobolds
- **Weak party:** remove two kobolds
- **Strong party:** add two winged kobolds
- **Very strong party:** add four winged kobolds

TREASURE

The kobolds carry a combined treasure of a paltry 5 gp in various coins along with an assortment of baubles, such as buttons, pieces of string and a dead mouse.

GENERAL FEATURES OF THE TEMPLE OF THE SCALE

The bulk of the temple is controlled by the reanimated corpses of the original druid inhabitants. Unless otherwise stated, assume the following traits about the

complex. See the map provided in the appendix for a description for reference of the temple complex.

Ceilings. The ceilings within the temple are generally 15 feet high.

Light. The entire temple is lightless except for a few key locations. Unless otherwise mentioned, the rooms are shrouded in complete darkness unless the characters possess a light source.

Sound. The complex is as quiet and still as a tomb.

2. MAIN HALL

The druids of the Circle of the Red Scale once used the main chamber of the complex for conducting ritualized magic. Upon Spernik disturbing the first key fragment, the long-dead druids rose from the slumber of death.

This huge room is perhaps 70 feet long and half as wide. The ceiling is 30 feet above the wide stone tiles and supported by three pillars that run down the center of the room. Each pillar is expertly carved to resemble five chromatic dragons, supporting the ceiling with their forelimbs. You can make out faded mosaics on the ceilings and walls depicting colorful dragons in flight. The sprawling scene is marred by knotty roots that have poked through the tile work.

- Due to the number of rotted chairs and tables in the room, it is easy to deduce that this room once functioned as a great hall, used for eating and perhaps even ceremonial events.
- There are three doors that lead off from this room; one each on the left, right and far walls.
- The doors to the left are made of wood and bound in rusted iron. Though faded with time, it is still obvious that the planks of the doors were once brightly painted in the five colors of chromatic dragons.
- The door to the left leads to area 3, the druids' former living quarters.
- The door to the right leads to the temple's crypt and an underground lake the druids used as a water supply.
- The door at the far end of the hall is framed by a detailed stone carving of Tiamat, its paint faded with time.
- Six recently-dead kobolds lay about the room.

DEVELOPMENT

Seven **zombies** rose after Spernik disturbed the first key piece in area 3. Upon the characters entering the main

hall, the five zombies closest to the characters turn and attack the newest intruders. The two zombies on the far side of the room appear to be distracted by something beyond it and do not move to attack the characters until the second round of combat.

Any character going near the door on the far wall hears muffled voices on a successful DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check.

Spernik has barred the door to the room on the far wall. He is paranoid beyond measure and extremely difficult to reason with. Any character succeeding on a DC 20 Charisma (Persuasion or Deception) check may be able to convince him that they are willing to help him. Any attempts to intimidate Spernik automatically fail; he fears the consequences of failure more than death at the hands of the characters.

Alternatively, the door may be bashed down on a successful DC 15 Strength check. Doing so, however, causes Spernik to attack the characters immediately. If the character's initial attempt to burst the door in fails, the kobolds form ranks in front of Spernik while he readies an action to cast *hold person* on the person breaking the door down in the event the characters are eventually successful.

ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

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

- **Very weak party:** remove four zombies
- **Weak party:** remove two zombies
- **Strong party:** add two zombies
- **Very strong party:** add four zombies

TREASURE

A cursory examination of each of the pillars' carvings reveals the eye sockets of each of the five heads are set with semi-precious gemstones corresponding to the color of each chromatic dragon (onyx, lapis lazuli, jade, garnet, and topaz).

The gemstones are about 25 feet off the ground. Climbing the pillars is simple enough, but the aged stone is extremely brittle. Each time a character climbs a pillar, there is a 1-in-6 chance that a portion of it crumbles under the weight. A successful DC 15 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check allows the climber to grab onto the statue before falling 20 feet to the floor, taking 7 (2d6) bludgeoning damage.

The fifteen gems (five on each of the three pillars) are worth 2 gp each for a total of 30 gp.

3. LIVING QUARTERS

The druids lived a strictly regimented life. The living quarters were required to be kept in immaculate order and, although time has taken its toll on the contents of the room, the contents are still neat and organized.

Each of the walls of this 60-foot-long, 10-foot-wide hallway is lined with five regularly-spaced doors of semi-rotted wood. The hallway ends in a set of double doors, one of which rotted free from its hinges long ago. There are a number of stone shelves carved into the walls the contents of which, despite the centuries of dust, are tidily arranged.

There is nothing of use in this room that is still functional. Wooden objects have rotted away to nothing and any metallic goods are rusted to the point of crumbling to dust at the faintest touch.

There are a total of 12, 10-foot by 10-foot rooms along the hallway. Each room has the rotted remains of a bed and a dresser.

TREASURE

Each room has a faded, embroidered robe hanging on a peg or folded neatly away in the ruins of a dresser. The robes are beautifully sewn garments of each of the five colors of chromatic dragons. Half of these robes crumble to dust when handled but the remaining half are still sufficiently intact to be worn.

Should anyone in the party wear these robes, the visual sparks a faint memory in the minds of the long-dead druids. During the first round of combat, any undead creature in the complex has disadvantage on their attacks against a character wearing the robes.

Additionally, searching all of the rooms nets the adventurers a total of 15 gp in old coins.

4. KITCHEN

This area was once used as a kitchen for the druids.

This 30-foot by 20-foot room was likely used as a kitchen, if the stone fire pit is any indication. A door on the far wall leads to a small, empty larder. The room is dry and dusty except for a few patches of wet stone on the floor.

Nothing of use or value remains in this hall, the wooden furniture has rotted long ago, and any metal goods have been dissolved by the oozes.

The wet patches on the floor are actually three **gray**

oozes. They do not attack unless closely examined or trod upon.

5. CRYPT

The druids of the Circle burned their dead, but interred their bones here; decorating the walls and pillars of the room with the charred remains of the members of their order.

This large, octagonal room is perhaps 40 feet wide and just as long with a 20-foot high ceiling. A 10-foot wide ledge surrounds a 15-foot-deep pool of dark water in the center of the room. As your light falls upon the walls, you see that they are decorated with charred and blackened bones.

The druids interred their dead in this room and used the naturally-occurring pool as a water source. Though stagnant and slightly brackish, the water is sufficiently clean enough to drink.

Upon entering the room, two **ghouls** (actually lacedons—ghouls with a swim speed of 30 feet) emerge from the water and a blackened **skeleton** breaks free from the wall and combat begins.

6. THE CIRCLE OF THE CIRCLE

Beyond the door decorated with the carving of Tiamat lay the druids' primary space of worship and ritual.

This round room is about 40 feet in diameter with walls beautifully decorated in stunning, colorful mosaics depicting stylized dragons in a number of different activities. A large door of hammered red metal rests in the far facing wall. Four other open exits with stairs are spaced evenly around the room. The room is littered with bones.

The door on the far side of the room is embossed with the image of a rearing red dragon. The dragon wears an amulet with the central piece missing.

This room is the antechamber to the Reliquary, which can only be opened with a key. The key in question is broken into four parts, each of which is housed in a shrine dedicated to four of the five types of chromatic dragon; black, blue, green and white.

RELIQUARY KEY

Long before the dragon and its army attacked the druids, Skovac decreed the relic must be protected at all costs. A reliquary was constructed and its key was

divided into four equal-sized key pieces; each placed in a trapped altar of the black, blue, green, and white chromatic dragons.

The reliquary key parts are engraved with indications of how the keys fit together. Rotating a key component into the proper position and pressing firmly is enough to snap the key parts into place.

SPERNIK

Spernik (a **cult fanatic**) and six **kobolds** are in this room when the characters arrive. If the characters managed to persuade him to open the door, he converses with them briefly before realizing that he must kill them if he is to succeed on his mission. If the characters break down the door, he and the kobolds attack immediately.

ROLEPLAYING SPERNIK

Spernik is terrified at the prospects of failing in mission. He is sweating profusely and is constantly looking around nervously. He is scared of the characters, but not as scared as he is of his masters.

Spernik is quite young—only 19 years of age—and completely overwhelmed by his current situation. Despite this, he is quite cunning and engages in discussion as he decides the best way to deal with the characters.

- He acknowledges his crimes in Phlan, but refuses to answer any question that would reveal his motives.
- He acknowledges being a member of the Cult of the Dragon, but refuses to divulge any additional information on the Cult.
- He suggests that the characters leave and forget they ever saw him here.
- He divulges that the red door requires a four part key and that each shrine contains one of the four parts.
- He also reveals that all four of the shrines are trapped, and that he was only able to bypass two of them.
- He refuses to surrender the two pieces of the key that he has already claimed.
- He offers the characters a gem worth “a king’s ransom when they get back to Phlan” in exchange for letting him go.

Spernik knows he is outnumbered and defeating the adventurers will be difficult. Because of this, he is hesitant to attack them. On his turn, he casts *shield of*

faith as a bonus action and follows it with *spiritual weapon*. He attacks the adventurers only under the following conditions.

- The adventurers attack him.
- The adventurers successfully retrieve the key fragments from the white and blue shrines.
- The adventurers attempt to forcibly take the black and green key fragments from him.

ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

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

- **Very weak party:** remove all the kobolds; change Spernik’s hit points to 22
- **Weak party:** remove three kobolds
- **Strong party:** add three winged kobolds
- **Very strong party:** remove all the kobolds; add nine winged kobolds

Should the adventurers venture into the shrines to retrieve the pieces of the key, he denies possessing any knowledge of the contents of any of the shrines, insisting that the kobolds were the ones that went in, not him.

Spernik can be persuaded to surrender with a DC 20 Charisma (Intimidation or Persuasion) check. If the kobolds are all dead when the adventurers do this, this check is made with advantage.

If successful, he begins to sob uncontrollably and begins loudly mewling about how “they’re going to kill him when they find out”. If questioned further, he reveals that he has been sent here by the Cult of the Dragon to recover a relic. The relic was rumored to possess the ability to enslave dragons, and the Cult wishes to use it to unwillingly recruit dragons into the Cult’s service. The later is a lie; one that Spernik will stick to even if an adventurer detects deception through a successful Wisdom (Insight) check and confronts him about it. Only a *charm person* spell or similar ability will persuade him to tell the adventurers the truth—the Cult wishes to give the relic to the red dragon Scornworyx as a gift to entice the dragon into the Cult’s service.

As Spernik relates this information, the kobolds (if still alive) become agitated, insulting and harrying Spernik—apparently for demonstrating a profound lack of backbone. Eventually, a kobold throws a rock at Spernik and they attack Spernik and the adventurers. Two attack Spernik, while the rest focus their attacks on the character that appears to be the least armored in the party.

Once subdued, Spernik will not resist the adventurers if they choose to bind him, but if they do not do so, he does not hesitate to flee when the adventurers proceed into the reliquary, which he refuses to enter.

In the unlikely event that the characters let him go, he drops a gem (see Treasure, below) at their feet and leaves without incident.

TREASURE

Spernik has both the **green and black piece of the reliquary key**, a gem worth 30 gp and a *ring of fire resistance* on his person. Also, his scimitar is silvered.

Spernik carries a journal that provides details regarding his mission to deliver the relic to the red dragon Scorlworyx, who lives in the Dragonspine Mountains.

Lastly, Spernik also has a couple ancient-looking tomes in his pack. These books were stolen from the library. The Lord Sage will pay 100 gp for their safe return.

6A. WHITE SHRINE

A bone-chilling, knee-deep white mist clings to every nook of this 20-by-20-foot chamber. The walls are of the same grey stone as the rest of the complex, but decorated with a pattern of glossy, white and blue tiles perhaps a hand's width across. A short set of stairs leads to a raised dais, upon which a rectangular altar carved from a single piece of white stone, veined with grey. The mist that fills the room seems to be flowing from something resting on top of the altar.

Spernik sent a few kobolds into this room to get the **white piece of the reliquary key**, but the trap slew them. Because of the mist, however, he is unsure of the exact nature of the trap. He hasn't sent any other kobolds in and was too scared to go in himself.

There is a **scythe blade trap** on the steps leading to the altar. The trap is triggered by a pressure plate on the first step. When triggered, a pair of razor-sharp blades scissor from a narrow niche in the step above causing 9 (2d8) slashing damage; the damage is halved if the character makes a successful DC 12 Dexterity saving throw. The pressure plate is discovered with a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check and can be disarmed with a successful DC 10 Dexterity check using thieves' tools.

The piece of the key rests on the altar. It can be safely retrieved once the trap has been sprung or disabled, and is quite cold to the touch. Upon being removed from the

altar, mist stops flowing from the key piece.

6B. BLACK SHRINE

Black stairs descend into a 20-by-20-foot room hewn from the same stone as the chamber outside, but with walls are decorated in glossy, black and bone-white tiles. A short, triangular altar of black stone rests atop a low triangular platform at the opposite end of the chamber. A kobold lays at the foot of the altar, its features melted beyond further recognition.

Spernik currently has the **black piece of the reliquary key**. It was retrieved by his kobold minions, but not before one of them was slain by the now-inert **acid trap**.

6C. BLUE SHRINE

This 20-by-20-foot room has a floor made from a single piece of beaten copper. Shiny, blue and yellow tiles line the walls and a diamond-shaped altar of polished blue stone rests atop a dais. Small bolts of electricity arc between something resting atop the altar and a number of copper studs in the wall,

This was the last room that Spernik investigated. By the time he got to doing so, he had only a half dozen kobolds left in his service. Because of this, he has made no attempt to retrieve the **blue piece of the reliquary key** that lay on the altar.

The key piece is grounding the arcs of electricity that emanate from the copper studs. Removing the key triggers the room's electricity trap. When triggered, lightning arcs to the floor, dealing 7 (2d6) lightning damage to everyone in the room. Anyone struck by the lightning that succeeds on a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw suffers only half damage.

This trap is detectable with a successful DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check and may be disarmed with a successful DC 13 Dexterity check using thieves' tools.

The blue piece of the key rests upon the altar and can be removed safely once the trap has been sprung or disabled. Holding it causes some of the wearer's hair stand on end and emit tiny shocks when they touch other creatures.

6D. GREEN SHRINE

The air in this 20 by 20 foot room is acrid and sour-smelling. A set of stairs descends past walls of shiny green tiles 8 feet to the sunken floor below. A dozen or so dead kobolds lay strewn about; their bodies strangely contorted as if they died in abject agony. A round altar of green stone lay against the far wall.

The room is filled with a **poisonous gas** that is heavier than air and difficult to see. Characters succeeding at a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check notice that a faint, barely-visible mist fills the sunken portion of the room.

Anyone descending to the floor below suffers 4 (1d8) poison damage per round spent in the room. This damage is halved on a successful DC 12 Constitution saving throw.

DEVELOPMENTS

Should the characters retrieve all four pieces of the key, they fit together cleverly and lock into place, creating a seamless piece of multi-colored metal; wrought in the shape of Tiamat's holy symbol.

The door to the reliquary may only be opened once the characters have obtained all four pieces of the key. It cannot be otherwise be unlocked.

Should the characters have the complete reliquary key, it fits flawlessly into the dragon's amulet. When placed, read:

The key clicks into place and the grating roar of mechanical action fills the air. The door slides down into the floor below revealing the room beyond.

7. RELIQUARY

Tiamat's scale is protected in this area by members of the Circle of the Scale, cursed with unlife. When the vault door is opened, read:

The brilliant red and orange tiles covering the walls of this room gleam with reflected torchlight and the faint red glow that emanates from something that floats lazily in the air above a red, stone altar in the middle of the room.

The object is quite large—the size of a large shield—and looks to be made of polished red metal inscribed with runes. Before you can get closer to inspect it, however, a cold, distant voice interrupts you “Turn from your path, mortals; lest you forfeit your lives.”

The speaker is **Scalebinder Skovac** a **wight** who led the Circle of the Scale in life. He and two **zombies** are in this room.

GENERAL FEATURES

The following features apply to this room.

Area. This room is approximately 20 feet deep and 30 feet wide.

Lighting. The scale and the altar beneath it glow with a soft orange light, bathing the room in dim light.

Smells, Sounds. Burning coals, incense, crackling flame, whispering.

ROLEPLAYING SCALEBINDER SKOVAC

Skovac is solely dedicated to ensuring that the relic is not disturbed. Anything else is trivial. He is bitter in undeath and resents the living, which is reflected in his choice of words.

- Skovac retells the story of his circle to any who ask.
- He views his undeath as a curse; punishment by the gods for the acts he and his brethren committed in life.
- He allows the characters to leave the temple unharmed, provided they do not attempt to take the relic with them.
- He knows of the Cult of the Dragon, but his knowledge is centuries old and has no idea of their current plans.

Should the characters attempt to take the relic, Skovac first warns them not to do so. If they ignore his warnings, he attacks. Scalebinder Skovac possesses two *scrolls of flame blade*, one of which he employs immediately if the situation goes sour. In order to cast the spell, he needs to succeed on a DC 12 Intelligence (Arcana) check; if he fails, he wades into combat, not using the other scroll unless given pause to do so.

In combat, Scalebinder Skovac uses his *life drain* attack grudgingly; despite being wholly evil, he views undeath as a punishment fit for no one. He uses it only if reduced to 10 hit points or less.

ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

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

- **Very weak party:** remove the zombies; change Skovac's hit points to 30
- **Weak party:** remove one zombie; change Skovac's hit points to 30
- **Strong party:** add four zombies
- **Very strong party:** remove the zombies; add two ghosts

DEVELOPMENTS

The relic is a huge, flawless scale from an ancient red dragon—nearly three feet wide—engraved with runes and inlaid with silver, gold, and platinum.

If a character casts *detect magic*, the scale radiates powerful abjuration and illusion magic, but an *identify* spell reveals no actual properties.

TREASURE

The scale is an art object worth quite a bit of money, and fetches 300 gp from the right buyer.

As previously mentioned, the Lord Sage offers the characters half that much (150 gp), but assures them that with time, he may be able to discover what, if any, properties the relic has.

Scalebinder Skovac wears a necklace of red gold with a small red dragon scale engraved with a rune meaning "Fire" in Draconic. The amulet is worth 50 gp. He also has one (or two, in exceptional circumstances) *scrolls of flame blade*.

CONCLUSION

Upon returning to Phlan and the Lord Sage, the characters are paid 50 gp when they report finding and capturing/killing Spernik.

Additionally, Spernik's journal provides valuable information regarding his mission to recruit Scrolworyx to the Cult's cause.

REWARDS

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

EXPERIENCE

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

COMBAT AWARDS

Name of Foe	XP per Foe
Scalebinder Skovac	450
Ghast	450
Spernik	200
Ghoul	200
Spy	200
Gray Ooze	100

Skeleton	50
Winged Kobold	50
Zombie	50
Kobold	25

NON-COMBAT AWARDS

Task or Accomplishment	XP per Character
Thoroughly investigating the thefts	100
Bypassing the blue shrine's trap	50
Bypassing the white shrine's trap	50

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

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

TREASURE

The characters receive the following treasure, divided up amongst the party. 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
Payment from the Lord Sage	50
Retrieving the stolen books	100
Giving the relic to the Lord Sage	150
Selling the relic	300
Kobold pouches	5
Semi-precious stones from pillars	20
Gold found in Living Quarters	10
Spernik's gem	15
Spernik's scimitar	100
Skovac's necklace	50

RING OF FIRE RESISTANCE

Wondrous item, uncommon

This delicate copper ring is fitted with a beautiful fire agate and is always warm to the touch. When you are attuned to the ring and wear it, you gain fire resistance. A full description of this item can be found in the basic rules or the *Dragon Master's Guide*.

SPELL SCROLL: FLAME BLADE

Scroll, uncommon

This *spell scroll* contains a single *flame blade* spell. A description of *spell scrolls* can be found in the basic rules or *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

PERMANENT MAGIC ITEM DISTRIBUTION

D&D Adventurers League has a system in place to determine who is awarded permanent magic items at the end of a session. Each character's logsheet contains a column to record permanent magic items for ease of reference.

- If all the players at the table agree on one character taking possession of a permanent magic item, that character gets the item.
- In the event that one or more characters indicate an interest in possessing a permanent magic item, the character that possesses the fewest permanent magic items gets the item. If there is a tie in the total number of permanent magic items owned by contesting characters, the item's owner is determined randomly by the DM.

RENOWN

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

Zhentarim members earn **one additional renown point** for fully exploring and mapping the Temple of the Scale.

DOWNTIME

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

DM REWARDS

You receive **200 XP** and **ten downtime days** for running this session.

APPENDIX: MONSTER/NPC STATISTICS

BANDIT CAPTAIN

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

Armor Class 15 (studded leather)

Hit Points 65 (10d8 + 20)

Speed 30 ft.

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

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

Skills Athletics +4, Deception +4

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any two languages

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

ACTIONS

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

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

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

REACTIONS

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

GHAST

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 36 (8d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	17 (+3)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)

Damage Resistances necrotic

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Stench. Any creature that starts its turn within 5 feet of the ghost must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the start of its next turn. On a successful

saving throw, the creature is immune to the ghost's Stench for 24 hours.

Turning Defiance. The ghost and any ghouls within 30 feet of it have advantage on saving throws against effects that turn undead.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 12 (2d8 + 3) piercing damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage. If the target is a creature other than an undead, it must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

GHOUL

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 22 (5d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	7 (-2)	10 (+0)	6 (-2)

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) piercing damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2d4 + 2) slashing damage. If the target is a creature other than an elf or undead, it must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

GRAY OOZE

Medium ooze, unaligned

Armor Class 8

Hit Points 22 (3d8 + 9)

Speed 10 ft., climb 10 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	6 (-2)	16 (+3)	1 (-5)	6 (-2)	2 (-4)

Skills Stealth +2

Damage Resistances acid, cold, fire

Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, prone

Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 8

Languages —

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Amorphous. The ooze can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

Corrode Metal. Any nonmagical weapon made of metal that hits the ooze corrodes. After dealing damage, the weapon takes a permanent and cumulative -1 penalty to damage rolls. If its penalty drops to -5, the weapon is destroyed. Nonmagical ammunition made of metal that hits the ooze is destroyed after dealing damage.

The ooze can eat through 2-inch-thick, nonmagical metal in 1 round.

False Appearance. While the ooze remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from an oily pool or wet rock.

ACTIONS

Pseudopod. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) bludgeoning damage plus 7 (2d6) acid damage, and if the target is wearing nonmagical metal armor, its armor is partly corroded and takes a permanent and cumulative -1 penalty to the AC it offers. The armor is destroyed if the penalty reduces its AC to 10.

KOBOLD

Small humanoid (kobold), lawful evil

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 5 (2d6 - 2)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
7 (-2)	15 (+2)	9 (-1)	8 (-1)	7 (-2)	8 (-1)

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8

Languages Common, Draconic

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in sunlight, the kobold has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

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

ACTIONS

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

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

WINGED KOBOLD

Small humanoid (kobold), lawful evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 7 (3d6 - 3)

Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
7 (-2)	16 (+3)	9 (-1)	8 (-1)	7 (-2)	8 (-1)

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8

Languages Common, Draconic

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in sunlight, the kobold has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

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

ACTIONS

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

Dropped Rock. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, one target directly below the kobold. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

SCALEBINDER SKOVAC (WIGHT)

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 14 (studded leather)

Hit Points 45 (6d8 + 18)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +4

Damage Resistances necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons that aren't silvered

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages the languages it knew in life

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in sunlight, the wight has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The wight makes two longsword attacks or two longbow attacks. It can use its Life Drain in place of one longsword attack.

Life Drain. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) necrotic damage. The target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

A humanoid slain by this attack rises 24 hours later as a zombie under the wight's control, unless the humanoid is restored to life or its body is destroyed. The wight can have no more than twelve zombies under its control at one time.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) slashing damage, or 7 (1d10 + 2) slashing damage if used with two hands.

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

SKELETON

Medium undead, lawful evil

Armor Class 13 (armor scraps)

Hit Points 13 (2d8 + 4)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Damage Vulnerabilities bludgeoning

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

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

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

ACTIONS

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

SPERNIK (CULT FANATIC)

Medium humanoid (human), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 13 (leather armor)

Hit Points 33 (6d8 + 6)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)

Skills Deception +4, Persuasion +4, Religion +2

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Dark Devotion. The fanatic has advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened.

Spellcasting. The fanatic is a 4th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 11, +3 to hit with spell attacks). The fanatic has the following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *light, sacred flame, thaumaturgy*

1st level (4 slots): *command, inflict wounds, shield of faith*

2nd level (3 slots): *hold person, spiritual weapon*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The fanatic makes two melee attacks.

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

ZOMBIE

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 8

Hit Points 22 (3d8 + 9)

Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	6 (-2)	16 (+3)	3 (-4)	6 (-2)	5 (-3)

Saving Throws Wis +0

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8

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

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

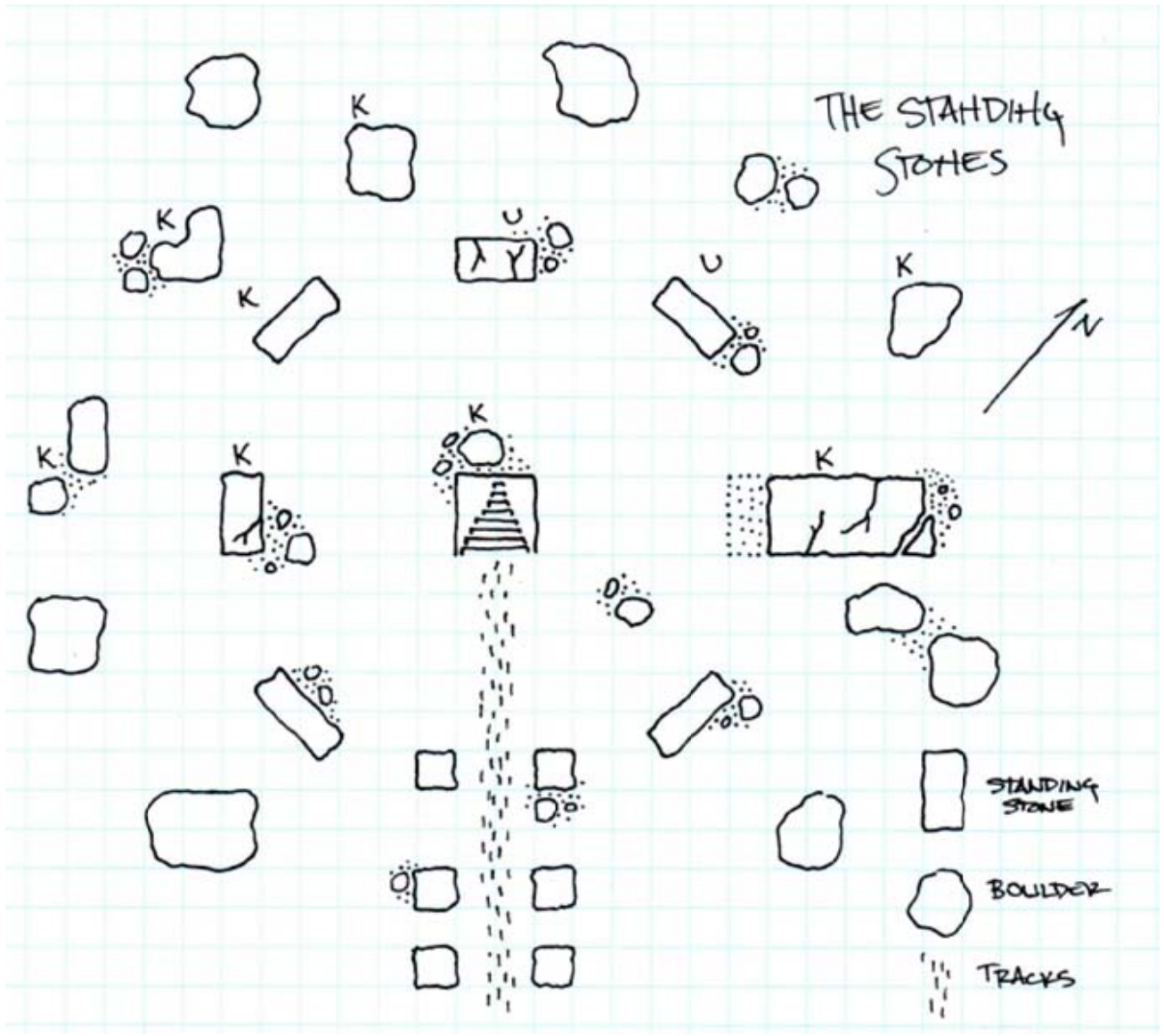
Undead Fortitude. If damage reduces the zombie to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the zombie drops to 1 hit point instead.

ACTIONS

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Hit: 4 (1d6 + 1) bludgeoning damage.

APPENDIX: MAP OF THE STANDING STONES



APPENDIX: MAP OF THE TEMPLE OF THE SCALE

