

DARK DOMAINS 3: DARK STARS RISING

Dark Stars Rising is a Fifth Edition plug-in adventure for **four characters with an average party level (APL) of 3, 5, 8, or 11**. This document offers a general guideline on how to scale the adventure for each level. A research team based at a remote observatory has mysteriously gone quiet, and the characters have been dispatched to investigate. Once there, they must contend with eldritch horrors, madness, and a militia of cultists bent on stopping them.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

The table below offers some ideas if you don't have a reason for the characters to investigate the observatory. Roll a d8 or choose the one you like best. If you need to motivate the party with a monetary reward, their patrons offer 300 gp per level of the adventure.

RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

To run the adventure, you need the three Fifth Edition core rulebooks. If you don't have a copy, you can access a free basic ruleset from the official source.

Text that appears in a box like this is meant to be read aloud or paraphrased for the players when their characters first 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 as a way of saying, "Hey, game master, 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 non-magical 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.

CREDITS

The following creators made this adventure possible:

Design and Writing. DMDave

Cartography. DMDave with Forgotten Adventures, Dyson Logos

Artwork. Paper Forge, Midjourney

LEVEL SELECTION

Before play, be sure to know the level at which you wish to run the adventure. Overall, the locations and their descriptions in the adventure remain unchanged throughout the levels. However, most of the encounters, hazards, traps, and treasure 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 3rd, 5th, 8th, or 11th, the chart below shows you which version of the adventure you should select for each level. A given version of the adventure might be easier or harder for a given party. It's not recommended that you run this adventure for characters with an average party level of less than 3 as it may pose too much of a challenge. Similarly, a party with an average party level of 13 or greater might find the adventure too easy.

Scaling the Adventure

| Average Party Level | Recommended Adventure Version | Relative Difficulty |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|
| 3 | 3rd-level | Hard |
| 4 | 3rd-level | Medium |
| 5 | 5th-level | Hard |
| 6 | 5th-level | Medium |
| 7 | 8th-level | Deadly |
| 8 | 8th-level | Hard |
| 9 | 8th-level | Medium |
| 10 | 11th-level | Deadly |
| 11 | 11th-level | Hard |
| 12 | 11th-level | Medium |

Dark Stars Rising Hooks

| d8 | Patron | Adventure Hook |
|-----------|--------------------|---|
| 1 | Academy | The mage's college that partially funded the observatory has been without news of its own researchers for too long. They task the characters with finding out what happened, making sure the researchers are safe and securing the research, not necessarily in that order. |
| 2 | Ancient Being | As Yagiogreth of the Dark Star is increasing its influence over the material plane, other beings of similar power and age feel its approach. One of them sends the characters to the observatory so they can sever Yagiogreth's connection to this plane and rid them of the rival. |
| 3 | Aristocrat | The friend of a noble known to the characters was last seen setting out for the observatory. The noble (rightly) worries that something happened to them, and hopes the characters can find out what exactly that is. |
| 4 | Criminal Syndicate | The duchy and mage's academy might have tried to keep the powers of the observatory's telescope quiet, but rumors always spread. The characters' criminal contact wants them to secure these powers for the shadier elements of society. |
| 5 | Adventurers' Guild | The local duchy hired adventurers of the guild before to investigate the observatory. None of them returned. Now, the guild sends the characters there to figure out what happened to its other members. |
| 6 | Military Force | The local militia recognizes that the observatory would be a great place for a tactical base, being high up and already full of telescopes. They employ the characters to ask the researchers' permission for stationing a few soldiers up there. |
| 7 | Religious Order | A local church has read in their deity's omens trouble brewing up at the observatory. They know no details but ask the characters to find out how true these omens are. |
| 8 | Sovereign | The duchy discreetly hires the characters to check up on their research facility in the observatory. The research itself does not concern the characters, but something has made reports from there stop. |





THE THULE-31 JOINT RESEARCH OBSERVATORY

Almost a decade ago, a mage's college in conjunction with the local duchy built the Thule-31 Joint Research Observatory. Its purpose was simple: study the stars, and watch for signs of life. Soon after the constellatory research began, the team (led by an elf named Filvarel) discovered that the right instrument—in this case, the observatory's telescope—could do more than simply see; the star signs had powers unto themselves, and by trial and error, one could learn to harness those powers.

The duchy kept this knowledge secret, much to the chagrin of their mage's college partners, so that it wouldn't fall into the hands of jealous rivals. They demanded that the mages and researchers stationed

at Thule-31 continue their search for older, more powerful signs hidden in the black folds of space. The research team obliged, and eventually, they did discover something, something ancient and unfathomable and uncaring: Yagiogreth of the Dark Star.

This eldritch being, born without form and void, peered back through the mortals' looking glass and began whispering its ancient secrets into the minds of these eager researchers.

News coming out of the observatory slowed to a trickle, then ceased altogether, and runners dispatched from the duchy disappeared without a trace. Brave adventurers are needed to enter the observatory, discover what's happened to the researchers, and recover their research—or destroy it, should the need arise.

GENERAL FEATURES

The following features are common throughout all areas of the observatory and are printed here for ease of reference:

Size & Dimensions. The ceilings within each area of the observatory are 20 feet high unless stated otherwise.

Illumination. Treat all outdoor areas as having no light; treat all indoor areas as having dim light unless stated otherwise.

Surface Detail. The observatory has been turned into a den of cult worship: fetishes of bone—animal and otherwise—adorn the walls, occult symbols have been painted with blood and surrounded with candles, and the air is heavy with a hallucinatory incense (see Madness below).

Barriers. Several doors and windows throughout the observatory are locked and/or boarded up. All of the barriers are made of wood and have AC 15, 18 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. A lock can be picked with a successful DC 15 Dexterity check using thieves' tools, or any barrier can be forced open with a successful DC 20 Strength check.

THE IMITATION

Before the adventure begins, select one player in **secret** to be the Imitation—do not mention this aspect of the adventure to the rest of the group. Share with the selected player (or have them read) the following information:

You are the Imitation, a creature born from the mind of an eldritch being known as Yagiogreth of the Dark Star. Your character is safe, but unconscious and tied up somewhere in the observatory. You are a perfect Imitation of your character, with the following exceptions:

- You do not suffer from madness effects; you still roll for madness checks and may roleplay being mad, but you are incapable of going mad. You are also immune to other types of insanity.
- Set your Strength score to 20.
- Set your Constitution score to 22.
- Your objective is to protect the telescope at all costs. Do not let anyone destroy it or redirect it away from Yagiogreth of the Dark Star.

Unbeknownst to even this player, the Imitation's true character is tied up and unconscious in **area 10**.

MADNESS

The research team, under the direction of their new master Yagiogreth of the Dark Star, has filled the

GM NOTE

Some groups or players may not fare well with the idea of their character having been replaced without anyone knowing. You know your party best and if you think this development would ruin anyone's fun out of character, have an NPC be the Imitation instead. If the characters are accompanied by an NPC anyway, your choice is simple. If they are not, an acquaintance of their patron decides to accompany the characters to the observatory, ostensibly because this acquaintance has their own interest in learning what happened to the researchers, but really to make sure the characters don't succeed in interfering.

observatory with a hallucinatory incense. They believe the incense will help bring them closer to the eldritch being—and who's to say they're wrong? But regardless of what the deranged research team believes, the incense causes all creatures in the area to go a bit mad. Certain objects will prompt a madness check on sight or contact, as noted in the area's description.

Increasing Madness. On a failed madness check, a character suffers a short-time madness (refer to the *DMG* for details on madness). The more madness a character experiences, the more severe the madness becomes. Once a character has experienced three short-term effects, their next failed madness check will incur a long-term madness. Similarly, if a character ever experiences three long-term effects, they will then progress to making checks against indefinite madneses.

CONSTELLATORY DIVINATION

The research team, in conjunction with the mage's college, figured out something extraordinary in their studies: the constellations in the sky, if channeled through the proper instrument—such as the observatory's own enchanted telescope—can confer benefits to those who look upon them. Unfortunately for them, they never considered the possibility of eldritch beings inhabiting the stars!

When the adventure begins, the observatory's telescope is fixed upon Yagiogreth of the Dark Star, allowing its influence to flow from the stars into the minds of the research team. Once the adventure ends, however, the characters may choose to point the magical telescope at a different (and less evil) constellation in order to receive its blessing. A character can only gain one such benefit at a time. If they already have a constellation feature and use the telescope to look at a different constellation, that constellation's feature replaces the existing one.

The following are well-known constellations that

the characters may look upon. That being said, this is not an exhaustive list; the stars in the sky are infinite, so feel free to come up with your own!

The Warrior

Once per day, as a bonus action, you invoke the Warrior to gain advantage on your next attack roll made with a melee weapon.

The Mage

Once per day, as a bonus action, you invoke the Mage to amplify your magic. The next spell you cast of 1st level or higher acts as if it was cast with a spell slot 1 level higher than you expend.

The Thief

Once per day, as a bonus action, you invoke the Thief to cast *greater invisibility* on yourself.

The Lover

Once per day, as a bonus action, you invoke the Lover to gain advantage on all Charisma checks for the next minute. Additionally, humanoid creatures of your choice that look upon you during that time must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw or become charmed by you (as if by the spell *charm person*) for 1 hour.

The Monolith

Once per day, as a bonus action, you invoke the Monolith to cast *stoneskin* on yourself for 1 minute.

Yagiogreth of the Dark Star

Once per day, as a bonus action, you invoke Yagiogreth of the Dark Star to cast *contact other plane*, except the contact is always the eldritch being Yagiogreth of the Dark Star. Additionally, the DC of the spell's Intelligence saving throw becomes 10, and permanently and cumulatively increases by 2 every time the constellation is invoked.



AREAS OF THE OBSERVATORY

The following locations are keyed to the map of the observatory on pages 11-13.

1 - The Approach - Exterior

The observatory looms silently over the cliffs, its doors and windows boarded up, its halls darkened. As you approach, you smell something strange and pungent in the air. There's a path at the top of the hill that wraps around the facility—perhaps there's another way in?

Alternate Path. A footpath wraps around the observatory. Following it leads to **area 6**.

Obstacle: Barriers to Entry. This area connects to several other areas via boarded-up windows and doors. Refer to the General Features section for information on how to overcome these obstacles:

- ▶ 1 boarded-up and locked door to **area 2**
- ▶ 1 boarded-up and locked door to **area 5** (via **area 6**)
- ▶ 4 boarded-up and locked windows to **area 5** (via **area 6**)

Encounter: The Possessed Mob. Yagiogreth of the Dark Star does not sit idly by as the characters threaten its seat of power on this plane of existence. The eldritch being begins extending its influence to the vulnerable minds of people in the surrounding countryside as soon as the adventure begins. After Filvarel has been dealt with in **area 11**, a possessed mob begins climbing the hill toward the observatory with the intent of removing the characters by force. The size of the mob is always twenty-five **commoners** armed with improvised weapons and torches, regardless of the adventure's APL. If the characters slay too many possessed commoners, their reward will be forfeit and they'll be banned from the duchy (see *Concluding the Adventure* for more information). Once the telescope in **area 11** is moved or destroyed, the commoners return to their senses.

2 - The Orrery - Interior

A large orrery is slowly spinning in the center of the area. Occult objects are hanging from its orbs, jangling like wind chimes.

Madness Check: Occult Orrery. Dozens of profane objects, made of animal and human bone, are hanging from the rotating orrery. Any character that looks upon these objects for the first time must make a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or experience a madness effect (see *Increasing Madness* on page 4).

Encounter: Raving Researchers. Several researchers are present in the area, and each researcher has an *eldritch spell scroll* in their possession (see Treasure below). They've defaced themselves with a blade by carving symbols into their own flesh. The researchers approach the characters ranting and raving about Yagiogreth of the Dark Star and Filvarel (the principal investigator in charge of the facility). They will insist that the characters allow them to carve symbols into their flesh, and will eventually become hostile if refused. They can be convinced to stand aside with a successful DC 18 Charisma (Persuasion) check. However, if any of the occult symbols on the orrery are destroyed, they will become hostile regardless of the situation. Refer to the table below for the number and type of researchers present:

Raving Researchers

| Version | Statblocks |
|---------|---------------------------|
| 3 | 1 cult fanatic, 1 cultist |
| 5 | 3 cult fanatics |
| 8 | 1 cult fanatic, 1 mage |
| 11 | 2 mages |

Treasure: Eldritch Spell Scrolls. The researchers have on their person one *eldritch spell scroll*. This is a normal *spell scroll*, except it is written in an unknowable language. Any creature that uses the scroll must make a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw or

suffer a madness effect (see Increasing Madness on page 4). The scroll's spell is determined randomly when the scroll is used, and the scroll's rarity is dependent on the adventure's APL:

Eldritch Spell Scrolls

| Version | Scroll Rarity |
|---------|---------------------------|
| 3 | Uncommon (spell level 2) |
| 5 | Rare (spell level 4) |
| 8 | Very Rare (spell level 6) |
| 11 | Very Rare (spell level 8) |

Ladder. A ladder on the west side of the area leads up to **area 7**. However, the hatch is locked. The key is located in a book in **area 3**. Alternatively, the lock can be broken or picked (see General Features).

Moving On. There is a foyer to the north of this area. On the left side of the foyer is an unlocked door to **area 3**. On the right side of the foyer is an unlocked door to **area 4**. Finally, the foyer leads further north into **area 6**.

A trapdoor leads down into nothing more than a small chamber with dusty observatory equipment. If you want to expand on the location, however, the full map of the observatory includes a basement and caves that might, at the GM's discretion, hold more researchers or a different threat altogether.

3 - Study Room - Interior

Before the characters open the door to this room, read or paraphrase the following:

The air stinks of rotting meat. It seems to be coming from beyond the door.

Madness Check: The Hanging Man. A naked human man has been nailed to the west wall of this room; his stomach has been sliced open, his intestines torn out to hang, and occult symbols have been carved into his flesh. His blood has been used to paint yet more occult imagery along the walls. Any character that looks upon the hanging man for the first time must make a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw or experience a madness effect (see Increasing Madness on page 4).

Trap: Glyph - Insanity. On the desk, just beneath the hanging man, is a bloodied book. A silver key can be seen sticking out of its pages. Opening the book or removing the key triggers the trap: creatures in the room must make a DC 14 Intelligence saving throw. On a failed save, a creature is driven insane for 1 minute. An insane creature can't take actions, can't understand what other creatures say, can't read, and speaks only in gibberish. The GM controls its movement, which is erratic. This effect counts toward a character's madness thresholds (see Increasing Madness on page 4).



Treasure: Profane Spellbook. The bloodied book on the desk is a profane spellbook made of animal skin. The book is written in an old dialect of Common mixed with strange, unrecognizable (and unpronounceable) words. The spellbook can be studied while taking a long rest. Doing so triggers a madness check: the character studying the profane spellbook must make a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or experience a madness effect (see Increasing Madness on page 4). If the character succeeds on the saving throw, they gain an additional spell slot equal to their highest available spell slot until they complete another long rest.

4 - Storage Closet - Interior

Barrels and boxes are piled to the ceiling. It smells of rotting food and spoiled drink.

Illumination. Treat this area as having no light.

Treasure: Storage Room Supplies. A careful search of the storage room reveals treasure relative to the APL of the adventure:

Supplies

| Version | Treasure |
|---------|---|
| 3 | Pristine vellum rolls; a <i>potion of healing</i> |
| 5 | A week's worth of rations; a <i>potion of greater healing</i> |
| 8 | Packaged research notes; a <i>potion of superior healing</i> |
| 11 | 1d8 rare spell components (GM's choice); <i>potion of supreme healing</i> |

5 - Dining Hall - Interior

Several people are sitting at the dining table, muttering to themselves. Each of them is hunched over what looks like a scroll.

Madness Check: Lunatic Ravings. The researchers in this area are reciting eldritch words in a forgotten tongue. Any character that comes within 15 feet of the dining table hears these ravings; characters that hear these ravings for the first time must make a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or experience a madness effect (see Increasing Madness on page 4).

Encounter: Entranced Researchers. Several researchers are present in the area, and each researcher is busy reading the *eldritch spell scroll* in their possession (see Treasure below). The researchers are entranced by the scrolls and won't even notice the characters unless they come within 10 feet of the dining table. If they do end up noticing the char-

acters, they will insist that they read the scrolls for themselves, and will become hostile if refused. They can be convinced to stand aside with a successful DC 18 Charisma (Persuasion) check. Refer to the table below for the number and type of researchers present:

Entranced Researchers

| Version | Statblocks |
|---------|-------------------------------------|
| 3 | 1 cult fanatic, 4 cultists |
| 5 | 3 cult fanatics, 4 cultists |
| 8 | 1 cult fanatic, 1 mage, 3 cultists |
| 11 | 2 mages, 1 cult fanatic, 3 cultists |

Treasure: Eldritch Spell Scrolls. The researchers have on their person one *eldritch spell scroll* each. This is a normal *spell scroll*, except it is written in an unknowable language. Any creature that uses the scroll must make a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw or suffer a madness effect (see Increasing Madness on page 4). The scroll's spell is determined randomly when the scroll is used, and the scroll's rarity is dependent on the adventure's APL:

Eldritch Spell Scrolls

| Version | Scroll Rarity |
|---------|---------------------------|
| 3 | Uncommon (spell level 2) |
| 5 | Rare (spell level 4) |
| 8 | Very Rare (spell level 6) |
| 11 | Very Rare (spell level 8) |

Obstacle: Barriers to Entry. This area connects to area 6 via boarded-up windows and doors. Refer to the General Features section for information on how to overcome these obstacles:

- ▶ 1 boarded-up and locked door to area 6
- ▶ 4 boarded-up and locked windows to area 6

6 - Overlook - Exterior

It's peaceful out here. Below the cliffs, the countryside seems to roll on forever.

Obstacle: Barriers to Entry. This area connects to area 5 via boarded-up windows and doors. Refer to the General Features section for information on how to overcome these obstacles:

- ▶ 1 boarded-up and locked door to area 5
- ▶ 4 boarded-up and locked windows to area 5

Footpath. A footpath curves around the observatory to area 1.

7 - Telescope Nooks - Interior

It's quiet in this area, but muttering sounds can be heard in the adjoining room to the southeast. There are two telescopes looking out into the night sky. What do they see?

Trap: Glyph - Insanity. There are two telescopes in the area, each occupying a different nook. The lenses have been visibly defaced if one were to check before looking. Looking through the telescope triggers the trap: the creature looking sees the indescribably horrific face of Yagiogreth of the Dark Star and must make a DC 17 Intelligence saving throw. On a failed save, the target is driven insane for 1 minute. An insane creature can't take actions, can't understand what other creatures say, can't read, and speaks only in gibberish. The GM controls its movement, which is erratic. This effect counts toward a character's madness thresholds (see Increasing Madness on page 4).

8 - Conference Area - Interior

Surprisingly, this room appears to be in good condition and free of occult symbology. Two telescopes peer out into the night sky.

Trap: Glyph - Insanity. There are two telescopes in the area, each occupying a different nook. The lenses have been visibly defaced if one were to check before looking. Looking through the telescope triggers the trap: the creature looking sees the indescribably horrific face of Yagiogreth of the Dark Star and must make a DC 17 Intelligence saving throw. On a failed save, the target is driven insane for 1 minute. An insane creature can't take actions, can't understand what other creatures say, can't read, and speaks only in gibberish. The GM controls its movement, which is erratic. This effect counts toward a character's madness thresholds (see Increasing Madness on page 4).

9 - Bunk Room - Interior

Like most of the observatory, this area is decorated with unutterable words written in blood and bone.

Madness Check: Occult Symbology. The walls are covered in strange symbols, written in blood and pieces of bone. Characters that see these symbols for the first time must make a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw or experience a madness effect (see Increasing Madness on page 4).

Trap: Glyph - Insanity. There are two telescopes in the area, each occupying a different nook. The lenses have been visibly defaced if one were to



check before looking. Looking through the telescope triggers the trap: the creature looking sees the indescribably horrific face of Yagiogreth of the Dark Star and must make a DC 17 Intelligence saving throw. On a failed save, the target is driven insane for 1 minute. An insane creature can't take actions, can't understand what other creatures say, can't read, and speaks only in gibberish. The GM controls its movement, which is erratic. This effect counts toward a character's madness thresholds (see Increasing Madness on page 4).

Encounter: Crazy Researchers. Several researchers are present in the area, and each researcher has an *eldritch spell scroll* in their possession (see Treasure below). The researchers are rocking back and forth on their beds. They will insist that the characters look into the telescopes in this area, and will eventually become hostile and physically force them to look if refused. They can be convinced to stand aside with a successful DC 18 Charisma (Persuasion) check. However, if any of the occult symbols in the room are destroyed, they will become hostile regardless of the situation. Refer to the table below for the number and type of researchers present:

Crazy Researchers

| Version | Statblocks |
|---------|---------------------------|
| 3 | 1 cult fanatic, 1 cultist |
| 5 | 3 cult fanatics |
| 8 | 2 cult fanatics, 1 mage |
| 11 | 2 mages |

Treasure: Eldritch Spell Scrolls. The researchers have on their person one *eldritch spell scroll* each. This is a normal *spell scroll*, except it is written in an unknowable language. Any creature that uses the scroll must make a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw or suffer a madness effect (see Increasing Madness on page 4). The scroll's spell is determined randomly when the scroll is used, and the scroll's rarity is dependent on the adventure's APL:

Eldritch Spell Scrolls

| Version | Scroll Rarity |
|---------|---------------------------|
| 3 | Uncommon (spell level 2) |
| 5 | Rare (spell level 4) |
| 8 | Very Rare (spell level 6) |
| 11 | Very Rare (spell level 8) |

10 - Principal Investigator's Office - Interior

The walls are smeared with blood and feces. Candlelight flickers over arcane and inscrutable symbols that hurt to look upon. Behind the desk, someone is tied up.

Madness Check: Occult Symbolology. The walls are covered in strange symbols, written in blood. Characters that see these symbols for the first time must make a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw or experience a madness effect (see Increasing Madness on page 4).

Trap: Glyph - Insanity. There's a telescope in this area, occupying a small nook. The lens has been visibly defaced if one were to check before looking. Looking through the telescope triggers the trap: the creature looking sees the indescribably horrific face of Yagiogreth of the Dark Star and must make a DC 17 Intelligence saving throw. On a failed save, the target is driven insane for 1 minute. An insane creature can't take actions, can't understand what other creatures say, can't read, and speaks only in gibberish. The GM controls its movement, which is erratic. This effect counts toward a character's madness thresholds (see Increasing Madness on page 4).

Encounter: Ending the Imitation Game. If the Imitation player has yet to be discovered, they are found out upon the party finding their true character tied up and unconscious in this area. The character is awoken by the commotion, and the Imitation transforms into a monster and takes the characters by surprise. The monster appears to be a horrific conglomeration of blood and twisted flesh, but uses a different statblock depending on the APL of the adventure:

Ending the Imitation Game

| Version | Statblock |
|---------|-------------------|
| 3 | 1 mimic |
| 5 | 1 roper |
| 8 | 1 roper |
| 11 | 1 glabrezu |



Treasure: Filvarel's Notes. Scattered across the desk are Filvarel's notes on the telescope, constellatory divination, and Yagiogreth of the Dark Star. Characters may study the notes by spending an hour and performing a DC 18 Intelligence (Arcana) check. Characters who succeed on this check learn everything detailed in the background chapters of this adventure document, including how to sever Yagiogreth of the Dark Star's influence from the world. Characters who fail the check must make a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw or experience a madness effect (see Increasing Madness on page 4).

11 - The Summit - Interior

The observatory's dome has been flung open, allowing the telescope to look upon the stars. Clouds are swirling directly above the facility, flashing with heat lightning.

Encounter: Filvarel & Researchers. Filvarel is busy contemplating the majesty of Yagiogreth of the Dark Star when the characters arrive. Depending on the APL of the adventure, other humanoids may be present as well. Upon seeing the characters, he will greet them warmly and invite them to look into the

telescope, saying that the Eldritch being has bequeathed him (and the others, if playing at APL 11) a “special power”: a were-form. Filvarel is perfectly cooperative so long as the characters don’t engage him in combat or try to move the telescope from its coordinates. If Filvarel feels as if his or the observatory’s connection to Yagiogreth of the Dark Star is threatened, he will transform into his were-form and attack. These were-forms have the appearance of horrific monstrosities of twisted flesh and blood, but use different statblocks depending on the APL of the adventure:

Filvarel & Researchers

| Version | Statblocks |
|---------|-----------------------------|
| 3 | 1 wereboar |
| 5 | 1 werebear, 1 cult fanatic |
| 8 | 1 werebear, 3 cult fanatics |
| 11 | 4 werebears |

The Mob Approaches. Once Filvarel (and the others, if present) have been dealt with, the characters hear the collective scream of dozens of people below—a possessed mob of commoners begin climbing the hills toward the observatory. Refer to **area 1** for more details on this encounter.

Severing the Connection. The telescope is fixed upon Yagiogreth of the Dark Star and has been purposefully broken to prevent it from moving. To sever the eldritch being’s influence from the mob and the observatory, the telescope must either be repaired and repositioned, magically blocked (for example, by the spell *darkness*), or destroyed altogether. Once one of these conditions have been met, the mob and any researchers left alive come to their senses—if it was by a temporary effect, however, such as by the aforementioned spell *darkness*, then Yagiogreth of the Dark Star regains control once the effect ends unless the telescope has been repositioned or destroyed in the interim.

- ▶ The telescope can be repaired over the course of an hour by succeeding on a DC 18 Intelligence (Arcana) check; it can then be moved with no difficulty.
- ▶ Physically repositioning the telescope *without* repairing it first requires a DC 30 Strength (Athletics) check.
- ▶ The telescope has 50 hit points, an AC of 10, and resistance to slashing, bludgeoning, and piercing damage. The lenses within the telescope have 20 hit points, an AC of 10, and resistance to slashing and piercing damage. Destroying either the lenses or the entire telescope severs the connection.

Treasure: Calibration Lenses. The lenses within the telescope are made of solid crystal. Together, they weigh 100 lbs and are worth roughly 2,500 gp.



CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE: STARS GUIDE YOU

Once Filvarel has been subdued or killed and the accursed telescope repositioned or destroyed, the characters may attempt to collect the promised reward from their patron. The patron may have had additional stipulations, such as keeping the telescope intact, in which case the reward is reduced by half if their condition isn’t met.

If the characters kill seven or more commoners in the possessed mob, however, then no payment is given, and the characters are banned from the region.

Finally, so long as the characters have remained in good standing, they may return to the observatory in two weeks (whereupon they’ll find a new research team working) and make use of the facility as described under Constellatory Divination. Ω

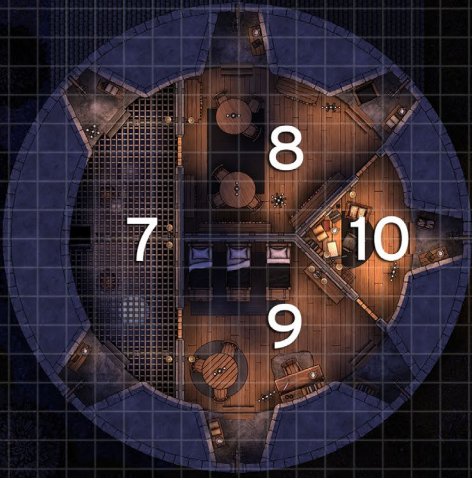
The Observatory

Ground Floor



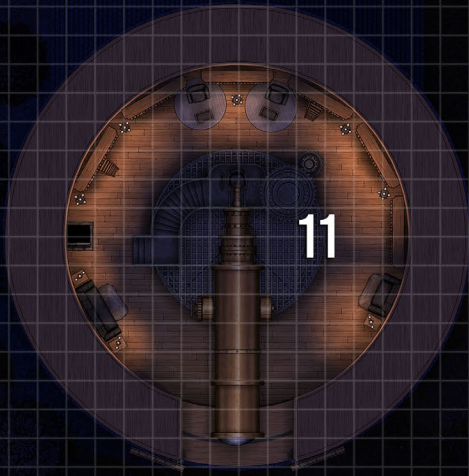
The Observatory

Living Quarters



1 square = 5 feet

The Observatory Telescope



1 square = 5 feet

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