

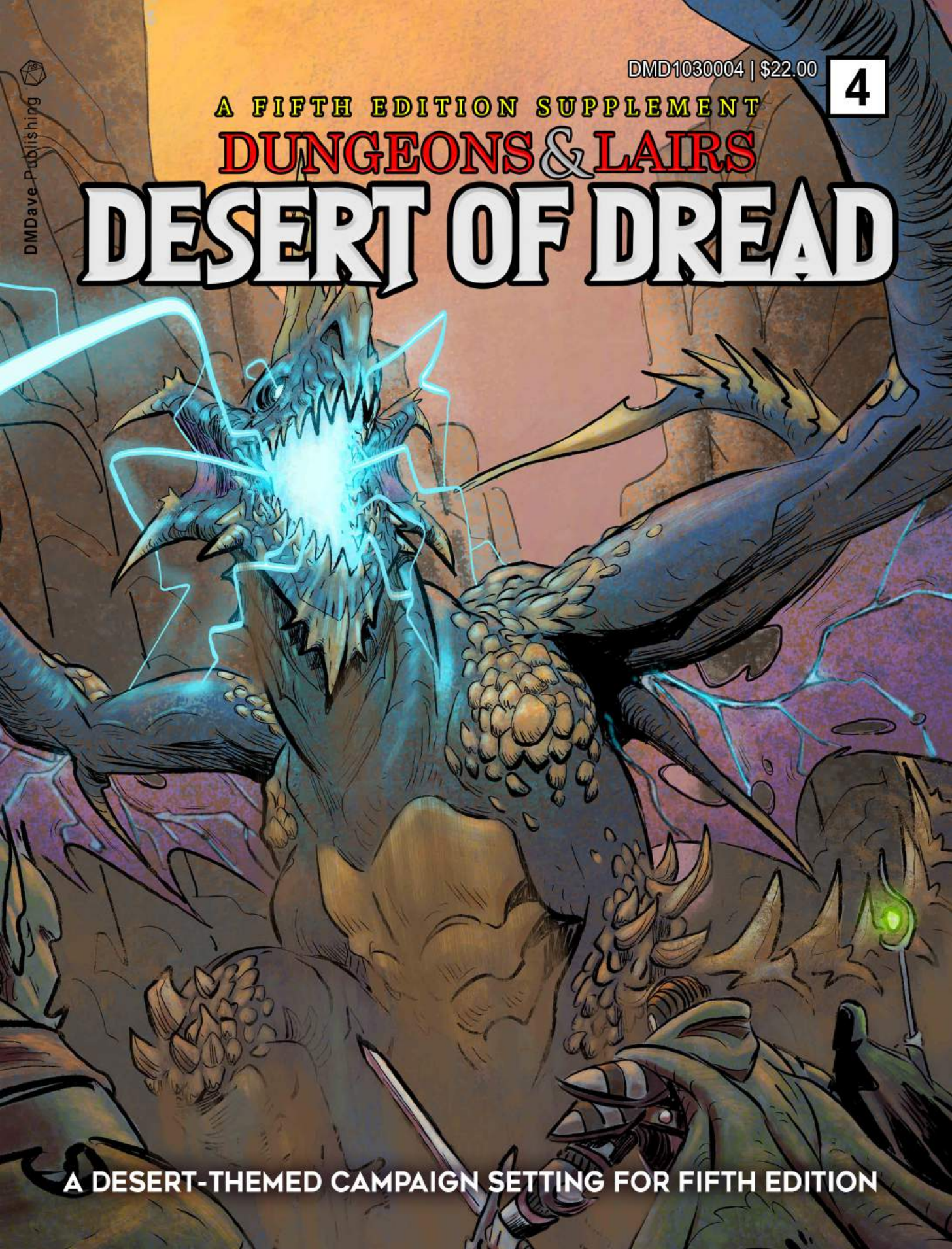
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A FIFTH EDITION SUPPLEMENT  
**DUNGEONS & LAIRS**

# DESERT OF DREAD



A DESERT-THEMED CAMPAIGN SETTING FOR FIFTH EDITION

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**A DESERT-THEMED CAMPAIGN SETTING  
FOR FIFTH EDITION**

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Hamrick Brands, LLC  
1527 Ashley Cir  
Norman, OK 73069

Design by Dave Hamrick  
Writing by Tim Andrews, Dave Hamrick, Ellie Hogan, Alexander LeForte, John Webb  
Layout Design by Tony Casper and Dave Hamrick  
Proofing by Tony Casper and John Webb  
Additional Assistance by Robert Carnicom and Aubrey Moore  
Maps by Inkarnate, Dungeon Scrawl, Tom Cartos, and Watabou  
Cover Illustration by Matias Lazaro  
Illustrations by Rick Hershey, Matias Lazaro, Nacho Lazaro, and Dean Spencer  
Additional Artwork from Shutterstock

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## How to Use This Book

Welcome to the *Dungeons & Lairs: Desert of Dread* campaign setting book, designed for Fifth Edition gamemasters looking to challenge their players with exciting and dangerous adventures in the sunbaked lands of a colossal desert. This book contains a range of content that can be used as it is detailed in the book or used separately in your own campaign.

Below is a breakdown of the chapters.

**Chapter 1. Desert of Dread.** This chapter details the eponymous (and nigh literal) sandbox region featured in this book, the Desert of Dread, and all of its keyed locations.

**Chapter 2. Sandara Oasis** This chapter details the desert city of Sandara Oasis which can be used as part of the sandbox or used separately in a campaign of your own.

**Chapter 3. Dungeons & Lairs.** This chapter offers five scalable, flexible adventures for you to use in your own campaign or as part of the sandbox adventure series included in this campaign book.

**Appendix. New Monsters.** The appendix includes 9 new monsters featured in Chapter 3's adventures. You may also use these monsters in your own campaigns, too.

# Two Ways to Use the Content

There is no limit to the ways you can use the content featured in this book. However, we've found that there are two popular ways to use the content in this book.

## As a Campaign Setting

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If you're looking for a fully-realized campaign setting that's ready to play straight out of the book, the Desert of Dread has everything you need. With a full realized city, NPCs, and adventure hooks to take characters from level 5 to 16, this book can serve as the foundation for an entire campaign.

If you wish to use the book this way, follow the steps on this page.

### 1. Establish Sandara Oasis

The first step in using the Desert of Dread as a campaign setting is to establish a base of operations for the characters. Chapter 2 details the massive desert city of Sandara Oasis. Alternatively, the characters could start in a village, fortress, trading post, castle, or some other location of your own design.

Once the players have a home base, they will be able to explore the surrounding wilderness and engage in a variety of adventures.

### 2. Introduce the First Hook

Once the base of operations has been established, you can introduce an adventure hook for one of the adventures included in Chapter 3 of this book. All of the adventures are scalable, so the GM can adjust them to fit the level of the party. Each adventure provides a unique challenge and a chance for the players to gain experience and treasure.

### 3. Award Milestone Levels

After completing an adventure, the characters should earn enough experience to gain one half of a level. For example, a 5th-level party that completes the adventure Efreeti Mirage will earn enough experience to get halfway to 6th-level.

### 4. Add More Adventures

Finally, you can use additional Dungeons & Lairs supplements from DMDave Publishing to create additional hooks and adventures set in the Desert of Dread. These supplements provide additional creatures, NPCs, and adventure ideas that can be easily integrated into the existing campaign setting. You can get more Dungeons & Lairs adventures from [dmdavepublishing.com](http://dmdavepublishing.com).

## As Individual Parts

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If you're a GM looking to integrate the Desert of Dread into your own campaign, the book provides a wealth of resources for you to draw from. You can use the featured settlement, NPCs, and random encounter tables to create a living and breathing world for your players to explore. The adventures included in the book can also be easily adapted to fit into your existing campaign, providing exciting and challenging encounters for your players to face.



## Chapter 1. Desert of Dread

The Desert of Dread is a campaign setting designed for Fifth Edition, set in a vast desert full of dangers and secrets. A large city named Sandara Oasis sits at the northernmost part of the desert, serving as a jumping-off point for desert travelers and adventurers. Plus, the city itself is home to plenty of challenges and opportunities. Within the desert, characters will face a range of threats, from marauding bands of gnolls to ancient temples filled with dangerous traps and guardians.

### General Features

The Desert of Dread is a vast expanse of wilderness covering over 2,700 square miles, featuring a mix of rocky badlands and windswept dunes. The weather is hot year round, with minor seasonal changes that

bring light precipitation in the late spring and early summer. The late summers are especially dreadful, with temperatures climbing to 120° F or higher.

Despite this rugged atmosphere, the desert is still home to beasts, humanoids, and plant life. The desert is also home to deadly monsters such as purple worms, efreeti, elementals, and even a tyrannical blue dragon. These creatures are adapted to surviving in the blistering hot desert landscape, and aren't afraid to fight to keep what's theirs.

While settlements are few and far between, nomadic tribes and merchant caravans frequently traverse the desert. Gnollish and orcish war bands lurk amid the ruins of old sandstone fortresses, and the large city of Sandara Oasis prospers thanks to the eponymous water source at its center.



## Travel Times

Travel in the desert is slow and difficult. Not only will travelers have to contend with the fierce climate, but much of the terrain is unforgiving. The hexes on the map of the Desert of Dread (page 4) measure 3 miles from the center of one hex to its neighbor.

The table below shows the number of hexes that the party can travel in a day. On-road travel refers to travel along well-tread pathways and roads, represented by the dashed lines on the map. Off-road travel refers to all other hexes.

## Navigation

Many of the adventures have their own methods for navigating their respective areas due to the strange or mysterious conditions that beset that particular section of the Desert of Dread. As an option, you can employ the following rules for navigating the desert when the characters are outside of those areas.

At the start of each day of traveling off-road, the players should designate a navigator. The navigator makes a DC 10 Wisdom

(Survival) check. If the check succeeds, the party travels in the desired direction without becoming lost. You can show the party where they are on the Desert of Dread map.

If the check fails, the party becomes lost for the day. Roll a d6 to determine the random hex that the characters enter, the results referencing the side of the hex the characters enter. The party remains lost until the next morning, when they can make another Wisdom (Survival) check to find their bearings.

## Foraging

The desert and surrounding areas have limited food and water sources for the characters. Each day, one or more characters that aren't navigating or keeping watch can make a DC 20 Wisdom (Survival) check to find food and water. On a successful check, roll 1d6 + the forager's Wisdom modifier to determine how much food (in pounds) the character finds, then repeat the roll for water (in gallons).

### DESERT OF DREAD DAILY TRAVEL TIMES

Pace	On-Road	Off-Road	Effect
Fast	16 hexes	8 hexes	-5 penalty to passive Wisdom (Perception) scores
Normal	12 hexes	6 hexes	—
Slow	8 hexes	4 hexes	Able to use Stealth

### DESERT OF DREAD HOURLY TRAVEL TIMES

Pace	On-Road	Off-Road	Effect
Fast	2 hexes	1 hex	-5 penalty to passive Wisdom (Perception) scores
Normal	1 ½ hexes	¾ hex	—
Slow	1 hex	½ hex	Able to use Stealth



# Weather

The desert is extremely hot year-round, although temperatures drop considerably at night (typically by 15 to 20° F). You can pick whatever weather best fits your campaign, or roll on the Weather tables to determine the weather for a given day.

The different types of weather temperatures are detailed below. Note that not all weather types appear on the tables.

**Cold:** Temperatures ranging from 0° to 40° F (-17° to 4° C).

**Extreme Cold:** Temperatures ranging from -20° to 0° F (-29° to -17° C). Creatures exposed to extreme cold must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw at the end of each hour or gain one level of exhaustion. Creatures with resistance or immunity to cold damage automatically succeed on the saving throw, as do creatures wearing cold weather gear (thick coats, gloves, and the like) and creatures naturally adapted to cold climates.

**Extreme Heat:** Temperatures ranging from 100° to 120° F (37° to 48° C). Creatures ex-

posed to extreme heat that do not have access to drinkable water must succeed on a Constitution saving throw at the end of each hour or gain one level of exhaustion. The DC is 5 for the first hour and increases by 1 for each additional hour. Creatures wearing medium or heavy armor or who are clad in heavy clothing have disadvantage on the saving throw. Creatures with resistance or immunity to fire damage automatically succeed on the saving throw, as do creatures naturally adapted to hot climates.

**Heavy Precipitation:** Everything within an area of heavy rain or heavy snowfall is lightly obscured, and creatures in the area have disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight. Heavy rain also extinguishes open flames and imposes disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing.

**Temperate:** Temperatures ranging from 40° to 80° F (4° to 27° C).

**Warm:** Temperatures ranging from 80° to 100° F (27° to 37° C).

## WEATHER TEMPERATURES

d20	Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter
1–15	Temperate	Warm	Warm	Temperate
16–17	Temperate	Temperate	Temperate	Temperate
18–20	Warm	Extreme heat	Extreme Heat	Warm

## WEATHER PRECIPITATION

d20	Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter
1–17	None	None	None	None
18–20	Light rain	Light rain	Light rain	Light rain

## Random Encounters

Roll a d20 three times each day that the characters are traveling in the Desert of Dread: once in the morning, once in the afternoon, and once in the evening (or when the characters are camping). The characters happen upon a random encounter on a result of 18-20 if they are off-road, or 19-20 if they are on-road. Roll percentile dice on the appropriate tables on the next two pages to determine the encounter that the characters experience.

Creatures marked with an asterisk are new monsters featured in the appendix.

Some of the adventures in this book have different rules for random encounters, which may supersede these, even if they use the same tables.

## RANDOM DESERT ENCOUNTERS LEVELS 1 TO 4

d100	Encounter
01–02	1d4 <b>commoner</b> nomads
03–04	1d6 <b>vultures</b>
05–06	1d4 + 1 <b>bandits</b>
07–08	3d4 <b>jackals</b>
09–10	2d4 <b>flying snakes</b>
11–12	1 <b>death dog</b>
13–14	1d6 + 1 <b>blood hawks</b>
15–16	2d4 <b>poisonous snakes</b>
17–18	1d4 <b>giant lizards</b>
19–20	1d6 + 2 <b>tribal warriors</b>
21–22	1d6 + 2 <b>kobolds</b>
23–24	1d3 <b>swarms of insects</b>
25–26	1d4 + 1 <b>giant wolf spiders</b>
27–28	1d6 <b>giant poisonous snakes</b>
29–30	1d6 <b>pseudodragons</b>
31–32	1 <b>gnoll</b> riding a <b>giant hyena</b>
33–34	1d2 <b>swarms of poisonous snakes</b>
35–36	1d6 + 2 <b>hyenas</b>
37–38	1 <b>ogre</b>
39–40	1d3 <b>tiefling scouts</b>
41–42	1 <b>giant constrictor snake</b>
43–44	1 <b>giant scorpion</b>
45–46	3d4 <b>stirges</b>
47–48	1d4 <b>dust mephits</b>
49–50	1d2 <b>gray thirsters*</b>

d100	Encounter
51–52	1d3 <b>giant spiders</b>
53–54	1d6 <b>bandits</b> riding <b>camels</b>
55–56	1d6 <b>jackalweres*</b>
57–58	1 <b>wight</b>
59–60	1d4 + 1 <b>hobgoblins</b>
61–62	1 <b>phase spider</b>
63–64	1 <b>mummy</b>
65–66	1 <b>berserker</b> and 1d6 + 1 <b>tribal warriors</b>
67–68	1d6 + 2 <b>orcs</b>
69–70	1d4 <b>dryads</b>
71–72	1d4 <b>lions</b>
73–74	2d4 <b>giant toads</b>
75–76	1d4 + 3 <b>giant vultures</b>
77–78	1d2 <b>giant scorpions</b>
79–80	1d2 <b>centaurs</b> (camel bodies)
81–82	1 <b>weretiger</b>
83–84	1 <b>bandit captain</b> and 2d4 <b>bandits</b>
85–86	1d3 <b>phase spiders</b>
87–88	1d6 + 1 <b>giant spiders</b>
89–90	1d6 + 1 <b>gnolls</b>
91–92	1d8 <b>hobgoblins</b>
93–94	2d6 <b>giant wasps</b>
95–96	1 <b>fire elemental</b>
97–98	1 <b>air elemental</b>
99–00	1 <b>medusa</b>

## RANDOM DESERT ENCOUNTERS LEVELS 5 AND HIGHER

d100	Encounter
01–02	1 <b>druid</b> and 1 <b>lion</b>
03–04	1 <b>weretiger</b>
05–06	1d3 <b>mummies</b>
07–08	1d3 <b>giant constrictor snakes</b>
09–10	1d4 <b>giant toads</b> and 2d4 <b>swarms of insects</b>
11–12	2d4 + 2 <b>gnolls</b>
13–14	1 <b>jackalwere</b>
15–16	1 <b>air elemental</b>
17–18	1 <b>lamia</b>
19–20	1 <b>hill giant</b>
21–22	1d3 <b>giant scorpions</b>
23–24	1d3 <b>gray thirsters*</b>
25–26	1d4 <b>berserkers</b> and 3d4 <b>tribal warriors</b>
27–28	1d6 <b>death dogs</b> and 2d6 <b>jackals</b>
29–30	2d4 <b>lions</b>
31–32	1d4 <b>kezais*</b>
33–34	1d4 <b>phase spiders</b>
35–36	2d4 + 1 <b>giant spiders</b>
37–38	2d6 <b>gnolls</b> and 4d4 <b>hyenas</b>
39–40	1 <b>young brass dragon</b>
41–42	1 <b>desert giant*</b>
43–44	1d6 <b>giant scorpions</b>
45–46	1d4 + 1 <b>swarms of poisonous snakes</b>
47–48	1d6 <b>wererats</b>
49–50	1d3 <b>coautls</b>

d100	Encounter
51–52	1 <b>hobgoblin veteran</b> and 2d4 + 2 <b>hobgoblins</b>
53–54	1 <b>young blue dragon</b>
55–56	1d4 <b>earth weirds*</b>
57–58	1d2 <b>trolls</b>
59–60	1d2 <b>fire elementals</b>
61–62	1 <b>druid</b> and 1d4 <b>giant scorpions</b>
63–64	2d4 <b>wights</b>
65–66	1d4 <b>orc berserkers</b> and 2d6 <b>orcs</b>
67–68	1d2 <b>wights*</b> and 1d8 <b>zombies</b>
69–70	1d6 <b>veteran</b> adventurers
71–72	1 <b>guardian naga</b>
73–74	1 <b>gynosphinx</b>
75–76	1 <b>efreeti</b>
77–78	1 <b>adult brass dragon</b>
79–80	3d10 <b>giant wasps</b>
81–82	1 <b>gnoll pack lord*</b> and 1d6 + 1 <b>gnoll scouts</b>
83–84	1 <b>fire elemental</b> and 1d4 + 1 <b>dust mephits</b>
85–86	2d6 <b>phase spiders</b>
87–88	2d6 <b>centaurs</b> (camel bodies)
89–90	3d4 <b>mummies</b>
91–92	1 <b>purple worm</b>
93–94	1d4 <b>trolls</b>
95–96	1 <b>lamia</b> and 2d4 <b>thugs</b>
97–98	1 <b>adult blue dragon</b>
99–00	1 <b>adult brass dragon</b>



## Chapter 2. Sandara Oasis

This chapter details the city of Sandara Oasis, the largest and most prominent settlement in the Desert of Dread. It is the perfect starting location or home base for the characters while they adventure among the windswept dunes of the surrounding wastelands.

As you first set foot in Sandara Oasis, you are awestruck by the sight of a thriving city amidst the vast desert expanse. Intricate sandstone buildings with ornate facades rise around you, their warm hues reflecting the golden sunlight. You notice the ingenious windcatchers and shaded courtyards designed to keep the city cool. A gentle breeze carries the scent of blossoming flowers from the lush gardens and palm groves that seem to defy the arid surroundings. The soft sound of flowing water from the network of canals surrounding the city's heart catches your attention, and you can't help but feel a sense of wonder and excitement as you venture deeper into this desert sanctuary.

Sandara Oasis, a shimmering gem in the heart of the desert, was founded centuries ago by a group of nomads seeking refuge from the scorching sun and unforgiving landscape. Legend has it that the nomads stumbled upon a rare, life-sustaining spring, and recognizing the significance of their discovery, they decided to settle around it. Over time, the small settlement blossomed into a thriving city, as word of the miraculous oasis spread and attracted merchants, settlers, and travelers from far and wide. The city's unique location and abundant resources allowed it to become a crucial trading hub, connecting distant lands and cultures while

fostering a rich and diverse community.

The founders of Sandara Oasis, being visionaries and skilled architects, designed the city with the desert environment in mind. The city is built around the life-giving spring, its crystal-clear waters flowing through an intricate network of canals that provide sustenance and support to the lush gardens and palm groves scattered throughout the metropolis. Ingenious water management systems, coupled with the construction of windcatchers and shaded courtyards, ensure that the city remains cool and comfortable even during the hottest days.

Sandara Oasis has a storied history marked by periods of prosperity and hardship. It has endured invasions, droughts, and sandstorms, each time emerging stronger and more resilient. The city's most recent calamity came in the form of a devastating earthquake that struck without warning, shattering buildings and disrupting the delicate water system that the city relies on for its survival. The once-verdant gardens and plazas now lie in ruins, and the canals are choked with debris and silt, threatening the oasis at the heart of Sandara.

Despite the destruction wrought by the earthquake, the people of Sandara Oasis have not given in to despair. With a collective spirit of determination and resilience, they have begun the arduous process of rebuilding their beloved city, brick by brick. They know that their city has weathered many storms in the past, and they have faith that, with hard work and unity, Sandara Oasis will once again rise from the sands and reclaim its place as the desert's crowning jewel.

## Basic Information

Those familiar with Sandara Oasis know the following facts about it.

### Population

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In Sandara Oasis, the diverse population consists of a mix of ethnicities, each contributing their unique skills and culture to the city's vibrant tapestry. The demographic shares are as follows:

- **Humans:** 40% - As adaptable settlers, humans have played a significant role in the city's growth and continue to be the driving force behind its trade and commerce.
- **Elves:** 20% - With their deep connection to nature and affinity for magic, the elves have been instrumental in maintaining the city's lush gardens and mystical aura.
- **Dwarves:** 15% - Renowned for their engineering prowess, the dwarves have contributed to the city's architectural marvels and have helped maintain its vital water systems.
- **Halflings:** 10% - Skilled in agriculture and blessed with a cheerful disposition, the halflings have brought their expertise in farming and a sense of community to the city.
- **Orcs:** 5% - Once considered outsiders, orcs have gradually found acceptance in Sandara Oasis, where they serve as skilled artisans and formidable defenders.
- **Gnomes:** 5% - Known for their inventiveness and curiosity, gnomes have enriched the city with their technological innovations and whimsical creations.
- **Tieflings:** 3% - With their unique heritage and innate magical abilities, tieflings have found a place in Sandara Oasis, where they work as diplomats,

scholars, and entertainers.

- **Other races:** 2% - Sandara Oasis is also home to various other races, such as dragonborn, birdfolk, and giantkin, each adding their unique flavor to the city's diverse population.

### Government

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The government of Sandara Oasis is a council-based system, known as the Circle of Wisdom, which comprises representatives from each of the city's major races. This inclusive approach ensures that the diverse needs and interests of the population are taken into consideration when making decisions. Among the esteemed council members are Elira Silverleaf, an elven mage renowned for her wisdom, and Drogar Ironbeard, a dwarf engineer with a reputation for innovation. The council convenes regularly to address Sandara Oasis's challenges and opportunities, operating on a consensus-based model that promotes open dialogue and collaboration among the different races and cultures that call this desert gem their home.

### Defense

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Sandara Oasis boasts a well-organized and multilayered defense system that leverages the unique strengths of its diverse inhabitants. The city's defense force, the Sandara Sentinels, is a formidable military unit comprising skilled warriors, archers, and mages from various races. The city's sandstone walls, watchtowers, and fortified gates, along with the strategic manipulation of its network of canals, contribute to the architectural defense strategy. The Desert Eyes, a group of skilled scouts and spies, monitor the surrounding desert for potential threats, while the diplomatic Circle of

Wisdom has established alliances with neighboring settlements and powerful regional entities. This comprehensive approach ensures that Sandara Oasis remains well-defended and prepared for any challenges that may arise.

## Commerce

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The commerce of Sandara Oasis is a vibrant and bustling facet of the city's life, with its strategic location in the desert making it an essential trading hub. The diverse population, with each race contributing its unique crafts, goods, and resources, enriches the city's markets and trading centers. Exotic spices, textiles, precious metals, magical artifacts, and other sought-after items can be found in the colorful bazaars and market squares, attracting merchants and travelers from far and wide. The local economy also thrives on the cultivation and export of the city's renowned date palms and other agricultural products, made possible by the oasis's life-sustaining waters. A robust network of caravans and trade routes connects Sandara Oasis with distant lands, ensuring the flow of goods, ideas, and cultural exchange that helps maintain the city's prosperity and dynamism.

## Heraldry

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The heraldry of Sandara Oasis features a radiant blue pool with a flourishing palm tree at its heart, symbolizing the life-giving oasis and the city's connection to nature. Surrounding the central emblem are four distinct symbols representing the major races in the city, showcasing the unity and diversity of its inhabitants.

## Notable Locations

This section details the most well known locations in Sandara Oasis, as shown on the map of the city on page 16.

### Springwell District

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This central neighborhood is built around the original life-giving spring that led to the city's founding. It is home to the Circle of Wisdom's council chambers, as well as the city's most important religious and cultural institutions.

#### 1. The Council Chambers

This grand building is where the Circle of Wisdom meets to make important decisions for the city. Councilor Elira Silverleaf, an elven mage, is a prominent member known for her wisdom and diplomatic skills.

#### 2. Oasis Spring Temple

This sacred place of worship and reflection is dedicated to the deity who is believed to have blessed the city with its life-giving spring. High Priestess Liana Watersong oversees the temple and is revered for her spiritual guidance.

#### 3. The Living Waters Library

An extensive collection of scrolls, books, and artifacts, the Living Waters Library documents the history, knowledge, and cultures of Sandara Oasis and beyond. The head librarian, Glimmerwick the Gnome, is a renowned scholar and a fount of information.

#### 4. The Market of Miracles

This bustling marketplace is filled with exotic goods, fresh produce, and local crafts, where people gather to trade and socialize. Razak the Merchant, a friendly and charismatic human trader, is a well-known figure among the market's many vendors.



# SANDARA OASIS



## 5. The Celestial Observatory

The Celestial Observatory serves as a center for astronomy and astrological research. Nalaar Starwhisper, a knowledgeable and dedicated tiefling astronomer, can often be found here, gazing at the heavens and sharing his discoveries with visitors.

## Sunspire Heights

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An affluent residential area known for its elegant sandstone villas and lush private gardens, Sunspire Heights is inhabited primarily by the city's wealthier residents, including merchants, high-ranking officials, and successful artisans.

## 6. The Grand Promenade

This luxurious boulevard lined with elegant sandstone villas, lush gardens, and ornate fountains is where the wealthy residents of Sunspire Heights often take leisurely strolls. Lady Seraphina Brightgaze, a distinguished human noble, is a prominent figure in the area, known for her philanthropy and extravagant soirées.

## 7. The Golden Oasis Club

The Golden Oasis is an exclusive social club that caters to the city's elite, offering exquisite dining, curated events, and a refined atmosphere. Torvald Ironbeard, a successful dwarf entrepreneur and club member, can often be found engaged in high-stakes games of strategy with other influential patrons.

## 8. The Gallery of Wonders

This prestigious art gallery showcases the finest works of renowned artists from Sandara Oasis and beyond. Curator Elythria Moonson, a discerning and well-connected elven art connoisseur, oversees the gallery's collection and exhibitions.

## 9. The Sunspire Academy

The Sunspire Academy is a distinguished institution offering education in various fields such as politics, economics, and the arts to the city's privileged youth. Headmaster Alaric Stormrider, a respected human scholar and educator, is dedicated to nurturing the next generation of leaders.

## 10. The Verdant Sanctuary

This sprawling, meticulously maintained park features rare and exotic plants, soothing water features, and secluded spots for relaxation and contemplation. Master Gardener Otho Leafwhisper, a gifted halfling horticulturist, is responsible for the park's enchanting design and upkeep.

## Artisan's Quarter

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A bustling neighborhood filled with workshops, studios, and galleries, the Artisan's Quarter is where the city's skilled craftspeople create and showcase their work. This area is also home to numerous markets and bazaars, making it a hub for commerce and trade.

## 11. The Crafting Coliseum

This vibrant marketplace at the heart of the quarter is where skilled artisans showcase their wares, from intricate jewelry to expertly crafted weapons and armor. Talia Blackhammer, a renowned orcish blacksmith, is famous for her masterfully forged creations and welcoming demeanor.

## 12. The Loom of Dreams

This prestigious textile workshop is known for producing exquisite fabrics, tapestries, and garments. Master Weaver Imani Silkweaver, a skilled human artisan, oversees the workshop and is sought after for her expertise in creating intricate patterns and designs.

### 13. The Enchanted Emporium

The Enchanted Emporium is a magical shop filled with a wide array of enchanted items, potions, and spell components. The enigmatic gnome proprietor, Fizzlewick Sparkshimmer, is a knowledgeable and resourceful source for all things arcane.

### 14. The Painted Symphony

This lively venue is where painters, musicians, and poets gather to share their work, collaborate, and be inspired. Raelis Starstrider, an elven bard and local celebrity, often performs her enchanting melodies to the delight of the crowd.

### 15. The Sculptor's Sanctuary

A peaceful garden adorned with beautifully carved statues and installations, the Sculptor's Sanctuary was created by the city's talented sculptors. Toras Stoneheart, a gifted dwarf sculptor, is renowned for his lifelike creations that captivate and inspire visitors.

## Twilight Gardens

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This serene and verdant district houses the majority of the city's elven population. Known for its magical ambiance, the Twilight Gardens features beautifully landscaped parks, enchanting groves, and a renowned academy of magic.

### 16. The Moonlit Grove

The Moonlit Grove is an enchanting park filled with bioluminescent flora that emits a soft, ethereal glow in the evenings. The park's caretaker, Lysandria Nightbloom, an elven druid, is known for her dedication to preserving the delicate balance of this magical ecosystem.

### 17. The Whispering Library

The Whispering Library houses a vast collection of ancient elven scrolls, tomes, and manuscripts within an elegant, tree-entwined structure. Archivist Thalion Silveroak, an esteemed elven scholar, oversees the library and shares his wealth of knowledge with visitors seeking wisdom.

### 18. The Elysian Baths

This series of natural hot springs and pools are nestled amidst lush foliage, providing a tranquil and rejuvenating retreat. Laeriel Watershimmer, a skilled elven healer, offers her expertise in restorative therapies and medicinal herbs to patrons seeking relaxation and wellbeing.

### 19. The Crystal Spire

A striking tower constructed from enchanted crystal, the Spire serves as both an arcane academy and a place of meditation. Master mage Elandra Starweaver, an accomplished elven spellcaster, guides and mentors aspiring mages in their magical pursuits.

### 20. The Celestial Stage

This open-air amphitheater is where elven musicians, dancers, and performers showcase their talents under the stars. Maestro Arien Lightfoot, a renowned elven conductor and composer, often graces the stage with his mesmerizing and harmonious performances.

## Ironforge Enclave

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Ironforge Enclave is the primary residential and industrial area for the city's dwarven population. This neighborhood is characterized by its impressive stone architecture, intricate engineering projects, and the constant hum of activity from its many forges and workshops.



## 21. The Great Forge

It's here at this massive, bustling foundry where skilled dwarven smiths craft masterpieces of metalwork, from intricate jewelry to durable armor and weapons. Master Blacksmith Balin Firebeard is famous for his exceptional craftsmanship and dedication to the art of smithing.

## 22. The Stonemason's Guildhall

The ancient guildhall is a robust structure where dwarven masons gather to discuss techniques, plan architectural projects, and share their knowledge. Guildmaster Durin Stonehammer, an experienced and innovative stonemason, leads the guild and oversees many of the city's major construction projects.

## 23. The Gilded Tankard

A popular tavern renowned for its extensive collection of fine ales, meads, and spirits, the Gilded Tankard offers a warm and welcoming atmosphere for patrons. The tavern's proprietor, Hilda Ironfoot, is a jovial dwarf with a flair for storytelling and a talent for brewing unique concoctions.

## 24. The Subterranean Market

A network of underground tunnels and chambers filled with shops and stalls, this market is where merchants trade in precious gems, minerals, and other rare resources unearthed by the dwarven miners. Gemologist Borin Gemseeker is a respected figure in the market, known for his expertise in identifying and appraising valuable stones.

## 25. The Hall of Ancestors

A sacred space carved deep within the earth, the Hall is adorned with intricate reliefs and statues commemorating the dwarven heroes and legends of the past. High Priest Thraindor Earthshaper presides over the hall, leading rituals and ceremonies that honor the memory and legacy of the city's dwarven forebears.

## The Shifting Shadows

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The Shifting Shadows is a notorious slum in Sandara Oasis, where a labyrinth of narrow, winding alleys and ramshackle dwellings provide refuge for criminals and the downtrodden. The district is rife with crime and poverty, as its inhabitants struggle to survive and navigate the city's darker side.

## 26. The Shadow's Den

The Shadow's Den is a dimly lit, clandestine tavern where criminals, thieves, and unsavory characters gather to conduct illicit deals and exchange information. The mysterious bartender, Marik the Sly, is a discreet source of rumors and valuable information for those who can gain his trust.

## 27. The Broken Chalice

Seemingly a crumbling, abandoned temple, the Chalice now serves as a hideout and meeting place for the city's most notorious thieves' guild. The guild's enigmatic leader, Lysa Nightshade, is a cunning mastermind who orchestrates heists and criminal operations throughout the city.

## 28. The Beggar's Bazaar

This makeshift market is where stolen goods, contraband, and counterfeit items are traded and bartered amongst the district's residents. Old One-Eyed Jak, a seasoned fence, is well-known for his ability to discreetly offload

valuable items and find buyers for even the most difficult-to-sell goods.

## 29. The Serpent's Coil

The Coil is a dangerous gambling den where high-stakes games of chance and skill attract thrill-seekers and desperate souls. Voren Blackfang, a charismatic half-orc cardsharp, is a notorious figure in the den, often enticing unsuspecting victims into games they cannot win.

## 30. The Hollow Refuge

This dilapidated shelter is run by a compassionate half-elf healer named Alira Softsight, who provides care and aid to the injured and sick residents of the Shifting Shadows, despite the dangers and challenges of her surroundings.

# Notable Organizations

These are the most important movers and shakers in Sandara Oasis.

## The Circle of Wisdom

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The Circle of Wisdom is the primary governing body of Sandara Oasis, responsible for creating and enforcing laws, maintaining order, and ensuring the prosperity of the city. Composed of representatives from each of the city's major races, the Circle strives to promote cooperation and unity among the diverse population of Sandara. Their decisions are made through a democratic process, with each member bringing their unique perspective and expertise to the table, ensuring that the interests of all inhabitants are considered.

The Circle of Wisdom meets regularly in the Council Chambers within the Springwell District to address various issues facing the city, from managing resources and overseeing

public projects to handling diplomatic relations with neighboring lands. Public hearings and forums are held periodically, allowing citizens to voice their concerns and contribute to the decision-making process. By fostering an open and inclusive atmosphere, the Circle of Wisdom aims to create a fair and just society for all residents of Sandara Oasis.

Several notable members of the Circle of Wisdom include Elira Silverleaf, Tiberius Ironstride, Drogar Ironbeard, and Gark the Knuckle. Each representative is dedicated to the well-being of their respective communities, while also striving for the greater good of Sandara Oasis as a whole. Through collaboration and mutual understanding, the Circle of Wisdom works tirelessly to preserve the city's unique cultural heritage and ensure a bright future for all its inhabitants.

## The Sandara Sentinels

The Sandara Sentinels are an elite military unit responsible for the protection and security of Sandara Oasis and its inhabitants. Highly trained and disciplined, the Sentinels consist of skilled warriors, mages, and archers from various races within the city, working together to defend their home from external threats and maintain internal order. The Sentinels are respected for their dedication and unwavering commitment to the safety of Sandara, often serving as a symbol of unity and strength for the city's diverse population. Under the leadership of Commander Lyra Swiftwind, a highly skilled half-elf warrior, the Sandara Sentinels are organized into various specialized units, each with their own unique focus and expertise. These include the city guard, responsible for patrolling the streets and maintaining public order; the border patrol, tasked with monitoring the

desert outskirts and ensuring the security of trade routes; and the arcane unit, composed of skilled mages and spellcasters who provide magical support and defense. This structured organization allows the Sentinels to effectively respond to a wide range of potential threats and challenges.

In addition to their primary duties, the Sandara Sentinels also engage in regular training exercises, honing their skills and ensuring their readiness for any situation. They often collaborate with other organizations within the city, such as the Desert Eyes intelligence network, to gather information on potential threats and maintain a strong defense against any adversaries. Through their diligent efforts, the Sandara Sentinels play a vital role in preserving the peace and prosperity of Sandara Oasis, ensuring a safe and secure environment for all who call the city home.

## The Nightshade Brotherhood

The Broken Chalice is the base of operations for the Nightshade Brotherhood, the most notorious thieves' guild in all of Sandara Oasis. Led by the cunning and elusive Lysa Nightshade, the Nightshade Brotherhood has a reputation for pulling off some of the city's most daring heists and illicit operations. The guild operates covertly and effectively, using a vast network of informants, spies, and bribed officials to stay one step ahead of the law and its enemies.

The Nightshade Brotherhood is composed of skilled thieves, burglars, and cutpurses from all walks of life, united by their desire for wealth, power, and status. Each member is trained in the art of thievery, honing their skills in lockpicking, pickpocketing, and stealth. They often specialize in specific areas of expertise, such as forgery, assassination, or infiltration, allowing the guild to undertake a

wide range of illicit operations. Members of the Nightshade Brotherhood are fiercely loyal to their guild and its leader, bound by a strict code of conduct that ensures secrecy and discretion.

Despite the danger and illegality of their activities, the Nightshade Brotherhood has a certain level of respect within the city, particularly among those who value cunning and resourcefulness. The guild is known for its ability to acquire rare and valuable items, from priceless artifacts to magical artifacts, making them a valuable resource for those seeking such treasures. The Nightshade Brotherhood also operates several legitimate businesses throughout the city, serving as a cover for their more nefarious activities. The guild's influence extends beyond Sandara Oasis, as they maintain connections with other criminal organizations throughout the region.

## Notable NPCs

Here are some of the most influential, helpful, and resources NPCs in Sandara Oasis.

### Patrons and Quest-Givers

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The following NPCs can serve as quest-givers and patrons for the characters while they are in Sandara Oasis.

#### Councilor Elira Silverleaf

As a member of the Circle of Wisdom, Councilor Silverleaf tends to send characters on diplomatic or investigative missions that require discretion and a clear head. Examples of tasks that she might assign include investigating a disturbance in one of the city's districts, delivering a message to a neighboring city, or negotiating a delicate treaty with a visiting diplomat.

Suggested hooks:

##### **Blue Dragon Plateau (page 30).**

Councilor Silverleaf, concerned about the

increasing tension between Sandara Oasis and the cultists of the Blue Dragon Plateau, tasks the characters with a covert mission to gather information on Zolar's true intentions.

**Efreeti Mirage (page 46).** Councilor Silverleaf receives reports of adventurers disappearing after seeking refuge at the rumored Efreeti Hotel. Suspecting foul play, she tasks the characters with investigating the Mirage Hotel, unraveling its true nature, and rescuing any individuals trapped within.

**Gnoll Burrows (page 56).** Councilor Silverleaf receives reports of a mysterious and powerful necromancer, Hak'shud, who has infiltrated the highest levels of Sandara Oasis and is using the remains of a giant purple worm as his lair. Concerned about the safety of the city, she tasks the characters with infiltrating the Flesh Burrows, rooting out the gnoll minions, and ultimately confronting Hak'shud before he completes his flesh golem and unleashes it upon Sandara Oasis.

**Jackalwere Warren (page 66).** Councilor Silverleaf receives urgent pleas from the nearby desert settlements about the rising threat of the jackalweres and their leader, Rak'Shen. Concerned for the safety of the region, she tasks the characters with entering the Jackalwere Warren, locating Rak'Shen, and eliminating him along with his followers.

**Raider Redoubt (page 76).** Councilor Silverleaf, aware of the escalating conflict between Gark the Knuckle and the orc raiders, seeks to preserve the fragile peace in Sandara Oasis. She tasks the characters with mediating between the two factions, uncovering the truth behind Gark's corruption, and finding a peaceful resolution to the situation.

## Zarek Nightwhisper

Director of the Desert Eyes, Zarek is often the go-to NPC for characters who are seeking information or require stealth and cunning in their missions. He may task the characters with infiltrating a criminal organization, retrieving an item from a heavily guarded location, or gathering intel on a potential threat to the city.

Suggested hooks:

**Blue Dragon Plateau (page 30).** Zarek Nightwhisper approaches the characters with a clandestine proposition—infiltrate Zolar's inner circle and retrieve a valuable artifact that holds the key to Zolar's power, an enormous blue gem (see page 42).

**Efreeti Mirage (page 46).** Zarek Nightwhisper uncovers a disturbing rumor surrounding the Efreeti Hotel and its connection to the criminal underworld. He enlists the characters to infiltrate the Mirage Hotel under the pretense of being interested patrons, gather evidence of Master Manasseh's illicit activities, and disrupt his operations.

**Gnoll Burrows (page 56).** Zarek Nightwhisper discovers whispers among the criminal underbelly of Sandara Oasis about a powerful source of dark magic hidden within the rotting remains of a giant purple worm. He enlists the characters to investigate and retrieve any valuable artifacts or knowledge that Hak'shud may be utilizing.

**Jackalwere Warren (page 66).** Zarek Nightwhisper learns of the ancient tomb-turned-lair inhabited by the jackalweres and their charismatic leader Rak'Shen. Intrigued by the power of the amulet and recognizing the threat the jackalweres pose, he tasks the characters with infiltrating the Jackalwere Warren and acquiring the fabled amulet.

**Raider Redoubt (page 76).** Zarek Nightwhisper, sympathizing with the orc raiders' plight, covertly reaches out to the characters for assistance. He tasks them with disrupting Gark's operations, intercepting his caravans, and retrieving the stolen goods to redistribute them back to the orcish community.

## Commander Lyra Swiftwind

Leader of the Sandara Sentinels, Commander Swiftwind is the NPC to talk to when combat and tactics are required. She may assign the characters to protect a VIP, eliminate a dangerous monster, or investigate a security breach in one of the city's important locations.

Suggested hooks:

**Blue Dragon Plateau (page 30).** Commander Swiftwind, recognizing the need for a strike against Zolar's forces, assigns the characters a dangerous mission: lead a small, elite team of Sentinels (ten **veterans**) to launch a surprise attack on a key outpost in the Blue Dragon Plateau.

**Efreeti Mirage (page 46).** Commander Swiftwind receives distress signals from a group of elite Sentinels who went missing while investigating the rumored Efreeti Hotel. Fearing for the lives of her comrades, she assigns the characters the task of mounting a daring rescue mission.

**Gnoll Burrows (page 56).** Commander Swiftwind receives distress signals from the Sandara Sentinels who were tasked with guarding the remains of Hak'shud but have mysteriously vanished. She urgently assigns the characters with a rescue mission, venturing into the depths of the Flesh Burrows to locate and rescue the missing Sentinels.

**Jackalwere Warren (page 66).** Commander Swiftwind receives distress calls



from desert settlements terrorized by the jackalweres and their newfound unity under Rak'Shen. Fearing the spread of the Sandfang Dynasty, she assigns the characters the task of liberating the region from the jackalweres' reign of terror.

**Raider Redoubt (page 76).** Commander Swiftwind, responsible for maintaining the security of Sandara Oasis, receives reports of increased orc raiding activities. Concerned about the safety of travelers and caravans, she assigns the characters with the task of putting an end to the orc raiders.

## Lysa Nightshade

The mysterious leader of the organization that shares her name, Lysa tends to send characters on heists or other illegal missions that require cunning and stealth. She may task the characters with stealing an important item, infiltrating a heavily guarded location, or taking out a rival criminal organization

Suggested hooks:

**Blue Dragon Plateau (page 30).** Lysa Nightshade, seeking to disrupt Zolar's control over the region's criminal underworld, hires the characters for a daring heist—steal a legendary artifact from Zolar's hoard deep within the Blue Dragon Plateau.

**Efreeti Mirage (page 46).** Lysa Nightshade, having discovered the true nature of the Efreeti Hotel, believes that within its depths lies a treasure trove of forbidden knowledge and artifacts. She hires the characters to accompany her on a dangerous expedition to the Mirage Hotel, promising them a share of the spoils.

**Gnoll Burrows (page 56).** Lysa Nightshade, seeking forbidden and powerful magic, hears rumors of Hak'shud's necromantic activities within the rotting remains of the giant purple worm. Intrigued, she hires the characters to accompany her on

a dangerous expedition into the Flesh Burrows to retrieve arcane artifacts or knowledge.

**Jackalwere Warren (page 66).** Lysa Nightshade, seeking to expand her criminal empire and harness the power of the amulet, becomes intrigued by the legends of the Jackalwere Warren. She hires the characters to accompany her on a dangerous mission to infiltrate the tomb, seize the amulet, and bring Rak'Shen under her control.

**Raider Redoubt (page 76).** Lysa Nightshade, always seeking opportunities for profit, sees the conflict between Gark and the orc raiders as a chance to expand her criminal network. She hires the characters to infiltrate both sides and play them against each other, ultimately ensuring her own gain in the chaos.

## High Priest Thraindor Earthshaper

As the leader of the Hall of Ancestors and the de facto leader of Sandara Oasis' dwarven population, High Priest Thraindor is the NPC to talk to when characters need to undertake a spiritual or religious quest. He may require them to recover a lost artifact, purify a sacred location, or perform a ritual that honors the city's ancestors.

Suggested hooks:

**Blue Dragon Plateau (page 30).** High Priest Thraindor Earthshaper reveals a prophecy that foretells the downfall of Zolar at the hands of a chosen group of heroes. The characters, identified as the chosen ones, must embark on a sacred quest through the unforgiving desert to find and awaken an ancient guardian spirit (**guardian naga**) that can aid them in their battle against Zolar.

**Efreeti Mirage (page 46).** High Priest Thraindor Earthshaper receives visions of an ancient artifact hidden within the depths of

the Efreeti Hotel, an artifact that could potentially be used to banish or subdue Master Manasseh. He tasks the characters with retrieving the artifact, guiding them with his spiritual guidance and wisdom.

**Gnoll Burrows (page 56).** High Priest Thraindor Earthshaper receives visions from the ancestors warning him of a great evil emanating from the flesh of a giant purple worm. He tasks the characters with purging the corruption and restoring sanctity to the remains.

**Jackalwere Warren (page 66).** High Priest Thraindor Earthshaper receives visions warning him of the dark forces gathering within the Jackalwere Warren. He tasks the characters with purging the tomb of the jackalweres' presence and reclaiming the amulet as a sacred artifact.

**Raider Redoubt (page 76).** High Priest Thraindor Earthshaper, believing in the power of redemption and unity, tasks the characters with bringing peace and understanding between Gark and the orc raiders.

## Allies

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Whenever the characters need assistance—be it information, services, or just muscle—the following NPCs may serve as valuable allies.

### Captain Valtor Blackwing

As a veteran member of the Sandara Sentinels, Captain Blackwing has seen his fair share of combat and can offer the characters valuable advice on tactics and strategy. He may also provide them with advanced weaponry or equipment that can give them an edge in battle.

### Isadora Goldfeather

A skilled herbalist and healer, Isadora is a valuable ally for characters who find themselves in need of medical aid or other

forms of support. She may provide the characters with healing potions or remedies, or offer advice on how to survive in the harsh desert environment.

### Elanor Winterblade

A talented bard and entertainer, Elanor can offer the characters assistance in a variety of ways. She may help them gain access to a difficult-to-reach location by performing for the guards, or use her charisma and social skills to help them negotiate a tricky diplomatic situation.

### Kethral Shadowstep

A former member of the Nightshade Brotherhood, Kethral left the guild after becoming disillusioned with its criminal activities. He now operates as a freelance spy and information broker, using his extensive knowledge of the city's underworld to provide valuable intel to those who need it.

### Drog Stonefist

A formidable dwarf warrior who now operates as a caravan guard, Drog is a valuable ally for characters who need protection while traveling through the dangerous desert. He may offer to accompany them on a journey, providing them with combat support and advice on how to navigate the treacherous terrain.

### Priestess Liana Watersong

As the leader of the Oasis Spring Temple, Liana is a skilled priestess who can offer the characters valuable advice on matters of spirituality and magic. She may provide them with protective blessings, offer to perform a powerful ritual, or even grant them access to rare and powerful magical artifacts.

## Enemies

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There are plenty of troublesome NPCs operating out of Sandara Oasis, too.

### Gark the Knuckle

A corrupt member of the Circle of Wisdom, Gark is known for his ruthless tactics and willingness to use violence to achieve his goals.

### Tarkus Bloodclaw

A powerful orc warlord who leads a band of raiders, Tarkus is a constant threat to the city's borders and trade routes. He may become an enemy of the characters if they interfere with his operations or get in the way of his plans.

### Commander Kiera Stormborn

A high-ranking member of the Sandara Sentinels, Kiera is known for her extreme methods and disregard for civilian casualties. She may become an enemy of the characters if they refuse to carry out one of her dangerous missions or if they uncover evidence of her corrupt activities.

### Valentina Blackheart

A former member of the Nightshade Brotherhood who now leads her own criminal organization, the Obsidian Order, Valentina is known for her ruthlessness and cunning.

### High Priest Malakai Firebrand

A rival of High Priest Thraindor, Malakai leads his own faction within the Hall of Ancestors and seeks to expand his influence over the city. He may become an enemy of the characters if they refuse to support him or interfere with his plans.

## Things to Do

If the characters are looking for some interesting and unique things to do while they're in Sandara Oasis, here's a few ideas.

### Sand-Surfing Competition

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The vast desert surrounding Sandara Oasis is filled with towering sand dunes that are perfect for sand-surfing. The characters could join a competition, racing down the dunes on specially designed boards and facing challenges such as wind gusts, sudden drops, and unexpected obstacles.

### Hall of Ancestors Performance

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The Hall of Ancestors is the center of dwarven spiritual and cultural life in Sandara Oasis, and its halls are filled with art, music, and theater. The characters could attend a performance of traditional music and dance, or even participate in a dramatic reenactment of an important event in the city's history. This also gives them a chance to meet the rival faction leaders, Thraindor Earthshaper and Malakai Firebrand.

### Circle of Wisdom Banquets

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The Circle of Wisdom is the most influential political organization in Sandara Oasis, and its members often host grand banquets and feasts to celebrate important events or to honor visiting dignitaries. The characters could attend one of these banquets, enjoying the exotic food, music, and entertainment, while also rubbing shoulders with some of the most powerful figures in the city. However, they may also need to navigate political intrigue, rivalries, and hidden agendas as they mingle with the high society of Sandara Oasis.

## Random Encounters

Every 8 hours the characters are in Sandara Oasis, roll a d20. On a result of 18–20, a random encounter occurs. Choose from or roll on the Random Encounters in Sandara Oasis table to determine the nature of the encounter.

### RANDOM ENCOUNTERS IN SANDARA OASIS

d20	Encounter
1	A street performer captivates the crowd with a mesmerizing display of fire manipulation.
2	A mischievous pickpocket ( <b>commoner</b> ) attempts to snatch a character's belongings, only to be caught by a vigilant city <b>guard</b> .
3	A lively outdoor market is bustling with exotic goods, enticing aromas, and colorful characters.
4	A sudden sandstorm engulfs the city, forcing everyone to seek shelter and hunker down until it passes.
5	A lost child approaches the characters, tearfully asking for help in finding their way back home.
6	A street food vendor offers the characters a taste of their renowned spicy delicacy, warning them it packs a fiery punch.
7	The characters stumble upon a hidden underground gambling den, where fortunes are won and lost amidst the tension-filled atmosphere.
8	A <b>desert giant</b> (see the appendix) merchant presents the characters with a rare and valuable artifact, claiming it has mystical properties.
9	A group of street urchins challenges the characters to a game of improvised street soccer, showcasing their impressive skills.

d20	Encounter
10	A flamboyant fortune teller ( <b>spy</b> ) offers to read the characters' palms, revealing cryptic glimpses into their futures.
11	A heated argument erupts between two rival merchants.
12	The city is abuzz with a colorful parade celebrating a local festival, complete with music, dancing, and elaborate floats.
13	A street artist sketches a stunning portrait of one of the characters, capturing their likeness with uncanny accuracy.
14	A street preacher ( <b>cultist</b> ) delivers a passionate sermon, warning the city's inhabitants of an impending catastrophe and calling for repentance.
15	A mysterious beggar offers a cryptic riddle to the characters, promising a valuable reward if they can solve it.
16	The characters witness an acrobatic performance by a troupe of skilled performers, displaying breathtaking feats of agility and coordination.
17	A mischievous monkey ( <b>baboon</b> ) steals a character's prized possession and leads them on a comical chase through the streets.
18	A street magician ( <b>mage</b> ) wows the crowd with mind-bending illusions, leaving the characters questioning reality.
19	The characters stumble upon a hidden garden oasis within the city, filled with blooming flowers and soothing fountains.
20	A local historian ( <b>noble</b> ) approaches the characters, eager to share fascinating tales and legends about the city's history.



## Chapter 3. Dungeons & Lairs

The adventures in this chapter are all designed for four characters with an average party level (APL) of 5, 8, 11, or 14. This section offers general guidelines on scaling the adventures to better fit your party's level. You are free to run these adventures individually or part of a larger campaign, in any order that you like.

### Running the Adventures

To run the adventures, you need the three Fifth Edition core rulebooks. You can access a free basic ruleset from the official source if you don't have a copy. You can also find many of the monsters for free on open source websites like [5thsrd.org](http://5thsrd.org).

Text that appears in a box like this is meant to be read aloud or paraphrased for the players when their characters arrive at a location or under specific circumstances, as described in the text.

When a creature's name appears in **bold** type, that's a visual cue pointing you to its stat block to say, "Hey, gamemaster, make sure you get this creature's stat block ready—there's going to be an encounter!" If the stat block appears in the appendix of this adventure, the text tells you so; otherwise, you can find the stat block in the core rulebook.

*Spells* and nonmagical equipment mentioned in the adventure are described in the core manual for players. *Magic items* are described in the core manual for game masters unless the adventure's text directs you to an item's description in the appendix.

## Level Selection

Before playing, know the level at which you wish to run the adventure. Overall, the adventure's locations and descriptions remain unchanged throughout the levels. However, most encounters, hazards, traps, and treasures scale with each level of the adventure. The keyed locations will present the differences between each level.

Also, the adventure works for more than just the listed levels. If you wish to run this adventure for levels other than 3, 5, 8, or 11, the chart below shows you which version of the adventure you should select for each level.

## Adventure Hooks

Sandara Oasis in Chapter 2 offers adventure hooks, many of which lead directly to the adventures listed in this chapter. While most of the hooks offer specific rewards, if you need to motivate the party with a monetary reward, the quest giver offers 500 gp per level of the adventure.

## SCALING THE ADVENTURE

Average Party Level	Recommended Adventure Version	Relative Difficulty
5	5th-Level	Hard
6	5th-Level	Medium
7	5th-Level	Easy
8	8th-Level	Hard
9	8th-Level	Medium
10	8th-Level	Easy
11	11th-Level	Hard
12	11th-Level	Medium
13	11th-Level	Easy
14	14th-Level	Hard
15	14th-Level	Medium
16	14th-Level	Easy

## ADVENTURE LIST

Adventure Name	Page	Theme
Blue Dragon Plateau	30	A 200-foot tall plateau is home to a tyrannical dragon named Zolar and his minions.
Efreeti Mirage	46	What at first might seem like a refuge from the harsh desert is actually the domain of a sinister elemental.
Gnoll Burrow	56	A vile necromancer and his gnollish minions use the remains of a purple worm as their lair.
Jackalwere Warren	66	A diabolical jackalwere uses an ancient relic to command jackals and other jackalweres.
Raider Redoubt	76	A band of orcish raiders causes trouble along a well-traveled road.



# D. Blue Dragon Plateau

The characters must enter the desert lair of a diabolical blue dragon, combat draconic minions, avoid dastardly traps, and circumvent other grim hazards.

## Background

The blue-scaled dragon, Zolar Suneater, has watched over the endless sands for countless years. Travelers through the desert are rare, but those who choose to make the perilous journey are warned to be watchful for a sudden darkening of the skies, as though the sun has been blocked out.

Zolar flies high above, too high for those without magically enhanced vision to see, but when he spots his prey, he dives suddenly with the sun behind him. Once you see his shadow descending upon you, it is probably too late.

Although no one is certain, many believe the dragon has made his lair in one of the ruined temples atop the peaks of the nearby mountain range. It would explain how he has never been seen at lower altitudes, except, of course, when he feeds.

## Blue Dragon Plateau

Zolar's lair hides within the heart of a 200-foot-tall plateau upon which a mighty temple dedicated to a wind god once stood. Hunks of stone walls, broken tile floors, and other embellishments are all that remain of the old temple. A 20-foot-wide gaping hole in the earth in the ruins of the main temple offers access to Zolar's actual den.

## General Features

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Unless stated otherwise, the Blue Dragon Plateau has the following features.

**Outside.** The plateau is situated near a dry desert canyon. Year round, the days are insufferably hot, and the nights damnably chilly. High winds are common, which create frequent dust storms. Furthermore, Zolar's presence creates a field of static electricity throughout the area—the characters will know they're near when the hair on their head starts to stand on end. The temple ruins are made from stone and rock quarried from the plateau.

**Den Interior.** The caverns below the old temple boast 20-foot-high ceilings. The walls are made from razor-sharp glass, a hallmark of blue dragons. A creature not wearing armor that touches a wall or is pushed into it takes 2 (1d4) slashing damage from the jagged edges.

**Illumination.** The large holes at the east end of the den keep the caverns illuminated during the day, the rays of light bouncing off the multiple mirrors put in place by Zolar. Otherwise, these caverns are completely dark. Read-aloud text blocks assume that the characters have darkvision or their own light sources. Zolar relies on his special vision.

**Dimensional Mirrors.** Various mirrors hang throughout Zolar's lair. Once on each of its turns, a Medium or smaller creature that is allied with Zolar and has the spellcasting feature can use 10 feet of its movement to step magically into one of the mirrors within its reach and emerge from a second mirror within Zolar's lair, appearing in an unoccupied space within 5 feet of the second mirror. The mirrors have AC 13, 10 hit points, and are immune to nonmagical damage. Destroying a mirror causes it to stop



functioning as a transporter.

## Half-Blue Dragons

Many of the creatures featured in this adventure are the half-blue dragon offspring of Zolar. These creatures all have the half-blue dragon template, which grants them the following additional features.

**Challenge.** Increase the challenge rating for each creature by 2.

**Ability Scores.** Unless already higher, change the half-dragon's Intelligence and Charisma scores to 10 (+0).

**Senses.** The half-dragon gains blindsight out to a radius of 10 feet and darkvision out to a radius of 60 feet.

**Resistance.** The half-dragon gains resistance to lightning damage.

**Languages.** The half-dragon speaks Draconic.

**New Action: Breath Weapon (Recharge 5–6).** The half-dragon gains a breath weapon. It can exhale lightning in a 30-foot line that is 5 feet wide. Each creature in that line must make a Dexterity saving throw, taking 22 (4d10) lightning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. The DC for the save is equal to 8 + the creature's Constitution modifier + its proficiency bonus (+2 for CR 0–4 creatures, +3 for CR 5–10 creatures).

## Approaching the Lair (8th-Level and Higher Only)

In the 8th-level version of this adventure and higher, Zolar is a legendary dragon whose mighty magic warps and distorts the desert environment around his lair. When the characters come within 6 miles of Zolar's lair, they experience deadly hazards caused by Zolar's presence.

The characters must perform a series of

skill challenges to overcome these hazards. A skill challenge simulates a task requiring more time and effort than a single ability check. In its simplest form, the characters make a series of ability checks to earn a required number of successes before accumulating a maximum number of failed checks—similar to how death saving throws work. All skill challenges against these hazards have the following features in common:

- **Goal and Context.** The characters must find a safe way through the hazard.
- **Difficulty.** Primary skill checks related to this skill challenge are made against DC 15. Secondary and repeat checks are made against DC 20.
- **Complexity.** The characters may make as many ability checks as they like toward a given skill challenge. However, they need at least three successes to complete each challenge.
- **Primary Checks.** When the characters partake in a skill challenge, they may commit any ability check they like to the skill challenge. Certain ability checks, however, lend themselves better to a successful outcome than others. These ability checks are primary checks and usually have a lower DC than their secondary checks. Each of the hazards lists the primary checks relevant to the hazard.
- **Secondary Checks.** Secondary checks represent all the skills the characters may use to participate in a skill challenge that aren't considered primary checks. The main reason for the disparity between primary and secondary is that primary checks are a little more "obvious" in their function.
- **Time.** Each check contributed to overcoming a hazard takes 30 minutes of

the character's time—a minimum of 90 minutes per hazard if all of their checks are successful.

- **Consequences.** Achieving three successes made against a hazard's skill challenge allows the characters to complete the challenge. Each time the characters suffer a failure, something bad happens, as detailed in each of the hazard's descriptions.

### First Hazard: Thunderstorms

Thunderstorms rage within 6 miles of the lair. The primary checks for this skill challenge are Strength (Athletics), Intelligence (Arcana), and Wisdom (Survival). Each time the characters fail a challenge, the characters must each make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw. A character takes 10 (3d6) lightning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

### Second Hazard: Dust Devils

Dust devils scour the land within 6 miles of the lair. This skill challenge sees the characters get through the dust devils' territory without getting into a fight. The primary checks are Strength (Athletics), Dexterity (Stealth), and Wisdom (Perception). Each time the characters fail one of these checks, they must fight the dust devils. A dust devil has the statistics of an **air elemental**, but it can't fly, has a speed of 50 feet, and has an Intelligence and Charisma of 1 (–5). The number of dust devils the characters fight depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Dust Devil Encounters table.

### Third Hazard: Sinkholes

Hidden sinkholes form in and around Zolar's lair. The primary checks for this skill challenge are Dexterity (Acrobatics),

## DUST DEVIL ENCOUNTERS

Adventure Level	Encounter
8th	1d2 <b>dust devils</b>
11th	1d4 <b>dust devils</b>
14th	1d6 + 1 <b>dust devils</b>

Intelligence (Nature), and Wisdom (Perception). Each time the characters fail a check, they must each make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or fall 1d6 × 10 feet into the sinkhole, taking 3 (1d6) damage for every 10 feet they fall.

### Fourth Hazard: The Plateau

After the characters reach Zolar's plateau, they still have to find a way to reach the top without drawing attention to themselves. The primary checks for this skill challenge are Strength (Athletics), Dexterity (Stealth), and Intelligence (Nature). Using magical means to reach the top, such as the *fly* or *dimension door* spells, still requires a skill challenge but grants the characters one success as if they had succeeded on a Strength (Athletics) check. Each time the characters fail a check, they're attacked by Zolar's minions. The nature of the minions depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Plateau Random Encounters table.

- **Half-blue dragon knights** and **gladiators** use the half-blue dragon template (see the Half-Blue Dragons section on page 32). All of them have *slippers of spider climb*, allowing them to walk vertically along the plateau's edge without making checks.
- **Earth elementals** can throw rocks at flying targets. They can throw two rocks per turn using their Multiattack. A rock

functions exactly like their Slam attack, except it is a ranged weapon attack with a range of 50/150 feet.

- **Cult fanatics** ride **phase spiders** if they're fighting climbers or **griffons** if they're fighting flyers. When a phase spider enters the Material Plane via its Ethereal Jaunt trait, its rider accompanies it. Additionally, the spiders are equipped with special saddles that allow the cultists to ride them even while traveling vertically or upside down on ceilings.

If it's the characters' first check, they're attacked at the bottom of the plateau. Otherwise, the creatures attack while the characters are mid-climb or mid-air.

## Zolar the Blue Dragon

Zolar is a **young blue dragon** in the 5th-level version of this adventure and an **adult blue dragon** in all other versions. Unlike other blue dragons, Zolar has a distaste for appearing human via magic and prefers to remain in his true draconic form. Zolar will offer the characters a chance to avoid conflict by promising them no harm if they serve him, and he will even offer to help them find adventure hooks (assuming they're okay with giving Zolar 80 percent of everything they find). If the characters refuse Zolar's deals, Zolar attacks. However, Zolar prefers to use hit-and-run strategies, taking to the skies or to the soft sand at the base of his plateau.

Before the characters reach Zolar's lair, roll a d10 to determine his current location using the Zolar's Location table.

### PLATEAU RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

d6	8th-Level Encounters	11th-Level Encounters	14th-Level Encounters
1	1 <b>harpy</b> and 1d4 + 1 <b>manticores</b>	1 <b>harpy</b> and 1d4 <b>air elementals</b>	1d2 <b>harpies</b> and 1d4 <b>invisible stalkers</b>
2	1d4 <b>veterans</b> wearing <i>slippers of spider climb</i>	1d4 <b>half-blue dragon knights*</b> wearing <i>slippers of spider climb</i>	1d4 <b>half-blue dragon gladiators*</b> wearing <i>slippers of spider climb</i>
3	1d2 <b>earth elementals</b>	1d4 <b>earth elementals</b>	1d6 + 1 <b>earth elementals</b>
4	1d3 <b>cult fanatics</b> riding <b>phase spiders</b> or <b>griffons</b>	1d6 <b>cult fanatics</b> riding <b>phase spiders</b> or <b>griffons</b>	2d4 <b>cult fanatics</b> riding <b>phase spiders</b> or <b>griffons</b>
5	2d4 <b>gargoyles</b>	3d4 <b>gargoyles</b>	4d4 <b>gargoyles</b>
6	1d2 <b>roppers</b>	1d4 <b>roppers</b>	1d6 + 1 <b>roppers</b>



### ZOLAR'S LOCATION

d10	Current Location
1–2	D1g – Zolar's Perch
3–4	D3 – Zolar's Nest
5–6	D6 – Temple Great Hall
7–8	D7 – Gallery
9–10	Zolar isn't currently in his lair but returns just as the characters are leaving

## AREA D1 ENCOUNTERS

Adventure Level	D1b Encounter	D1d Encounter	D1e Encounter
5th	1 cult fanatic and 5 thugs	1 half-blue dragon scout*	1 ogre with a shield (+2 AC) and flail (same damage, but piercing)
8th	1 half-blue dragon knight,* 1 cult fanatic, and 5 thugs	1 half-blue dragon knight*	1 hill giant
11th	1 half-blue dragon knight,* 1 cult fanatic, and 3 thugs	1 half-blue dragon gladiator*	1 <i>awakened</i> giant ape (Int 10, speaks Draconic)
14th	1 mage, 1 half-blue dragon knight,* 1 cult fanatic, and 3 thugs	1 half-blue dragon knight* mounted on a wyvern	1 fire giant

## Keyed Locations

The following areas are keyed to the maps of the Blue Dragon Plateau on pages 35 and 38.

### D1 – Plateau of Wind

You reach the top of the Blue Dragon Plateau, and a sudden rumble of thunder overhead startles you. The wind begins to howl, whipping sand up into your face and filling the air with static electricity. Despite the chaos, you can still see the ruins of the old temple and its auxiliary buildings looming in the distance.

**Encounter: Trouble.** Many of Zolar’s deadly troops hide here in the ruins. If the characters aren’t careful, they could draw the attention of all the creatures, resulting in a battle royale. The Area D1 Encounters table shows the breadth of the entire encounter should it come to that, as determined by the adventure’s level. Creatures marked with an asterisk use the half-blue dragon template (see the Half-Blue Dragons section on page 32).

**Potential Encounter: Zolar.** If Zolar is in area D1g, the characters immediately spot the beast standing on his perch. See Zolar the Blue Dragon above for details. If a fight breaks out between the characters and Zolar, Zolar’s minions hiding around the ruins join in the fight.

### D1a. Overlook Entrance

A lip leading into the caverns juts out from the cliff face approximately 50 feet below the top. It leads to area D2.

**Trap: Windy Overlook (8th Level and Higher Only).** Whenever a creature that isn’t Zolar sets foot onto the overlook, ferocious winds begin to blow here. A target must make a DC 15 Strength saving throw. On a failed save, the target is blown off the overlook and forced to the ground below. It’s a 150-foot drop from the overlook, dealing 52 (15d6) falling damage to the target.

## D1b. Grand Temple Ruins

You approach the remains of the grand temple, and the scale of the ruins is breathtaking. The stone pillars rise up to the sky, and the intricate carvings and hieroglyphics on the walls tell stories of long-forgotten gods and ancient civilizations. As you make your way inside, you can see that the temple was once a place of great reverence with ornate altars and offerings left behind by worshippers long gone.

In the center of the main chamber, there is a gaping sinkhole.

**Encounter: Guardians.** Some of Zolar's trusted guardians lurk in the old ruins. If they know the characters are coming (for example, if the characters failed to climb up the cliffside without provoking an encounter), they are hiding and ready. The nature of this encounter depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Area D1b Encounter table. Creatures marked with an asterisk use the half-blue dragon template (see the Half-Blue Dragons section on page 32).

### D1c. Sinkhole

You approach the 20-foot-wide sinkhole in the middle of the temple ruins, and as you peer into its depths, you see nothing but darkness. The ground around the sinkhole is unstable, and you can see that there have been recent rockfalls, as though something has been moving around down there. A sense of unease washes over you as you realize that you are not alone and something may be lurking in the darkness below.

The 20-foot-wide sinkhole is 30 feet deep, opening 50 feet above the temple's old great hall, area D6—a total of 80 feet. A creature

### AREA D1B ENCOUNTER

Adventure Level	Encounter
5th	1 <b>cult fanatic</b> and 5 <b>thugs</b>
8th	1 <b>half-blue dragon knight</b> ,* 1 <b>cult fanatic</b> , and 5 <b>thugs</b>
11th	1 <b>half-blue dragon knight</b> ,* 1 <b>cult fanatic</b> , and 3 <b>thugs</b>
14th	1 <b>mage</b> , 1 <b>half-blue dragon knight</b> ,* 1 <b>cult fanatic</b> , and 3 <b>thugs</b>

### AREA D1C ENCOUNTER

Adventure Level	Encounter
5th	1 <b>phase spider</b>
8th	2 <b>phase spiders</b>
11th	1 <b>half-blue dragon phase spider</b> * and 1 <b>phase spider</b>
14th	1 <b>half-blue dragon phase spider</b> * and 2 <b>phase spiders</b>

### AREA D1D ENCOUNTER

Adventure Level	Encounter
5th	2 <b>swarms of poisonous snakes</b>
8th	3 <b>swarms of poisonous snakes</b>
11th	4 <b>swarms of poisonous snakes</b>
14th	4 <b>swarms of poisonous snakes</b> and 2 <b>giant poisonous snakes</b>



### AREA D1E ENCOUNTER

Adventure Level	Encounter
5th	1 half-blue dragon scout*
8th	1 half-blue dragon knight*
11th	1 half-blue dragon gladiator*
14th	1 half-blue dragon knight* mounted on a wyvern

### AREA D1F ENCOUNTER

Adventure Level	Encounter
5th	1 ogre with a shield (+2 AC) and flail (same damage, but piercing)
8th	1 hill giant
11th	1 <i>awakened</i> giant ape (Int 10, speaks Draconic)
14th	1 fire giant

that falls into the hole takes 28 (8d6) damage from the fall. Climbing down the sinkhole without a rope isn't too difficult, requiring only a successful DC 5 Strength (Athletics) check. However, there's still the matter of the additional 50 feet beyond that.

**Encounter: Phase Spiders.** The drop isn't the only thing creatures descending into the sinkhole need to worry about. Phase spiders loyal to Zolar lurk in the hole. They remain ethereal until a creature enters the hole. They won't join the other monsters in the potential "battle royale" (see area D1 for details). The number of phase spiders depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Area D1c Encounter table. Creatures marked with an asterisk use the half-blue dragon template (see the Half-Blue Dragons section on page 32).

### D1d. North Ruins

This tiny pair of buildings once served as storehouses for the temple. Now it's home to creepy critters.

**Encounter: Critters.** Pests lurk within the ruins of this old building. They are not associated with the other creatures atop the plateau and won't involve themselves in combat with its other inhabitants. The nature of these creatures depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Area D1d Encounter table.

### D1e. West Ruins

These open ruins are often bathed in the shadow cast by the cliff above.

**Encounter: Half-Blue Dragon Soldier.** One of Zolar's progeny, a half-dragon, uses this area to collect her thoughts. She emerges to join the fray if a battle erupts atop the plateau. Her statistics depend on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Area D1e Encounter table. Creatures marked with an

asterisk use the half-blue dragon template (see the Half-Blue Dragons section on page 32).

**Treasure: Golden Necklace.** Zolar isn't a fan of gold, so he awarded the creature here a valuable golden necklace, which it wears with pride. The necklace is worth 1,000 gp in the 5th- and 8th-level versions and 5,000 gp in the 11th- and 14th-level versions.

### D1f. South Ruins

Like the other buildings atop the plateau, this small structure lies in ruins.

**Encounter: Muscle.** One of Zolar's tougher troops resides here, sleeping in the shadows of the old building's walls. When a fight breaks out on the plateau, they emerge from the ruins and start swinging. The nature of the creature depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Area D1f Encounter table.

### D1g. Zolar's Perch

As you make your way up a rocky outcropping that overlooks the ruins of the ancient temple, you notice something strange. The ground is scorched in places, and you can see the remains of small animals that appear to have been burned alive. Looking closer, you notice deep gouges in the rocks, obvious claw marks.

This is where Zolar sometimes stands to bask in the sun and issue commands to his troops. If Zolar is located atop the plateau, he stands here. Zolar and his minions won't engage in combat unless the characters provoke them. See Zolar the Blue Dragon on page 34 for details.



## AREA D2 ENCOUNTER

Adventure Level	Encounter
5th	2 earth weirds*
8th	3 earth weirds*
11th	1 invisible stalker and 2 earth weirds*
14th	1 invisible stalker and 2 earth elementals

### D2 – Overlook

The only way to reach the overlook without coming in through the back entrance is to climb in through the cliffside. See Area D1a for details.

You discover a 20-foot-tall opening into a cavern, 50 feet below the top of the plateau. The entrance is dark, and you can't see more than a few feet inside. The static electricity here makes your hair stand on end, and you realize that this may be the blue dragon's lair.

As you peer inside, your eyes adjust to the darkness, and you begin to notice strange details. A mirror hangs on the northern wall, reflecting the faint light from outside. It seems out of place, considering the thick layer of sand that covers everything else in the lair.

**Feature: Dimensional Mirror.** The mirror is one of the mirrors detailed on page 31.

**Encounter: Entrance Guards.** Elemental guardians protect the entrance to Zolar's lair, using their special features to hide within the sand. The guardians here won't attack if Zolar is present (see below). The nature of these guardians depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Area D2

Encounter table. Creatures marked with an asterisk are new creatures featured in the appendix.

**Potential Encounter: Zolar the Blue Dragon.** If Zolar is in his nest (see below), then he notices the characters as soon as they enter through this entrance. The dragon speaks to them from the dark recesses of his cavern, offering the same deal as detailed on page 34.

### D3 – Zolar's Nest

A short flight of stairs climbs up to a marble dais backed against a stone wall cut into the surface of the cavern. Fine carpets, silk throw pillows, and other comfortable-looking accouterments cover the surface of the dais, all of which are blue. It somewhat resembles a bed or nest for a large creature.

This is where Zolar sometimes comes to lounge. Zolar doesn't sleep as often as other dragons his age, preferring to keep himself busy plotting and pillaging.

**Potential Encounter: Zolar the Blue Dragon.** If Zolar is here, he's currently meditating or sleeping. He's a light sleeper, so it won't take much to draw his attention, taking only a -2 penalty to his passive Wisdom (Perception) score. See Zolar the Blue Dragon on page 34 for details.

### D4 – Treasure Room

A chunk of ruined wall makes reaching this area difficult and gently conceals it. Noticing the entrance to the treasure chamber from the north side (coming from area D2) requires a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check.

**Hazard: Wobbly Wall.** A Medium or larger creature will have to squeeze through the passage to the north to reach the actual treasure. Although easily doable, it requires a

successful DC 10 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to do so without causing the wall to collapse. If the wall collapses, any creature on the eastern side of the wall must immediately make a Strength or Dexterity saving throw (the creature's choice). On a failed save, a creature takes 18 (4d8) bludgeoning damage and becomes restrained by the rubble. A creature, including the restrained creature itself, can pull a trapped creature free from the rubble with a successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check. On a successful save, a creature takes only half as much damage and isn't restrained. Collapsing the wall causes enemies in the area to come to investigate, either through the passages in the cavern or via dimensional mirrors.

**Feature: Dimensional Mirror.** There is a dimensional mirror at the south end of the entrance to this area. See page 31 for details.

**Trick: Ethereal Treasure.** When the characters find a way behind the wobbly wall (see above), read the following:

Neatly stacked chests, jars, and crates crowd this space. Curiously, there doesn't appear to be any sand on these objects.

The treasure is there, and it's not—it's on the Ethereal Plane. Zolar's phase spider minions drag his treasure to the Ethereal Plane to keep it safe. The characters might suspect that it's only an illusion. However, a character who investigates the treasure and succeeds on a DC 17 Intelligence (Arcana) check recognizes that the treasure is there, it's just unobtainable from the Material Plane.

**Treasure: Ethereal Goodies.** If the characters find a way to enter the Ethereal Plane, they can claim Zolar's treasure. The contents of Zolar's treasure depend on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Area D4 Treasure table.

## AREA D4 TREASURE

Adventure Level	Treasure
5th	250 pp; 7,500 sp; 6 tourmaline gems worth 100 gp each; a box of turquoise animal figurines worth 250 gp; a <i>potion of hill giant strength</i> ; <i>dust of disappearance</i> ; and an <i>elemental gem (blue sapphire)</i>
8th	500 pp; 10,000 sp; 12 tourmaline gems worth 100 gp each; a silver brooch worth 750 gp; a <i>potion of superior healing</i> ; a <i>potion of heroism</i> ; and <i>pipes of haunting</i>
11th	2,000 pp; 70,000 sp; 6 blue sapphires worth 1,000 gp each; an old painting depicting an attractive, blue-scaled dragonborn woman worth 2,500 gp; a <i>potion of invisibility</i> ; a <i>spell scroll of earthquake</i> ; and a <i>+3 flail</i>
14th	2,500 pp; 140,000 sp; 12 blue sapphires worth 1,000 gp each; a jeweled silver crown worth 7,500 gp; a <i>bead of force</i> ; a <i>handy haversack</i> ; and a <i>frost brand longsword</i>

## AREA D6 ENCOUNTER

Adventure Level	Encounter
5th	1 <b>cult fanatic</b> , 3 <b>thugs</b> , and 5 <b>cultists</b>
8th	2 <b>cult fanatics</b> and 8 <b>thugs</b>
11th	1 <b>mage</b> and 8 <b>thugs</b>
14th	1 <b>mage</b> , 2 <b>cult fanatics</b> , 2 <b>veterans</b> , and 4 <b>thugs</b>

## D5 – Sandbath

As you step into the lair, your eyes gradually adjust to the dim light, and you find yourself standing in a large cavern. The air is thick with the scent of sulfur, and the ground beneath your feet radiates with warmth.

At the center of the cavern, you notice a heaping pile of sand rising up toward the ceiling. A massive blue gem sits atop the pile.

Looking around the cavern, you notice three mirrors hanging on the natural walls.

This is where Zolar sometimes comes to relax, using the natural sand hazard to exfoliate his rough scales.

**Hazard: Sand Blizzard.** When a creature enters this chamber, the sand starts to swirl around the area, heavily obscuring everything. Any creature that enters the area or starts its turn here must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. A creature takes 18 (4d8) slashing damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

**Feature: Dimensional Mirrors.** There are three dimensional mirrors in this area. See page 31 for details.

**Treasure: Zolar’s Favorite Gem.** Zolar

keeps one of his favorite treasures, a blue gem the size of a watermelon, atop his sandbath. The gem is worth 10,000 gp and weighs nearly 500 pounds. Stealing this gem invokes the full brunt of Zolar’s wrath.

## D6 – Temple Great Hall (Sinkhole Entrance)

The sinkhole (see area D1c) deposits the characters here. This was once the lowest part of the temple on the plateau above. Now it is nothing more than a few jagged columns, bits of rubble, and a cracked tile floor. Sand covers everything.

**Encounter: Dragon Cultists.** Zolar’s loyal minions gather here to pray and praise their dragon lord. The cultists’ nature depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Area D6 Encounter table. Unlike Zolar, they suffer no qualms attacking the characters, even if Zolar is here and otherwise distracted (see below).

**Potential Encounter: Zolar.** Zolar could potentially be here, pacing and ruminating. If so, he might even ignore the characters while trying to think through a complex problem—unless they attack him, of course. Once finished, Zolar turns his attention to the characters. See page 34 for details on encounters with Zolar.

**Feature: Sinkhole Exit.** The entrance to the sinkhole is 50 feet above the floor of this area and then climbs another 30 feet until it reaches the plateau.

**Feature: Dimensional Mirror.** There is a dimensional mirror fixed to the wall to the north. See page 31 for details. The cultists here use the mirrors to get to the other parts of the caverns quickly.

## D7 – Gallery

As you continue to explore the lair, you enter a chamber that takes your breath away. The walls and floors are decorated with valuable

rugs, and massive blue gems glint in the dim light. Other valuable-looking relics are scattered throughout the chamber, including a few old books that appear to be written in an ancient language you don't recognize.

This is Zolar's gallery where he keeps his favorite art objects and possessions.

**Encounter: The Curator.** Zolar's most trusted minion, a one-eyed creature called the Curator, lurks in this area. The Curator is a half-blue dragon **mage** (see the Half-Blue Dragons section on page 32). The Curator won't enter combat unless he is attacked, the characters attempt to take any of the prizes here, or Zolar commands him to. If the Curator feels outmatched, he slips into one of the dimensional mirrors to find reinforcements.

**Potential Encounter: Zolar.** Zolar could potentially be here, gazing at his favorite possession. If so, he might even ignore the characters—unless they attack him, of course. Once finished, Zolar turns his attention to the characters. See page 34 for details on encounters with Zolar.

**Feature: Dimensional Mirrors.** Dimensional mirrors hang on the walls here. See page 31 for details.

**Treasure: Gallery Goods.** The nature of the goods here depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Area D7 Treasure table.

## D8 – Servant's Quarters

You come across a chamber that seems to be a living area for the dragon's servants. Pillows and makeshift beds made from rugs are scattered around the room, and you can see that this must be where the dragon's followers rest and relax.

Crates filled with supplies are stacked against the walls, and you can see cooking implements and a small fire pit in the center of the room.

The dragon's servants are often so busy they rarely use this area. As such, it's empty.

**Trap: Chest Trap.** There is a small, blue chest atop the stack of goods on the

## AREA D7 TREASURE

Adventure Level	Treasure
5th	1,000 gp; 6 fine rugs worth 250 gp each; 6 large sapphires worth 1,000 gp each; 18 pieces of jewelry worth 100 gp each; a silver crown worth 2,500 gp; 3 +1 <i>quarterstaves</i> ; and a <i>staff of the python</i> (becomes a constrictor snake instead of a giant constrictor snake)
8th	1,500 gp; 8 fine rugs worth 250 gp each; 8 large sapphires worth 1,000 gp each; 18 pieces of jewelry worth 100 gp each; a silver crown worth 2,500 gp; 3 +1 <i>quarterstaves</i> ; and a <i>staff of the python</i>
11th	5,000 gp; 6 fine rugs worth 1,000 gp each; 6 large sapphires worth 5,000 gp each; 18 pieces of jewelry worth 500 gp each; a silver crown worth 7,500 gp; 3 +2 <i>quarterstaves</i> ; and a <i>staff of swarming insects</i>
14th	7,500 gp; 8 fine rugs worth 1,000 gp each; 8 large sapphires worth 5,000 gp each; 18 pieces of jewelry worth 500 gp each; a silver crown worth 7,500 gp; 3 +2 <i>quarterstaves</i> ; and a <i>staff of withering</i>

southern wall. The chest is locked, requiring a successful DC 10 Dexterity check using proficiency in thieves' tools to open. However, the lock is trapped. Spotting the trap in advance requires a successful DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check. If sprung, it fires a poison needle at the target with a +6 attack bonus. On a hit, the target takes 1 piercing damage and must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target becomes paralyzed for 1 minute.

**Treasure: Servant Goodies.** The chest contains 2 ep.

## Aftermath

If the characters successfully defeat Zolar, they will have access to his hoard and all the treasures contained within. However, they must be careful not to disturb the balance of power in the region, as other powerful entities—efreeti, jackalweres, and even other

dragons—may seek to claim the dragon's territory for themselves.

If the characters decide to work alongside Zolar, they must accept his terms—80 percent of everything they find. Zolar isn't willing to budge on this and has a pretty good sense of when people are lying to him. He isn't above frying one of the characters with his lightning breath to make his point.

If the characters have to leave and return, Zolar is quick to bring in reinforcements. Increase the level of the adventure by one increment (from 8th to 11th, for example) to account for this. If you are running the 14th-level version of the adventure, Zolar instead decides to completely abandon the lair, recognizing that the threat of the characters is too great for him and his current crop of minions. This annoyance won't be forgotten, however, and Zolar will do his best to haunt the characters for the rest of their days. Ω



DEAN SPENCER



# E. Efreeti Mirage

Deep in the desert it is said that a magical hotel will appear to adventurers in need. Unfortunately, while the Mirage Hotel does exist, its purposes are far more sinister than they appear.

## Background

Manasseh Jisabbom'abaid Ruzinazzimal Obezzen—or simply Master Manasseh to mortals incapable of comprehending the full glory of his name—is an ancient and powerful efreeti. He is so old and powerful that he has created a domain known as the Mirage Hotel capable of slipping between the Material Plane and its own demiplane. While some of its guests are allowed to leave to keep the myth of the Mirage Hotel alive, many more are ensorcelled and never heard from again.

## Locating the Mirage Hotel

If the party is seeking out the Mirage Hotel they must track down where it has previously appeared.

Each day while searching for the Mirage Hotel the party must choose one character to perform a DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) check. On a failure, the party experiences a random encounter at some point during the day, as shown in the Locating the Mirage Hotel Encounters table. After five successful checks, the party reaches their destination.

Alternatively, the Mirage Hotel may appear to the characters in their time of need. It is most likely to appear when they are wounded from a difficult fight, lost, exhausted, or in danger of running out of rations.

## Mirage Hotel

The Mirage Hotel is a decadent mini-resort that appears to be crafted of the finest materials money can buy.

## General Features

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Unless stated otherwise, the Mirage Hotel has the following features.

**Architecture.** All of the structures and furniture in the Mirage Hotel are magical in nature and immune to all damage as well as transmutation effects. However, a dispel magic spell can temporarily suppress these properties in a 5-foot-cube section of the architecture for 10 minutes.

**Doors and Windows.** The doors and windows of the Mirage Hotel generally follow the same rules as the rest of the architecture. Locked doors and windows require a successful DC 20 Dexterity check using proficiency in thieves' tools to unlock or a successful DC 20 Strength check to force open.

**Environment.** The weather is always perfect at the Mirage Hotel. During the day it is hot and sunny with a refreshing breeze. At night the temperature cools enough that the light covers provided in the guest rooms are cozy rather than sweaty. There is never a cloud in the sky or a rainy day.

**Illumination.** The hotel is brightly lit by *continual flame* spells in decorative candelabras. A creature can use its object interaction to toggle the lights in bedrooms on and off by clapping twice.

**Magical Saturation.** Due to its highly magical nature, any character that attempts to cast *detect magic* must succeed on a DC 13 Intelligence saving throw or gain a level of



## LOCATING THE MIRAGE HOTEL ENCOUNTERS

d6	5th- or 8th-Level Encounters	11th- or 14th-Level Encounters
1	1d10 <b>giant hyenas</b>	2d4 <b>wights</b>
2	1d2 <b>air elementals</b>	1d4 <b>medusas</b>
3	1d2 <b>hill giants</b>	1d4 <b>hill giants</b>
4	1d4 + 2 <b>giant scorpions</b>	1 <b>purple worm</b>
5	1d2 <b>fire elementals</b>	1d3 <b>guardian nagas</b>
6	A trading merchant	A trading caravan
7	1 <b>adult brass dragon</b>	1 <b>ancient brass dragon</b>
8	1 <b>roc</b>	1d3 <b>rocs</b>

exhaustion from sensory overload. Regardless of whether the character succeeds or fails this saving throw, the spell immediately ends.

**Mental Corruption.** An insidious magical ensorcelling effect permeates the Mirage Hotel. Once every 24 hours each guest of the Mirage Hotel must succeed on a DC 12 Charisma saving throw or advance one level on the Curse of the Mirage Hotel table. Creatures that are immune to being charmed make this saving throw with advantage.

The first and second levels of this curse can be cured with a *remove curse* spell or similar magic, or by killing Manasseh. Once a creature advances to the third level, the curse becomes permanent, and nothing short of a *wish* spell can remove it. All servants of the Mirage Hotel are affected by this curse.

### Daily Events

The following events occur on specific days, providing the characters with clues and incentives to expose the mysteries of the Mirage Hotel.

**Day 1.** The characters are awoken by a loud argument from room 5b. Jerrick (see pages 52) has advanced to the second level of the curse and wants to retire, which Eliza finds disrespectful to their dead party members.

**Day 2.** Eliza has also advanced to the second level of the curse and seems to have come around to Jerrick's way of thinking. Instead of swimming, they tidy up around the pool and bar for part of the day.

**Day 3.** Kylantha (see page 53) knocks on the door of one of the character's bedrooms. She is dressed as a maid and asks whether they want their sheets changed. She has fully succumbed to the curse.

**Day 4.** If the characters ask the guards in area E10 (see page 53), they are allowed up to the master suite. Manasseh is in the mood to challenge his guests to a game of cards.

**Day 5.** The hotel briefly stops by the Material Plane to pick up a half-dead caravanner who got lost in the desert. The characters have a 30-second window to escape, if they so desire.

## CURSE OF THE MIRAGE HOTEL

Curse Level	Effect
1st	The progress of time loses all meaning. The cursed creature believes that they arrived at the hotel yesterday and will leave tomorrow.
2nd	The creature begins to express a desire to retire and starts to offer to help out around the Mirage Hotel. The creature no longer has any desire to leave the hotel in the near future.
3rd	The cursed creature is fully ensorcelled, believes themselves to be a willing servant of the Mirage Hotel, and moves into the servant's quarters. Their memories prior to their ensorcellment are repressed (even to those using <i>detect thoughts</i> or similar magic), and if asked about people or events from their past they brush it off as uninteresting and unimportant.

### Keyed Locations

The following locations are keyed to the maps of the Mirage Hotel on page 50.

#### E01 – Entrance

One second you're in the desert with nothing but rolling dunes and the hot sun beating down on you; the next, the air in front of you shimmers as if you were approaching a mirage. The shimmering increases until a small building complex fades into reality directly in front of you. "Mirage Hotel" is written in shiny gold letters on the gate.

As soon as the entire party has entered through the gate, the hotel shimmers slightly and a tingle of magical energy seems to fizzle along the characters' skin. A character that succeeds on a DC 20 Intelligence (Arcana) check can tell that this magic was some sort of planar transportation effect.

**Trick: Please Come Again!** The gate out of the hotel is not locked and the party is free to leave at any time. However, the Mirage Hotel is located in a pocket dimension that

can't be left via nonmagical means. Shortly after the Mirage Hotel disappears over the horizon, it reappears in front of the party no matter which direction they leave.

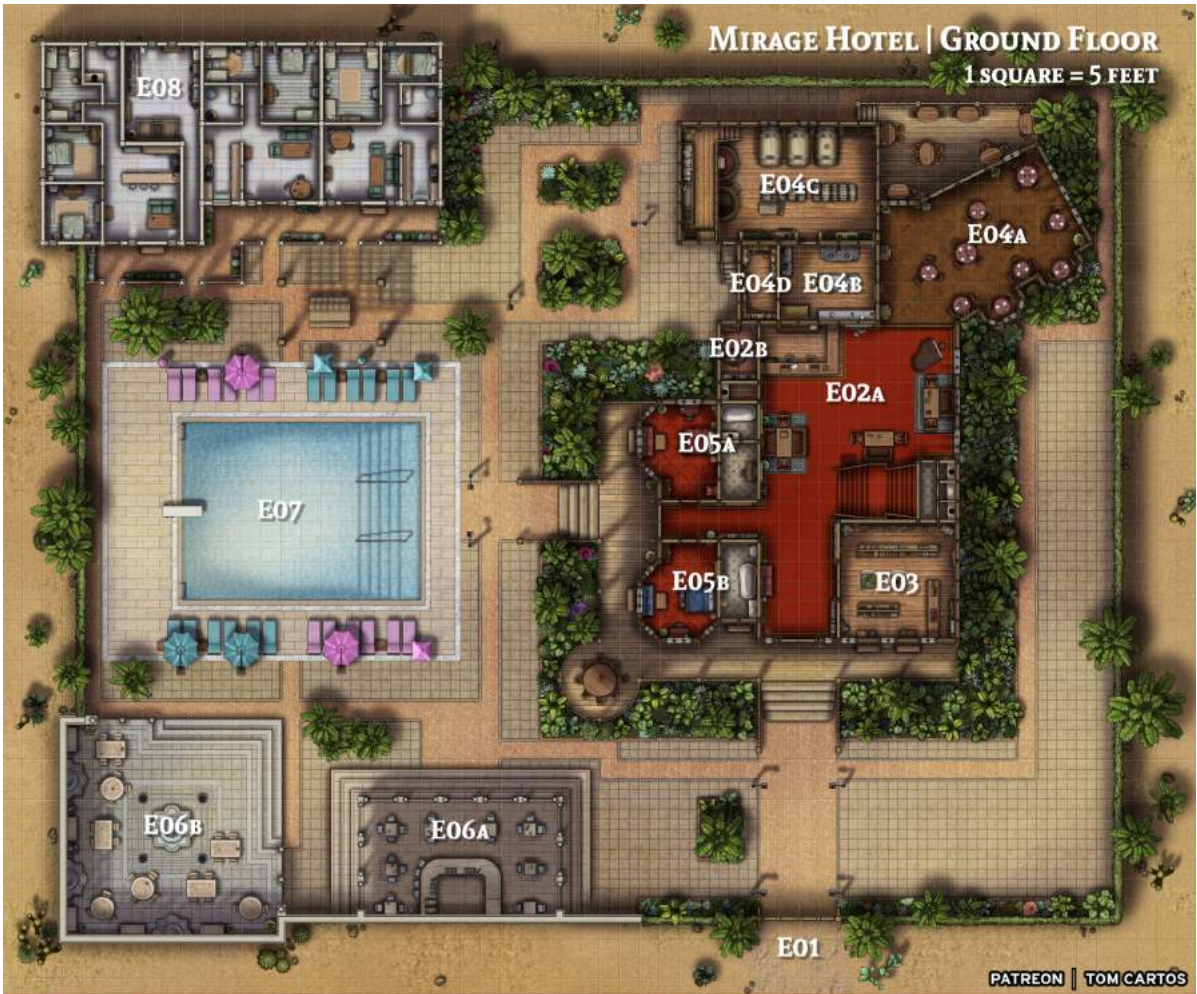
#### E02 – Reception

A silver bell on the door jingles as you enter. A woman with bubblegum-pink hair looks up from her desk across the lobby with a smile and says "Welcome to Mirage Hotel!"

**2a.** The front desk is staffed during the day by Carmela Kosmin. Every few hours she takes a break, leaving a "ring bell for service" placard on the counter.

There are currently four rooms available in the Mirage Hotel: one on the main floor and three on the first floor. The rooms have no cost, but the receptionist does imply that guests typically tip the staff generously. Each character is provided with a key to their room upon check-in.

If they attempt to set a check-out date the receptionist laughs pleasantly and says, "No need to worry about that! You are welcome to stay as long as you like!"



**Encounter: Kind Carmela.** Carmela (NG human **veteran**) only attacks if the characters start a physical conflict or Manasseh is killed.

**2b.** The reception records are kept in a locked room adjacent to the front desk.

**Secret: Missing Check-Outs.** A character who spends at least 1 minute reading through the records and succeeds on a DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check realizes that most people who check into the Mirage Hotel never check out.

## E03 – General Store

The shelves, weapons racks, and display stands of the general store are stuffed to the bursting with all the equipment an adventurer could possibly need.

During the day, characters can purchase any nonmagical item they desire here at its typical cost from the grumpy drow shopkeeper, Vhondryl Illistyn.

**Trick: Quantum Gear.** The gear in the general store only exists as long as the shopkeeper is present. At night while he is sleeping—or in the case of his death—the shelves are mysteriously barren and the merchandise is nowhere to be found.

**Encounter: Shopkeeper.** Vhondryl Illistyn (NE female **drow**) only attacks if the characters start a physical conflict or Manasseh is killed.

## E04 – Kitchens and Dining Area

A well-dressed waiter patrols this large dining room and offers to seat you at a table as soon as you enter. From within the kitchen, the delectable aroma of lavish meals makes your mouth water.

The doors to 4b–d are not locked during

## AREA E04 ENCOUNTER

Adventure Level	Encounter
5th	1 waiter ( <b>noble</b> ) and 4 <b>thugs</b> )
8th	1 waiter ( <b>noble</b> ) and 8 <b>thugs</b>
11th	1 waiter ( <b>noble</b> ), 2 <b>thugs</b> , and 5 <b>veterans</b>
14th	1 waiter ( <b>noble</b> ), 1 <b>assassin</b> , and 4 <b>veterans</b>

the day, but the characters are politely asked not to get in the way of the staff if they try to enter.

**4a.** The full-service dining room offers 3 complimentary meals a day to its guests. There is no set menu, but incredibly the kitchens seem to have ingredients for whatever dish the characters desire.

**4b.** The kitchen is stiflingly hot from the wood stoves used to cook all the meals for the hotel. There is always at least one servant on standby, with more during the busiest meal times.

**4c.** The pantry is stuffed to the gills with foodstuffs. If a character wants to find a specific ingredient, have them roll an Intelligence (Investigation) check. No matter what they roll, they always find what they are looking for.

**4d.** The Mirage Hotel brews its own ale in this room.

**Encounter: Kitchen Staff.** During the day, the kitchen is staffed by a number of servants. At night they move to their rooms in the servant's quarters (area E08) and lock the doors. They only attack if the characters start a physical conflict or Manasseh is killed.

The number and statistics of the kitchen staff depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Area E04 Encounter table.

## AREA E06 ENCOUNTER

Adventure Level	Encounter
5th	Hadar ( <b>hill giant</b> )
8th	Hadar ( <b>frost giant</b> )
11th	Hadar ( <b>fire giant</b> )
14th	Hadar ( <b>erinyes</b> )

## E05 – Main Floor and Guest Rooms

Guest room doors and windows automatically lock when closed. The guest rooms of the Mirage Hotel each boast their own en suite and a luxuriously comfortable bed.

**5a.** This room is unoccupied.

**5b.** Jerrick and Eliza Steinberg’s room is locked when the couple are not inside.

**Treasure: Adventurer’s Gear.** The couple carelessly leaves their valuables unlocked in the room’s foot locker. Inside are the contents of an explorer’s pack and a priest’s pack, 500 gp, and a *circlet of blasting*.

**Encounter: Thieves!** Jerrick (a **priest**) and Eliza (a **scout**) react violently if they discover the theft.

## E06 – Poolside Bar

A burly half-orc covered in geometric tattoos mans the open-air bar. “Warm day,” he remarks in a rasping voice as you approach. “May I offer you a cool glass of refreshing ale?”

The house-made ale is the default beverage Hadar Rockfist serves at the bar. Much like the kitchens, however, Hadar seems to have any other beverage the characters could possibly desire on hand.

**Encounter: Burly Bartender.** Hadar (N

male half-orc) only attacks if the characters start a physical conflict or Manasseh is killed. Hadar’s statistics depend on the level of the adventure as shown in the Area E06 Encounter table, although his size is always Medium.

## E07 – Pool

The large pool outside the hotel is filled with crystal-clear, cool water. A pair of guests are floating sedately, enjoying the perfect weather.

These guests are Jerrick Steinberg (LG male human **priest**) and Eliza Steinberg (LN female human **scout**). They are deeply upset after the loss of the other half of their party to a roc attack shortly before entering the Mirage Hotel and both are at the first level of the curse (see General Features). When they first arrived, Jerrick discovered they were trapped and used a *sending* scroll to call for help, although he now forgets having done so. They have little interest in interacting with the party.

## E08 – Servant’s Quarters

A much less opulent building takes up the corner of the property filled with cramped but clean quarters for the hotel’s servants. While the party is strongly discouraged from entering the servant’s quarters, there are no consequences for doing so. None of the doors are locked because none of the servants have any valuables.

**Secret: Follow the Money.** Characters who search the rooms will discover that there isn’t a single coin in any of the rooms. The servants must store their tips elsewhere—not that they will discuss such matters with guests.

**Secret: Signs of a Past Life.** A character who succeeds on a DC 16 Intelligence

(Investigation) check to search the bedrooms finds a handkerchief with beautifully embroidered heraldry, far too fine for a typical servant to own. Succeeding on a DC 12 Intelligence (History) check reveals it to be the Knights of Sedinya heraldry, a famous order of eccentric knights who recently had a member disappear and cause a huge scandal. If they investigate further, none of the guests or staff remember anything about this.

## E09 – First Floor Guest Rooms

Guests room doors and windows automatically lock when closed. The guest rooms of the Mirage Hotel each boast their own en suite and a luxuriously comfortable bed. On the second floor, each room has a private balcony.

**9a.** Kylantha Norren’s room is always locked when the **spy** is otherwise occupied.

**Secret: Means of Communication.** A creature that breaks into Kylantha’s room and succeeds on a DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) check finds a *shell of sending* hidden under the mattress. Zarek Nightwhisper of Sandara Oasis has its paired *shell of sending* and has been anxiously awaiting word for over a week since Kylantha has been cursed since her first morning here and believes she has only been at the hotel for a single night.

**9b–d.** These rooms are unoccupied.

## E10 – Storage

The door to this small storage room is propped open. Inside, a human woman dressed in practical traveling clothes hums as she folds sheets.

This woman is Kylantha Norren (LE human **spy**) staying in room 9a who explains that she was getting some fresh sheets for her

## AREA E11 ENCOUNTER

Adventure Level	Encounter
5th	3 <b>veterans</b>
8th	2 <b>gladiators</b>
11th	3 <b>gladiators</b>
14th	3 <b>gladiators</b>

bed when she noticed that they were poorly folded and decided to tidy things up. Kylantha is at the second level of the curse (see General Features), and as such, she believes she has only been here a single night. Nothing the characters say will shake her certainty unless they first remove the curse.

## E11 – Stairs to Master Suite

A red velvet ribbon blocks access to the top floor. Alert guards stand in front of it. “Master Manasseh is not accepting visitors today,” they explain as you approach. “Perhaps tomorrow.”

Unless otherwise stated in Daily Events (see page 48), the characters are given the same greeting every day.

**Encounter: VIPs Only.** If the characters try to force their way past or are caught as they attempt to sneak through, the guards give a single verbal warning before resorting to lethal force.

The nature of the encounter depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Area E11 Encounter table.

## E12 – Master Suite

The windows and doors leading into the master suite are all closed and locked.

The top floor of the Mirage Hotel is even more luxurious than the previous two floors. A thick haze of sweet-smelling herbal smoke lightly obscures the air. A human man with glittering yellow eyes and a magnificent waxed mustache sits in a plush chair, accompanied by fawning admirers in decorative armor. “Ah! New guests,” he exclaims as he spots you. “Come, enjoy yourselves!”

**Hazard: Enchanting Smoke.** The smoke amplifies the effects of the Mirage Hotel’s curse. At the end of each minute a creature spends in the smoke, it must succeed on a DC 12 Charisma saving throw or advance to the next level of the Curse of the Mirage Hotel (see General Features).

Manasseh acts friendly and attempts to keep the characters engulfed in the smoke long enough for them to become ensorcelled. He’s more than willing to engage in a long conversation and tries to lie to the players to rationalize any suspicions they may have.

**Encounter: Repaid in Kind.** Although Manasseh would prefer to ensorcelled the characters, he will attack with lethal force if the characters provoke a fight. The three possible outcomes of the fight are detailed below. The nature of the encounter depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Area E12 First Encounter table.

**Outcome 1: Manasseh Surrenders.** If Manasseh is reduced to 50 hit points or fewer he attempts to flee using his *plane shift* spell. If that fails, he offers the characters three wishes in return for his life. Naturally, Manasseh will attempt to exploit any poor wording.

After using their wishes, the Mirage Hotel transitions back into the Material Plane. A round later, it shimmers out of existence

### AREA E12 FIRST ENCOUNTER

Adventure Level	Encounter
5th	Manasseh ( <b>efreeti</b> ; AC 15; no spells) and 2 <b>nobles</b>
8th	Manasseh ( <b>efreeti</b> ; AC 15) and 2 <b>nobles</b>
11th	Manasseh ( <b>efreeti</b> ) and 2 <b>thugs</b>
14th	Manasseh ( <b>efreeti</b> ), 1 <b>mage</b> , and 2 <b>knights</b>

### AREA E12 SECOND ENCOUNTER

Adventure Level	Encounter
5th	Manasseh ( <b>efreeti</b> ; AC 15; no spells), 1 <b>fire elemental</b> , and 2 <b>steam mephits</b>
8th	Manasseh ( <b>efreeti</b> ; AC 15), 2 <b>fire elementals</b> , and 2 <b>azers</b>
11th	Manasseh ( <b>efreeti</b> ) and 4 <b>fire elementals</b>
14th	Manasseh ( <b>efreeti</b> ), 5 <b>fire elementals</b> , and 2 <b>azers</b>

again, leaving the characters and their gear back in the desert.

**Outcome 2: Manasseh Dies.** The Mirage Hotel exists only as an extension of Manasseh and vanishes the moment he dies. If this happens while it is in its demiplane, everyone and everything inside is violently shunted back into the desert on the Material Plane. Each creature in the Mirage Hotel must make a Constitution saving throw, taking force damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. The DC for this save and the amount of damage dealt on a failure depends on the level of the adventure as shown in the Mirage Hotel Collapse Damage table.

## AREA E12 TREASURE

Adventure Level	Treasure
5th	Currency and art objects worth 5,000 gp; a <i>bag of tricks (tan)</i> ; and a <i>gem of brightness</i>
8th	Currency and art objects worth 7,500 gp; a <i>bag of tricks (tan)</i> ; and a <i>gem of brightness</i>
11th	Currency and art objects worth 20,000 gp; <i>boots of elvenkind</i> ; and an <i>amulet of health</i>
14th	Currency and art objects worth 35,000 gp; a <i>spell scroll</i> of <i>simulacrum</i> ; and an <i>animated shield</i>

## MIRAGE HOTEL COLLAPSE DAMAGE

Adventure Level	Save DC	Force Damage
5th	12	27 (6d8)
8th	13	36 (8d8)
11th	15	45 (10d8)
14th	16	54 (12d8)

**Outcome 3: Manasseh Escapes.** If Manasseh successfully flees from the party, the players remain trapped in the Mirage Hotel, and all of his ensorcelled servants attack them on sight. After 24 hours, Manasseh uses *plane shift* to return with reinforcements.

### Encounter: Manasseh Returns.

Manasseh returns with backup, appearing back in the living area of the master suite. On his first turn, he casts *invisibility*, and hides until his allies successfully take out the party or he is revealed. With only a single use of

*plane shift* each day, Manasseh will surrender if he is reduced to 50 hit points or fewer or if all of his allies are slain.

The nature of Manasseh's allies depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Area E12 Second Encounter table.

**Treasure: Ancient Hoard.** Manasseh has amassed quite a bit of wealth over the years. The total value of all currency and art objects in the suite, along with the magic items, depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Area E12 Treasure table. Additionally, any items the characters were sent to retrieve can be found here.

## Aftermath

If the characters are all ensorcelled they will remain trapped in the Mirage Hotel for the rest of their lives, unless a new group of plucky adventurers is sent to save them! As long as Manasseh lives, the Mirage Hotel continues to abduct and ensorcelled adventurers in the desert indefinitely. Of course, if he dies, the region will have one less safe-ish haven for adventurers in need. Ω





# G. Gnoll Burrows

The characters must delve into the rotting remains of a giant purple worm and root out the gnolls feasting on its flesh—along with their dark master.

## Background

About a week ago, a caravan transporting the remains of a lich-like creature called Hak'shud was swallowed whole by a purple worm. Though the caravan and its human accompaniment were destroyed, the lich survived, and immediately began to decay the great beast from within. Once the worm was slain and buried beneath the sands, Hak'shud reached out telepathically across the desert wastes in search of thralls. Though he found few intelligent humanoids, he did discover a roving band of gnolls and bound them all to his will.

Using his profane magics, Hak'shud transformed these gnolls into undead monstrosities and commanded them to bring him flesh—alive or dead. Meanwhile, the small number of humanoids he'd managed to contact and ensorcel began to infiltrate the highest levels of Sandara Oasis, including the Hall of Ancestors; countless bodies have been removed from those hallowed halls and placed at the feet of Hak'shud.

Now, deep within the bowels of the purple worm, Hak'shud is weaving a flesh golem powerful enough to destroy Sandara Oasis. Brave heroes are needed to enter the burrows and put an end to his foul schemes.

## The Flesh Burrows

The Flesh Burrows are a series of tunnels and cavities that have been carved into the remains of a giant purple worm by Hak'shud and his army of gnolls. Desiccated and stiffened by the desert heat, the burrows are surprisingly stable; however, the venom of the purple worm is still active, even in death. The gnolls have taken to dipping their weapons in these pools of poison to give them an edge in combat.

Additionally, adventurers delving into the worm's remains must be cautious of noxious gases, unstable terrain, and bursts of toxic waste, to say nothing of the foul parasites nestled in its flesh. It'll take a strong will—and an even stronger stomach—to root out the gnoll infestation.

## General Features

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Unless stated otherwise, the Flesh Burrows have the following features.

**Size and Dimensions.** The ceilings within each area of the Flesh Burrows are roughly 15 feet high.

**Illumination.** Treat each area as having no light.

**Surface Detail.** There is an overwhelming stench of rotten flesh. Sacs of poison are suspended from the walls of the burrow. Every surface is sticky with bloody waste.

- Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell are made with disadvantage.
- Unless precautions are taken (stuffing their noses with cotton, for example), each character must succeed on a DC 18 Constitution saving throw upon entering the Flesh Burrows or become poisoned.

A poisoned character can repeat this saving throw upon entering a new area of the burrows, ending the condition on themselves with a success. Taking precautions after becoming poisoned grants advantage on the saving throw. A character who succeeds on this saving throw becomes immune to this effect for 24 hours.

**Hazard: Gas Explosion.** Characters with proficiency in Medicine or a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 14 or higher realize that there is a massive buildup of gases within the purple worm's corpse—using fire is ill-advised. Whenever a fire source is ignited in any area of the Flesh Burrows, roll a d20. On a 1–5, a firestorm engulfs the area, causing fire damage to all creatures and objects within it. Each creature in the area can make a Dexterity saving throw, taking half damage on a success. The nature of the hazard depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Gas Explosion Hazard table.

#### **Creature Template: Fleshripped.**

Certain creatures in this adventure are tagged with the “fleshripped” template (for example, a **gnoll** might become a **fleshripped gnoll**). A creature using this template has its statistics changed as follows:

- Its creature type becomes undead.
- It gains immunity to poison damage, as well as the charmed, exhaustion, and poisoned conditions.
- It gains darkvision out to a range of 60 feet.
- It gains the following trait: **Poisoned Weapons.** The creature's weapons are coated in purple worm poison. On a hit, the target must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw, taking 7 (2d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

## Keyed Locations

The following locations are keyed to the map of the Flesh Burrows on page 60.

### G1 – The Mouth

The massive mouth of the dead worm lolls open, its tongue a desiccated carpet of stone. The stench of rotten flesh is overwhelming. Toxin sacs hang precariously from the walls of its gullet; their membranous shells quiver with each step.

**Encounter: Swarms of Insects.** The purple worm's flesh writhes with 3 **swarms of insects**. They don't attack unless disturbed by the characters. If a character makes a saving throw to avoid falling toxin (see below), they automatically disturb the insect swarms.

**Hazard: Falling Toxin.** Whenever a creature moves farther than 15 feet on the ground in a single round, toxin sacs are released from the roof of the mouth. Each creature in the area must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or take poison damage. The nature of the hazard depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Falling Toxin Hazard table.

### G2 – The Corpse Dump

Before you are piles of stinking corpses—their mouths are all a bloody rictus. To the south, you hear rhythmic scraping sounds, as if by something being dragged across the ground.

**Hazard: Corpse Piles – Cackle Fever.** Whenever a non-undead creature moves farther than 15 feet on the ground in a single round, they must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check or fall face first

### FALLING TOXIN HAZARD

Adventure Level	Poison Damage
5th	11 (2d10)
8th	16 (3d10)
11th	22 (4d10)
14th	33 (6d10)

### MODIFIED CACKLE FEVER

Adventure Level	Save DC	Psychic Damage	Madness
5th	13	5 (1d10)	Short-term
8th	15	7 (2d6)	Long-term
11th	17	11 (2d10)	Indefinite
14th	18	16 (3d10)	Indefinite

### GAS EXPLOSION HAZARD

Adventure Level	Save DC	Fire Damage
5th	14	44 (8d10)
8th	15	66 (12d10)
11th	16	88 (16d10)
14th	17	110 (20d10)

into a pile of corpses. A creature that falls into the corpses must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or be infected with cackle fever. The nature of the cackle fever depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Modified Cackle Fever table.

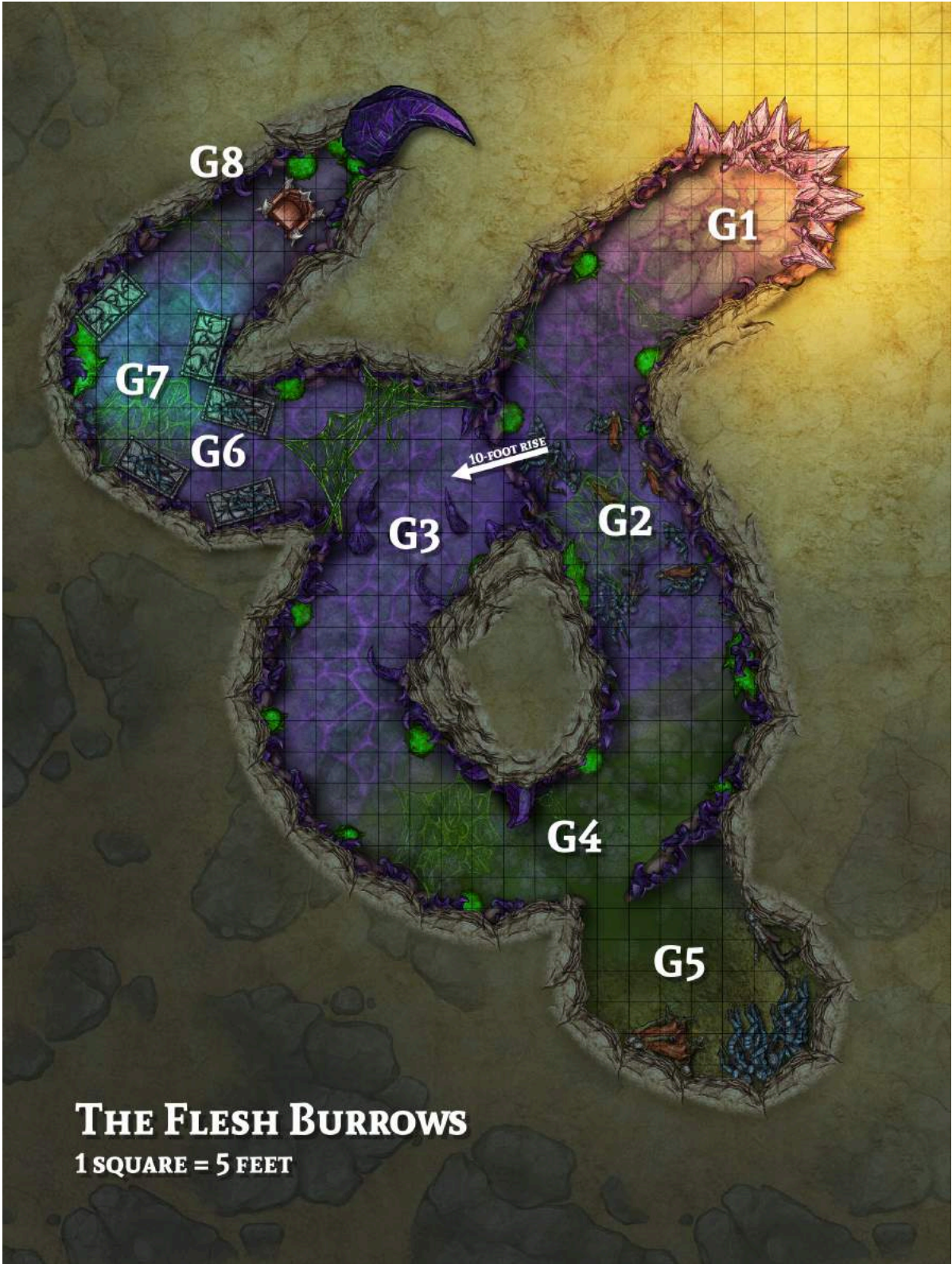
**Encounter: Scavengers.** Several of Hak'shud's servants are picking through the corpse piles, searching for usable flesh. One of them is currently dragging a body into area G4 on their way to Hak'shud's lieutenant in area G5. The nature of the encounter depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Area G2 Encounter table. Creatures marked with an asterisk are new creatures featured in the appendix.

### G3 – Burrow Intersection

Sharp stalactites hang from the ceiling, the result of the worm's flesh ossifying in the desert heat. You hear muffled screaming to the west.

**Encounter: Ropers.** One or more **ropers** have disguised themselves as stalactites on the ceiling. A character with proficiency in Medicine or Nature knows that the worm's flesh couldn't have ossified so quickly. The nature of the encounter depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Area G3 Encounter table.

**Obstacle: Door of Flesh.** A thick, gooey web of flesh (as if a *web* spell with a save DC of 14) separates this area from area G6. The door reconstitutes itself on initiative counts 10 and 20. Additionally, any attempt to damage the door causes it to scream; each non-undead creature within 20 feet of it must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 7 (2d6) thunder damage and is deafened for 1 minute. On a successful save, the creature takes half as



## AREA G2 ENCOUNTER

Adventure Level	Encounter
5th	3 <b>fleshripped gnolls</b> and 1 <b>gnoll abomination*</b>
8th	3 <b>gnoll abominations*</b>
11th	1 <b>fleshripped mage</b> and 2 <b>gnoll abominations*</b>
14th	1 <b>fleshripped mage</b> and 4 <b>gnoll abominations*</b>

## AREA G3 ENCOUNTER

Adventure Level	Encounter
5th	1 <b>fleshripped roper</b>
8th	2 <b>ropers</b>
11th	3 <b>fleshripped ropers</b>
14th	4 <b>fleshripped ropers</b>

## ACID POOL

Adventure Level	Acid Damage
5th	11 (2d10)
8th	16 (3d10)
11th	22 (4d10)
14th	33 (6d10)

much damage and isn't deafened. The door screaming alerts the creatures in area G6 to the characters' presence (see area G6 for more information).

The door can be deactivated by speaking the phrase: "Hak'shud Devours All." If Mort is accompanying the characters (see Adventure Hooks), he can tell the characters the password. Otherwise, Mort is busy sorting through corpses in area G5.

## G4 – The Stomach

You come to the shore of a pool of bubbling liquid. Partially digested bodies bob on its surface.

**Obstacle: Acid Pool.** The entire room is submerged in a pool of stomach acid. It is 10 feet deep at the center. Any creature that begins its turn in the pool takes acid damage. Additionally, any nonmagical item that begins a turn inside the pool corrodes. After corroding, weapons take a permanent and cumulative –1 penalty to damage rolls; armor takes a permanent and cumulative –1 penalty to AC. If its penalty drops to –5, the weapon or armor is destroyed. Smaller items (such as nonmagical clothing and rings) are instantly destroyed. The nature of the obstacle depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Acid Pool table.

**Treasure: Ring of Water Walking.** An oxidized copper *ring of water walking* floats in the center of the acid pool. A creature can attempt to fish it out from the shore by attempting a DC 16 Dexterity check using a line and hook. A failed check destroys the line and hook.

## G5 – Corpse Sorting

This area strikes as a halfway point between a morgue and a bureaucrat's office. It seems the bodies are being categorized and sorted into neat stacks.

### Hazard: Corpse Piles – Cackle Fever.

The corpses are all infected with cackle fever. Refer to area G2 for more information.

**Encounter: Hak'shud's Lieutenant.** If the characters enter the room quietly, they see a flying skull (**fleshripped flying sword**, except its longsword attack is instead a slam attack that deals bludgeoning damage and it can speak and understand Common). It is mulling over a large *manual of flesh golems*, muttering to itself and barking the occasional command to one or more gnomish servants nearby.

If Mort is already accompanying the characters (see Adventure Hooks), the flying skull is one of Hak'shud's loyal lieutenants. Otherwise, the flying skull is Mort himself—and he is ready to turn traitor on his dark master! Once the gnomish servants are defeated, Mort begs for mercy (if he wasn't already accompanying the characters), using his knowledge of Hak'shud and the password to the flesh door (see area G3) as leverage.

The nature of the encounter depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Area G5 Encounter table. Creatures marked with an asterisk are new creatures featured in the appendix.

**Treasure: Cursed Manual of Flesh Golems.** The flying skull in this area is in possession of a *manual of flesh golems*. A DC 10 Wisdom (Medicine) check reveals that the manual itself is made of humanoid skins and written in blood. The manual is cursed: whenever a non-undead creature touches the manual, it magically adheres to the creature

### AREA G5 ENCOUNTER

Adventure Level	Encounter
5th	1 flying skull and 1 <b>gnomish abomination*</b>
8th	1 flying skull and 2 <b>gnomish abominations*</b>
11th	1 flying skull and 3 <b>gnomish abominations*</b>
14th	1 flying skull and 4 <b>gnomish abominations*</b>

### AREA G6 TREASURE

Adventure Level	Treasure
5th	1 <i>potion of poison</i> and 1 <i>potion of gaseous form</i>
8th	1 <i>potion of poison</i> and 1 <i>potion of flying</i>
11th	1 <i>potion of poison</i> and 1 <i>potion of heroism</i>
14th	1 <i>potion of poison</i> and 1 <i>potion of invulnerability</i>

### AREA G7 ENCOUNTER

Adventure Level	Encounter
5th	Fenian ( <b>fleshripped cult fanatic</b> ), 2 <b>gnomish abominations*</b> , and 1 <b>fleshripped gnomish</b>
8th	Fenian ( <b>fleshripped mage</b> ), 2 <b>gnomish abominations*</b> , and 1 <b>fleshripped gnomish</b>
11th	Fenian ( <b>fleshripped mage</b> ) and 3 <b>gnomish abominations*</b> with 80 hit points each
14th	Fenian ( <b>fleshripped mage</b> ) and 4 <b>gnomish abominations*</b> with 80 hit points each

touching it and attempts to consume its flesh. A Huge or smaller creature adhered to the manual is also grappled by it (escape DC 15). Ability checks made to escape this grapple are made with disadvantage. At the beginning of each round, a creature grappled by the cursed manual takes 7 (2d6) necrotic damage. If this effect kills a creature, that creature's face is added as a page to the book.

## G6 – The Slaughterhouse

Aligned around this room are rows and rows of upright embalming tables, upon which lie the mangled bodies of the gnolls' experiments. Some of them are awake—they moan in pain, begging for the release of death. An alchemical table lies at the center of the room.

**Development: Trapped Creations.** 1d4 + 1 of the experiments in this room are awake. If they hear the flesh door scream (see area G3), they call out to the characters for mercy, which prompts Fenian Ulevand in area G7 to investigate and quiet them down.

**Treasure: Potions.** There are several vials of colorful liquid on the alchemical table. The nature of the potions depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Area G6 Treasure table.

## G7 – Traitor's Laboratory

More embalming tables are arrayed around the room, but they're all unoccupied. Bluish orbs of light dance in the air. You feel an ominous wind blow from the north, though nothing touches your skin.

**Illumination.** Treat this area as being dimly lit from permanent *dancing lights*.

**Encounter: Mad Doctor and Servants.**

Fenian Ulevand, once an acolyte of High Priest Thraindor Earthshaper, now performs twisted experiments on the corpses that pass into the Flesh Burrows. Upon meeting the characters, he comments on the pliability of their flesh and promises them great power should they choose to lay under his knife!

During the encounter, Fenian commands his servants to grapple the weakest-looking character, restrain them on an embalming table (escape DC 15), and gag them. Should his servants succeed, Fenian commands them to do the same to the next weakest-looking character and so on until all characters are restrained and gagged.

If all characters are ever simultaneously restrained on embalming tables, the encounter ends—the characters are soon slain and transformed into undead abominations. Only a *wish* spell can return them to life. The nature of the encounter depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Area G7 Encounter table. Creatures marked with an asterisk are new creatures featured in the appendix.

**Treasure: Dimensional Shackles.** One of the embalming tables is equipped with a pair of *dimensional shackles*.

## G8 – Hak'shud's Corpse Throne

Before you lies a throne stitched together from the mangled corpses of Hak'shud's victims. Seated upon the throne, silhouetted against dancing orbs of light, is Hak'shud himself—or rather, Hak'shud's skeleton. As his voice tickles the back of your mind, you feel the ground shift.

**Illumination.** Treat this area as being dimly lit from permanent *dancing lights*.

**Hazard: Falling Debris.** The ossified remains of the purple worm begin to collapse around the characters. On initiative count 10,



## FALLING DEBRIS HAZARD

Adventure Level	Bludgeoning Damage
5th	11 (2d10)
8th	16 (3d10)
11th	22 (4d10)
14th	27 (5d10)

## AREA G8 ENCOUNTER

Adventure Level	Encounter
5th	Hak'shud ( <b>fleshripped cult fanatic</b> ) mounted on a corpse throne ( <b>fleshripped flesh golem</b> )
8th	Hak'shud ( <b>fleshripped cult fanatic</b> ) mounted on a corpse throne ( <b>fleshripped clay golem</b> )
11th	Hak'shud ( <b>fleshripped mage</b> ) mounted on a corpse throne ( <b>fleshripped clay golem</b> )
14th	Hak'shud ( <b>fleshripped mage</b> ) mounted on a corpse throne ( <b>fleshripped stone golem</b> )

each creature in the area must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or take bludgeoning damage. The nature of the hazard depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Falling Debris Hazard table.

As soon as the battle with Hak'shud is over, the purple worm shudders one last time and falls apart, revealing a way to the surface.

**Gas Release.** Characters with proficiency in Medicine or a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 14 or higher realize that the built-up gases within the purple worm are escaping during the battle. For the remainder of the adventure, gas explosions (see General Features) only happen on a 1 or 2.

**Encounter: Hak'shud.** Hak'shud, sensing his schemes coming to an end, engages the characters atop his golem, the corpse throne. On initiative count 20, Hak'shud attempts to infiltrate the characters' minds with a psychic scream. Each character must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or take 7 (2d6) psychic damage and become frightened of Hak'shud for 1 minute. A frightened character can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns. If a character's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, that character is immune to the Hak'shud's scream for the next 24 hours.

The nature of the encounter depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Area G8 Encounter table. Creatures marked with an asterisk are new creatures featured in the appendix.

**Treasure: Hak'shud's Hoard.** Should the characters manage to overcome Hak'shud and his corpse throne golem, they're free to pick through the remains and recover his treasure hoard. The hoard's contents depend on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Area G8 Treasure table.

## Aftermath

If the characters successfully defeat Hak'shud, any of his servants remaining in the Flesh Burrows are killed as the purple worm collapses in on itself. The characters are free to rest and collect Hak'shud's treasure hoard before returning to their patron, who pays them what was promised. However, if the characters were forced to retreat from the Flesh Burrows, then Hak'shud continues to build his army into an unstoppable force. If left alone for  $1d4 + 1$  weeks, he emerges from the Flesh Burrows as a **lich** mounted atop a **fleshripped iron golem**. Backed by 25 **fleshripped mages**, 50 **gnoll abominations**, and 200 **fleshripped gnolls**, Hak'shud then attacks Sandara Oasis. Ω

### AREA G8 TREASURE

Adventure Level	Treasure
5th	52 pp, 480 gp, 430 sp, 600 cp, 8 art objects worth 50 gp each, 2d4 <i>potions of healing</i> , and a set of <i>pipes of haunting</i> made out of enchanted purple worm organs
8th	92 pp, 680 gp, 630 sp, 840 cp, 12 art objects worth 50 gp each, 1d4 <i>potions of greater healing</i> , and a <i>mantle of spell resistance</i> made of stitched-together animal flesh
11th	132 pp, 880 gp, 830 sp, 990 cp, 16 art objects worth 50 gp each, 2d4 <i>potions of greater healing</i> , and a bloodied <i>nine lives stealer</i> with 2 charges remaining)
14th	252 pp, 1,801 gp, 2,320 sp, 1,231 cp, 20 art objects worth 50 gp each, 2d4 <i>potions of greater healing</i> , and a bloodied <i>nine lives stealer</i> with 2 charges remaining)



# J. Jackalwere Warren

The characters are tasked with entering the tomb-turned-lair to destroy the jackalweres, their leader, and the creatures they call to their aid.

## Background

In an era shrouded by the sands of time, the revered Pharaoh Sekhtor presided over a sprawling desert realm. Sekhtor held a profound connection with jackals—creatures he and his people believed to be divine emissaries chosen by the gods themselves.

The *amulet of the jackal's embrace*, as it came to be known, was forged during the height of Sekhtor's reign. Crafted by the greatest artisans of the kingdom under the guidance of its high priestess, the amulet is the culmination of a celestial event that occurred only once every thousand years. The amulet was gifted to Sekhtor as a testament to his divine right to rulership. With the power of the amulet, Sekhtor was said to be able to command the unwavering loyalty of the jackals, and to share in their divinity. Upon his eventual death, the pharaoh was entombed with this amulet, as none other were seen fit to wear it.

Over the centuries, Sekhtor's once-majestic tomb succumbed to the relentless desert winds, its location fading into the realm of legend. Recently, however, a cunning band of jackalweres chanced upon the forgotten tomb, claiming it as their lair. Their leader, the enigmatic and charismatic Rak'Shen, unearthed the fabled amulet and claimed it for himself. He soon discovered that not only could he speak to jackals, but he could bend other jackalweres to his will. Recognizing his path to power, Rak'Shen used the magic of

the amulet to unite several disparate jackalwere packs of the desert under his ironclad rule, a unification he titled the Sandfang Dynasty.

With the tomb now transformed into a guarded lair, the jackalweres revere Rak'Shen as a divine descendant of Sekhtor and see themselves as his chosen heirs and guardians. Empowered by the mystical amulet, Rak'Shen harbors grand ambitions of expanding his influence across the desert, forging a formidable army to establish a new kingdom where the Sandfang Dynasty reigns supreme. As word of the resurgent tomb and its fearsome denizens spread, the surrounding desert settlements grow increasingly uneasy, beseeching brave souls to delve into the sand-swallowed crypt and cleanse it of its unholy presence.

## General Features

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Originally built to honor Sekhtor and his retinue and deter any intruders, the tomb in which Rak'Shen and his followers lair consists of a series of labyrinthine chambers connected by long corridors carved out of the surrounding stone and sand of a small cliffside. Most of these chambers have been repurposed into living quarters of various sorts, but some remain trapped and unexplored. The tomb's general features are as described below, unless otherwise stated.

**Ceilings, Walls, and Floors.** The tomb is constructed mostly of massive chunks of hewn granite. Ceilings vary in height from 10 to 15 feet, with some chambers featuring intricate frescoes depicting Pharaoh Sekhtor's life and his connection with jackals. The floors are covered in sand, and though uneven, they are not considered difficult terrain.

**Doors.** Doors within the tomb are made of heavy stone and are adorned with intricate carvings of jackals and ancient symbols of protection. They have AC 18 and 30 hit points. They are unlocked and open inward toward the chambers they connect.

**Light.** Torches mounted on the walls provide a flickering, dim light throughout the tomb.

**Secret Doors.** Secret doors were built throughout the tomb to both confuse intruders as well as to provide alternative passage for tomb keepers. The doors are fashioned in the same surrounding stone of the walls and require a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check to notice.

In addition to the tomb's primary entrance (area J01), there is a second, secret entrance partially concealed along the cliffside that has not been discovered by the jackalweres. A character who searches the area for at least 1 hour and makes a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check notices the doorway, almost entirely buried by a sand dune. The doorway leads to a series of connecting corridors within the tomb to the east of area J06.

## Keyed Locations

The following locations are keyed to the map of the Jackalwere Warren on page 69.

### J01 – Tomb Doors

When the party arrives at the tomb's entrance, read the following text aloud:

Before you is a pair of doors set into the weathered face of a small cliffside. Imposing and ornate, they are constructed from heavy, aged bronze and are adorned with intricate carvings depicting scenes of a lost kingdom. The passage of time has left its mark, and the once-gleaming metal now bears the greenish patina of oxidation.

Originally locked, they have been breached by the jackalweres and open inward toward a staircase that descends into a short hallway, terminating in a closed door.

### J02 – Entrance Hall

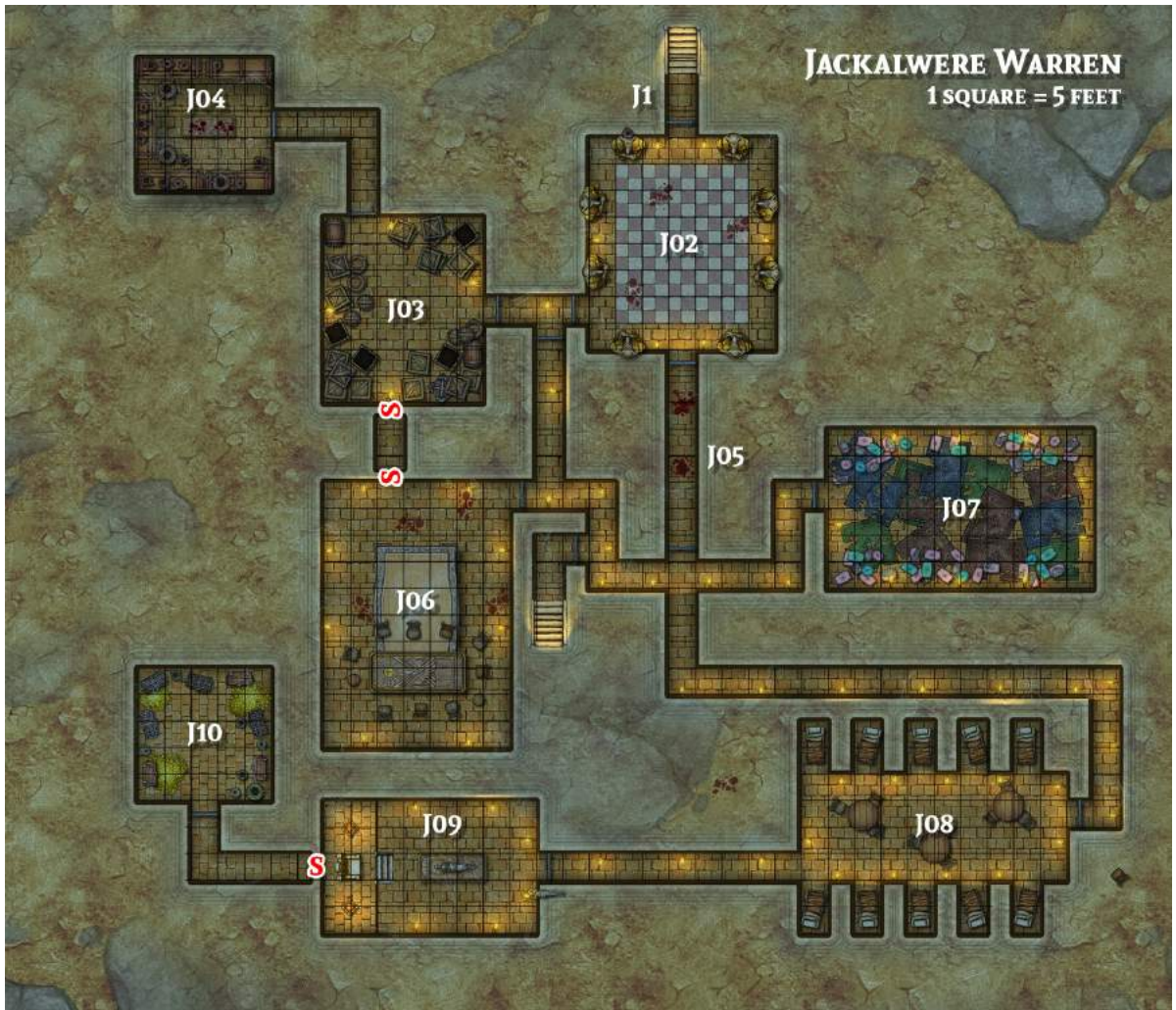
Towering statues of jackal-headed warriors line the walls of this entrance hall. The room has been desecrated by crude symbols painted on the walls, scraps of animal bones, and dusty rags.

The jackalweres have repurposed the entrance hall into a guard chamber, digging up the floor and installing spikes to better defend themselves against potential assault. The spikes span wall-to-wall across the room and create a 5-foot-wide choke point at its center. Scaling the spike wall requires a successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check.

**Encounter: Jackalwere Guards.** Rak'Shen has posted guards in this entrance to defend against any intruders. The guards attack immediately and fight recklessly, attempting to retreat later than they should to warn the rest of the lair of the party's presence. The nature of the guards depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Jackalwere Guards Encounter table. Creatures marked with an asterisk are new creatures featured in the appendix.

### J03 – Offering Room

The air in this chamber is heavy with the scent of dried herbs and musty parchment. Stacks of crates, barrels, and burlap sacks have been haphazardly piled in the room, their contents spilling out in places to reveal preserved food, stolen treasures, and mundane supplies. In the center of the room, an ornate stone altar is partially covered by a makeshift wooden table laden with various tools and materials. Faded



### JACKALWERE GUARDS ENCOUNTER

Adventure Level	Encounter
5th	2 jackalwere alphas*
8th	2 jackalwere alphas*
11th	3 jackalwere alphas*
14th	3 jackalwere alphas*

murals on the walls depict scenes of ancient priests making offerings to the gods.

This room, previously used for ritualistic offerings, has been converted to storage by the jackalweres. An investigation of the containers reveals a collection of rations, tools, and adventuring gear such as rope, torches, and bedrolls.

**Treasure: Stolen Items.** There is an assortment of valuable treasure in addition to the mundane items stored here, including 200 gp, three gemstones worth 50 gp each, and a decorative, ivory-handled silver dagger worth 100 gp.

**Secret Door.** A secret door in the south wall connects this room to area J06.

## J04 – Preparation Chamber

The party can hear tortured screams and the lashing of a whip as they travel the corridor toward this chamber. When they enter, read the following text aloud:

Once a chamber for the wrapping and embalming of the dead, this room has taken on a much darker purpose. The walls are lined with ancient, crumbling canopic jars and ceremonial tools, while the center of the room now holds a grim array of torture implements: a stained table, a rack adorned with sharp hooks, and an array of whips and knives, all casting eerie shadows under the flickering torchlight. The floor is stained with dried blood, and the musty air is heavy with the scent of vomit and suffering. A few old mummy wrappings hang from the ceiling, a remnant of the chamber's original purpose.

Members of the Sandfang Dynasty inflict pain purely for their own sadistic pleasure as often as they do in attempts to extract

information from their captives. In the end, they take no prisoners. Nearly all who enter this room unwillingly do not leave it alive. Currently, a jackalware named Khasir is being whipped in this room on accusations of conspiracy against the dynasty.

### **Encounter: Sandfang Torturers.**

Members of the Sandfang are torturing a suspected conspirator named Khasir in this room. The torturers are quick to turn their attention to the party once they are interrupted. The nature of the torturers depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Sandfang Torturers Encounter table. Creatures marked with an asterisk are new creatures featured in the appendix.

**Khasir the Defiant.** Khasir was once a member of a separate jackalwere clan united under Rak'Shen's rule. For reasons unknown, even to him, he has proven resistant to the effects of the amulet. While other jackalweres are spellbound by its power, Khasir remains resistant to its effects. He has been plotting with an external faction of jackalweres to overthrow Rak'Shen and establish a more just and equitable society for his kin.

However, he was overheard speaking negatively of Rak'Shen, leading to his capture and torture. Khasir is willing to help the party in exchange for his freedom. Though speaking truthfully causes jackalweres physical pain, Khasir freely offers the following information to the party through gritted teeth and heavy breathing in exchange for his freedom:

- He is being tortured for conspiracy to act against Rak'Shen, leader of the Sandfang Dynasty of jackalweres.
- Rak'Shen wears an amulet that manipulates the mind of other jackalweres, binding them to his service through some sort of enchantment

## SANDFANG TORTURERS ENCOUNTER

Adventure Level	Encounter
5th	1 jackalwere alpha* and 2 jackalweres*
8th	2 jackalwere alphas*
11th	3 jackalwere alphas*
14th	1 jackalwere pack leader and 2 jackalwere alphas

## KHASIR STATISTICS

Adventure Level	Stat Block
5th	jackalwere alpha*
8th	jackalwere alpha* with 58 hit points
11th	jackalwere pack leader*
14th	jackalwere pack leader*

magic.

- Khasir is resistant to this magic for reasons unknown.
- According to an old prophecy, the amulet's power can be neutralized if submerged in the waters of a sacred oasis deeper within the desert. (This is a lie.)
- Khasir is familiar with the lair and aware of its traps and secret corridors, even ones unknown to other Dynasty members. He can guide the party throughout their exploration and assist them in killing Rak'Shen.

Khasir ultimately seeks to take the amulet for himself and install himself as supreme leader in Rak'Shen's place. He plans to assist

the party throughout the lair, hoping to steal the amulet from them in the moments after Rak'Shen's fall and flee to safety. If the party agrees to navigate the lair with Khasir, he helpfully points out all of its secret doors and traps, with the exception of the vault room, which he is unaware of.

Khasir's statistics depend upon the level of the adventure, as shown in the Khasir Statistics table. Creatures marked with an asterisk are new creatures featured in the appendix. Khasir also has the following bonus action option: **Cunning Action**. Khasir takes the Dash, Disengage, or Hide action.

## J05 – Trapped Corridor

This corridor is trapped, and what appears to be a door at its south end is only an imitation intended to deceive potential intruders. The Sandfang lost one of their own learning this lesson, and now they keep away from this corridor but leave it unobstructed so as to potentially mislead any trespassers. A character who enters this corridor and makes a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check before proceeding notices a faint brown stain on the floor near the entrance, evidence of the corridor's previous victim.

**Trap: Swinging Blades.** Various pressure plates in the floor along this corridor activate several swinging blades that are connected to a complex pulley system and emerge from subtle openings in the walls, partially concealed by bas-reliefs. If a pressure plate is activated, each creature in the corridor must make a successful Dexterity saving throw, taking slashing damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

A successful Wisdom (Perception) check reveals the pressure plates, which can then be carefully avoided. A successful Dexterity check using proficiency with thieves' tools disables the trap, but failing this check by 5 or



more activates it. The various DCs and the damage of the blades depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Swinging Blades Trap table.

## J06 – War Room

This once-majestic chamber has clearly been defaced by jackalwere influence. Its once pristine stone floors are now dirtied with sand tracked in from outside, and murals painted on the walls have been obscured by tattered banners and bones hung like garland just below the ceiling. A large altar marked with gold inlays and intricate carvings has been repurposed as a meeting table in the center of the room and is surrounded by an assortment of mismatched chairs and stools.

Originally intended as a ceremonial hall for rituals and burial rites, the jackalweres have repurposed this space into a war room. Laid across the table is a large piece of vellum, upon which a crude map has been scrawled. A character who examines this map can discern that it depicts the surrounding region and seems to suggest past jackalwere assault points and future areas of interest.

**Secret Door.** A secret door in the north wall of this room connects it to area J03.

## J07 – Gallery

This long, vaulted chamber is adorned with frescoes and bas-reliefs depicting scenes of a ruler's life and conquest. The jackalweres, however, have transformed the space into a leisure room. Ratty cushions, makeshift seating, and a few improvised gathering tables are scattered throughout the area, creating a stark contrast to the artistry that surrounds them.

This room displays intricate burial art of the tomb's occupants and heavily features Pharaoh Sekhtor. A character who spends time examining the art can infer details of the pharaoh's life, including the forging of the *amulet of jackal's embrace*, which is depicted in significant detail. Small piles of coins and gems are stacked atop some of the tables in this room, evidence of gambling activity.

**Encounter: Jackalwere Pets.** A few jackalweres occupy this chamber attempting to teach some of their pets some new tricks. The jackalweres attack if they detect intruders, and they are aided by their pets in combat. The nature of the jackalweres and their pets depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Area J07 Encounter table. Creatures marked with an asterisk are new creatures featured in the appendix.

### SWINGING BLADES TRAP

Adventure Level	Save DC	Slashing Damage	Perception DC	Disarm DC
5th	13	7 (2d6)	16	15
8th	15	11 (2d10)	17	17
11th	17	14 (4d6)	18	19
14th	19	22 (4d10)	19	21

## AREA J07 ENCOUNTER

Adventure Level	Encounter
5th	3 jackalweres* and 2 worgs
8th	1 jackalwere alpha*, 1 jackalwere*, and 2 giant scorpions
11th	2 jackalweres alphas* and 3 giant scorpions
14th	1 jackalwere pack leader*, 1 jackalwere alpha*, and 3 giant scorpions

## AREA J08 ENCOUNTER

Adventure Level	Encounter
5th	3 jackalweres* with resistance to nonmagical non-silvered attacks
8th	4 jackalweres*
11th	2 jackalwere alphas* and 1 jackalwere*
14th	3 jackalwere alphas* and 2 jackalweres*

## J08 – Sleeping Quarters

Crypts in the north and south walls of this chamber have been repurposed into individual dens for higher-ranking jackalweres, with pieces of fabric bolted to the wall above various alcoves to create semi-private spaces. The common area is occupied by roughly hewn wooden tables and benches. Scattered about the floor are a mix of gnawed bones, stone rubble, and crude weapons.

The servants and advisors to Pharaoh Sekhtor were buried in this chamber. Now, it serves as personal quarters for the Sandfang

Dynasty. Many of the crypts have been broken open by jackalweres in search of loot, their rubble spilling out onto the floor. The alcoves hold the personal belongings of the jackweres and makeshift bedding. If the party investigates the alcoves, they might find a series of crude wall paintings left by one of the jackalweres that chronicle their experiences with Rak'Shen and his amulet.

### Encounter: Resting Jackalweres.

Resting jackalweres occupy some of the dens in this chamber. If they have not already been alerted to the presence of intruders, the party may be able to sneak through this room undetected with a successful DC 15 group Dexterity (Stealth) check. If the jackalweres notice the party, they are quick to attack. The nature of the jackalweres depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Area J08 Encounter table. Creatures marked with an asterisk are new creatures featured in the appendix.

## J09 – Sekhtor's Crypt

At the far end of this chamber, a stone throne rests upon a raised dais, adorned with gold leaf and embedded with precious gems. In the center of the room, a stone table bears a mummified corpse surrounded by cutting implements, its wrappings tattered and torn. The air is heavy with musk and decay. The inscriptions and carvings on the walls reach a level of grandeur unmatched throughout the tomb, suggesting this room as the resting place of its most distinguished occupant.

Sekhtor was entombed in this chamber within a sarcophagus fitted to rest on the very same throne he sat upon in life, which was transported to the tomb for his burial. Rak'Shen removed Sekhtor's corpse from the

## AREA J09 ENCOUNTER

Adventure Level	Encounter
5th	Rak'Shen (jackalwere pack leader*) and 2 jackalweres*
8th	Rak'Shen (jackalwere pack leader*) and 2 jackalwere alphas*
11th	Rak'Shen (jackalwere pack leader* with 99 hp, 3 jackalwere alphas, and 2 giant scorpions
14th	Rak'Shen (jackalwere pack leader* with 99 hp), 3 jackalwere alphas, and 3 giant scorpions

throne and took the seat for himself, often using it to hold court. He believes that gradually eating pieces of Sekhtor's corpse will grant him whatever powers the pharaoh wielded in life, and with the power of the amulet recovered from the corpse, he has manipulated the rest of the Sandfang Dynasty into believing that he is a divine descendant of the ancient ruler.

Characters who investigate the inscriptions throughout this room and make a successful DC 13 Intelligence (History) can interpret the history of Sekhtor and the amulet. A character who examines the mummified corpse on the table can quickly discern that it belongs to Sekhtor, and a successful DC 10 Wisdom (Medicine) check confirms that portions of flesh have been gradually removed.

**Encounter: Rak'Shen.** Rak'Shen is likely to be found in this room, holding a meeting with a small number of jackalweres he considers his senior advisors. Rak'Shen will attack swiftly, and is unlikely to entertain conversation beyond threats. The nature of Rak'Shen and his advisors depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Area J09 Encounter table. Creatures marked with an asterisk are new

creatures featured in the appendix.

**Secret Door.** A secret door in the west wall behind the throne connects this room to area J10.

**Treasure: Rak'Shen's Belongings.** On Rak'Shen's person is the *amulet of jackal's embrace* (see the sidebar on page 75) as well as a coin purse containing 25 pp.

## J10 – Vault

The door to this room is locked, and can be opened with a DC 15 Dexterity check using thieves' tools or forced open with a DC 20 Strength check. When the party enters, read the following text aloud:

The riches and artifacts of a bygone era fill this chamber. Ornate chests adorned with gold and jewels are scattered throughout the room, their contents spilling out onto the floor. Among the treasure trove, various statues of ancient deities, bejeweled scepters, and ceremonial weapons glint softly in the light. Along the walls, shelves hold exquisitely crafted vases, urns, and other relics of a forgotten society. A thick layer of dust and cobwebs suggest that this room has remained undisturbed for centuries.

**Treasure: Burial Hoard.** So enraptured with the burial throne of Sekhtor, the jackalweres never discovered the secret door behind it that led to this chamber. The contents of this room depend on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Area J10 Treasure table.

## AREA J10 TREASURE

Adventure Level	Treasure
5th	700 gp, a <i>potion of greater healing</i> , and a <i>sentinel shield</i>
8th	1,400 gp, two <i>potions of greater healing</i> , and <i>bracers of archery</i>
11th	21,000 gp, a <i>potion of heroism</i> , and <i>boots of speed</i>
14th	28,000 gp, a <i>potion of stone giant strength</i> , and <i>berserker axe</i>

## Aftermath

If the party destroys Rak'Shen, the Sandfang Dynasty is no more and the surrounding region is made safer by the elimination of the band. If, however, the party did not recover the amulet, another jackalwere force under a new leader is sure to eventually establish itself.

Depending on whether or not the party rescued Khasir and how subsequent events played out, they may have to chase him down after he steals the amulet from them and flees. Alternatively, they may remain in possession of the amulet and now must decide what to do with it. Though Khasir lies about a cleansing oasis, perhaps the truth is not so different. At the GM's discretion, another adventure may be required to ensure that the amulet can no longer pose any threat. Ω

## Amulet of Jackal's Embrace

*Wondrous item, rare (requires attunement)*

This amulet is made of intricately carved obsidian in the shape of a snarling jackal's head, which has gleaming red gemstones for eyes. While wearing the amulet, you can use an action to attempt to charm a jackal or jackalwere you can see within 60 feet of you. The target must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or become charmed by you for 24 hours.

The charmed creature is friendly to you for the duration and will follow your commands to the best of its ability. If you issue a command that is harmful to it, or if you or your companions do anything harmful to it, it can repeat the saving throw, ending the effect on itself on a success. When the effect ends, the creature doesn't realize it was charmed by you and doesn't feel hostile toward you, and it has advantage on saving throws against this effect for the next 24 hours.



# R. Raider Redoubt

The orcs of the Desert of Dread have been raiding travelers and caravans that leave the city of Sandara Oasis. The party is sent to stop these raiders.

## Background

Once considered outsiders, orcs have gradually found acceptance in Sandara Oasis, where they serve as skilled artisans and formidable defenders. There are still those, however, who hold enmity towards the orcs—none more so than Gark the Knuckle. A rich and influential member of the Circle of Wisdom, Gark is corrupt and known for his ruthless tactics and willingness to use violence to achieve his goals.

Gark has been using his influence to cheat orcish artisans and traders, making himself a fortune while leaving many orcs destitute. Angry at this mistreatment, Tarkus Bloodclaw leads a group of orcs who raid Gark's caravans.

## Desert Journey

These lands are arid, flat, and harsh. By day the sands are baked to scorching temperatures, while the ground becomes so cold at night your breath crystallizes instantly.

To reach the Dread Fort, the characters must follow the Lifeless Way: a route of oases, canyons, and outposts used to cross the desert. The Lifeless Way is detailed on the map of the Desert of Dread on page 6. Be sure to review the rules for traveling through the desert.

## Finding the Raiders

Whether with a caravan or alone, the characters must explore the desert using the Lifeless Way. Along the way, the characters

must overcome several obstacles, most notably the scorching conditions. For the party, this journey takes a minimum of 8 hours.

## R1 – Ele-mental!

A warm breeze passes through the searing heat, kicking up sand and creating a tornado of searing dust that burns the skin. Spinning and churning, the dust shapes into the vague outline of a biped and surges towards you.

**Encounter: Dust Devil.** The desert sands are home to elemental creatures with an affinity for extreme heat. These creatures seek to burn and consume everything they touch. A dust devil has the statistics of an **air elemental**, but it can't fly, has a speed of 50 feet, and has an Intelligence and Charisma of 1 (–5). The number of dust devils the characters fight depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Dust Devil Encounters table.

### DUST DEVIL ENCOUNTERS

Adventure Level	Encounter
5th	1 <b>dust devil</b>
8th	1d2 <b>dust devils</b>
11th	1d4 <b>dust devils</b>
14th	1d6 + 1 <b>dust devils</b>

## R2 – Sandstorm

A roar of sound shatters across the dunes, and a wall of roiling clouds races toward you. You have only moments to protect yourself from the oncoming sandstorm before it consumes you!

Sandstorms are common in the desert but can be extremely dangerous for the unprepared. The sandstorm moves at a rate of 360 feet per round (roughly 40 miles per hour) and extends approximately 300 feet into the air.

Reward clever thinking over the roll of a die. This skill challenge tests the ingenuity of the characters and their players. If the characters have mounts, they must consider these when planning solutions. Let the players devise creative uses of skills, magic, or tools. Each character has time to take one turn before the storm hits. The characters might do the following things to save themselves, their mounts, or NPCs.

- Use a Strength (Athletics) check to dig themselves into a sand dune.
- Use a Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to quickly shelter behind an object.
- Use an Intelligence (Nature) check to discern that putting a water-soaked cloak over their faces enables them to survive the storm.

- Use a Wisdom (Survival) check to find a small wadi for a character to take cover in.

Once they've made their preparations, read or paraphrase the following:

Searing air and stinging sand overwhelm the area: sand whips through the air, tearing and ripping at exposed skin and rending the hems and sleeves of clothes to tatters.

Characters who fail to protect themselves suffer bludgeoning damage and a negative effect. These effects might kill mounts or cause them to flee into the desert. The DC for the ability checks, damage dealt, and negative effects are detailed in the Sandstorm Hazard table.

**Buried Alive!** A buried creature is restrained, blinded, deafened, and unable to breathe. A creature can use its action to make a Strength check against the DC in the Sandstorm Hazard table, freeing itself or a buried creature within its reach on a success.

## R3 – Ambush at the Oasis

A small oasis is one of the first stopping points on the Lifeless Way. Aware of this location, the raiders use it to ambush travelers. This location offers the party a chance to fill waterskins and rest.

### SANDSTORM HAZARD

Adventure Level	Save DC	Bludgeoning Damage	Negative Effect
5th	14	14 (4d6)	Buried in sand
8th	15	21 (6d6)	Buried in sand
11th	17	28 (8d6)	One level of exhaustion and buried in sand
14th	18	35 (10d6)	One level of exhaustion and buried in sand

## TRAVEL ENCOUNTERS

Adventure Level	Encounter
5th	6 orc <b>spies</b>
8th	4 orc <b>berserkers</b>
11th	4 orc <b>veterans</b>
14th	1 orc <b>gladiator</b> , 3 orc <b>veterans</b> , and 3 orc <b>spies</b>

**Encounter: Oasis Ambush.** The orcish raiders are hidden beneath the sand near the oasis and have advantage on their Dexterity (Stealth) checks to surprise the party. If the raiders subdue the party, they take the characters to their camp (skip directly to the Dread Fort section). The raiders do not wish to kill anyone and have learned that taking prisoners can be more profitable. The nature of the encounter depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Travel Encounters table.

### R4 – Drake’s Run

Drake's Run is a narrow, fast-flowing river that cuts through the region at the bottom of a gorge.

**Gorge.** The gorge cuts across the road. To continue their journey, the characters must find a way across it. The gorge is 30 feet deep and ranges from 40–50 feet wide.

**Collapsed Bridge.** A rope bridge spans the gorge and is the primary path used by travelers to cross it. The heat has dried out the ropes and wood, making the crossing dangerous.

A character attempting to cross the bridge must make a DC 13 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check. On a failure, the character places too much weight on a compromised section of wood, collapsing a 5-foot stretch of planks, which fall into the river below. A Small or smaller creature makes this check with

advantage, but if a Large or larger creature or two Medium creatures attempt to cross the bridge at the same time, the ropes give out, and the entire bridge collapses into the gorge. Climbing either side of the canyon requires a successful DC 13 Strength (Athletics) check.

**Encounter: Bridge Raiders.** The orcish raiders watch this crossing from seclusion. Hidden beneath the sand, they are impossible to see from the canyon's far side. If the characters step onto the bridge, the raiders spring out from their hiding place and, with their weapons poised to cut the ropes, demand payment for safe passage.

The raiders do not wish to kill anyone and know that a drop into the water is unlikely to be fatal. If the raiders manage to subdue the party, they take them to their camp (skip directly to the Dread Fort section). The nature of the encounter depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Travel Encounters table.

**Treasure: Crossing Toll.** Tucked behind a rocky outcropping is a small chest with the loot the raiders have taken from previous travelers seeking to cross the bridge. The chest contains 10 gp per level of the adventure.

### R5 – The Dread Fort

The orcs have lived in these deserts for generations, making them ideally suited to become members of the Desert Eyes, the scouting arm of the Sandara Sentinels. Tarkus claw led these orcs to the Dread Fort.

The Dread Fort is just a short walk from the road and was built by the Desert Eyes. The fort is high on a bluff, offering a clear view of the entire area. A freshwater well makes this the perfect location for the raiders' base.



## General Features

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Unless stated otherwise, the Dread Fort has the following features.

**Field of View.** The raiders keep lookouts posted at all times and have a clear view of all approaches. Without using magic, reaching the camp unnoticed during the daytime is impossible.

**General Alarm.** If the raiders come under attack, they will sound a general alarm, alerting all of the camp's occupants.

**Log Spike Wall.** A wall of sharp, irregularly spaced logs surrounds the camp. A Tiny creature can squeeze through the gap between two logs.

**Sandstone Bluff.** The camp is built atop a sandstone bluff that rises 50 feet above the ground and is approached using two steep paths. Reaching the camp without traversing one of these paths requires a creature to scale the side of the bluff. To climb this cliff face, a character must succeed on a DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check.

## Keyed Locations

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The following locations are keyed to the map of the Dread Fort on page 82.

### R5a – Lookout Towers

Two wooden towers guard the entrances to the camp. These towers are 20 feet tall and shaded from the sun. A creature on top of a tower has three-quarters cover from ranged attacks made from below. A small brazier is lit at night to keep the tower's occupants warm.

**Encounter: Raider Lookouts.** The orcs keep a vigilant watch over the approaches to the fort. Each tower has one lookout at all times. If the lookout sees anyone approaching the fort, they call down to the camp. Tarkus Bloodclaw (see area R7) will arrive within two rounds, climbing the tower to decide what to do next. These lookouts

only attack if they are ordered to or are attacked first. All of the lookouts are orc scouts.

### R5b – Prisoner Pens

The raiders consider themselves outlaws, not murderers, and take prisoners for ransom. Two prisoners are currently being held, a caravan guard named Drog Stonefist (CG male dwarf) and a **sprite** named Axius.

Each prisoner is being held in a rusted metal cage. If more prisoners arrive, they are squeezed into one of these cages. They are given food and water but cannot protect themselves from the sun. Both prisoners are suffering from two levels of exhaustion. The key to open these cages is carried by Tarkus Bloodclaw (see area R7). Alternatively, the locks can be picked with a successful DC 15 Dexterity check made using proficiency with thieves' tools.

If released, Axius will thank the characters and then flee, but Drog Stonefist will seek a little revenge, offering to join the party while they assault the camp. The nature of Drog's stat block depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Drog Stonefist Statistics table.

### R5c – Nightbloom's Tent

Far from being their prisoner, Lysandria Nightbloom (CG female high elf **druid**) sought out the raiders when she heard their story. Since then, she has been working with the raiders, using her magic to help keep them fed.

Lysandria will not fight unless attacked and only then as a means to escape. If she encounters the characters, Lysandria won't immediately raise the alarm. Instead, she questions them as to why they're here. Additionally, she will explain the raiders' story. If the characters convince her they mean the camp no harm, she will take them to speak with Tarkus Bloodclaw (see area R5g).

## DROG STONEFIST STATISTICS

Adventure Level	Stat Block
5th	<b>Duergar</b>
8th	<b>Veteran</b>
11th	<b>Gladiator</b>
14th	<b>Gladiator</b> with 165 hp

## LYSANDRIA'S SUPPLIES

Adventure Level	Treasure
5th	2 <i>potions of healing</i> , a <i>potion of heroism</i> , 2 healer's kits, and an herbalism kit
8th	2 <i>potions of greater healing</i> , a <i>potion of fire giant strength</i> , 3 healer's kits, and an herbalism kit
11th	2 <i>potions of superior healing</i> , a <i>potion of frost giant strength</i> , 3 healer's kits, and an herbalism kit
14th	2 <i>potions of supreme healing</i> , a <i>potion of cloud giant strength</i> , 3 healer's kits, and an herbalism kit

## AREA R5D ENCOUNTER

Adventure Level	Encounter
5th	2 orc <b>berserkers</b> and 4 orc <b>spies</b>
8th	2 orc <b>veterans</b> and 4 orc <b>berserkers</b>
11th	2 orc <b>gladiators</b> and 4 orc <b>spies</b>
14th	3 orc <b>gladiators</b> and 3 orc <b>veterans</b>

## Treasure: Potions and Medical

**Supplies.** Lysandria is a gifted potion maker and has some potions in her tent. Several boxes of medical supplies labeled with the symbol of a local temple are also stacked in the corner of the tent. The nature of the supplies depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Lysandria's Supplies table.

## R5d – Raider Barracks

Staying in the shade, the majority of the camp's occupants are here. During the day, the raiders are resting, playing dice, or sharpening weapons. If a character comes within earshot, they will hear the raiders arguing about Tarkus. Some raiders believe they should be raiding every caravan that passes rather than only those of “the Knuckle.” At night all but one of the raiders sleeps. If an alarm is sounded, they dash out into the camp, ready for action.

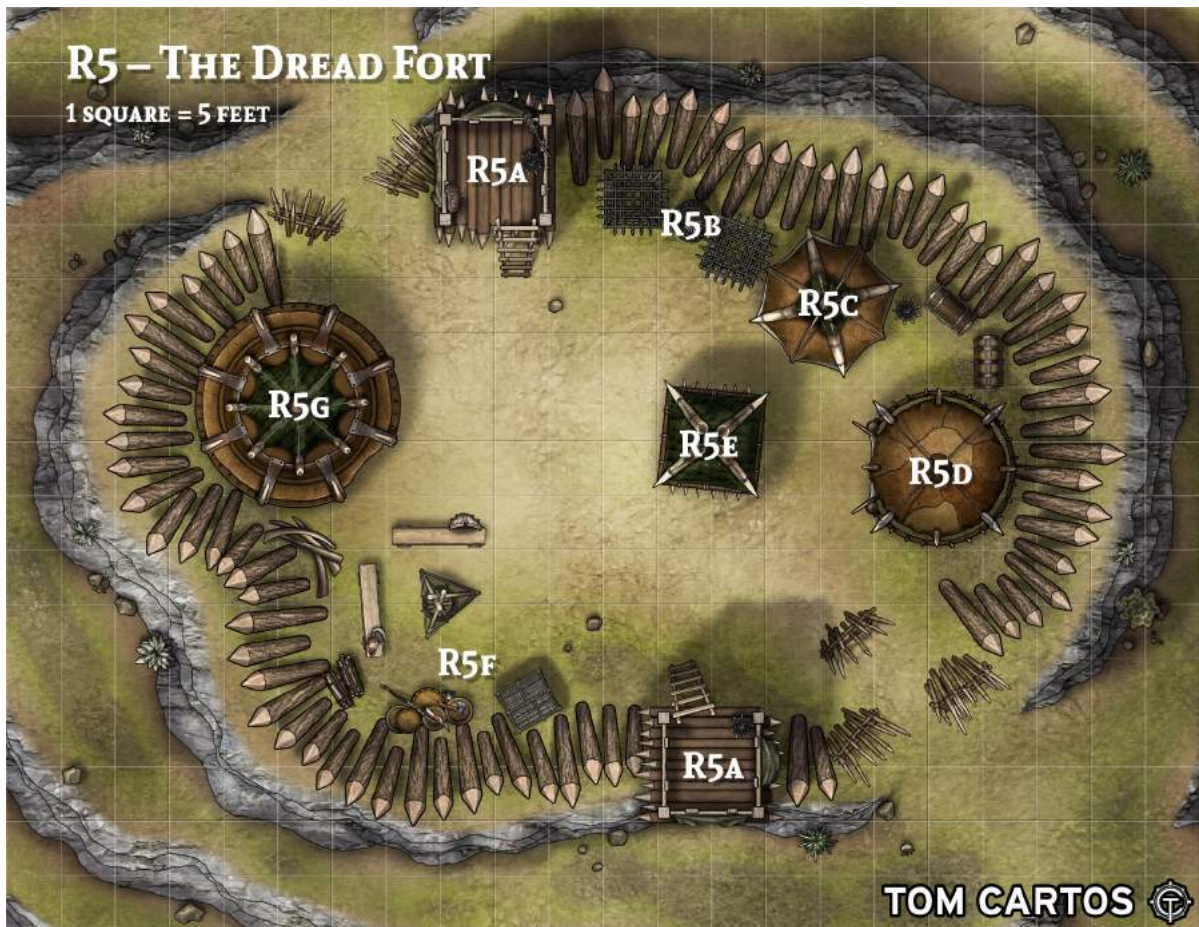
If they see a stranger, they raise the general alarm and attack. The nature of the encounter depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Area R5d Encounter table.

## R5e – Well Shaft

A small tent covers the entrance to a well shaft that keeps the camp's inhabitants alive. The shaft descends 60 feet into the ground, reaching the water table. A leather bucket tied to 80 feet of hempen rope sits neatly coiled in the corner.

## R5f – Messenger Pigeons

Tarkus and the raiders receive regular messages from another Desert Eye who is sympathetic to their plight. These messages are anonymous but detail the comings and goings of caravans owned by Gark the Knuckle. These are the only caravans the raiders ever attack.



Messenger pigeons that are kept in wicker cages carry these messages to and from the camp. There are currently three pigeons present (which use the **raven** stat block). If released, a pigeon will fly directly to the home of Zarek Nightwhisper in Sandara Oasis.

### R5g – Bloodclaw’s Tent

Tarkus Bloodclaw was once a member of the Desert Eyes and second-in-command to Zarek Nightwhisper. Witnessing the mistreatment of his people, he pleaded with the Circle of Wisdom to step in, but they refused. Believing he had no alternative, Tarkus abandoned his life in Sandara Oasis and brought his troop here.

Aided by Zarek, Tarkus works to cripple the activities of Gark the Knuckle by raiding

his shipments. Hungry and desperate, Tarkus struggles to control his warriors, many of who believe they should raid every caravan.

If he encounters the characters, Tarkus’ first instinct is to speak with them, even asking for their help. He will only attack if he has no other option. If he is forced to fight, Tarkus calls for any remaining raiders and fights to subdue the characters, ransoming them back to their employer.

Tarkus uses the orc **warlord** stat block detailed in the appendix.

**Treasure: Raiders’ Hoard.** The raided loot is kept in a lockbox, ready to be smuggled back to the orcs of Sandara Oasis. The box is locked, but Tarkus carries a key. Alternatively, the lock can be picked with a successful DC 15

Dexterity check made using proficiency with thieves' tools.

The nature of the treasure depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the Area R5g Treasure table.

## Aftermath

If the characters, they are rewarded handsomely and will be offered more work by the same patron in the future. If this included arresting or killing Tarkus Bloodclaw, word will spread quickly, and they will have earned the ire of every orc in Sandara Oasis.

If they chose not to arrest or kill Tarkus, they earn the respect of every orc and Desert Eyes member but earn Gark the Knuckle's fierce vexation. Ω

### AREA R5G TREASURE

Adventure Level	Treasure
5th	750 sp, 200 gp, a <i>wand of wonder</i> , two <i>spell scrolls</i> of <i>beacon of hope</i> ,
8th	1,000 sp, 500 gp, , a <i>wand of fireballs</i> , and two <i>spell scrolls</i> of <i>raise dead</i> ,
11th	5,000 sp, 2,000 gp, a <i>wand of polymorph</i> , and two <i>spell scrolls</i> of <i>control water</i>
14th	5,000 sp, 2,500 gp, 100 pp, a <i>scarab of protection</i> , and two <i>spell scrolls</i> of <i>earthquake</i>

# Appendix: New Monsters

This appendix introduces 9 brand new monsters for use in Fifth Edition gameplay. These monsters are intended to be used alongside the monsters already found in the Fifth Edition manual for monsters, and are specifically tailored for the adventures included in this book.

However, gamemasters are free to replace these monsters with other monsters of similar challenge rating or style, if they prefer not to use them in the adventures detailed in

this book. These monsters are versatile and can be adapted to fit a variety of different campaigns, making them an excellent addition to any gamemaster's toolkit. Whether you're looking to diversify your gameplay with unique creatures or seeking to challenge your players with new and unexpected foes, these monsters are sure to provide plenty of excitement in any adventure you choose to use them in.

## NEW MONSTERS

Monster	CR	Type	Terrain	Featured Adventure
Earth Weird	3	Elemental	Any	Blue Dragon Plateau
Giant, Desert	9	Giant	Desert	—
Gnoll Abomination	3	Undead	Any	Gnoll Burrows
Gray Thirster	3	Undead	Desert	—
Jackalwere	1/2	Humanoid	Desert, Urban	Jackalwere Warren
Jackalwere Alpha	3	Humanoid	Desert, Urban	Jackalwere Warren
Jackalwere Pack Leader	5	Humanoid	Desert, Urban	Jackalwere Warren
Kezai	4	Monstrosity	Desert	—
Orc Warlord	8	Humanoid	Any	—

# Earth Weird

*As the ground rumbles beneath you, a creature emerges, a towering amalgamation of stone, boulders, and swirling dust, pulsating with elemental energy. Its ancient form exudes a primordial aura, adorned with intricate patterns and veins that mimic the natural geology of the earth, evoking a sense of ancient sentience.*

Unlike other earth elementals, the Earth Weird possesses a deeper awareness and understanding of the world around it. It carries within it a wealth of wisdom, accrued over countless ages of observing the cycles of nature and the intricate interplay between earth and life.

However, this heightened intellect is also a limitation, for the Earth Weird's knowledge and perception are intricately tied to the specific area it guards. Its wisdom is steeped in the land it calls home, rendering its understanding of other realms and distant places limited.

**Master of Its Domain.** The earth weird's wisdom is deeply rooted in the intricate balance of the ecosystem it protects. It recognizes the importance of preserving the delicate harmony between earth, flora, and fauna, and seeks to ensure the longevity and well-being of its domain.

## Earth Weird

*Large Elemental, Neutral*

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	15 (+2)	15 (+2)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

**Damage Vulnerabilities** damage from water-based attacks and effects

**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** exhaustion,

paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, unconscious

**Senses** tremorsense 30 ft., passive Perception 10

**Languages** understands Terran but can't speak

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

**Proficiency Bonus** +2

## Special Traits

**Earthbound.** The earth weird dies if it leaves the area of earth to which it is bound or if that earth is destroyed.

**Earth Glide.** The earth weird can burrow through nonmagical, unworked earth and stone. While doing so, the earth weird doesn't disturb the material it moves through.

**False Appearance.** If the earth weird is motionless at the start of combat, it has advantage on its initiative roll. Moreover, if a creature hasn't observed the earth weird move or act, that creature must succeed on a DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) check to discern that the earth weird isn't ordinary dirt and rocks.

**Siege Monster.** The earth weird deals double damage to objects and structures.

**Unusual Nature.** The earth weird does not require air, food, drink, or sleep.

## Actions

**Constrict.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (3d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a Medium or smaller creature, it is grappled (escape DC 14) and pulled 5 feet toward the earth weird. Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the earth weird can't constrict another target.

## Giant, Desert

*The towering woman rises up from the desert sand. Her pale brown robe almost perfectly matches the gritty terrain, and her roughly textured skin is a rich walnut brown.*

Desert giants live in arid wastelands that were once a thriving giant empire. Their rich brown skin is rough-textured, and they dress in light robes matching the color of the sand, accented with brightly colored head cloths and sashes. Beneath their robes, the desert giants paint or tattoo their skin with intricate designs in a riot of colors that outsiders rarely see.

**Wandering Legacy.** Desert giants subsist in the scorching wastes by moving from oasis to oasis. They follow herds of desert animals that they cultivate for milk, meat, and hides, and they shun most contact with settled people. They can survive the blazing heat of the high summer, because desert giants know secret ways with relatively plentiful water and the location of cool, shaded caverns.

While in ages past, the desert giants lived in stationary settlements and cities, the fall of their ancient empire drove them into the dunes. The truth behind their nomadic lifestyle is a sore spot; should any outsider learn the truth, the desert giants stop at nothing to permanently silence the inquisitive soul.

**Keepers of the Past.** Over time, wandering desert giant amass vast knowledge of ruins and relics scattered across and beneath their homeland. On rare occasions that the tribes require something of outsiders, this information is their most valuable commodity. Relics of the past, or simply the location of unplundered ruins, can purchase great advantage for the tribe.

## Giant, Desert

*Huge Giant, Typically Neutral*

**Armor Class** 17 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 175 (14d12 + 84)

**Speed** 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
27 (+8)	10 (+0)	22 (+6)	13 (+1)	18 (+4)	15 (+2)

**Saving Throws** Str +12, Con +10, Cha +6

**Skills** Perception +8, Stealth +4, Survival +8

**Damage Immunities** fire

**Senses** passive Perception 18

**Languages** Common, Giant

**Challenge** 9 (5,000 XP)

**Proficiency Bonus** +4

### Special Traits

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**Sand Camouflage.** The giant has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to hide in sandy terrain.

**Wasteland Stride.** The giant ignores difficult terrain caused by sand, gravel, and rocks.

### Actions

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**Multiattack.** The giant makes two greatsword attacks.

**Greatsword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 23 (6d4 + 8) slashing damage.

**Rock.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, range 60/240 ft., one target. *Hit:* 30 (4d10 + 8) bludgeoning damage.

# Gnoll Abomination

*As the stench of decay fills the air, your eyes behold a monstrous sight. Before you stands a gnoll abomination, a grotesque fusion of twisted flesh and decaying hyena parts, its towering form reaching heights of 8 to 10 feet. Its leathery skin hangs loosely from its emaciated frame, revealing patches of exposed, putrid muscle and bone, while its elongated jaws drip with blackened drool and jagged teeth.*

In the twisted machinations of necromancers and the dark desires of gnoll tribes, the gnoll abomination is born. Created through vile rituals and forbidden magic, these horrific creatures serve as a menacing fusion of undead abominations and the once fearsome gnoll race.

## Gnoll Abomination

*Large Undead, Neutral*

**Armor Class** 11

**Hit Points** 57 (6d10 + 24)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	6 (-2)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

**Damage Immunities** necrotic, poison;

bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't adamantite

**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

**Languages** understands the languages of its creator but can't speak

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

## Special Traits

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**Immutable Form.** The abomination is immune to any spell or effect that would alter its form.

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

**Magic Weapons.** The abomination's weapon attacks are magical.

**Necrotic Absorption.** Whenever the abomination is subjected to necrotic damage, it takes no damage and instead regains a number of hit points equal to the necrotic damage dealt.

**Rampage.** When the abomination reduces a creature to 0 hit points with a melee attack on its turn, the abomination can take a bonus action to move up to half its speed and make a Bite attack.

## Actions

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**Multiattack.** The abomination makes one Bite attack and one Slam attack.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw, taking 7 (2d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

**Slam.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (2d4 + 3) bludgeoning damage.



# Gray Thirster

*This dried-out body of a long dead traveler is still clad in the tattered remains of his clothes. Skin as dry as parchment clings to the bones that are clearly distinguishable underneath. A hoarse moaning emanates from the dry, cracked lips.*

The greatest danger to people traversing badlands and deserts is thirst, and even the best prepared can find themselves without water. The lucky ones die quickly, while those less fortunate linger in sun-addled torment for days. These souls sometimes rise from the sand as gray thirsters, driven to inflict the torment they suffered upon other travelers.

**Destroy Wells and Oases.** Gray thirsters destroy or foul sources of water and often lurk nearby to ambush those seeking clean water.

## Gray Thirster

*Medium Undead, Neutral Evil*

**Armor Class** 13

**Hit Points** 39 (6d8 + 12)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	6 (-2)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)

**Skills** Stealth +5

**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning, necrotic

**Damage Immunities** fire, poison

**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhaustion, frightened, poisoned

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

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

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

## Special Traits

**Aura of Thirst.** The gray thirster projects a 30-foot aura of desiccating thirst. The first time a creature enters the aura on its turn, or when it starts in the aura, it must make a successful DC 12 Constitution saving throw or gain one level of exhaustion. If the saving throw is successful, the creature is immune to the gray thirster's Thirst for the next 24 hours.

**Undead Nature.** The gray thirster does not require air, food, or sleep.

## Actions

**Multiattack.** The gray thirster makes two claw attacks and one Withering Turban attack.

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

**Withering Turban.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) necrotic damage. If the target is suffering from any levels of exhaustion, its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage it took from this attack. This reduction lasts until the target has no levels of exhaustion remaining.

**Drought (1/Day).** The gray thirster draws the moisture from a 20-foot radius area centered on itself. Nonmagical water and other liquids in this area turn to dust. Each creature that is neither undead nor a construct in the area takes 9 (2d8) necrotic damage, or half damage with a successful DC 13 Constitution saving throw. Plans, oozes, and creatures with the Amphibious, Water Breathing, or Water Form traits have disadvantage on this saving throw. Liquids carried by a creature that make a successful

# Jackalwere

*Amidst the shifting dunes, a figure emerges from the shadows with an unsettling grace. Before you stands a creature seemingly born of both nightmare and desert. Its form is that of a lithe and sinewy jackal, standing on its hind legs, but with piercing, malevolent eyes that glow with an eerie yellow hue. Its fur, a blend of earthy browns and grays, bristles with an otherworldly energy, giving it an ethereal aura.*

Within the desolate wastelands, the jackalwere prowls with a purpose both ancient and self-serving. These cunning creatures, born of twilight and trickery, possess an insatiable hunger for power and dominance.

Motivated by their primal instincts and a desire to survive, Jackalweres are opportunistic hunters, preying upon the weak and vulnerable. With their shapeshifting abilities, they infiltrate humanoid societies, adopting alluring guises to gain trust and manipulate those around them.

## Jackalwere

*Medium Humanoid (Human, Shapechanger),  
Typically Neutral Evil*

**Armor Class** 12

**Hit Points** 22 (4d8 + 4)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	15 (+2)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)

**Skills** Perception +3, Stealth +4

**Damage Immunities** bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't silvered

**Senses** passive Perception 13

**Languages** Common (can't speak in jackal form)

**Challenge** 1/2 (100 XP)

**Proficiency Bonus** +2

## Special Traits

**Shapechanger.** The jackalwere can use its action to polymorph into a jackal-humanoid hybrid or into a jackal, or back into its true form, which is humanoid. Its statistics, other than its size, are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

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

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

## Actions

**Bite (Jackal or Hybrid Form Only).** Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

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

**Sleep Gaze.** The jackalwere glares at one creature it can see within 30 feet of it. The target must succeed on a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw or magically fall unconscious for 10 minutes. This effect ends if the target takes damage or someone uses an action to shake or slap the target awake. If a creature's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the creature is immune to this jackalwere's Sleep Gaze for the next 24 hours. Undead and creatures immune to being charmed aren't affected by this effect.

# Jackalwere Alpha

*Medium Humanoid (Human, Shapechanger),  
Typically Neutral Evil*

**Armor Class** 13

**Hit Points** 45 (7d8 + 14)

**Speed** 30 ft. (40 ft. in jackal form)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	17 (+3)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)

**Skills** Perception +4, Stealth +5

**Damage Immunities** bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't silvered

**Senses** passive Perception 14

**Languages** Common (can't speak in jackal form)

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

**Proficiency Bonus** +2

## Special Traits

**Shapechanger.** The jackalwere can use its action to polymorph into a jackal-humanoid hybrid or into a jackal, or back into its true form, which is humanoid. Its statistics, other than its size, are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

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

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

## Actions

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

**Bite (Jackal or Hybrid Form Only).** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

**Claws (Hybrid Form Only).** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2d4 + 2) slashing damage.

**Longsword (Humanoid or Hybrid Form Only).** *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.

**Sleep Gaze.** The jackalwere glares at one creature it can see within 30 feet of it. The target must succeed on a DC 11 Wisdom saving throw or magically fall unconscious for 10 minutes. This effect ends if the target takes damage or someone uses an action to shake or slap the target awake. If a creature's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the creature is immune to this jackalwere's Sleep Gaze for the next 24 hours. Undead and creatures immune to being charmed aren't affected by this effect.

# Jackalwere Pack Leader

*Medium Humanoid (Human, Shapechanger),  
Typically Neutral Evil*

**Armor Class** 14

**Hit Points** 67 (9d8 + 27)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)

**Saving Throws** Dex +7

**Skills** Intimidation +5, Perception +6,  
Stealth +7

**Damage Immunities** bludgeoning, piercing,  
and slashing from nonmagical attacks that  
aren't silvered

**Senses** passive Perception 16

**Languages** Common (can't speak in jackal  
form)

**Challenge** 5 (1,800 XP)

**Proficiency Bonus** +3

## Special Traits

**Shapechanger.** The jackalwere can use its action to polymorph into a jackal-humanoid hybrid or into a jackal, or back into its true form, which is humanoid. Its statistics, other than its size, are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

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

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

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

## Actions

**Multiattack.** The jackalwere can use its Pack Assault or Sleep Gaze. It then makes two melee attacks.

**Bite (Jackal or Hybrid Form Only).** Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage.

**Claws (Hybrid Form Only).** Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage.

**Greatsword (Humanoid or Hybrid Form Only).** Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage.

**Pack Assault (Recharge 5–6).** The jackalwere orders a coordinated strike on one creature it can see within 30 feet of it. Each of the jackalwere's allies can immediately use its reaction to move up to 30 feet toward the target and make a melee weapon attack against it.

**Sleep Gaze.** The jackalwere glares at one creature it can see within 30 feet of it. The target must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or magically fall unconscious for 10 minutes. This effect ends if the target takes damage or someone uses an action to shake or slap the target awake. If a creature's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the creature is immune to this jackalwere's Sleep Gaze for the next 24 hours. Undead and creatures immune to being charmed aren't affected by this effect.

# Kezai

*This creature looks much like a human-sized scorpion with wide, laced wings. The tip of its curled tail holds numerous barbs that drip sticky poison.*

The kezai is a creature that lives in hot climates and wages a chemical war on anything that opposes it. It emits a foul poison from its tail, coating the barbs that it hurls at enemies. If this wasn't deadly enough, it naturally produces a thin, flammable gas that it can ignite with a searing chemical produced in a gland near its mandibles. Fortunately for those who come across the kezai, the gland is slow-acting and takes time to produce the chemical necessary to ignite the gas.

## Kezai

*Medium Monstrosity, Unaligned*

**Armor Class** 16 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 67 (9d8 + 27)

**Speed** 30 ft., fly 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	4 (-3)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)

**Damage Immunities** fire

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

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 4 (1,100)

**Proficiency Bonus** +2

## Special Traits

**Nauseous Gas.** The kezai produces a faint, nauseating gas. Any creature that starts its turn within 20 feet of the kezai must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw, or take 2 (1d4) poison damage. The area within 20 feet of the kezai is lightly obscured by the thin gas.

## Actions

**Multiattack.** The kezai makes three attacks: one with its poison barb and two with its claws.

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

**Poison Barb.** *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30/120 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 6 (1d4 + 4) piercing damage and the target must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, the creature takes 7 (2d6) poison damage and is poisoned for 1 minute. On a success, the creature takes half the damage and isn't poisoned. The creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. While poisoned in this way, the creature takes 3 (1d6) poison damage at the start of each of its turns.

**Searing Acid.** The kezai's mandibles drip a searing acid, instantly igniting the gas around it. Each creature within 20 feet of the kezai must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw, taking 18 (4d8) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. The kezai's Nauseous Gas trait becomes inactive for 1 minute. The kezai can't use Searing Acid unless Nauseous Gas has been active for at least 1 minute.

# Orc Warlord

*As the ground trembles beneath heavy footsteps, a towering figure emerges from the midst of the orc horde. Before you stands a living embodiment of strength and fury. Clad in battle-worn armor, adorned with trophies of defeated enemies, and wielding a massive, bloodstained weapon, this formidable leader exudes an aura of raw power.*

In the heart of the orc clan, the Orc Warlord stands as the pinnacle of strength and leadership. Driven by an insatiable hunger for power and dominance, this formidable figure rises to command the respect and loyalty of their brethren.

Motivated by a primal desire to conquer and expand their influence, the Orc Warlord embarks on campaigns of war and pillage, seeking to establish their clan as the dominant force in the region. Their motivations lie in the pursuit of glory, wealth, and the eternal struggle for supremacy. Within the orc clan, the Warlord occupies a position of revered authority.

## Orc Warlord

*Medium Humanoid (Orc), Typically Lawful Evil*

**Armor Class** 20 (plate, shield)

**Hit Points** 153 (18d8 + 72)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	13 (+1)	18 (+4)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)

**Saving Throws** Str +8, Con +7, Wis +5, Cha +5

**Skills** Athletics +8, Intimidation +5, Perception +5, Persuasion +5

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

**Languages** Common, Orc

**Challenge** 8 (3,900 XP)

## Special Traits

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**Call To Arms.** When the warlord rolls initiative, it commands every ally that can see or hear it to run toward the fray. Each of the warlord's affected allies can immediately use its reaction to move up to its speed toward the warlord or a hostile creature that it can see.

**Indomitable (3/Day).** The warlord can reroll a saving throw it fails. It must use the new roll.

**Stalwart Presence.** The warlord has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, frightened, stunned, or knocked prone.

## Actions

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**Multiattack.** The warlord makes two Battleaxe attacks and one Shield Bash attack.

**Battleaxe.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 14 (2d8 + 5) slashing damage, or 16 (2d10 + 5) slashing damage if used with two hands.

**Shield Bash.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 12 (2d6 + 5) bludgeoning damage, and if the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 16 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

## Bonus Actions

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**Enrage.** Each of the warlord's allies within 30 feet of it gains advantage on the first attack roll it makes on its next turn.

**Invigorate.** Each of the warlord's allies within 30 feet of it gains 7 (2d6) temporary hit points.

**Rush.** The warlord moves up to its speed toward a hostile creature that it can see.

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