

— BLEEDING EDGE ADVENTURE #6 —

# Escape From Ceranir

- A D20 ADVENTURE FOR FOUR TO SIX CHARACTERS OF 6TH TO 8TH LEVEL -



By Scott Fitzgerald Gray



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# Introduction

*Escape from Ceranir* is a challenging site-based adventure—an incursion into a ravaged fortress designed to push characters to their limits, and then beyond.

The isolated Citadel Ceranir is a center of arcane study and training founded by the legendary mage of the same name. Those wizards who study, practice, and work here are famed throughout the lands for their constant work in keeping the peace and attending to the occasional crawling horror that lurks in the depths of the surrounding forests. But now, the citadel has fallen eerily silent and no word has emerged from this place in weeks, a fact worrisome to those who depend on its vigilance to safeguard their homes.

Asked to learn the fate of the Ceranir wizards, the PCs find the citadel sealed and apparently deserted. They discover its walls conceal a gruesome sight—the stronghold routed despite any sign of incursion or external assault and its inhabitants slain en masse. Magical and mundane traps designed as a first response to incursion stand ready to destroy the unwary, and the monstrous denizens of the citadel's bestiary roam freely in its corridors.

But even as the PCs run the gauntlet of these challenges, they eventually discover a more chilling secret—having entered ruined Ceranir, they now have no way to leave....

## Adventure Background

Citadel Ceranir has a long history of training the children of wealth and nobility to the wizarding arts. The school's approach to spellcasting is codified around equal devotion to four deities—the Gods of Magic, Knowledge, Secrets, and Death. Master Ceranir considered each deity to possess dominion over an equally important facet of arcane study, and taught his students to worship not only the fruits of magic (in the form of the God of Magic himself), but of its process (Knowledge and Secrets) and ultimate power (Death).

The citadel's apprentices have always been humans or (more rarely) half-elves. Ceranir's primary objective was to push the boundaries of arcane research, and he resented the stranglehold that the long-lived elven scholars had on much of the most important magical lore.

While the amount of power held within its walls suggests a wealth of possible things that might have befallen the citadel, the reality is more tragically mundane. Derishar, one of the citadel's masters, intentionally shut down the bestiary wards, allowing the creatures there to sweep through the citadel and destroy all they found.

## Derishar's Fall

For some months prior to the citadel's destruction, Aleon (Master of Knowledge) used spellcraft and cunning to make Derishar (Master of Death) fall in love with her, never suspecting her plan would see Derishar driven mad with jealous rage. Derishar grew to hate Gariant (Master of Magic, and the citadel's headmaster), who he suspected of having designs on Aleon. In the end, he sought to destroy Gariant by shutting down the sorcerous wards keeping the creatures of the bestiary contained.

Derishar was unable to restore the wards once they had been disabled, however. A pack of barghest raced through the dormitory (killing Master Mydrien), then

faced Derishar and Aleon in the garden. Aleon was killed, Derishar single-handedly forced the barghests to withdraw. He returned Aleon's body to the masters' wing, and then made the hidden library his final sanctum. Though he could easily have escaped out the secret door through which the PC will likely enter, the mad despair wrought by Aleon's death has kept him here.

Players who enjoy the challenge of story puzzles can find enough evidence to deduce what happened here (Derishar's journals, the *elixir of love* in Aleon's chambers, and the records in the hidden library). Players who prefer action to back-story shouldn't have to look far either.

## Adventure Synopsis

The party arrived at Citadel Ceranir, finding itself outside the complex with no sign of anyone within. Uncovering a means of entering the citadel becomes the first order of business. Once inside, it quickly becomes apparent something dire has befallen this place and its inhabitants.

Ravaged chambers and the bodies of the dead set a mood of dark unease, as do the disturbing sounds of wolves echoing through the citadel's empty halls. But at some point in the party's investigations, they'll make a more unnerving discovery—the magical wards designed to keep the citadel safe from intruders are active, and that they themselves are trapped.

Even as they search in vain for survivors and piece together the story of how the citadel fell, the party seeks escape. The four keys once held by the masters of Ceranir promise to unlock the main doors, and the party searches for them as they pass through five main sections of the complex—the dormitory, the masters' wing, the garden, the cellars, the tower of learning, and the bestiary. However, whatever disaster befell this center of arcane study has also set the bestiary's creatures at loose throughout the complex—including a pack of barghests just as intent on escape as the PCs.

## Using this Adventure

*Escape from Ceranir* is designed for a party of four 6th-level characters, but can be easily scaled for characters of up to 8th level. The party should include a wizard or sorcerer with healthy ranks in Knowledge (arcana), as well as a rogue of at least 5th level. The various magical wards and mundane traps make characters possessing these skills crucial for survival.

## Adapting this Adventure

The emptiness of the citadel and the destruction found there is designed to raise the level of tension in the party. Whether the PCs discover early on that they are trapped within the citadel's walls or only uncover that fact after attempting to flee, play this atmosphere up. Make use of sensory cues, whether the ever-present silence, the dripping water of the dormitory, the distant howls of the barghests, or the pall of smoke that hangs over the cellars and the tower of learning.

Depending on the party's moral bent, allow them to work under the impression that there may be survivors (the missing bodies in the dormitory) for as long as possible. An initial sense of this being a rescue mission can only help to heighten

## Bleeding Edge

Green Ronin Publishing's *Bleeding Edge Adventures* provide challenging and entertaining scenarios that cater to the tastes and interests of the modern gamer. Within these adventures, you will find a wealth of material designed to take advantage of the intricacies of the d20 system and give you everything you need to create an exciting adventure experience.

Each adventure in the Bleeding Edge line stands on its own, so you need not have them all to enjoy them. However, the series can also be linked together to provide a complete campaign.

Finally, these adventures can be slotted into any campaign setting. Many of the locations used in the adventures are found in the larger *World of Freeport*, but if you do not use Freeport, you can still use the adventure by changing the names and places to suit your own setting.



the eventual realization that the characters themselves are the ones trapped within Ceranir's walls.

## Scaling the Adventure

While larger and smaller parties and groups of greater or lower levels than those recommended for this adventure may be used, you should consider making the following adjustments to the creatures and traps presented in the following pages.

### Weaker Parties

For groups with three or fewer characters or are lower than 5th level on average, make the following changes:

- ♦ **Room 12:** Remove one ooze mephit.
- ♦ **Room 13:** Replace the *fireball* trap with a *burning hands* trap (see *DMG*) and make the maximized *magic missile* trap a standard *magic missile* trap.
- ♦ **Room 18:** Remove one of the arakai. Replace the advanced barghest with a normal barghest.
- ♦ **Room 23:** Reduce the phasm's hit points to 47.
- ♦ **Room 24:** Give the assassin vine normal hit points.
- ♦ **Room 35:** Remove one brass dragon wyrmling.
- ♦ **Room 38:** Remove the *black tentacle* trap.
- ♦ **Room 40:** Remove all of the normal shadows.
- ♦ **Room 41:** Replace the chaos beast with a fiendish Large monstrous spider and remove the master's levels in eldritch knight.
- ♦ Finally, allow the characters to rest more frequently, offer additional curative magic in rooms. You can even have any given trap malfunction 50% of the time.

### Stronger Parties

For groups with five or more characters or are higher than 7th level on average, make the following changes:

- ♦ **Room 1:** Replace the *burning hands* trap with a *fire trap* and the *acid arrow* trap with a fusillade of darts trap (see *DMG*).
- ♦ **Room 4:** Increase the Search and Disable Device DCs by 2 for each trap.
- ♦ **Room 10:** Make the damaged *lightning bolt* trap fully functioning and caster level 6th.
- ♦ **Room 12:** Add two more ooze mephits.
- ♦ **Room 13:** Increase the caster level on the *fireball* trap to 7th.
- ♦ **Room 15:** Replace the *stinking cloud* trap with an *acid fog* trap (see *DMG*).
- ♦ **Room 17:** Replace the *glyph of warding* trap with a CR 6 *glyph of warding* (blast) trap.
- ♦ **Room 18:** Give all of the arakai one level each of rogue. Replace the advanced barghest with a greater barghest.
- ♦ **Room 23:** Give the phasm two levels of rogue.
- ♦ **Room 24:** Advance the assassin vine to 12 Hit Dice.
- ♦ **Room 33:** Advance the mimic to 15 Hit Dice.
- ♦ **Room 35:** Replace the brass dragon wyrmlings with red dragon wyrmlings.
- ♦ **Room 38:** Replace the *black tentacles* trap with a *prismatic spray* trap (see *DMG*).
- ♦ **Room 40:** Add a second chaos beast and give Master Derishar two more levels of eldritch knight.
- ♦ Finally, do not allow the characters to rest by harassing them with encounters as if the PCs were facing creatures summoned by a *summon monster V* spell. It can be assumed that malfunctioning traps scattered throughout the complex produce these monsters.

## Suggested Adventure Hooks

There are a number of possible scenarios to get a party to the Citadel's front gates. Because the PCs need an incentive to actually force their way in, choose (or create) one that makes it less likely that they'll simply wander back to civilization when they find the doors sealed against them.

- ♦ The party's wizard is a former student of Ceranir, and has been asked to deliver a message to the citadel or to escort a newly graduated apprentice back home.



## No Exit

*Escape from Ceranir* is a challenging dungeon crawl, made more so by the fact once the PCs enter the citadel, they can't get out. A party used to taking advantage of cheap healing and plentiful supplies in the nearby small town ubiquitous in many adventure scenarios will need to adjust.

If the party finds itself in a crisis, feel free to fine-tune the treasure found within the complex as a means of aiding them, while reducing the amount of overall XP awarded (effectively trading those XP for immediately useful supplies). The secret closet in the masters' library (**Room 14**) and the caretaker's chest in **Room 33** are already specifically stocked with curative magic and useful items, and are the best place to locate any other much-needed magic (a *potion of fly* for a party with no means to reach the observatory, for example). Likewise, if the party comes into the adventure short on melee firepower (or if they miss the secret compartment in Master Gariant's armoire), make Master Aleon a fighter/wizard and have appropriate magic armor and weapons found in the garden where she fell.

A party whose spellcasting resources are depleted so badly that they need to rest within a secure part of the citadel for 24 hours should be allowed to do so, but be sure to roll meaningless dice frequently and fill the time with distant howling as the barghest roams at will. Alternatively, the party could find a small number of one-use elixirs either in the masters' wing (collected by the arakai) or the ruined laboratory (**Room 36**), any of which allows a spellcaster to regain full spell capacity after only four hours rest.

- Far from civilization, the party has recently come across a magic item they desire to sell or to have studied in an attempt to learn of its powers. Citadel Ceranir is only a few days away, and its reputation is well known.
- A ranger or druid in the party has heard of a unicorn being kidnapped a month before from a local sylvan wood. The distinct moon-and-dagger insignia the kidnappers wore is traced to Citadel Ceranir.
- A local noble is assassinated by his daughter then took her own life in the aftermath. It is later discovered that she was a former student of Citadel Ceranir. Her family and the authorities believe she was somehow corrupted during her time at Ceranir, but the citadel's connection to the nobility precludes open accusations without an independent (and clandestine) investigation. (See the **Expanding the Adventure** sidebars.)
- *Escape from Ceranir* is also a perfect continuation of the unfolding story that connects all of the **Bleeding Edge Adventures**. It can be run as a sequel to *Bleeding Edge #4: A Dreadful Dawn* or *Bleeding Edge #5: Temple of the Death Goddess*. In either

case, the mayor of Erburg is concerned about the silent citadel, for long has it maintained law and order in these lands and with the recent troubles plaguing the town and the lack of response from the arcane fortress suggests some ill event has transpired. The mayor and Lord Tylus request the player characters go to see what's afoot at the citadel at once and for their efforts, the town is willing to pay 1,000 gp to each PC that returns with news of the citadel's fate.

Whether the PCs decide to seek entrance to Ceranir openly or look for a clandestine way in from the start, the result when they arrive is the same—the dark fortress shows no signs of life.

## A Little Research

Characters wishing to do a bit of research before they embark to the citadel can make Gather Information or Knowledge (local) checks. The result of their check reveals all the information under the DC and everything for all lower DCs.

## Ceranir Information

DC	Information
15	Citadel Ceranir is a noted academy of magical instruction and families of hopeful wizards send their children here to learn the techniques from the school's masters.
17	Realizing the concern of local folks who live in towns and villages around the citadel, the wizards ensure the people support the school by patrolling the lands to safeguard it from monstrous attacks, magical maladies, and other supernatural dangers.
	The school tends to take only human students, though they will on occasion accept half-elves.
20	The school's curriculum is based on the magical methods espoused by four deities who have magic or sorcery in their portfolios. As such, the Gods of Magic, Knowledge, Secrets, and Death are equally represented in the school.
25	The academy's founder, Ceranir, established the school as a vehicle for research and magical experimentation. No friend to the elves, whom he felt were hiding the deeper mysteries of magic, Ceranir intended to eclipse the eldritch might of his rivals and thus no full-blooded elf was ever permitted within the school's walls.

## Getting There

*Escape from Ceranir* places the fortress in a remote section of forest, several miles from the town of Erburg (see map at left). This need not be the case; so long as the fortress is somewhere far enough off the beaten trail, any location—mountains, hills, even underwater—can work. As the characters make their way to the fortress, there's an 8% chance per hour for a random encounter. If one results, use the **Sample Temperate Forest Encounter Table** in **Chapter 3: Adventures** in the *DMG* to see what the PCs face.



# - The Citadel of Ceranir -

The adventure begins as the PCs cover the last few yards before the towering citadel. When you're ready to begin, read or paraphrase the following text.

*Rising through the forest's canopy are the peaks of a massive stone citadel. Ivy crawls over the surface of the dark stone of its walls, and to the casual eye, it appears to be an impregnable fortress. However, nothing stirs, not even the wind. Even the sounds of the forest have grown quiet as you draw near, suggesting something is not quite right.*

If the party has access to a minor artifact or a *wand of disintegrate*, let them blast the front doors of the citadel off their massive hinges. Otherwise, the stone doors stays closed regardless of any magic or lock-picking expertise the party brings to bear. Visitors to the citadel would normally knock and be admitted (or dispensed with) by the four masters bearing their keys. However, with no one to open the doors, getting access to the citadel will take some doing.

Allow the party to scout the exposed walls of the complex. If the party has the magical ability to pass through the 6-inch-wide window slits, or to look through them and use that knowledge to *teleport* within, they can conceivably start the adventure in either the Master's Wing (see page 11) or the Dormitory (page 8). However, any such action activates the citadel's defenses (see **The Back Door**).

With no knowledge of destination, *teleporting* into any other part of the citadel is effectively impossible. (As would be expected, the walls of the citadel carry a *dweomer* that makes *scrying* the interior impossible.)

By contrast, **Room 1** offers easy access to the citadel. Even a cursory search (Search DC 20) reveals a narrow track leaving the main path and climbing to the outer wall. If the PCs discover this, read or paraphrase the following:

*Your careful search beneath the citadel's exposed northern flank reveals a single track twisting around to the southeast. It follows a cleft where the walls push in.*

Reaching the door from the foot of the track requires single-file ascent up a narrow 40-foot stone chimney (Climb DC 15). Once up, the top of the chimney provides enough of a foothold for the secret door set into the outer wall of worked stone to be found (Search DC 20) and the lock to be picked (Open Lock DC 25).

## Getting Out

Always expect a resourceful party to come up with an unexpected way out of even the most well conceived deathtrap. However, as far as the design of this adventure goes, the only way out of Citadel Ceranir is through the front doors, armed with the four crescent-shaped keys of the citadel masters.

## The Keys of Ceranir

Each masters' key radiates moderate abjuration and conjuration (DC 20 Spellcraft to recognize). The keys open any of the locked doors within the citadel (except the door to **Room 13**) and deactivate the defensive wards of those doors. The keys also grant access to the hidden library (**Room 41**) by way of the teaching courtyards in the garden (any of **Rooms 20, 21, 25, or 26**). Using a key to activate the *teleport* mechanisms there also requires one to be wearing the red robes found only in the masters' wing.

Master Aleon's key was taken by the barghest when she fell. Three keys remain at large in the dormitory, the bestiary, and the hidden library. See those areas for details.

## The Back Door

Opening the secret door to **Room 1** without the use of one of the four magical keys carried by the masters arm and trip the citadel's defenses and sets the rest of the adventure in motion. The masters themselves knew they were the citadel's best defense, and so chose not to worry about enemies gaining access to the complex in favor of trapping them within the citadel for capture, questioning, and disposal. However, with no masters to meet the intruding party, the PCs have to face the citadel's defenses head-on.

The secret door radiates faint abjuration magic if detected (DC 25 Spellcraft to recognize), but its ward cannot be bypassed or disabled. (The door's magic is faint because it is merely the alarm that arms the much more powerful wards spread throughout the complex.) This secret door is the route the masters took in and out of the citadel—with the main doors in **Room 4** requiring all four masters' keys to open, they themselves cannot enter through it.

The moment the door is open, an invisible one-way *wall of force* blocks the entrance and all other portals into the citadel (including the windows in the dormitory and masters' wing, and the front doors if those have somehow been opened). The field can be passed through from the outside with no difficulty, so PCs following the first character in have no hint anything is amiss. The secret door can be closed,

## Knock Knock

A significant amount of the challenge of this adventure lies in getting through its warded doors.

## Construction

All interior doors of the citadel are of strong wooden construction (2-inches thick, hardness 5, 20 hit points, break DC 25 if locked). The wooden walls throughout much of the complex are of reinforced construction (9-inches thick, break DC 25, hardness 5, 90 hp, Climb DC 21).

## Magical Wards

Many of the doors are warded as part of the citadel's defenses, though some have been damaged by fire and several are already open. Doors that were not closed at the time the citadel's defenses were razed need to be closed in order for their wards to be activated for the first time. All warded doors radiate moderate abjuration in addition to the school of their specific spell effects (Spellcraft DC to recognize = the trap's Search DC–10).

A warded door automatically activates by opening it, kicking it in, or destroying it by magical means (including directing the rot monster from **Area 10** to eat through the door as opposed to the adjacent wall).

The ward on an unlocked door cannot be reset again once discharged.

## Locked Doors

Opening a locked and warded door with one of the masters' keys disables its ward. A successful Open Lock check against a locked door still leaves its ward operational (pending a Disable Device check), and ready to be activated when the door is opened.

A locked door can be relocked with one of the masters' keys or a successful Open Lock check (same DC to open the lock). Relocking a door reactivates its ward, which the PCs might not be expecting to have to disable again.

Locked doors are sealed tight, and their keyholes are too small to see through.

## Experience

Each warded door has a Challenge Rating associated with it, but a few doors will likely only trip up a savvy party before figuring out ways past the rest.

Any action that involves a risk of a door's ward activating (including a Disable Device check and going through an adjacent wall by force) should reward full experience (or close to it). Any action that automatically activates a door's ward (including simply opening it) nets no experience. Any method that allows the party to bypass a door with no risk of setting off the trap (including using the rot monster to eat through the adjacent walls) should net partial experience as you deem appropriate.

## Keeping the PCs Inside

A curious effect blankets the whole of the fortress. While it's permissible to use conjuration (teleportation) spells and spell-like effects to get inside, it is not possible to use these spells to get out. Ceranir was very aware that the creatures he captured for his experiments sometimes had the ability to use such magic and allowing them to simply teleport out of their cells was completely unacceptable. Hence Ceranir researched a potent spell that functioned as a one-way *dimensional lock*, but only through the walls. Essentially, creatures could use teleport spells to get inside, and once there, teleport around the complex, but under no circumstances could such creatures *teleport* out of the compound. In addition to nixing these spells, the spell prevented the use of any transmutation or conjuration effect that allowed an individual to escape using planar travel. Creatures fleeing into the ethereal find themselves faced with an impenetrable barrier that corresponded to the citadel's walls. Thus, even though the barghests have the ability to *blink* and use *dimension door*, they cannot blink their ways through the walls.

reopened, or spiked open or shut. Characters can enter the citadel on foot, climbing, flying, by *teleporting*, *ethereal jaunt*, or what have you—but anyone attempting to leave by any means is stopped in their tracks.

With the *wall of force* in effect, *detect magic* (with a DC 24 Spellcraft check) notes a strong aura of abjuration at the door or any other now-sealed opening. A character with *detect magic* ongoing as the door is opened senses the original aura of faint abjuration spikes suddenly. The force wall cannot be destroyed, *dispelled*, or *disjoined* by any force or magic available to the PCs. Only unlocking the main doors with all four of the masters' keys dismiss its effects. For all intents and purposes, the entire complex functions as an artifact.

If the presence of the *wall of force* is deduced while some party members are still on the other side of it, simply give the party time to realize those on the citadel side aren't getting out anytime soon. Eventually, those lingering on the other side should join their fellows

## Citadel Features

There are no flammable torches in the citadel, but many of the chambers have braziers for heat. Wherever a brazier is found, a ceiling vent can be seen above it where a six-inch hole opens up in the rock. Similar vents are cut into the walls at floor level throughout the complex, admitting fresh air from outside. Should the party have any means of following the vents to the surface, each is blocked by the same force field that blocks the secret door in **Room 1**.

Ceilings in the citadel are 10-feet high unless otherwise noted. In most chambers, iron brackets along the walls once supported *everburning lanterns* (iron lamps imbued with *continual flame*). These are mostly empty now, the barghests having taken them to **Room 39** in an attempt to keep the shadows confined to the bestiary.

## The Entrance

See **The Back Door** (page 5) for access to **Room 1**.

### 1. Vestry and Common Room (EL 3 or 5)

*Lighting:* None

*Sounds:* A Listen check at the south door notes an unsettling silence beyond. A DC 10 Listen check at the north door reveals sounds of splashing—the mephits up to some mischief—and the echo of dripping water.

*The secret door opens easily to reveal a dark chamber, shrouded by a curtain of dead-black robes hanging from a wall-to-wall hooked railing. A door to the south is closed, but a door in the north wall stands half-open.*

## Getting Around

The robes that masters and apprentices wear allow characters to bypass some of the citadel's defenses. Doors with no lock will have their wards bypassed by any character wearing one of the black robes from the vestry (**Room 1**) or the red robes in the masters' wing. Doors with locks affect characters wearing the robes as normal, unless they are unlocked with one of the masters' keys or are disabled with a successful Disable Device check.

The apprentices' black dress robes (25 in all) hang here. All have the citadel's dagger-and-moon sigil in silver thread and radiate faint abjuration (DC 20 Spellcraft). Wearing the robes protect against some of the citadel's warded doors (see the **Getting Around** sidebar).

A cold brazier sits by the western wall, comfortable chairs and couches around it. Bundled firewood and a water barrel with dipper stand beside the south door. In the northwest corner, a lantern bracket hangs empty.

### Traps

The north door was open when the party entered the complex, and so its ward was not activated. If the door is closed for any reason, its magical ward is set and armed.

<b>BURNING HANDS TRAP</b>	<b>CR 3</b>
Search DC 26; Type Magical; Reset No reset	
Trigger Open door	
Effect <i>burning hands</i> (CL 5th, 5d4 fire damage, Reflex DC 11 half)	
Disarm Disable Device DC 11; Bypass masters' key	

The closed south door is warded but unlocked.

<b>ACID ARROW TRAP</b>	<b>CR 3</b>
Search DC 27; Type Magical; Reset No reset	
Trigger Open door	
Effect <i>acid arrow</i> (CL 3rd, 2d4 acid/round for 2 rounds)	
Disarm Disable Device DC 27; Bypass masters' key	

## 2. North Stairs (EL 6)

*Lighting:* None

*Sounds:* None (see text)

*A flight of stone steps runs up from east to west. A 10-foot landing opens up halfway, with a closed door to the north. At the top of the stairs, an open door to the south is barely visible, as is the body sprawled through it.*

There are no traps on the staircase, but roll dice and wince as the PCs ascend.

### Traps

The door on the landing opens up to the main foyer, and is locked and warded. It will open to any of the masters' keys or a successful DC 30 Open Lock check.

<b>DOMINATE PERSON TRAP</b>	<b>CR 6</b>
Search DC 30; Type Magical; Reset Lock door	
Trigger Open door	
Effect <i>dominate person</i> (CL 9th; characters in robes can issue commands; Will DC 17 negates)	
Disarm Disable Device DC 30; Bypass masters' key	

This ward is keyed to wearers of the robes of the citadel (either the black apprentice robes or the red robes of the masters). However, with no citadel residents left to command intruders to stand down, affected party members will be susceptible to



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the domination of any fellow PCs wearing the robes (most likely for protection against the door wards or because the rot monster in **Room 10** has destroyed their clothing). The effect won't be noticeable until a robed party member makes a direct suggestion, at which point inform the player of the affected character that they immediately undertake that task to the best of their ability (whether it's a good idea or not). In order to prevent accidental misuse by apprentices, the telepathic link established normally by the spell is suppressed.

Upon reaching the landing (whether they stay to investigate or continue up to the west door), read or paraphrase the following text.

*The snarling howl of a wolf suddenly rings out from above, echoing against the stones before fading to unearthly silence.*

This is just to set the mood. One of the barghest in the garden has just found its fallen comrade in **Room 22**.

The open door at the top of the stairs has had its *flame strike* trap activated by an unfortunate doppelganger escaping the bestiary. Its gangly remains are recognizable to any character who has encountered such creatures before (DC 19 Knowledge: nature).

### 3. Main Foyer

*Lighting:* None

*Sounds:* None

*Padded benches line the south and east walls of this foyer, with a cold brazier sitting between them. A stone door stands shut to the north, as does a wooden door to the west. A tapestry to the south depicts a wild-haired sorcerer surrounded by eldritch flame. A dagger-and-moon sigil is tattooed on his shoulder.*

The tapestry depicts Ceranir, founder of the school that bears his name. This legendary mage was well known for seeking to advance the frontiers of arcane knowledge (DC 16 bardic knowledge or Knowledge: arcana). Beyond that, feel free to leave his past mysterious or to provide whatever background makes sense for your campaign.

The wooden door to the west is locked and warded, but the lock has been deliberately sabotaged not to work with a master's key (see **Room 13** for details). It opens only with a successful DC 30 Open Lock check. The stone door to the north is neither locked nor warded.

### 4. Entrance Hall (EL 8)

*Lighting:* None

*Sounds:* None (see text)

*The walls and ceiling of this dark hall are grey marble, as is the double door at its end. Empty lantern brackets hang in all four corners.*

With the citadel's defensive wards active, the entrance hall becomes a good old-fashioned death trap for intruders who've had enough of the interior defenses and bolt for the front doors. The barghests *levitated* through this area to avoid the traps and collected the room's *everburning lamps*.

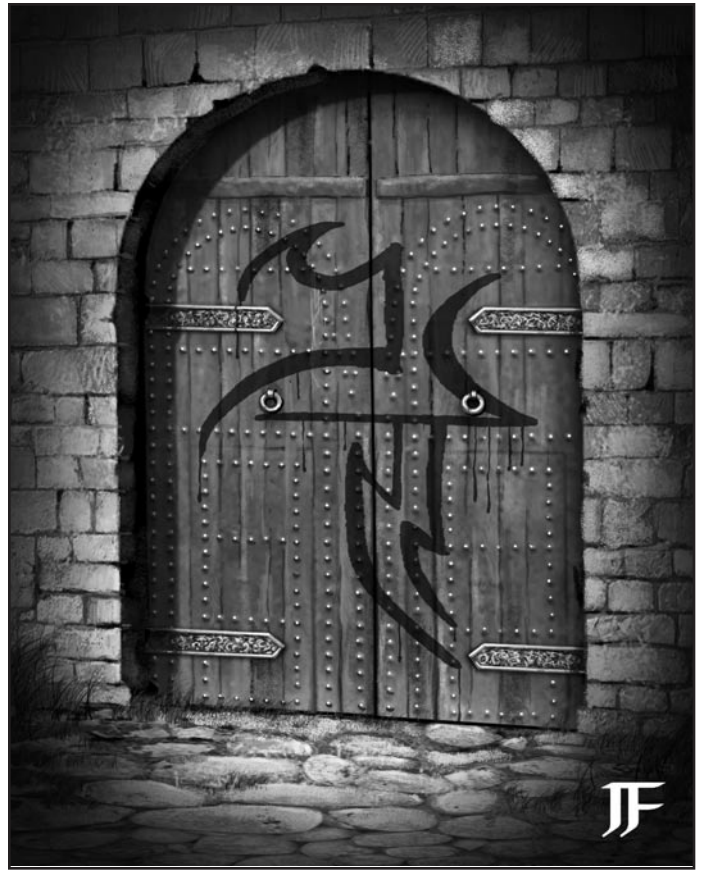
#### Traps

Though magically activated when the party entered the citadel, the traps along the walls are entirely mechanical and now radiate no magic. All are set within empty access space beyond the walls, floor, and ceiling. (There is no way direct way into this space—the masters used *dimension door* to check and set the traps.) The spears and needles fire through a thin fascia of treated plaster.

#### First 5 Feet

Both walls are trapped as follows.

BUILT-TO-COLLAPSE WALL	CR 3
Search DC 22; Type Mechanical; Reset No reset	
Trigger Location	
Melee stone blocks +20 (2d6)	
Targets multiple targets (all targets in the first 5-ft.-by-10-ft. area of the hall)	
Disarm Disable Device DC 22	



#### Second 5 Feet

Both walls and the ceiling are trapped. Disabling both traps requires separate Search and Disable Device checks, making it extremely likely that a party successful in circumventing one trap will trigger the other. The stone blocks will follow characters into the pit if that trap is triggered at the same time, or will trigger the pit trap with their weight.

PIT TRAP	CR 3
Search DC 20; Type Mechanical; Reset Manual (unless stone blocks trap is also triggered)	
Trigger Location	
Effect fall 60 ft. (6d6; Reflex DC 20 negates)	
Disarm Disable Device DC 20	

STONE BLOCKS FROM CEILING	CR 3
Search DC 25; Type Mechanical; Reset No reset	
Trigger Location	
Melee stone blocks +10 (4d6)	
Disarm Disable Device DC 20	

#### Third 5 Feet

The floor and ceiling are trapped.

HAIL OF NEEDLES	CR 3
Search DC 22; Type Mechanical; Reset No reset	
Trigger Location	
Ranged needle barrage +20 (2d4 plus poison)	
Effect bloodroot poison; DC 12; initial damage 0; secondary damage 1d4 Con + 1d3 Wis	
Disarm Disable Device DC 22	



## - The Citadel of Ceranir -

### Last 5 Feet

Both walls, the floor, and the ceiling are trapped.

FUSILLADE OF SPEARS	CR 3
Search DC 22; Type Mechanical; Reset No reset Trigger Location	
Ranged shortspear +20 (1d6) Targets multiple targets (1d3 spears per target in a 5-ft.-by-10-ft. area)	
Disarm Disable Device DC 22	

If the party manages to survive the gauntlet of traps, they can approach the double doors.

*The doors are edged in riveted black iron, a mechanism of four elaborate locks set between them. Each lock bears an identical crescent-shaped keyhole.*

The door opens only to the four keys carried by the masters of the citadel (see **The Keys of Ceranir** on page 5), which must be fitted and turned at the same time. Each of the four locks can be bypassed with a DC 40 Open Lock check, but the door will not open unless each lock is opened simultaneously.

## The Dormitory

Light: None

Sounds: Dripping water

The following text assumes that the PCs enter this section by way of **Room 1**.

*Beyond the door, the smell of mold and decay is pungent, but not strong enough to mask the darker scent of death on the air. A short flight of five steps leads down to a corridor running 50 feet north, its stone walls damp and dripping. The floor of that corridor is covered by a good six inches of brackish water.*

The scent of death and decay is prevalent throughout all the rooms in this section, courtesy of the barghest and the ooze mephits. The water on the floor adds +3 to the DC of any Move Silently checks. A DC 15 Search check within the corridor shows the water to be flowing from **Room 12**.

The doors in the dormitory wing are not warded (with the exception of the prefect's chambers, **Room 10**), and all stand partly open. Each of the austere apprentice chambers (**Rooms 5 through 9**) has the same basic layout.

*This 10-by-15-foot chamber contains three sets of narrow bunks, six footlockers, and a single desk and chair.*

## Thanks For Stopping By

Though this is one of the first areas of the citadel the PCs are likely to explore, it's also the last one they'll need to pass through on their way out.

If the party has managed to run Ceranir's gauntlet of challenges relatively unscathed, let the traps in this area stand as a final challenge to be overcome. However, if the party has come through the citadel so beaten up that getting killed at the exit would be more tragic than ironic, have any moderately successful Search check on the way out reveal another set of four keyholes. This mechanism disables the traps in **Room 4** (a safeguard the masters set up in the event that those traps were ever accidentally armed).

## Expanding the Adventure

The slain apprentices have no background details provided, but feel free to have a search of the dormitory turn up papers or letters connecting one or more with NPC nobles, merchants, or villains. These parents might pay richly to have their son or daughter's belongings or body returned to them—or might seek revenge on anyone rumored to have emerged alive from the cursed complex where their child died.

All of the victims here have been savagely torn apart. A DC 15 Heal check confirms they were killed approximately a day before, while a Survival check can identify the creatures responsible—a pack of large predators (DC 15), wolves (DC 20), or wolves plus additional wolflike creatures (DC 25). If the PCs leap to the assumption that the latter points to lycanthropes, let them run with it.

Make the details of the carnage here as suitably graphic as your game allows, but the intent should be for the ruthlessness of the barghest attack and the helplessness of its victims to put the PCs on edge. As well, let the party ruminate on the fact there are clearly five apprentices missing from this area. (One apprentice from each dormitory was on regular duty in the bestiary before the attack, and all are found dead there.)

The bodies are all in nightclothes or casual robes. In addition to their mortal injuries, some have recent signs or past scars of scourge marks and branding (a fist-sized version of the citadel's dagger-and-moon). Both indicate punishment received at the hands of Master Mydrien (see **Room 17**).

## 5. Apprentice Chamber

*The dismembered bodies of five young men are scattered across the room. The bunks have been torn apart, shredded blankets suggesting most victims were pulled from their beds.*

A body near the desk floats face up, recent scourge marks visible on his shoulder. At the desk is a half-completed letter from the boy to his father, apologizing for having been discovered with Ilyra's wand and punished. This is the *wand of detect magic* found in the secret closet in the masters' library (see **Room 14**); 'Ilyra' is its command word.

## 6. Apprentice Chamber

*Five more bodies are here—all adolescent girls torn to pieces. Signs of a struggle are seen here, and scorch marks streak the door and walls.*

The apprentice closest to the desk was studying late (a DC 12 Knowledge: arcana check identifies bloody papers detailing the properties of material components). She fought the barghest valiantly, and her *wand of lightning bolt* floats behind the desk where she was struck down (Search DC 20). (The contraband wand was a gift from her wizard father.) It has 3 charges remaining and is scribed with its command word, 'spark'.

## 7. Apprentice Chamber

*Five more young women lie dead here, one clinging to the bed, the others strewn across the chamber like rag dolls.*

The figure on the bed has her hand partly under the tick, reaching for a *potion of gaseous form* hidden there (Search DC 14). If she's moved, her shoulder reveals a recent brand. *Scrolls of arcane sight*, *darkvision*, and *mirror image* are hidden in the back of the desk (Search DC 22).

## 8. Apprentice Chamber

*The bodies of five young men are here, two curled beneath the bunks.*

Characters examining the drawers (DC 15 Search) find a *bag of holding* (type I), which currently contains a contraband hogshead cask of exceptional mead (value 50 gp to any high-class tavern keeper). In addition, characters searching (DC 20 Search) the bunks find a *useful stone* (see sidebar).

## 9. Apprentice Chamber

*Five young man lie dismembered here, one face down in the water where the desk and chair have been knocked over on top of him.*

Two ruined books floating near the desk are works focused on the directed mutation of aberrations and magical beasts (DC 25 Knowledge: arcana check to identify). The clothes and personal effects from one footlocker are strewn throughout the room, and the now-submerged empty locker has only a layer of blankets in it. A large quantity of cornhusks floats nearby, their origin traceable to a larger pile beneath the closest bunk. This was bedding and feed for the rot monster, currently in **Room 10**.

## 10. Prefect's Chamber (EL 4)

**Sounds:** Dripping water imposes a –2 penalty on Listen checks. A DC 30 Listen check reveals the sound of a wet snuffling noise.

*Water laps against the lower of two steps leading up to a closed wooden door, but that door has a two-foot hole torn through it at the bottom.*

Getting into the chamber is a more immediate threat than what lurks within it. As the rot monster ate its way through this door, it activated the magical ward (fleeing into the chamber when shocked for 3 points of damage). However, the combination of the damage to the door and the water flooding the surrounding area has turned the ward into an ongoing effect, dealing damage each round to any character touching water or stone within 5 feet of the door. (Note that the ward produces a recognizable flash of electrical energy, so that a PC who gets jolted might assume the trap is discharged and see no reason to leave.)

### Traps

Disabling the ward requires a character to reach the doorframe and make Disable Device checks without touching the floor, walls, or ceiling (or to work really quickly). A DC 14 Search check shows the hole in the door to have dry rot, but the rest of the door is solid.

DAMAGED LIGHTNING BOLT TRAP	CR 2
Search DC 28; Type Magical; Reset No reset Trigger Open Door	
Effect compromised lightning bolt (2d6 electricity to each creature within 5 feet, DC 14 Reflex save half damage)	
Disarm Disable Device DC 28	

Read or paraphrase the following text once the PCs are inside the room.

*Just inside the doorway lays the torn apart remains of a young male half-elf. The chamber beyond him contains a wardrobe, a single bed frame with no tick or mattress, a desk and wooden chair, and a couch whose upholstery has been removed. Bookshelves stand against the west wall, the volumes of the lower two shelves scattered about the room. The floor in front of you is covered in a gritty black ash, and closer to the chair sits what looks like a twisted pile of thin cord.*

The apprentice prefect was cut down even as he was moving to investigate the carnage in the dormitory.

The gritty ash is what remains after the rot monster causes plant matter to decay, and resembles dried compost. The books strewn before the shelves are actually only leather covers, their interior pages eaten. The other shelves contain mundane scholarly texts and a sign-out journal (this was the apprentices' library). A class schedule and assignments are at the desk, referring to the bestiary and the tower of learning but not indicating locations.

The stuffing of the stripped couch is horse hair, the rot monster just finishing its linen upholstery after a main course of bedding, literature, and cloak. As well, the twisted cord by the chair is woolen thread—all that's left of Master Mydrien's cloak. If his key is here (see **Mydrien's Key** sidebar, page 10), a DC 18 Search check locates it.

## Useful Stone

**Price:** 2,000 gp  
**Body Slot:** — (held)  
**Caster Level:** 5th  
**Aura:** faint conjuration (DC 17)  
**Activation:** 1 standard action  
**Weight:** —

*A smooth gray rock, it is otherwise ordinary except for the brightly-glowing blue glyph inscribed on its surface. No matter which way you turn it, the glyph seems to move so that you're always looking at.*

A *useful stone* is a minor magic item to which a permanent *unseen servant* is bound. The presence of the *unseen servant* is not immediately revealed aside for a constant cool or warm breeze that blows about the character. While carried, the *unseen servant* tries to make itself useful by anticipating the character's actions by opening unlocked doors when the character comes within 5 feet, folding laundry, do all the other useful things an *unseen servant* performs (treat the servant as having an Intelligence of 8). To control and give instructions to the *unseen servant*, a character must succeed on a DC 15 Charisma check. A successful check grants the character control for 1 minute after which time the character must make another check. If the *useful stone* leaves the wielder's possession at any time, it ceases to function.

**Prerequisites:** Craft Wondrous Item, *unseen servant*  
**Cost to Create:** 1,000 gp, 80 xp

After three rounds (or if someone moves to investigate behind the couch), read the following.

*Suddenly, a squat, insect-like creature the size of a dog appears from behind the couch. It moves quickly despite its thick, lumpy hide, and its long feathery antennae and armored tail thrash menacingly as it scuttles toward you.*

### Creatures

One of the apprentices in **Room 9** was particularly adept at magically manipulating the unnatural essence of aberrations. This is his thesis project—a young rust monster which has had its rust ability magically altered to affect plant matter.

**Rot Monster:** hp 13; see **Appendix I** for statistics.

While it's unlikely anyone in the party is carrying fresh vegetables, the death of its master has left the rot monster desperately frightened. Any party member the forlorn creature approaches (or those who attack it willingly because they mistake it to be a rust monster) is subject to its rot attack. Any attended items made of wood or plant-based fibers, including sacks, packs, and (most importantly) clothing are instantly turned to gritty black ash. Because the immature creature's rot ability is not fully developed, it cannot affect magic items.

Medium characters have a 1-in-6 chance of finding suitably sized clothing (treat as a courtier's outfit) in **Rooms 5** through **10**. As well, the party should remember the robes in the vestry (**Room 1**) if they haven't donned them already.

## Where'd You Get That Outfit?

Expect the heretofore irrelevant question of what the party's clothes are made of to take on significance the first time the rot monster makes a character's garments disappear. Though armor (except padded and specialized armors made of wood or other organic materials) are immune, most regular clothing and cloaks are fair game for the creature's touch.

In a standard fantasy setting, wool and linen are the most common fabrics used in adventuring garb, with wool more common for cloaks and other outer garments. However, in any campaign with greater-than-dark-ages levels of technology and craft, many garments (both inner and outer) will be made of fustian (a wool/linen cross-weave). Such garments are not entirely destroyed at the rot monster's touch, but dissolve into a mass of unraveling thread as their composite structure is undone.



## - The Citadel of Ceranir -



A short corridor serves as a cloakroom, beyond which lies an irregular 15-by-15 foot chamber. At the northern wall, water pours from a shattered cistern. A half-dozen footlockers float between as many empty beds.

This room was empty at the time of the attack, the footlockers likewise. The cistern is filled through a pipe from the cistern in the next room. It was broken by the mephits, but this area didn't flood fast enough for their tastes.

## 12. Baths (EL 6)

**Sounds:** Dripping water imposes a -2 penalty on Listen checks. A DC 10 Listen check reveals the sound of excited shouting. A check that succeeds by 5 or more reveals the language is Aquan, if the listener speaks this language.

With a DC 15 Move Silently check and no light, PCs can surprise the ooze mephits here. Any noise made coming up the passageway (including having dealt with the door into **Room 10** or the rot monster already) makes the mephits aware of their presence.

*Beyond a 10-foot alcove hung with laundry bags, an acidic haze fills this flooded chamber. Geysers of water spray from the walls, a trio of small winged creatures happily frolicking there.*

The water flows courtesy of four variant *decanter of endless water*. Three are built into the walls and cannot be removed, and are gushing now at their maximum 'fountain' level. The fourth is an actual decanter (fresh water at the 'stream' level only, value 250 gp) used to fill the various water barrels throughout the complex.

One mephit has commissioned the stone tub of a laundry to the north as a makeshift diving pool, while another body surfs along a common latrine at the east wall. Though the floor cannot be seen, anyone making a round's observation and a DC 12 Spot check notes the water to the south is deeper than its apparent half-foot depth, the third mephit swimming lengths there in the common bath sunk into the floor.

### Creatures

After a long captivity in the bestiary, this party of ooze mephits followed the scent of water here, setting up after the barghests had come and gone.

OOZE MEPHIT (3)	CR 6
N Small outsider (extraplanar, water) <b>Init</b> +0; <b>Senses</b> darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +6, Spot +6 <b>Languages</b> Aquan, Common	
<b>AC</b> 16, touch 11, flat-footed 16 (+1 size, +0 Dex, +5 natural) <b>hp</b> 19 each (3 HD); fast healing 2*; <b>DR</b> 5/magic <b>Fort</b> +4, <b>Ref</b> +3, <b>Will</b> +3	
<b>Spd</b> 30 ft. (6 squares), fly 40 ft. (average), swim 30 ft. <b>Melee</b> 2 claws +6 (1d3+2) <b>Base Atk</b> +3; <b>Grp</b> +1 <b>Atk Options</b> Power Attack <b>Special Actions</b> acid arrow, breath weapon, stinking cloud, summon mephit	
<b>Abilities</b> Str 14, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 6, Wis 11, Cha 15 <b>Feats</b> Power Attack, Toughness <b>Skills</b> Bluff +8, Diplomacy +4, Disguise +2 (+4 acting), Escape Artist +6, Hide +10, Listen +6, Move Silently +6, Spot +6, Swim +10, Use Rope +0 (+2 bindings)	
<b>Fast Healing (Ex)</b> Functions only in wet or muddy environments.	
<b>Acid Arrow (Sp)</b> As acid arrow spell; 1/hour; ranged touch +4; caster level 3rd.	
<b>Breath Weapon (Su)</b> 10-ft. cone, once every 1d4 rounds, damage 1d4 acid plus -4 penalty to AC and -2 penalty to attack rolls for 3 rounds, Reflex DC 13 half.	
<b>Stinking Cloud (Sp)</b> As stinking cloud spell; 1/day; DC 15; caster level 6th.	
<b>Summon Mephit (Sp)</b> 25% chance to summon 1 ooze mephit; 1/day; caster level 3rd (see Combat below). This ability is the equivalent of a 2nd-level spell.	

### Combat

The rot monster's only attack is its rot ability, so it defends itself with its antenna if pressed. The frightened creature shrieks pitifully and scuttles away if attacked, only to follow the PCs the moment they attempt to leave the area.

### Development

Characters sensitive to the poor rot monster's plight can befriend it with a DC 15 Handle Animal check. Even properly handled, attempting to confine the creature within the complex is futile (as witnessed by the door to this room), and it follows the party doggedly. The entrance hall (**Room 4**) features all-stone construction, and can be used to confine the creature if it can be lured or dragged there.

Should the party elect to have the creature accompany them (albeit carefully), the rot monster can help bypass the numerous warded doors in the complex by eating through the wooden walls adjoining those doors. Enticing it to cut a hole large enough for a Medium creature to pass through requires three rounds and a DC 20 Handle Animal check (the rot monster typically prefers softer fare than wood). A failed check can be retried after 1 minute after the creature's appetite builds up again.

## 11. Guest Quarters

**Sounds:** Dripping water imposes a -2 penalty on Listen checks.

### Mydrien's Key

Because there are a number of ways the PCs can go through this area, place Master Mydrien's key so the party finds it when their exploration is complete—either in his robe pocket (in the latrine portion of **Room 12**) or in the prefect's chamber (**Room 10**) amidst the tattered remnants of his cloak. Use the baths if the party saves the mephits for last, but use the prefect's room if they make a straight south-to-north sweep.

## Combat

Whether aware of the party or surprised, the mephits fight to the best of their ability. At the first sign of trouble, one directs its *stinking cloud* ability towards the entrance, forcing the party to move through it in order to attack. Once the party is in the main chamber, the mephits fly to keep out of melee range as they use their breath weapons and *acid blob* spell-like ability. Note their long incarceration has temporarily negated their *summon mephit* ability.

The constant spray of water in this area grants all combatants concealment (attacks have a 20% miss chance). In addition, any characters moving into the southern half of the room without being aware of the sunken bath there must make a DC 15 Reflex save or fall. Anyone falling into the acidic water (or anyone who dives into the deeper water of the bath intentionally) must make a DC 14 Fortitude save or be sickened for 1d6 rounds.

## Development

Master Mydrien died here, but only his clothing, ring, and possibly his key (see the **Mydrien's Key** sidebar) remain. Visiting the prefect on late-night business, he was answering the call of nature when the barghest attacked. As the only creature in the dormitory powerful enough to be consumed by the barghests' feed ability, he was quickly targeted and destroyed. Mydrien's working robes float near the floor-level latrines. If his key is here, it will be seen slipping from a pocket and into the water when the robes are examined. A DC 28 Search check is required to fish it up from the floor.

# The Masters' Wing

*Light:* Everburning lanterns in corners fill the room with bright light.

*Sounds:* None

The furnishings and trappings of the masters' wing are well appointed but subdued. Only this area and the hidden library (**Room 41**, page 24) were left untouched when the bestiary fell, though five arakai have run rampant since then (see **Appendix I** and **Room 18** on page 13 for more information). The arakai arrived via the private *dimension door* linking the bestiary and Master Gariant's quarters in **Room 16** (and subsequently destroyed that mechanism to prevent pursuit).

The arakai can sense the active wards in the closed doors of the library (**Room 14**), Master Aleon's quarters (**Room 15**), and the sitting room (**Room 13**), and so have not entered there. They have already enjoyed a full smorgasbord of magic items, so even the lowest-powered resetting wards are presently too potent for their absorb dweomer ability.

The masters' robes found in this area are similar in appearance to the apprentice robes in **Room 1**, but are a deep blood-red and radiate both abjuration and conjuration (Spellcraft DC 22). Wearing the robes protect against some of the citadel's warded doors (see the **Getting Around** sidebar).

## 13. Masters' Sitting Room (EL 7)

The door from **Room 3** is locked, but its lock has been deliberately broken by Derishar to prevent the barghests from opening it with the masters' key they've claimed. A DC 30 Open Lock check opens the door, but it cannot be relocked that way (meaning its ward cannot be reactivated).

At the same time, Derishar has wedged an *antimagic scarab* between the door and the frame (see sidebar). Each use expends one of the scarab's charges, but Derishar has left it continuously active in order to keep the barghests from entering from **Room 3** with their *blink* or *dimension door* ability. (Not knowing what lies beyond the door has so far deferred any attempts by the barghests to *dimension door* by direction and distance from the garden.)

The scarab is incredibly delicate and so if the PCs force the door (such as by breaking it down), the scarab shatters and ceases to function, thus enabling the *fireball* trap. Characters searching the door first (DC 25 Search check required) find the scarab and can extract it safely with a DC 25 Disable Device check. An *antimagic scarab* can function up to a maximum of 24 hours, and this item only has 1 minute of juice left whenever the PCs come across it. See the sidebar on this page for details.

## Standing Down

Assuming the party is attempting to return them to the bestiary, the ooze mephits are difficult conversationalists. A DC 30 Diplomacy check made as full-round action at any point in combat gets the mephits to halt hostilities. It takes a second DC 30 Diplomacy check made over a full minute to prevent combat from resuming, with the mephits revealing the carnage in the dormitory was long over when they arrived. They also relay directions to the bestiary, and describe the creatures formerly housed in the cells around them—a snake-haired woman, a horned horse, and a fire-breathing dog (the medusa, the unicorn, and the nessian hell hound, all dead).

Allow effective roleplaying to provide a healthy bonus on the second Diplomacy check. If the PCs successfully negotiate their way out of confrontation with the mephits, award full experience points for the encounter.

## Antimagic Scarab

**Price:** 6,000 gp

**Body Slot:** — (held)

**Caster Level:** 11th

**Aura:** moderate abjuration (DC 21)

**Activation:** 1 standard action

**Weight:** —

*This small glass scarab bears eldritch runes etched onto its surface.*

The *antimagic scarab* is a useful minor item that provides protection from magic for a limited duration. A newly created *antimagic scarab* can produce an *antimagic field* for a total of 24 hours before its main property is exhausted forever. Activating and deactivating the field requires a standard action.

In addition to its spell effect, the holder of the *antimagic scarab* may as immediate action, gain a +4 bonus to a single saving throw against a spell or spell-like effect. The wielder must wait 1 minute between each use of this ability. The saving throw bonus does not count against the time allotment for the *antimagic field*, and can be still used once the antimagic field effect is no longer available.

**Lore:** A character that reads Draconic can identify the symbols as wards against magic.

**Prerequisites:** Craft Wondrous Item, *antimagic field*

**Cost to Create:** 3,000 gp, 240 xp

## Traps

While the *antimagic scarab* is active, it negates the door's *fireball* ward. However, if the door is opened without a Disable Device check, its ward discharges when the scarab's current activation ends, or if the active scarab is carried more than 10 feet from the door.

The spell is centered on the door, blasting back to fill the foyer (plus the stairs and entrance hall if the doors in area 3 are open) and extending just short of the northern door in this room.

### FIREBALL TRAP

CR 5

**Search** DC 28; **Type** Magical; **Reset** Lock door

**Trigger** Open door

**Effect** *fireball* (CL 8th, 8d6 fire damage, DC 14 Reflex half)

**Disarm** Disable Device DC 28; **Bypass** Masters' Key

*Fine couches and tables furnish this carpeted sitting room, and expansive bookshelves line the walls. Everburning lanterns shine in the corners and a pair of cold braziers stand close to doorways north and east.*



## - The Citadel of Ceranir -

Though the room appears luxurious, there is nothing of value here (the books are general-interest histories and textbooks). The closed door in the northern wall is warded, but currently unlocked. It can be locked and unlocked with any of the masters' keys or a successful DC 30 Open Lock check.

### Traps

MAXIMIZED <i>MAGIC MISSILE</i> TRAP	CR 5
Search DC 29; Type Magical; Reset Lock door Trigger Open door	
Effect maximized <i>magic missile</i> (CL 5th, 15 points of damage)	
Disarm Disable Device DC 29; Bypass Masters' Key	

### Developments

One way or the other, the party coming through this door allows the barghest leader to gain access to the masters' wing. See **Barghest At Large** on page 14 for more information.

## 14. Masters' Library (EL 4)

This closed door is warded but currently unlocked. It can be locked and unlocked with any of the masters' keys or a successful DC 30 Open Lock check.

SHOCKING GRASP TRAP	CR 4
Search DC 26; Type Magical; Reset Lock door Trigger Open door	
Effect <i>shocking grasp</i> (CL 5th, melee touch +5, 5d6 electricity)	
Disarm Disable Device DC 26; Bypass Masters' Key	

Bound books and scrolls line shelves along the walls of this narrow room. *Everburning lanterns* hang to the north and south.

Some two thousand volumes of history, nature, religion, and magical lore are stored here. A DC 22 Knowledge (arcana) check and 40 minutes searching separates out two hundred valuable volumes, any of which fetch 1d10 × 10 gp (or average at 55 gp each) from sages or scholarly wizards. The *bag of holding* from **Room 8** can hold up to 180 books in total if the hogshead is removed.

*Detect magic* cast within the room reveals the presence of divine scrolls (forgotten or ignored in this place of arcane study) in three of the books of magical lore: *inflict moderate wounds*, *invisibility purge*, and *death ward*.

The thirty spellbooks of the apprentices are kept here for safekeeping at the end of lessons. They sit on the northern shelves, and so might help mask the stronger aura of magic beyond the secret door. They contain cantrips and a complete collection of 1st-level and 2nd-level spells found in the *PH* only.

### Secret Closet

The space to the north is carefully concealed behind a set of moveable shelves (Search DC 28). The citadel's general-use magical stores (as well as contraband items confiscated from students) are here. Only six relatively low-level scrolls remain (Master Derishar took the rest). The items include an *arcane scroll of daze monster*, *misdirection*, and *resist energy*, an *arcane scroll of explosive runes*, an *arcane scroll of flame arrow*, an *arcane scroll of heroism and sleet storm*, *bracers of armor +1*, *dust of tracelessness*, six *potions of cure moderate wounds*, two doses of *silversheen*, three *feather tokens* (bird), a *wand of detect magic* (35 charges; the wand offers no clue as to its function, but see **Room 5**), and a *cloak of resistance +1*.

## Missing Spellbooks

Once the masters' wing has been searched, astute characters might note that the absence of the masters' own spellbooks suggests the existence of another library somewhere in the citadel. Note that none of the documents found in the dormitories or the masters' wing offer any hint of the existence of the hidden library (**Room 41**).

## The Masters' Quarters

*Light:* *Everburning lanterns* fill the room with bright light, except where noted below.  
*Sound:* None

These four chambers contain the following common features.

*This room contains a comfortable bed, a desk and bookshelves, a couch and low table, a cold brazier, and a large armoire. The corner opposite the bed is closed off with a folding screen.*

Each armoire contains clothing, a set of red master's robes (except **Room 15**), personal effects, 5d10 gp, 1d20 pp, and 1d4 50 gp gems (all the monetary wealth in the entire citadel). All items are of decent quality but have no great value. Each set of bookshelves contains some three dozen mundane texts, plus a dozen arcane works that could fetch 2d12 × 10 gp each (average 130 gp) if sold (see **Masters' Library** for details).

The screen in any chamber can be inspected to reveal a draining floor-level latrine. A cask of clean water and a wash bucket sits close by.

## 15. Master Aleon's Quarters

This door is locked and warded. It will open to any of the masters' keys or a successful DC 30 Open Lock check.

STINKING CLOUD TRAP	CR 4
Search DC 28; Type Magical; Reset No reset Trigger Open Door	
Effect <i>stinking cloud</i> (CL 5th, DC 14)	
Disarm Disable Device DC 28; Bypass Masters' Key	

### Inside the Room

*Light:* *Everburning lanterns* lie shrouded by heavy black cloths. If the cloths are removed, the lanterns fill the room with bright light.

*On first glance, you seem to have stepped outside beneath a brilliant night sky. The walls of this dark chamber are hung with black tapestries showing a vast field of twinkling stars. To the west, their glow illuminates a motionless figure on the bed.*

This was the chamber of Derishar's lover Aleon, who has been laid to rest here by him. The scent of corruption gives away the state of the body even from the doorway. Aleon's corpse wears her red dress robes, but anyone looking closely note horrible bite and claw wounds on her arms and neck.

The tapestries are black velvet ensorcelled with permanent *silent image* spells. *Everburning lanterns* on the north and south walls are shrouded in black velvet. Examination of the room's books and the correspondence at the desk identifies Aleon by name and hints at a wizard with a strong theoretical and research background. A small shrine with candles dedicated to the God of Knowledge sits on a bookshelf.

A DC 25 Search check in the armoire reveals a secret compartment holding one vial of *elixir of love*, plus a half-dozen empty vials with which Aleon seduced Derishar over the previous months.

## 16. Master Gariant's Quarters

This door can be locked but is currently open, and so its ward is not activated. If the door is closed for any reason, its magical ward is set and armed. It can be locked and unlocked with any of the masters' keys or a successful DC 30 Open Lock check.

BESTOW CURSE TRAP	CR 4
Search DC 28; Type Magical; Reset Lock Door Trigger Open Door	
Effect <i>bestow curse</i> to impose a -4 penalty on attacks, saves, and checks (CL 5th, DC 14 negates)	
Disarm Disable Device DC 28; Bypass Masters' Key	

## - The Citadel of Ceranir -

*This room has been torn apart with a vengeance. The tick on the bed is shredded, tapestries hang in tatters, and the bookshelves have been emptied across the floor. The armoire stands closed, though deep scratches can be seen on its surface.*

The arakai have torn this area apart in search of its magic. The wizard/cleric Master Gariant was a great collector of arcana, and the haul from his chambers was exceptional (see **Room 18**).

Give the party three rounds to investigate the room.

The tapestries once showed spellcasters engaging in various arcane exercises and spell duels. The notes and journals at the desk are mostly student records and reports, but identify Gariant by name. The books suggest the chamber's occupant was well versed in the clerical and arcane arts alike.

On a shelf against one wall, an arrangement of clear crystal rods has been broken and scattered. A DC 15 Knowledge (arcana) or bardic knowledge check identifies it as a shrine to the God of Magic. As well, *detect magic* reveals a dim aura of transmutation (Spellcraft DC 19 to recognize) that a DC 22 Knowledge (arcana) check identifies it as lingering conjuration (teleportation) magic. The shrine also served to trigger Gariant's *dimension door* to the bestiary, but it cannot be rebuilt.

After three rounds (or as soon as anyone moves to open the armoire), read or paraphrase the following:

*A sudden banging comes from within the closed armoire, shuddering the fine wood panels.*

The armoire is locked (Open Lock DC 22) and occupied by an arakai (see **Appendix I**) who jaunted in courtesy of a *wand of dimension door* a half-hour before. It can sense magic within a secret compartment in the floor, but its frustration at being unable to get to it has kept it from hearing the party enter even as it inspires it to tear the armoire apart from the inside.

If the PCs can open the door in a single round (with a *knock* spell and someone ready to open it, for example), a small, grey-skinned creature within draws a wand with a shriek and disappears (returning to **Room 18** with *dimension door*). If more than one round is spent opening the armoire, the arakai is already gone. If the other arakai have not already been overcome or parleyed with, this one warns his fellows of the party's presence (see **Room 18**). Otherwise, he will not be seen again.

Within the armoire's secret compartment (Search DC 22, Open Lock DC 25) are the weapons and armor Gariant had no chance to don the night of the barghest assault. They include a +1 *quarterstaff*, a masterwork composite shortbow (+2 Strength bonus), and a quiver of 25 normal arrows and 7 +1 arrows.

## 17. Master Mydrien's Quarters

This door can be locked but is currently open, and so its ward is not activated. If the door is closed for any reason, its magical ward is set and armed. It can be locked and unlocked with any of the masters' keys or a successful DC 30 Open Lock check.

GLYPH OF WARDING (BLAST) TRAP	CR 4
Search DC 28; Type Magical; Reset Lock Door Trigger Open Door	
Targets Multiple (all within 5 ft.) Effect <i>glyph of warding</i> (blast) (CL 5th, 2d8 acid, DC 14 Reflex half)	
Disarm Disable Device DC 28; Bypass Masters' Key	

*Books and papers are strewn across the floor of this ransacked chamber, the bed turned upside down. Fine tapestries hang haphazardly, showing a battle between black and white horses with glowing eyes. To the northwest, two sets of manacles and a scourge hang from the wall. A long metal rod extends from the cold brazier close by.*

The arakai stripped this area of its magic, but spent considerable time working out the nature of the dweomer in Master Mydrien's desk. A complex illusion (DC 15 Will save if disbelieved) causes all papers and books here to appear to be nothing

## Expanding the Adventure

If it fits with your campaign, present evidence that the apprentices of Ceranir have been specifically and intentionally corrupted during their studies there. As well, records can suggest several former apprentices have been sent back to their homes and noble families with a form of delayed *suggestion* implanted by Mydrien—waiting to perform dark acts that might provide inspiration for subsequent adventures.

more than student records and notes on citadel finances. However, if documents are taken out of this chamber (or if the illusion is saved against), they identify Mydrien by name even as they reveal records of dark rituals—the worship of the God of Secrets subverting equal dedication to the Gods of Magic, Knowledge, and Death. Note the illusion effect functions on any document brought into the room by the PCs, including scrolls.

The manacles, scourge, and branding iron (the metal rod in the brazier) show where Mydrien meted out discipline to apprentices. The branding iron's dagger-and-moon design matches the marks seen on the bodies in the dormitory.

Beneath the cold coals in the brazier (DC 15 Search check for anyone inspecting the branding iron), a circular chunk of onyx is engraved with the symbol of the God of Secrets. The brazier doubles as an altar, with a DC 22 Search check revealing what looks like dried blood on the floor around it.

## 18. Master Derishar's Quarters (EL 9)

This door can be locked but is currently open, and so its ward is not activated. If the door is closed for any reason, its magical ward is set and armed. It can be locked and unlocked with any of the masters' keys or a successful DC 30 Open Lock check.

PHANTASMAL KILLER TRAP	CR 5
Search DC 29; Type Magical; Reset Lock Door Trigger Open Door	
Effect <i>phantasmal killer</i> (CL 7th, DC 16 Will disbelief and DC 16 Fort partial)	
Disarm Disable Device DC 29; Bypass Masters' Key	

If the PCs have entered **Room 16** before coming here, the arakai within the armoire will have jaunted back here to warn his compatriots. If so, there will be no sound as the PCs approach.

If the PCs have bypassed **Room 16**, they will be able to hear the arakai arguing along the last 10 feet of the corridor.

*The snarling whine of high-pitched voices can be heard through the open door of the chamber ahead.*

Those who speak Draconic can attempt a DC 17 Listen check to make out the specifics of a heated discussion regarding bad apples ('*The fruit has gone bad! You have doomed us all!*' comes clearly; improvise the rest).

If the arakai have been alerted to the party's presence, read only the following as someone moves to the open door.

*A scattering of skulls, books, and papers litter the floor of this unadorned stone chamber, and the bed is piled high with what look, and smell, like rotting apples.*

If the party has managed to approach without having alerted the arakai, read or paraphrase the following:

*More significant are the four (or five) gaunt, leathery humanoids arguing on and around the desk in the northwest corner. Their grey skin and large, lidless eyes give them a grotesque, almost pathetic appearance. At the same time, you notice that all of them have wands tucked into their ragged clothes.*



## - The Citadel of Ceranir -



### Creatures

Even if they have not been alerted, it requires a DC 20 Move Silently check to catch the nervous arakai by surprise. If the arakai hear the party, they immediately launch a wand attack (see **Tactics**, following).

If the arakai are awaiting the party's approach, they will break from cover behind the armoire, desk, and bed, attacking as soon as two or more PCs have entered the apparently empty room.

**Arakai (5):** hp 19 each; see **Appendix I** for statistics.

### Tactics

Wands are the arakai's preferred weapon, and in Master Gariant's quarters, they struck the mother lode. Still scarred by their imprisonment, however, they avoid close combat by climbing out of melee range. While on the walls or ceiling, an arakai can attack with a single wand (including expending two charges to make a double attack).

**Arakai #1:** *Hold person* (4 charges), *silence* (5 charges). This arakai hits each PC in turn with *silence* in order to interfere with the party's tactics, starting with the closest target.

### Standing Down

Though the arakai's ability to wield powerful magic makes them formidable foes, they are unenthusiastic combatants at best. A DC 25 Diplomacy check made as full-round action at any point in combat gets the arakai to stand down cautiously for one round. A second DC 25 Diplomacy check made over a full minute allows the party to exact a truce, with the arakai confirming there are no keys in the areas they've explored.

Allow effective roleplaying to provide a +2 bonus on the second Diplomacy check. If the party negotiates their way out of confrontation with the arakai, award full experience points for the encounter.

**Arakai #2:** *Color spray* (35 charges), *cat's grace* (10 charges). If an all-out magical assault doesn't send the PCs packing, this one hits herself and her fellows with *cat's grace* to increase their AC.

**Arakai #3:** *Acid arrow* (15 charges), *cure light wounds* (31 charges). If any of her comrades fall, this arakai administers *cure light wounds* while blasting the closest target with *acid arrow*.

**Arakai #4:** *Magic missile* (3rd) (14 charges), *bear's endurance* (8 charges). This arakai hits himself with *bear's endurance* (+ 3 hit points) before sniping with *magic missiles* from the ceiling.

**Arakai #5:** *Dimension door* (4 charges), *shocking grasp* (3rd) (18 charges). The arakai from **Area 16** either has previously arrived to alert the others, or hears combat and uses *dimension door* to jump into the fray after two rounds. He *dimension doors* onto a PC's back (making a Use Magic Device check to cast the 4th-level spell), then strikes with *shocking grasp* before scurrying away. Treat the target as flat-footed (meaning no attack of opportunity against the fleeing arakai).

Near starvation after escaping the bestiary, the arakai exhausted the remaining 6 charges in a *wand of create food and water* found in Mydrien's quarters. They lacked full insight into the item's powers, however, and the time-limited food they created is beginning to spoil rapidly. Any arakai pushed or chased to within 5 feet of the bed automatically goes skittering into it, at which point the mass of decomposing fruit cascades onto the floor. A DC 12 Balance check is required to move in the eastern half of the chamber, with the arakai all taking to the walls and ceilings.

While the party might attempt to draw the fight out of this chamber, the arakai have no desire to leave. They shut the door (inadvertently activating its *phantasmal killer* ward) the second the last party member hits the corridor.

### Developments

The impressive multispecies collection of skulls on the floor serve as bookends (a pair still on the shelves confirms this). The books and papers strewn across the floor identify Derishar by name and discuss necromantic research.

More interesting are his personal journals, which can be sorted out from the mess with a DC 22 Search check. They recount both a distrust of Master Mydrien and a tortured passion for Master Aleon—feelings strong enough that Derishar repeatedly announces his intention to die rather than live without her.

### Treasure

As well as the wands, the arakai have liberated all other magic items they could find on this level (essentially all of the masters' personal items not carried with them into final combat). All are now stored in the armoire and include *dust of appearance*, *elixir of vision*, *elixir of vision*, *potion of aid*, *potion of barkskin* +2, *potion of delay poison*, *potion of haste*, *potion of jump*, *potion of protection from arrows* 10/magic, *potion of shield of faith* +2, *potion of spider climb*, *ring of climbing*, *ring of the ram* (10 charges), and *universal solvent*.

A dozen nonmagical objects are mixed in with the above—items the arakai could make no use of, and so have drained to fuel their spell-like abilities. Describe your choice of masterwork wizard weapons, blank scroll pages, inert jewelry, and dormant wands for the players—worth a total of 750 gp.

## Barghest At Large (EL 4—Optional)

This encounter is designed to take place in and around Master Aleon's quarters (**Room 15**) as the party leaves the masters' wing (whether in victorious triumph or full flight). The leader of the barghest (see **Endgame: Barghest Assault** on page 26) has come up through **Rooms 2** and **3** and used its tracking ability to note the PCs' passage into **Room 13**.

With the door unlocked, the barghest can simply push through it (even if the *antimagic scarab* is replaced). If the party replaced the scarab and spiked the door shut, preface this optional encounter with the distant sound of the door being broken through by brute force (with an appropriate DC 0 Listen check modified by distance and barriers). This is the barghest leader that slew both Master Mydrien and Master Aleon, but Master Derishar drove it off before it could feed on Aleon. Scenting her presence, the creature has come to finish the job.

# - The Citadel of Ceranir -

## Creatures

The party will hear a triumphant howl from within **Room 15** (whether they left the door open or closed). If they go to investigate, read or paraphrase the following text.

*A nightmarish creature crouches on the bed—half-wolf and half humanoid, with red-black fur and eyes that glow molten yellow. The creature holds Master Aleon's body in long-fingered claws, its razor-sharp teeth sunk into her neck. With a shrieking howl, the corpse seems to collapse in on itself, leaving only empty robes behind.*

**Advanced Barghest (1):** hp 52; see page 26 for statistics.

## Tactics

If the party has come through this area relatively unscathed, play this as a combat encounter, with the barghest testing the PCs. Otherwise, have the wary creature *dimension door* back to the garden before the party can react. The noncombat version serves to help the PCs see what they're up against (and allows character knowledge to catch up to player knowledge if the players have already made the barghest connection.)

If the barghest engages the party, it uses *crushing despair* before casting *rage* on itself. It then makes full attacks as it lets the party come to it. If the advanced barghest takes more than 20 hit points damage fighting the party, it lets out a chilling howl, then vanish without a trace.

## The Garden

*Light:* None

*Sounds:* None

Citadel Ceranir's remote location makes it impossible for its residents to trade for food, so this high-roofed open space grants self-sufficiency even as it creates a sense of community that Master Ceranir saw lacking in too many mages. The party will most likely enter this area from the north stairs (**Room 2**, page 6).

*A dark open space runs 50 feet north to south, twice that distance east to west. Stone walls 8 feet high are spaced around the interior and five massive pillars support an arched ceiling rising 20 to 30 feet overhead. The smell of soil is sharp where the stone floor of the complex gives way to soft loam.*

The central garden has been built on a stone sub floor 3 feet deeper than the adjacent courtyards, and then filled with soil. The garden areas radiate moderate transmutation magic (Spellcraft DC 18 to recognize) from the permanent *plant growth* effect that brings sunless crops to maturity in a matter of days. This rapid growth causes plants to actually move, a harmless effect that hopefully disturbs the PCs regardless. *Everburning lanterns* once hung throughout the area, but have been taken by the barghest to **Room 39**.

Crops are rotated regularly, and the compost piles of the cornfield and pumpkin patch are full of the remnants of other types of plants. A DC 15 Search check anywhere in the garden reveals barghest tracks, but the creatures' *blink* ability makes these impossible to follow.

The stone-floored corner courtyards (**Rooms 20, 21, 25, and 26**) are given over to the citadel's masters and their particular approach to the learning and theocracy of magic. *Teleport* mechanisms there allow the masters to escort select apprentices to the hidden library for private tutorials.

## Combat

Combat conditions are noted in areas even when no combat is likely to take place. This is in expectation of the final battle between the PCs and the barghest taking place here (with Master Derishar possibly thrown in for good measure). See **Endgame: Barghest Assault** on page 26.

## 19. Cornfield

*From the stairs, a narrow path of stones runs through a dense cornfield. Heavy stalks and long fingers of silk seem to shift and twist despite the absence of any breeze.*

There is a compost pile where the walls meet to the southeast.

## Watchful Eyes

At any convenient point in the exploration of **Rooms 21, 22, 26, or 27**, tell any player making a reasonably high Spot or Listen check they sense something behind them. When the PCs look, they see a dark blur of movement shift within the shadows of the cornfield to the north or east (depending on where they are).

Three barghests watch the party's progress through this area, but they give the phasm (which they saw enter the south shed, **Room 23**) a wide berth. If the party heads toward them, they *blink* away (either through the north shed or down the north stairs). Continue to drop hints the PCs are being shadowed so long as they remain in the area.

## Combat

Any characters fighting in this area gain total concealment from the close-growing cornstalks (50% miss chance and an attacker can't use sight to locate a target).

## 20. Courtyard of Magic

*Four long wooden benches stand before a raised stone dais. Beside it, the symbol of the God of Magic is graven on two freestanding pillars.*

The symbol on the left-hand pillar radiates strong conjuration (Spellcraft DC 20 to recognize). A DC 25 Search check notes a keyhole there. If one of the crescent keys is fitted and turned by a character wearing the red robes of the masters, that character and up to six creatures touching the pillar are *teleported* to the hidden library (**Room 41**, page 24).

## 21. Courtyard of Secrets

*There are no benches here, but cinders spread across the ground show where people have knelt in ordered rows. A brazier burns in the southwest, the smoke above it writhing in the shape of the symbol of the God of Secrets.*

The brazier radiates strong conjuration (Spellcraft DC 20 to recognize). A DC 25 Search check notes a keyhole in its front. If one of the crescent keys is fitted and turned by a character wearing the red robes of the masters, that character and up to six creatures touching the brazier are *teleported* to the hidden library (**Room 41**, page 24). Any characters touching the brazier take 1d4 points of fire damage.

## 22. Firewood Garden

*Close-growing rows of birch and alder rise around you, their branches seeming to twist and tug the air. Where the walls meet in the northeast, firewood has been split and stacked.*

The citadel's supply of firewood is grown at accelerated rates and then magically dried. The otherwise normal trees screen the PCs' vision, so that a character must approach within 10 feet of the central pillar to see the following:

*Sprawled close to the east wall, a half-wolf, half-humanoid creature lies dead. A single gaping wound pierces its body, and its fur and flesh are nearly burned away. The sour scent of acid hangs in the air.*

This barghest was surprised by a phasm (currently in the south shed, **Room 23**). After striking as a large monstrous scorpion, the phasm assumed the form of an ochre jelly, constricting and killing the barghest as it tried to flee.

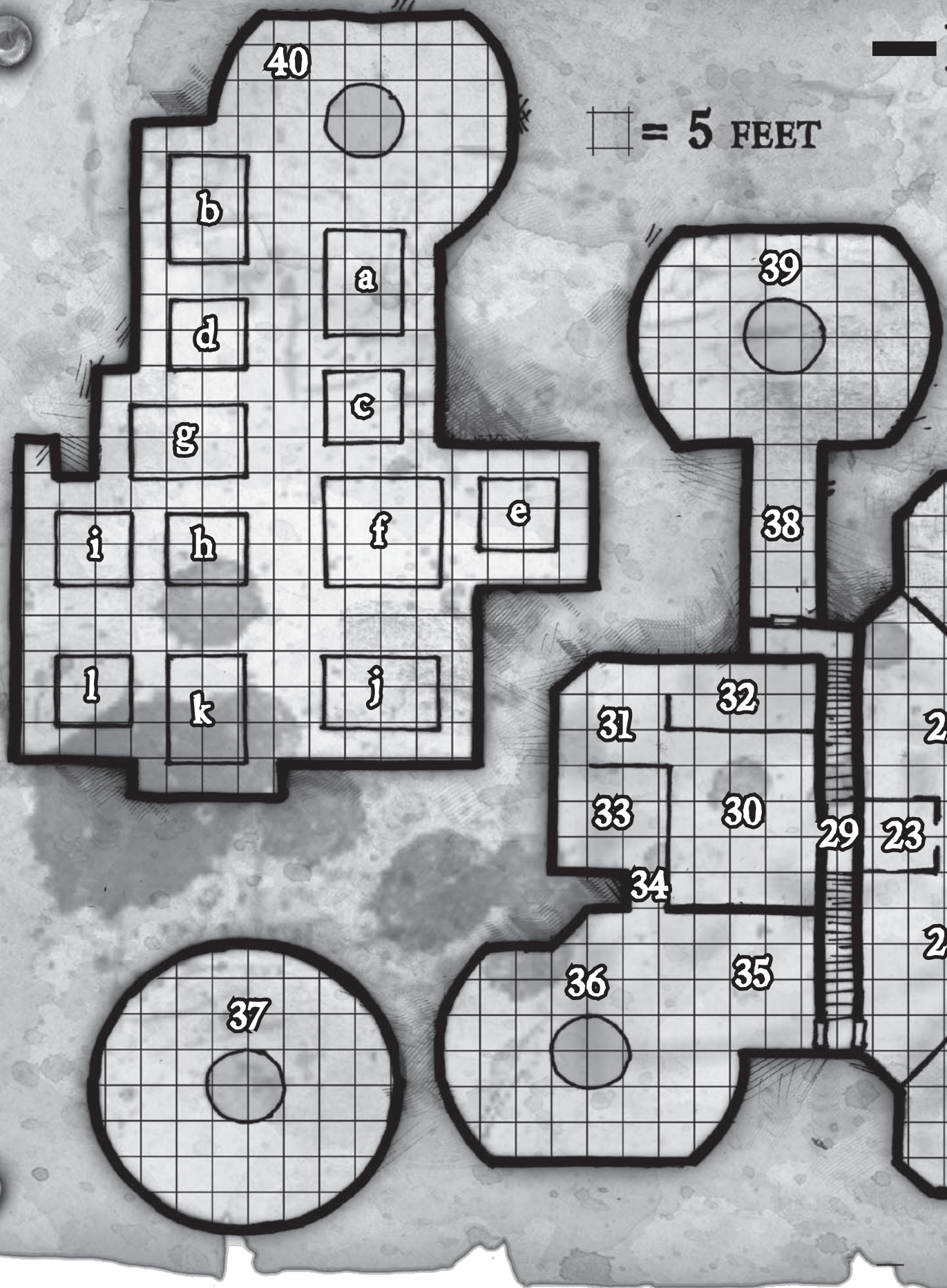
## Combat

Any characters fighting in this area gain concealment from the trees (attacks have a 20% miss chance).

## 23. South Shed (EL 7)

*A wooden shed is set against the southern wall, its open doorway dark.*

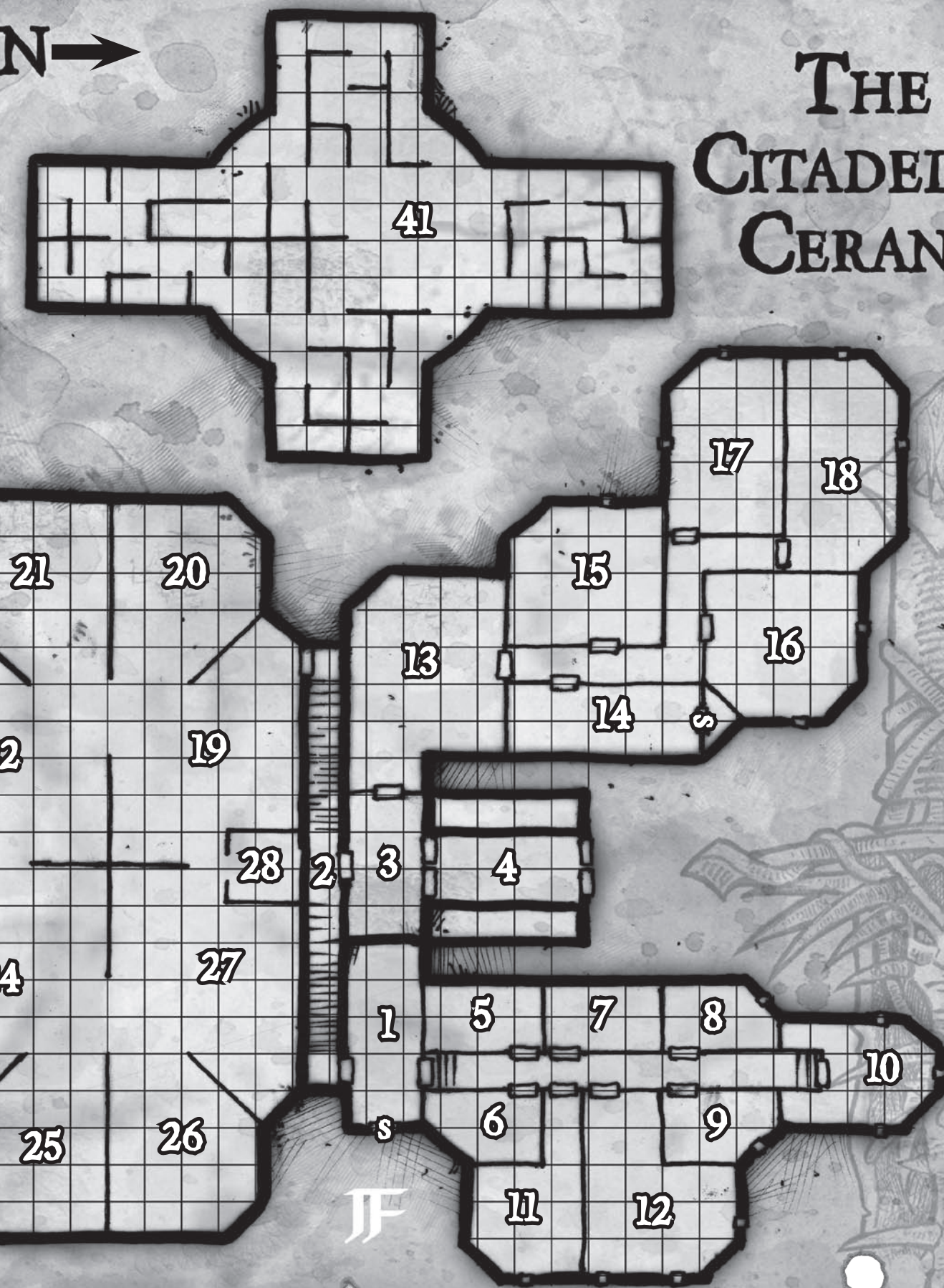






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# THE CITADEL OF CERANIR



## - The Citadel of Ceranir -

If and when the party investigates the shed, they find gardening tools, containers, soil, seed, and nothing of value.

### Creatures

A phasm that fled the bestiary lurks here, its long captivity giving it a vicious streak uncommon for its kind. Its tremorsense detected the party the moment they entered the garden, and it is ready and waiting.

PHASM	CR 7
CN Medium aberration (shapechanger) <b>Init</b> +6; <b>Senses</b> scent, tremorsense 60 ft.; Listen +12, Spot +12 <b>Languages</b> Common; telepathy 100 ft.	
AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15; Dodge, Mobility (+2 Dex, +5 natural) <b>hp</b> 97 (15 HD) <b>Immune</b> paralysis, poison, polymorph, sleep, stun, critical hits, flanking (natural form only) <b>Fort</b> +11, <b>Ref</b> +11, <b>Will</b> +11	
<b>Spd</b> 30 ft. (6 squares) <b>Melee</b> slam +12 (1d3+1) <b>Base Atk</b> +11; <b>Grp</b> +12 <b>Atk Options</b> Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes <b>Special Actions</b> alternate form	
<b>Abilities</b> Str 12, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 16, Wis 15, Cha 14 <b>SQ</b> amorphous, resilient <b>Feats</b> Alertness, Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility <b>Skills</b> Bluff +20, Climb +7, Craft (wood) +12, Diplomacy +12, Disguise +20 (+22 acting)*, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (local) +18, Listen +12, Spot +12, Survival +8	
<b>Alternate Form (Su)</b> A phasm can assume any form of Large size or smaller as a standard action. A phasm can remain in its alternate form until it chooses to assume a new one or return to its natural form.	
<b>Amorphous (Ex)</b> When in its natural form, it gains the immunities listed above.	
<b>Resilient (Ex)</b> A phasm has a +4 racial bonus on Fortitude and Reflex saves (included).	

### Tactics

When anyone approaches within 20 feet of the shed, the phasm slips out in the alternate form of a fly. It moves into position as close to as many PCs as possible, taking two rounds to do so. On the third round, it alters its form to that of a large monstrous scorpion (to the party, the scorpion appears from nowhere). On the fourth round, it gains surprise and attacks the closest character. Thereafter, it attacks multiple characters with its claws and poisonous sting.

The phasm alters its form according to combat, changing to a more defensively oriented form if the fight goes against it. If all or most of the PCs close to melee range, it alters form to that of an ochre jelly and surrounds them where they stand.

Though the phasm can communicate telepathically, it has no reason to do so. Likewise, the PCs should have no reason to suspect the creature is anything but what it seems. Each time the phasm changes form, however, a DC 18 Knowledge (dungeoneering) check allows a PC to deduce its true nature. One the phasm is recognized, a character can attempt to communicate telepathically in order to end the conflict (Diplomacy DC 25). Even if successful, there is a 30% chance the phasm continues to attack regardless.

## 24. Hanging Garden (EL 4)

*Two score pots and containers hang from a web of dark beams. The vines of fruit laden plants send tendrils up their supporting chains and vines spill to the ground, their containers slowly twisting in the shadows.*

### Creatures

The lack of threat from the plants in the rest of the garden is largely a setup for an assassin vine that made its slow way from the bestiary during the chaos of the barghest assault. Currently entwined with the rest of the abundant growth here,

the creature is even harder to see than normal (Spot DC 25). Anyone with ranks in Survival or Knowledge (nature) can use one of those skills instead of Spot to notice the plant.

Though it has been here only a day, the magical essence of the soil where it roots has increased the vine's Constitution and given it maximum hit points.

ENRICHED ASSASSIN VINE	CR 4
N Large plant <b>Init</b> +0; <b>Senses</b> blindsight 30 ft., low-light vision; Listen +1, Spot +1	
AC 15, touch 9, flat-footed 15 (–1 size, +0 Dex, +6 natural) <b>hp</b> 48 (4 HD) <b>Immune</b> critical hits, electricity, mind-affecting effects, paralysis, poison, polymorph, sleep, stunning <b>Resist</b> cold 10, fire 10 <b>Fort</b> +7, <b>Ref</b> +1, <b>Will</b> +2	
<b>Spd</b> 5 ft. (1 squares) <b>Melee</b> slam +7 (1d6+7) <b>Space</b> 10 ft.; <b>Reach</b> 10 ft. (20 ft. with vine) <b>Base Atk</b> +3; <b>Grp</b> +12 <b>Atk Options</b> constrict 1d6+7, improved grab <b>Special Actions</b> entangle	
<b>Abilities</b> Str 20, Dex 10, Con 16, Int —, Wis 13, Cha 9 <b>SQ</b> camouflage <b>Skills</b> Listen +1, Spot +1	
<b>Constrict (Ex)</b> An assassin vine deals 2d6+7 points of damage with a successful grapple check.	
<b>Entangle (Su)</b> An assassin vine can animate plants within 30 feet of itself as a free action (Reflex DC 13 partial). The effect lasts until the vine dies or decides to end it (also a free action). The save DC is Wisdom-based. The ability is otherwise similar to <i>entangle</i> (caster level 4th).	
<b>Improved Grab (Ex)</b> To use this ability, an assassin vine must hit with its slam attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can constrict.	
<b>Camouflage (Ex)</b> Since an assassin vine looks like a normal plant when at rest, it takes a DC 20 Spot check to notice it before it attacks. Anyone with ranks in Survival or Knowledge (nature) can use one of those skills instead of Spot to notice the plant.	

### Tactics

Any creatures fighting in this area gain cover from the mass of hanging containers (+4 AC), but only from a height of 3 feet above the floor. Creatures who fight below that level (Small two-legged, Medium four-legged, or smaller creatures) gain the cover bonus against larger opponents in the area, but those opponents gain no bonus against them. The assassin vine gains cover against all creatures regardless of size, but creatures gain no cover against it.

## 25. Courtyard of Knowledge

*Two dozen pillows line the walls of this carefully swept area. A 10-foot diameter circular flagstone area sits at center, painted with the symbol of the God of Knowledge.*

The flagstone radiates strong conjuration (Spellcraft DC 20 to recognize). A DC 25 Search check notes a keyhole at its center. If one of the crescent keys is fitted and turned by a character wearing the red robes of the masters, that character and up to six creatures standing on the stone are *teleported* to the hidden library (Room 41).

## 26. Courtyard of Death

*Thirty low stools are scattered across a dusty grey floor. In the northeast corner, a shrine of bleached bones has been erected in the shape of the symbol of the Goddess of Death.*



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A skull at the base of the shrine radiates strong conjuration (Spellcraft DC 20 to recognize). A DC 25 Search check notes a keyhole within its left eye socket. If one of the crescent keys is fitted and turned by a character wearing the red robes of the masters, that character and up to six creatures touching the shrine are *teleported* to the hidden library (**Room 41**).

### 27. Pumpkin Patch

*A path of stones leads to a closed door to the south, disappearing beneath a field of swollen pale-orange pumpkins. Their twisting, snakelike vines seem to swell and shrink with a regular rhythm.*

There is a compost pile where the walls meet to the southwest. The largest pumpkins are approaching 3 feet in diameter, smaller specimens filling all the available space between them. The noticeable swelling of their vines should be unsettling in appearance.

#### Combat

Characters can move through the pumpkin patch at only half-speed.

### 28. North Shed

*A wooden shed is set against the northern wall; its open doorway is dark.*

The shed contains stakes, lattice, and coils of rope and cord. It also contains a large watering can that functions as a variant *decanter of endless water* (fresh water at the 'stream' level only, value 250 gp).

## The Cellars and the Tower of Learning

*Lighting:* None.

*Sounds:* A DC 10 Listen check (modified by distance and obstacles) allows the characters to hear faint noises coming from **Room 35**.

The cellars were the kitchens, storage, and servants' quarters of the citadel; the tower of learning held the laboratory, library, and observatory where apprentices spent long hours in study. Fire swept through here as a result of the barghest assault, but both areas are cool now. The entrance to the tower through the south stairs (**Room 29**) is blocked, but a back-passage ladderway (**Room 34**) leads up from the servants' quarters.

The doors in this area have burned through (their wards destroyed), but the charred wooden walls still stand. The *everburning lanterns* that hung in all rooms were taken by the barghest once the fires died down. A pall of smoke still hangs throughout this side of the complex, and characters can remain here for a number of rounds equal to three times their Constitution score before feeling its effects. Each round thereafter, they must make a DC 18 Fortitude save or be sickened.

#### Combat

Creatures fighting in the haze gain concealment (20% miss chance). A character can charge through a burned-out wall (or push another creature through) with a DC 18 Strength check. Creatures going through a wall take 1d4 points of damage. None of the wooden walls are supporting, so there is no danger of the stone ceiling collapsing.

### 29. South Stairs

*An acrid haze of smoke hits you as the door opens, and another door directly across hangs charred from its hinges. Beyond it lies a pile of burned beams and rubble.*

Black ash and scorch marks streak the floor and walls of the upper and middle landings. The rubble at the south door blocks access to **Room 35**, but a DC 15 Search check grants a glimpse of the burned-out chamber beyond. From the doorway, it can be seen how a wooden upper floor in the room fell, but a second DC 18 Search check suggests at least some of the structure was collapsed after the fact (the brass dragons intentionally torching still-standing supports in order to block the doors).

As on the north stairs, a 10-foot landing sits at the halfway point. Its door has been burned through, allowing open access to **Room 30**.

At the bottom of the stairs, a short corridor runs south. The door to **Room 38** is locked and warded (see **The Trophy Hall**, page 22).

### 30. Dining Hall

*A huge wooden table and thirty chairs have been reduced to cinders, as have the cabinets along the charred walls.*

Ruined stoneware and silverware are scattered throughout. Nothing of interest or value remains here.

### 31. Kitchens

*The remains of tall cabinets and cupboards have collapsed to the floor, two charred and dismembered bodies sprawled beneath them.*

The fire started here when the kitchen servants were killed by the rampaging barghest. A variety of knives, pokers, and other makeshift weapons can be found here if a PC's gear has gotten hopelessly stuck to the mimic in **Room 33**.

### 32. Stores

*A mass of collapsed shelves, charred crates, bottles, and other debris fills what appears to have been a storeroom.*

Inspection reveals nothing of value, but the sight of bottles might bring the party back in search of alcohol to help deal with the mimic in **Room 33**. Each round of searching will turn up 1d4 unbroken bottles of weak wine (maximum 12 bottles in total). Each full bottle grants a +2 bonus on the Strength check for a single person or object to break free.

### 33. Staff Quarters (EL 4)

*Four badly burned bodies lie beneath the remains of four sets of bunks. What might have been footlockers have been burned down to their metal bracings, but a scorched wooden chest against the west wall seems to have survived mostly intact. In the east wall, a burned-out archway leads to small alcove.*

This room was the residence of the kitchen and maintenance staff. The locked wooden trunk (Open Lock DC 15) was the property of the citadel caretaker (a retired bard), and was spared burning by its permanent *ironwood* effect. It can be sold for 100 gp if packed out. Within are personal effects, a scroll of *animal messenger*, *blindness/deafness*, and *calm emotions*, and a three *potions of lesser restoration*.

#### Creatures

A paranoid party might suspect a wooden trunk that survived a fire of this magnitude to be a mimic. Encourage this thinking if you can, as it will distract the players from noticing that the mimic is actually the archway leading to the alcove.

MIMIC	CR 4
N Large aberration (shapechanger) Init +1; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +8, Spot +8 Languages Common	
AC 15, touch 10, flat-footed 15 (–1 size, +1 Dex, +5 natural) hp 52 (7 HD) Immune acid Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +6	
Spd 10 ft. (2 squares) Melee slam +9 (1d8+4) Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft. Base Atk +5; Grp +13 Atk Options adhesive, crush Special Actions mimic shape	



## - The Citadel of Ceranir -

**Abilities** Str 19, Dex 12, Con 17, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 10  
**Feats** Alertness, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Focus (slam)  
**Skills** Climb +9, Disguise +13, Listen +8, Spot +8

**Adhesive (Ex)** A mimic automatically grapples any creature it hits with a slam attack. Opponents so grappled cannot get free while the mimic is alive without removing the adhesive first.

A weapon that strikes the mimic is stuck fast unless the wielder succeeds on a DC 16 Reflex save. A successful DC 16 Strength is needed to pry a stuck weapon free.

Strong alcohol dissolves the adhesive, but the mimic may still grapple normally. A mimic can dissolve its adhesive at will, and the substance breaks down 5 rounds after the mimic dies.

**Crush (Ex)** A mimic deals 1d8+4 points of damage with a successful grapple check.

**Mimic Shape (Ex)** A mimic can assume the general shape of any object that fills roughly 150 cubic feet (5 feet by 5 feet by 6 feet) such as a massive chest, a stout bed, or a wide door frame. The creature cannot substantially alter its size. A mimic's body is hard and has a rough texture, no matter what appearance it presents. Anyone who examines the mimic can detect the ruse with a successful Spot check against the mimic's Disguise check.

After escaping the bestiary, this creature came here in order to steer clear of the barghests in the garden. It has grown into the burned-out opening in the stone wall. The secret door that once stood here (Search or Knowledge: architecture and engineering DC 18) gave the caretaker access directly to the Tower of Learning.

### Tactics

The mimic attempts to grapple the first character through the archway (treat as flat-footed), and fights relentlessly thereafter. It is not above being bribed or bargained with, but knows the citadel has fallen and will be strongly inclined to view the party as its last meal. The wine from **Room 32** can help dissolve the creature's adhesive, while the potent mead in **Room 8** dissolves it completely.

## 34. Ladderway

*What appeared to be an alcove is actually a 20-foot shaft leading up. At the top, a dark opening leads east.*

The ladder that was here has been burned to ashes (Climb DC 15 to scale the walls), as was the secret door above. The shaft acted as a chimney, drawing the fire from the cellars and setting the library ablaze.

## 35. Library (EL 6)

*Charred timbers, collapsed shelves, and the remains of the papers they once held fill the northern half of this chamber. The ceiling looms 20 feet overhead, but a wooden second floor has collapsed, mostly into the northeast corner. What must have once been an impressive library and scriptorium is now nothing but ash.*

As from the south stairs, a DC 18 Search check shows some supports were intentionally burned to drop the upper floor against the northern doorway.

### Creatures

Nothing of value remains here, but any attempt by the PCs to investigate the area draws out the dragon wyrmlings currently in hiding. The wyrmlings holed up here after bringing down the still-standing second level to block the door. They are burrowed deep within the ash and rubble of the northwest corner (the PCs have no chance to see them, but a DC 20 Search check will note that debris seems to be piled artificially high there).

If any PCs approach within 10 feet, read or paraphrase the following:

*Debris and ash suddenly erupts as three creatures—each the size of a small dog—take to the air. Though they move quickly, you get a glimpse of dragonlike forms, a coating of ash falling from brass scales.*

### BRASS DRAGON WYRMLINGS (3)

CR 3

CG Tiny dragon (fire)

**Init** +4; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft., low-light vision; Listen +6, Spot +6

**Languages** Draconic

**AC** 15, touch 12, flat-footed 15 (+2 size, +3 natural)

**hp** 30 (4 HD)

**Immune** fire, paralysis, sleep

**Fort** +5, **Ref** +4, **Will** +4

**Weakness** vulnerability to cold

**Spd** 60 ft. (12 squares), burrow 30 ft., fly 150 ft. (average); Flyby Attack

**Melee** bite +6 (1d4) and 2 claws +1 (1d3)

**Space** 2-1/2 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft. (bite 5 ft.)

**Base Atk** +4; **Grp** -4

**Special Actions** breath weapon

**Spell-like Abilities (CL 1st):**

At will—*speaking with animals*

**Abilities** Str 11, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 10

**Feats** Flyby Attack, Improved Initiative

**Skills** Hide +7, Knowledge (arcana) +6, Knowledge (history) +6, Knowledge (nature) +5, Listen +6, Search +6, Spot +6

**Breath Weapon (Su)** 30-ft. line, damage 1d6 fire, Reflex DC 13 half; or 15-ft. cone, sleep 1d6+1 rounds, Will DC 13 negates.

### Tactics

Though nominally good, their captivity has left these wyrmlings frightened and vicious, and they fight furiously. They avoid melee by circling at the ceiling, using their breath weapons to blast isolated foes with fire and target grouped PCs with *sleep*. A wyrmiling then circles for 1d4 rounds while it waits to make another breath weapon attack.

The smoke is thicker near the ceiling granting the wyrmlings total concealment (50% miss chance) for as long as they remain there. Nearer to the floor, all creatures, including the PCs, gain concealment (20% miss chance).

### Standing Down

The wyrmlings have no leader, and their fear makes it difficult to negotiate with them. A DC 25 Diplomacy check made as a full-round action at any point in combat convinces a single wyrmiling to stand down, with one other wyrmiling convinced for each point by which the check result beats the DC. Unaffected

## Making Tracks

The ash in the library and laboratory (**Room 35 and 36**) shows clearly visible tracks the PCs can note at any appropriate point.

A large animal (Survival DC 15 to recognize wolf tracks—actually a barghest in wolf form) appeared from nowhere in front of the rubble pile at the north door (the barghest *blinked* through from the south stairs). It circled the fallen disk in the laboratory, and then seemingly vanished (the barghest *levitated* up to the next level). At the same time, a humanoid appeared from nowhere to the south of the disk, heading north to disappear at the rubble (on the level above, the barghest changed shape into a goblin in an attempt to figure out the observatory controls, then left this area when it failed). The barghest came straight from the door, and so didn't attract the dragon wyrmlings' attention.

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wyrmings continue to fight, though the PCs can attempt subsequent full-round checks.

Once all the wyrmings have stood down, a second DC 20 Diplomacy check made over a full minute prevents combat from resuming. The wyrmings were hatched in the bestiary, and so have no useful information regarding the citadel. Allow effective roleplaying to provide a +2 bonus on the second Diplomacy check. If the party successfully negotiates their way out of confrontation with the dragon wyrmings, award full experience points for the encounter.

### Befriending a Dragon

For some characters, an encounter with these dragons is a chance of a lifetime, an opportunity to befriend these creatures and gain them as allies. In fact, a character that gains the Leadership feat might just gain one of these dragons as a cohort. Whether or not you allow the Leadership feat or think letting one or more PCs get a “pet dragon” is a good idea is entirely up to you. The dragons were hatched in the citadel and never received names since they were subjects of scrutiny and not companionship. They are generally distrustful of humans and so convincing one or more of these dragons to accompany the PCs should require a great deal of roleplaying, Diplomacy checks, and so on.

## 36. Laboratory

*The southern half of the chamber contained some dozen benches and low tables, all burned now. Twisted scraps of melted metal litter the floor. Shelves and racks along the walls hold shattered bottles and flasks, their contents staining the ash with brilliant colors. In the center of the area, a 10-foot-diameter white flagstone has been cracked. In the ceiling above it is a similarly sized hole.*

Nothing remains of the citadel’s working laboratory. Investigation reveals that the white stone disk actually sits above a layer of ash on the floor. This was a magical platform that *levitated* apprentices and masters to the observatory above (identical to the still-working disk in **Room 39**).

As the party begins to investigate the opening in the ceiling, or as they pass under it:

*A faint rumble of distant thunder rises from the dark space above you.*

No other sound is heard until the PCs ascend to **Room 37**.

The fire here was fueled by the laboratory’s stores of potent alchemical reagents, and was responsible for the blast that shattered the *levitating disk*. The scraps of metal are the remains of scales, alchemical equipment, and the like (DC 15 Craft: alchemy check to identify), most melted to slag now.

The fire and the resulting uncontrolled distillation of the laboratory’s stores have made for some unexpected alchemical combinations. For each round of movement across the floor, one random PC has a 50% chance of accidentally setting off a reaction from the following table as they break an unseen glass vial underfoot, kick up a cloud of colorful ash, and so on.

### Combat

If the battle with the dragon wyrmings comes to the laboratory, automatically roll a new alchemical reaction each round. Randomly determine a PC—apply this new reaction to them once they have completed their movement for the round.

## 37. Observatory

Once the PCs have found some means to ascend to the hole in the ceiling, be sure to adjust their view for the time of day or night (describing moonlight or sunlight as appropriate).

*Even from the bottom of the stairs, you see light through the lingering haze of smoke and hear the howling of wind.*

When someone ascends to the chamber, read or paraphrase the following:

*You stand on a round platform open to the air, ringed by a low ledge and a pillared colonnade. Around you, the forest extends in all directions, the distant horizon shrouded by clouds. Thunder rolls in the distance. A 3-foot high marble pillar stands to the south in the center of the chamber.*



## Accidental Alchemy

Die Roll (d12)	Result
1	All within 5 ft. sickened for 1d4 rounds (Fortitude DC 14 negates).
2	Gain immunity to the effects of the smoke in this area (see <b>The Cellars and the Tower of Learning</b> on page 19).
3	A flare-up of fire deals 1d6 damage (Reflex DC 16 negates).
4	Gain +2 to lowest ability score for 1d4 minutes.
5	All within 10 ft. are dazzled for 1d6 rounds (Will DC 15 negates).
6	Gain 2d6 temporary hit points for 5 rounds.
7	Become enraged for 1d6 rounds (as the <i>rage</i> spell).
8	All of the character’s hair turns shock white, permanently.
9	The character’s skin and hair change color, permanently turning a bright shade of blue.
10	The character believes her gender has changed for one frightening moment.
11	The character ages 1d6 years.
12	Roll twice, with the second result happening without warning 1 round later. If you roll 8 again, roll for another effect and increase the time delay by an additional round.

Ideally, the PCs will be desperate to get out of the citadel by this point, making the *projected illusion* they see here that much more crushing. Allow someone to notice the air in the chamber is motionless despite the sound of wind, or wait until characters move within 5 feet of the apparent edge of the platform to note that the dweomered observatory walls are a solid dome.

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The masters of Ceranir used this room for more than studying weather and stars, however. The marble pillar radiates moderate divination (Spellcraft DC 20 to recognize) and has a crescent-shaped keyhole. A DC 30 Spellcraft or Knowledge (arcana) check provides a clue as to its function. With one of the masters' keys fitted and turned, a character touching the pillar can mentally command the observatory to display any part of the citadel they can visualize or name. This allows the PCs to see areas they've already been through, as well as get a look inside unexplored areas if they recall (from the notes in the prefect's chamber and the masters' quarters) or guess those area's names.

The observatory displays image and sound, and allows low-light vision and darkvision to penetrate it. The effect otherwise functions as if the user were employing an *arcane eye* spell. Like that spell, the point-of-view of the observatory cannot pass through solid objects or holes less than 1 inch in diameter, though it can be directed to the area beyond a closed door if the character controlling it has been there before.

## The Bestiary

**Lighting:** A pile of everburning lanterns sits in **Room 39** and casts bright light throughout that room and shadowy light into all adjacent rooms.

This impressive center of research was Citadel Ceranir's eventual undoing. Most of the creatures once held here are at large now, with only the shadows and their victims remaining in **Room 40**.

## 38. Trophy Hall

The door to this room is locked and warded (the barghests don't understand the logic of the citadel's wards, but sealed this area behind them anyway). It opens to any of the masters' keys or a successful DC 30 Open Lock check.

BLACK TENTACLES TRAP	CR 7
Search DC 29; Type Magical; Reset Lock Door Trigger Open Door	
Melee tentacle +7 (1d6+4) Targets Multiple (up to three tentacles per target in each of four adjacent 5-ft. squares) Effect black tentacles (CL 7th)	
Disarm Disable Device DC 29; Bypass Masters' Key	

Once the pandemonium dies down, read or paraphrase the following:

*This hall displays a diverse and unearthly array of creatures—the heads of larger specimens hanging on the walls and the bodies of smaller beasts floating in jars or mounted on shelves. Some 30 feet distant, the hall opens onto a brilliantly lit chamber.*

Use your favorite random monster table to determine what's here (and note that a sizable number of good and sentient creatures are represented; at Ceranir, the study of magic took precedence over moral consideration). None of the specimens here are in any danger of coming to life, but roll menacingly as the party advances.

## 39. Study Hall (EL 4)

As the party approaches from **Room 38**:

*Blinding light within this chamber makes you shield your eyes. Though the western half of the room is unlit, an immense pile of everburning lanterns has been dumped haphazardly at the entrance, almost covering two bodies.*

These unfortunate apprentices were preparing the room for the next day's lessons. Unlike those killed by the barghest, they show no wounds, having been slain by the greater shadow (see **Room 40**) as they tried to escape.

The barghest have taken every everburning lantern they could safely procure in the complex (nearly fifty in all) and piled them in this room hoping to trap the shadows in the bestiary (so far successfully). Any Search or Spot checks made in the eastern half of the room take a –2 penalty from the overwhelming brightness.

Read or paraphrase the following:

*Walls, shelves, and wide tables are covered with the body parts of exotic creatures. Skulls and skeletons are labeled in exacting detail, with eyes and more unpleasant organs preserved in sealed jars. In the center of the room, tables are arranged around a 10-foot white circular flagstone.*

Any serious student of monstrous anatomy could easily waste a week here, but the room ultimately holds nothing of immediate value.

### Creatures

The room holds two shadows spawned from the fallen apprentices. They are ordered to watch for anyone entering. They are hiding in the northwest and southwest corners as far from the light as possible, but can be noticed with a DC 14 Spot or Search check.

**Shadows (2):** hp 19 each; see **Room 40** for statistics.

### Tactics

If spotted, the shadows flee to **Room 40**.

### Development

If the party has been through the laboratory (**Room 36**), they recognize the flagstone as identical to the shattered disk. A DC 15 Search check reveals a faint seam between the disk and the thicker floor. However, at the first sign of investigation, the shadows to the west immediately streak across the floor and disappear down the seam to alert their greater shadow master.

This magical platform carried students to the lower level, and can hold up to eight Medium creatures. Command words in Common ('ascend' and 'descend') raise and lower it if spoken by anyone standing on the disk, but must be guessed at or magically divined by the players. The platform takes 1 round to go up or down between levels.

## 40. Bestiary Cells (EL 11)

Assuming the PCs take the floating disk down to this level, the 10-foot hole in the ceiling above stays open. If they find some other means of access, the disc cannot be controlled from its underside.

## Watching and Waiting

To heighten the tension of the final encounter against the barghests, give the PCs only fast glimpses of those creatures through the observatory. In the entrance (**Rooms 1 through 3**), the dormitory (**Rooms 5 through 12**), the garden (**Rooms 19 through 28**, excluding the south shed), or even the cellars the party just passed through (**Rooms 30 through 33**), describe a half-humanoid, half-wolf form flashing into view for a round or two, then just as quickly vanishing (the barghest's *blink* ability makes it difficult for the observatory's sensor to follow them). The barghest at this stage have full knowledge of the party's presence and motivations, and are intentionally holding back to see if the PCs are successful in collecting the remaining keys—at which point, they happily slay them.

Players using the observatory should be allowed to scan freely throughout the remainder of the complex and map as they wish. Feel free to help the PCs if they've had trouble locating the masters' keys in areas already explored. For example, asking to see the dormitory might bring up a view of the prefect's office, with Master Mydrien's key visible where the party neglected to search for it previously.



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*The floating disk slowly drops some 20 feet, coming to rest on a stone floor below. A dark chamber opens up around it, dim light showing passageways to the east. Three bodies lay to the south.*

The bodies are the other three apprentices, killed by the greater shadow. As the PCs explore:

*The chamber extends some hundred feet east to west, but what you took at first to be corridors are actually the spaces around a series of iron-barred cells. In the semicircular eastern chamber, rough shelves hold dried fodder, blankets, buckets, and bales of shredded corn-husk straw. Everburning lanterns hang here and along the wide central corridor, shrouded with dark cloth.*

Dim auras of abjuration and enchantment (Spellcraft DC 23 to recognize each) linger here, speaking to how powerful the bestiary wards once were. On the shelves can be found a variant *decanter of endless water* (fresh water at the 'stream' level only, value 250 gp). Three *everburning lanterns* still function here, but have been dimmed by shadows lurking against the walls. A character within 5 feet can make a DC 18 Search check to note that a lamp is wrapped not by cloth but by living darkness, at which point the shadow attacks (see **Tactics**, following).

### Creatures

The area is now empty except for the bodies of those creatures that died here and the shadows that lie in wait for the party.

The bars of the cells are set deep within the stone floor and ceiling, spaced 2 feet apart with horizontal crossbars welded every 2 feet. There are no doors in the cells—the masters used *teleportation* to move the bestiary's creatures in and out, and powerful enchantments to keep them subdued.

**Cells F and K** have had their bars bent and can be entered freely. A Medium creature can squeeze through the bars of the other cells with a DC 18 Escape Artist check (Small creatures can enter freely; Large creatures cannot enter at all). Each cell contains spoiled food and brackish water appropriate for the creatures once confined there.

**Cell A—Body (Unicorn):** Though it tried, this noble creature could not escape its cell before the shadows came. Its legs and the battered bars of its cage are red-black with dried blood.

**Cell B—Empty (Ooze Mephits):** The mephits were small enough to squeeze through the bars, then fast enough to fly to freedom. The floor of this cell is covered in moldy sludge.

**Cell C—Body (Nessian Hellhound):** Scorch marks tell the tale of this creature's fierce last stand, but a swarm of shadows took it down.

**Cell D—Body (Medusa):** The incorporeal shadows managed to evade this creature's gaze attack.

**Cell E—Empty (Assassin Vine):** This creature simply slipped through the bars once the magic holding it failed. A layer of compost and grey-black bones cover the floor.

**Cell F—Open (Barghest):** The six barghests here forced their way out the moment the wards fell. Tufts of bloody red-black hair cling to bent bars, and cracked bones litter the floor.

**Cell G—Empty (Brass Dragon Wyrmlings):** The bars of this cell were blackened and charred as the wyrmlings slipped through.

**Cell H—Body (Doppelganger):** This creature wasn't as quick as its companion (see **Room 2**) in squeezing out of the cell. Consumed by the greater shadow, its corpse still clutches the bars.

**Cell I—Empty (Phasm):** This loathsome aberration simply oozed its mutable form through the bars. The floor here is pocked and acid-etched.

**Cell J—Empty (Arakai):** Even after slipping through the bars, three arakai were consumed by the greater shadow (their bodies lie nearby) while the others fled via Master Gariant's *dimension door*.

**Cell K—Open (Mimic):** This aberration used its change shape ability and natural toughness to batter its way through the bars of its cell.

**Cell L—Empty (Greater Shadow):** This monstrosity evil undead lost no time in killing the hated Master Gariant when the bestiary's wards fell.

This cell alone had specific controls for the binding magic required to hold an incorporeal creature—a crystal globe fastened to the east side of the cell with delicate iron straps. Its purpose can be determined with a DC 23 Knowledge (arcana) check. A second DC 23 Knowledge (arcana) check indicates the cell's ward can be temporarily reactivated with arcane spell power. Any arcane spell cast into the globe reactivates the ward for 1 round per spell level. Once activated, the ward can hold any shadows within the cell at bay (or keeps them out if the PCs are inside).

### GREATER SHADOW

CR 8

CE Medium undead (incorporeal)

**Init** +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; **Listen** +7, **Spot** +7

**AC** 14, **touch** 14, **flat-footed** 12; **Dodge**, **Mobility** (+2 **Dex**, +2 **deflection**) **hp** 58 (9 HD)

**Immune** ability damage, ability drain, critical hits, death effects, disease, massive damage, mind-affecting effects, nonlethal damage, paralysis, poison, sleep, stunning, any effect that requires a Fortitude save (unless it works on objects)

**Fort** +3, **Ref** +5, **Will** +7

**Spd** Fly 40 ft. (good); **Spring Attack**

**Melee** incorporeal touch +6 (1d8 Str)

**Base Atk** +4; **Grp** —

**Atk Options** Strength damage

**Special Actions** create spawn

**Abilities** Str —, **Dex** 15, **Con** —, **Int** 6, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 14

**SQ** incorporeal traits, turn resistance +2, undead traits

**Feats** Alertness, Dodge, Mobility, Spring Attack

**Skills** Hide +14 (+18 shadowy areas, +10 bright areas), **Listen** +9, **Search** +6, **Spot** +9

**Strength Damage (Su)** A greater shadow's touch deals 1d8 points of Strength damage to a living opponent. A creature reduced to 0 Strength dies.

**Create Spawn (Su):** Any humanoid reduced to 0 Strength by a greater shadow becomes a shadow under the control of its killer after 1d4 rounds.

### SHADOWS (9)

CR 3

CE Medium undead (incorporeal)

**Init** +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; **Listen** +7, **Spot** +7

**AC** 13, **touch** 13, **flat-footed** 11; **Dodge** (+2 **Dex**, +1 **deflection**) **hp** 19 (3 HD)

**Immune** ability damage, ability drain, critical hits, death effects, disease, massive damage, mind-affecting effects, nonlethal damage, paralysis, poison, sleep, stunning, any effect that requires a Fortitude save (unless it works on objects)

**Fort** +1, **Ref** +3, **Will** +4

**Spd** Fly 40 ft. (good)

**Melee** incorporeal touch +3 (1d6 Str)

**Base Atk** +1; **Grp** —

**Atk Options** Strength damage

**Special Actions** create spawn

**Abilities** Str —, **Dex** 14, **Con** —, **Int** 6, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 13

**SQ** incorporeal traits, turn resistance +2, undead traits

**Feats** Alertness, Dodge

**Skills** Hide +8 (+12 shadowy areas, +4 bright areas), **Listen** +7, **Search** +4, **Spot** +7

**Strength Damage (Su)** A shadow's touch deals 1d6 points of Strength damage to a living opponent. A creature reduced to 0 Strength dies.

**Create Spawn (Su):** Any humanoid reduced to 0 Strength by a shadow becomes a shadow under the control of its killer after 1d4 rounds.

### Tactics

The greater shadow lurking here amassed nine shadow minions (including those from **Room 39**) from the humanoid creatures it slew when the bestiary fell. Its only goal is vengeance, but its long imprisonment has left it wary.

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The shadows lay in wait against the walls, floor, and ceiling while the party moves into the area, emerging to ambush passing characters before retreating back into the darkness and blocking retreat to the floating disk. The greater shadow focuses its own attacks on those characters bearing the greatest resemblance to the masters (unarmored and in robes).

While the PCs have to go around the cells as they navigate the room, the shadows can pass through them. The shadows blocking the *everburning lanterns* fight viciously but do not move from their commanded positions, maximizing the other shadows' ability to hide. If one is destroyed, shadows in that area take a –4 penalty on Hide checks.

### Developments

Master Gariant was struck down by the greater shadow in the far southeast of the chamber. His key still hangs from a chain around his neck. A few feet beyond him, a stone in the wall glows faintly—the trigger for the nonfunctioning *dimension door* connection between the bestiary and his chambers.

## The Masters' Sanctum

*Lighting:* Bright  
*Sounds:* None

### 41. Hidden Library (EL 10)

The hidden library is situated some 50 feet below the center of the courtyard, but there is no physical connection between it and any other part of the citadel. All four *teleport* access points in the courtyards of the garden lead to the center of this area.

*The view around you blurs like water as you suddenly find yourself standing before a three-foot marble pillar in the center of a tall, well-lit space. Towering shelves of books create dark corridors all around you. To the north, a long table is covered in scrolls and bound volumes. A male figure in black stands over them. The figure looks up at you in angry surprise, grabs a handful of parchments, then vanishes from sight.*

The figure was Master Derishar, who vanished courtesy of *invisibility*. Just in case the PCs are using *see invisibility*, he quietly moves out of their line of sight. See **Creatures**, following, for more information.

The pillar is set with a crescent keyhole and radiates strong conjuration (Spellcraft DC 20 to recognize). If one of the crescent keys is fitted and turned by a character wearing the red robes of the masters, that character and up to six creatures touching the pillar are returned to whichever courtyard the key was used to bring them from. (If the PCs use a different key to return than they did to get here, they return to the courtyard of the key's master.)

The corridors running between the shelves serve primarily to hem the PCs in during the final combat, so if at all possible, map only as far as characters can see. Shelves run to the full height of the 20-foot ceilings, and cannot be knocked over. They can be easily scaled (Climb DC 14), and can be pushed through (Escape Artist DC 14 or Strength DC 14) in order to gain access to adjacent corridors. *Everburning lanterns* hang along the shelves, illuminating every corridor evenly.

An incalculable wealth of arcane lore can be found in the books and scrolls stored here, many of which (including the masters' spellbooks) radiate magic. If the PCs have time to investigate, give them a sense of the library's value, but see the **Up In Flames** sidebar on page 26 before they start planning their retirement.

A number of tomes dealing with enchantment wards (Spellcraft DC 20 to recognize) rest on the table. A DC 20 Forgery check matches their writing to the journals found in Master Gariant's chambers. However, the margins the books are filled with writing in a different hand—a raving diatribe by Master Derishar, identifying him as the one who sabotaged the magical wards in the bestiary in his attempt to kill Gariant (see **Adventure Background**, page 2). Derishar's words are ramblingly incoherent, but the extent of his jealous hatred of Gariant, and his own raving remorse at Aleon's death, are clear.

### Creatures

Two rounds after the party investigates the table (or four rounds after their arrival if they haven't done so yet), read or paraphrase the following:

*A bloated creature with a dozen leprous tentacles suddenly appears before you, but even as you watch, its form seems to melt and shift. Tentacles become flaming talons, then claws, then wings. Burning eyes and gaping mouths appear and disappear as the monstrosity lurches toward you.*

Master Derishar has summoned this chaos beast from one of the scrolls he made off with. Use your most fevered imagination to describe its appearance. Unless the party retreats, the chaos beast has no reason to move, and so will make full attacks whenever possible, fighting for 6 rounds before vanishing. (If the chaos beast somehow presents too little challenge for the PCs, or if they decide to simply run from it, Derishar summons another one to box the party in.)

CHAOS BEAST	CR 7
CN Medium outsider (chaotic, extraplanar) <b>Init</b> +5; <b>Senses</b> darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +11, Spot +11	
AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 15; Dodge, Mobility (+1 Dex, +5 natural) hp 44 (8 HD) <b>Immune</b> critical hits, transformation SR 15 <b>Fort</b> +7, <b>Ref</b> +7, <b>Will</b> +6	
<b>Spd</b> 20 ft. (4 squares) <b>Melee</b> 2 claws +10 (1d3+2 plus corporeal instability) <b>Base Atk</b> +8; <b>Grp</b> +10 <b>Atk Options</b> corporeal instability	
<b>Abilities</b> Str 14, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10 <b>Feats</b> Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility <b>Skills</b> Climb +13, Escape Artist +12, Hide +12, Jump +9, Listen +11, Search +11, Spot +11, Survival +0 (+2 following tracks), Tumble +14, Use Rope +1 (+3 with bindings)	
<b>Immunity to Transformation (Ex)</b> No mortal magic can permanently affect or fix a chaos beast's form. Effects such as <i>polymorphing</i> or petrification force the creature into a new shape, but at the start of its next turn, it immediately returns to its mutable form as a free action.	
<b>Corporeal Instability (Su)</b> A living creature struck by a chaos beast's claw attack must succeed on a DC 15 Fortitude save or become a spongy amorphous mass, its shape melting, flowing, writhing, and boiling. An affected creature is unable to hold or use any item. Clothing, armor, rings, and helmets become useless. Large items worn or carried—armor, backpacks, even shirts—hamper more than help, reducing the victim's Dexterity by 4. Soft or misshapen feet and legs reduce speed to 10 feet or one-quarter normal, whichever is less. Pain is such that the victim cannot act coherently and cannot cast spells or use magic items. It attacks blindly, attacking the nearest creature (–4 penalty to the attack, 50% miss chance). Each round, the amorphous state deals 1 point of Wisdom drain from the shock. If the Wisdom falls to 0, the creature becomes a chaos beast. A victim can regain its own shape by taking a standard action to attempt a DC 15 Charisma check. A success reestablishes the form for 1 minute. On a failure, the victim can repeat this check each round until successful. <i>A shapechange or stoneskin spell fixes the form for the duration of the spell. A restoration, heal, or greater restoration spell removes the affliction.</i>	

Derishar, last master of Citadel Ceranir, is the architect of all that has befallen this place. Having rested since the barghest assault, Derishar has regained his full spell power. He is currently poring through the library, seeking knowledge of how to re-establish the bestiary wards before he takes on the barghest again.

MASTER DERISHAR	CR 10
Male human evoker 7/fighter 1/eldritch knight 2 NE Medium humanoid <b>Init</b> +5; <b>Senses</b> Listen +1, Spot +1 <b>Languages</b> Abyssal, Common, Draconic, Infernal, Sylvan	
AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14 (+1 Dex, +4 <i>mage armor</i> ) hp 33 (10 HD) <b>Fort</b> +7, <b>Ref</b> +3, <b>Will</b> +4	

## - The Citadel of Ceranir -

Spd 30 ft. (6 squares) Melee +1 <i>ghost touch warhammer</i> +11/+6 (1d8+4) Base Atk +6; Grp +9 Atk Options Power Attack Combat Gear <i>arcane scroll of dimensional anchor</i> (ranged touch +7), <i>arcane scroll of magic circle against evil</i> , 2 <i>arcane scrolls of summon monster IV</i> (one is used)
<b>Evoker Spells Prepared (CL 8th; barred enchantment and necromancy):</b> 4th— <i>dimension door</i> (DC 18), <i>dimensional anchor</i> (ranged touch +7), <i>lesser globe of invulnerability</i> , <i>shout</i> (DC 20) 3rd— <i>dispel magic</i> , <i>fireball</i> (DC 19), <i>lightning bolt</i> (DC 19), <i>empowered magic missile</i> (×2) 2nd— <i>darkvision</i> , <i>daze monster</i> (DC 16), <i>detect thoughts</i> (DC 16)†, <i>flaming sphere</i> (DC 18), <i>invisibility</i> † 1st— <i>mage armor</i> †, <i>magic missile</i> (×3), <i>protection from evil</i> , <i>true strike</i> 0— <i>acid splash</i> (ranged touch +7) (×2), <i>flare</i> (DC 16), <i>ray of frost</i> (ranged touch +7, DC 16), <i>resistance</i>
†Already cast
<b>Abilities</b> Str 16, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 18, Wis 8, Cha 12 <b>SQ</b> familiar <b>Feats</b> Alertness (when familiar is within 5 ft.) <sup>B</sup> , Combat Casting <sup>B</sup> , Empower Spell <sup>B</sup> , Greater Spell Focus (evocation), Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Scribe Scroll <sup>B</sup> , Skill Focus (Spellcraft), Spell Focus (evocation), Weapon Focus (warhammer) <sup>B</sup> <b>Skills</b> Appraise +4 (+6 alchemical objects, weapons), Concentration +12, Craft (alchemy) +17, Craft (weaponsmithing) +17, Decipher Script +16, Handle Animal +3, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (arcana) +14, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +14, Listen -1 (+1 familiar), Spellcraft +21, Spot -1 (+1 familiar), Survival -1 (+1 underground), <b>Possessions</b> combat gear plus +1 <i>ghost touch warhammer</i> <b>Spellbook</b> all prepared plus all cantrips (except enchantment and necromancy); 1st— <i>alarm</i> , <i>burning hands</i> , <i>expeditious retreat</i> , <i>hold portal</i> ; 2nd— <i>continual flame</i> ; 3rd— <i>blink</i> , <i>daylight</i> , <i>wind wall</i>

### DREAD

### CR —

Male toad familiar N Diminutive animal Init +1; Senses low-light vision; Listen +4, Spot +4 Languages empathic link, speak with master, speak with toads
AC 19, touch 15, flat-footed 18 (+4 size, +1 Dex, +4 natural) hp 15 (10 HD) Resist improved evasion Fort +7, Ref +3, Will +7
Spd 5 ft. (1 squares) Space 1 ft.; Reach 0 ft. Base Atk +6; Grp -11 Atk Options deliver touch spells
Abilities Str 1, Dex 12, Con 11, Int 9, Wis 14, Cha 4 SQ share spells Feats Alertness Skills Hide +21, Listen +4, Spot +4

### Combat I

Derishar has been driven mad by the death of Aleon, but still exhibits extreme cunning. The party's presence here has surprised him, and he seeks to discover their purpose before making any decision on what to do with them.

While the chaos beast distracts the PCs, Derishar stays invisible at a safe distance as he casts *mage armor*, then *detect thoughts* to determine the party's moral bent (characters become aware that they are targeted by unknown magic if they make their saves). Because he seeks knowledge of the PCs' motivations (and for the purpose of their subsequent interaction with him), Derishar picks up only the general gist of why the party entered the citadel and the fact they have entered the masters' wing (see **Interrogation**, following).

Having determined the PCs' motives, Derishar appears once the chaos beast falls (or dismisses the creature if it appears to be getting the upper hand). While he



does not interfere with the PCs' helping each other if any have fallen victim to the beast's corporeal instability, he ignores any requests for aid.

Derishar's key is plainly seen hanging on a chain around his neck.

### Interrogation

Derishar knows the party has passed through the masters' wing if any PCs wear the red robes or wield the armor and weapons from that area. Otherwise, assume he picked up information from *detect thoughts*. (If one of the PCs is openly wearing the *antimagic scarab*, Derishar is darkly suspicious, but not wanting to believe the worst, he simply continues to question).

Derishar coldly interrogates the PCs as to how they entered the masters' wing and what they did there. If the PCs question him back on what they've read here and in his quarters, Derishar angrily confirms his role in the destruction of the citadel, but lays the blame at the feet of 'Gariant the Deceiver'. Any attempts to parlay with Derishar, especially questions involving discussion of the *elixir of love* found in Aleon's quarters, is met with hostility.

Derishar eventually asks what the party did with the *antimagic scarab*, or how they secured the door against the barghest. Whether the party lies or not, Derishar's *detect thoughts* spell should confirm the truth. The realization that Aleon's body has been destroyed (whether admitted by the party or seen in their thoughts) pushes Derishar over the edge.

### Combat II

Derishar first casts *fireball*, caring nothing for his own safety and inadvertently starting the conflagration that eventually reduces this area to ashes. From this point, he fights to the death. (Note: even if the *dominate person* ward from **Room 2** is in effect on some PCs, Derishar is not wearing his masters' robes and so cannot take advantage of it).

Derishar specifically targets any PCs who took the lead in the **Barghest At Large** encounter (page 14), as payment for their 'failure' to protect Aleon's body. Otherwise, he is indiscriminate in his targets.



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If the PCs make it a point to keep Derishar within melee range, he casts *flaming sphere* and directs it while he makes full attacks. If some or all of the PCs scatter, he strikes at a distance with *magic missile* and *shout*, using his empowered *magic missiles* only as a last resort (he hopes to save them for the barghest).

### Fighting in the Fire

Fighting while the room is aflame creates a thrilling combat environment, and for groups who've played through *Dirge of the Damned*, there should be a sense of déjà vu. Each round the combatants fight in the room, the atmosphere grows more dangerous, as follows:

**Round 1:** No special effects in place.

**Round 2:** Smoke drifts along the ceiling, and it becomes harder to see. The smoke grants concealment (20% miss chance).

**Round 3:** Random explosion near a combatant. Roll to see which combatant it affects. All creatures within 10 feet of the character take 1d6 points of fire damage (Reflex DC 15 negates).

**Round 4:** Burned timbers fall from the ceiling. All characters have a 10% chance of being struck by a falling piece of wood each round. If so, they take 1d4 points of fire damage and 1d4 points of bludgeoning damage (Reflex DC 15 negates).

**Round 5:** Heavy smoke fills the room. See **Chapter 8: Glossary** in the *DMG* for more information on heavy smoke effects. Random explosion occurs as described under Round 3, except the damage is 4d6 points and a Reflex DC 15 halves the damage.

## Burning Books

Fire spreads here with great speed, fed by the library's ancient tomes and wooden shelves. Allow the flames to advance 10 feet per round into every square of adjacent shelves. As well, there is a 50% chance per round for the flames to leap the gap between shelves and spread to new areas. There is enough fuel here (and enough oxygen vented in from the surface) to burn for 1 hour.

Clever PCs might try to extinguish the flames with decanters of endless water or create water spells. While this may preserve a handful of scrolls, the fire greedily devours the papers, spreading rapidly so most of the more potent scrolls are destroyed. Quick thinking PCs should be rewarded with 1d6+2 minor arcane scrolls. Generate these randomly using the tables in the *DMG*.

It's imperative that Derishar gets off the *fireball* spell. If the PCs somehow manage to prevent him from casting the spell, assume Derishar has a *contingency* spell cast (from a scroll) to create the effect. This may feel a little heavy-handed, but giving the PCs access to a couple of hundred arcane scrolls is far worse.

## Up In Flames

The value of the lore in Ceranir's tower vastly outweighs any amount of treasure that can be acceptably given to a 5th-level party, and it's for that reason this area has to be destroyed in the battle fought here. If the PCs have time to investigate the library's shelves, expand on the information in **Room 14** by multiplying the gp value of the books tenfold. Just don't let the players know they're not going to have a chance to leave with any of them.

At an opportune moment during the rapid spread of the blaze, give the PCs an opportunity to grab a book or two off the shelves. When assessed, those volumes will turn out to be spellcasters workbooks (total value 500 gp for their notes and arcane lore) that contain any new spells you might wish to add to your game.

All the other treasure that can be claimed here is what Derishar carries. If he is killed before the fire spreads, it can be stripped from him when the PCs take the key they need. If the PCs flee, Derishar's body can be carried out through the *teleport* mechanism.

**Round 6:** Burned timbers fall from the ceiling with greater frequency. All characters have a 20% chance of being struck by a falling piece of wood each round. If so, they take 1d4 points of fire damage and 1d4 points of bludgeoning damage (Reflex DC 18 negates).

**Round 7:** Flames begin to creep up the walls. All characters standing adjacent to any wall at the end of their turn take 1d4 points of fire damage from the burning wall.

**Round 8:** Burned timbers fall from the ceiling with yet greater frequency. All characters have a 30% chance of being struck by a falling piece of wood each round, dealing 1d4 points of fire damage and 1d4 points of bludgeoning damage (Reflex DC 18 negates).

**Round 9:** Random explosion occurs as described under Round 3, except the damage is 4d6 points and a Reflex DC 20 halves the damage.

**Round 10:** The room becomes so hot that all characters within it risk being burned. Each round, all characters within the room automatically take 1d4 points of fire damage.

### Development

If the PCs flee the burning library before Derishar has fallen, he uses *dimension door* to move to the north shed (**Room 28**) in pursuit. Knowing the party will have returned to one of the four courtyards, he casts *darkvision* and attempts to track them down. Whether the PCs have claimed Derishar's key or not, the barghest holds back until either he or the party falls (see **Endgame: Barghest Assault**, below).

## Endgame: Barghest Assault (EL 9)

The barghests spent much of the adventure shadowing the PCs while steering clear of a direct encounter. Having explored the entrance (**Room 4**), they understand obtaining all four keys is likely the only way out of Ceranir. However, having deduced that the keys are also the party's goal, they have been more than content to allow the PCs to face off against the citadel's dangers (particularly the shadows in **Room 40**).

Regardless of what route the PCs take through the citadel, the barghest comes after them once the last three keys have been found. The fourth key is already in the possession of the advanced barghest the party met in the masters' wing (**Barghest at Large**, page 14), and the climax of the adventure determines which group makes its way to freedom.

### ADVANCED BARGHEST

CR 4

LE Medium outsider (evil, extraplanar, lawful, shapechanger)  
**Init** +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent; Listen +13, Spot +13  
**Languages** Goblin, Infernal, Worg

**AC** 20, touch 12, flat-footed 18 (+2 Dex, +8 natural)

**hp** 52 (8 HD); **DR** 5/magic

**Fort** +8, **Ref** +8, **Will** +8

**Spd** 30 ft. (6 squares)

**Melee** bite +12 (1d6+4) and 2 claws +7 (1d4+2)

**Base Atk** +8; **Grp** +11

**Atk Options** Combat Reflexes

**Special Actions** change shape, feed

**Spell-like Abilities (CL 8th):**

At will—*blink*, *levitate*, *misdirection* (DC 14), *rage* (DC 15)

1/day—*charm monster* (DC 16), *crushing despair* (DC 16), *dimension door*

**Abilities** Str 19, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 14

**SQ** pass without trace (wolf form)

**Feats** Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Track

**Skills** Bluff +13, Diplomacy +6, Disguise +2 (+4 acting), Hide +13 (+17 in wolf form), Intimidate +15, Jump +15, Listen +13, Move Silently +12, Search +13, Sense Motive +13, Spot +13, Survival +13 (+15 following tracks)

**Possessions** none

## - The Citadel of Ceranir -

BARGHESTS (4)	CR 4
LE Medium outsider (evil, extraplanar, lawful, shapchanger) <b>Init</b> +6; <b>Senses</b> darkvision 60 ft., scent; Listen +13, Spot +13 <b>Languages</b> Goblin, Infernal, Worg	
AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16 (+2 Dex, +6 natural) <b>hp</b> 33 (6 HD); <b>DR</b> 5/magic <b>Fort</b> +8, <b>Ref</b> +8, <b>Will</b> +8	
<b>Spd</b> 30 ft. (6 squares) <b>Melee</b> bite +9 (1d6+3) and 2 claws +4 (1d4+1) <b>Base Atk</b> +6; <b>Grp</b> +9 <b>Atk Options</b> Combat Reflexes <b>Special Actions</b> change shape, feed <b>Spell-like Abilities (CL 6th):</b> At will— <i>blink</i> , <i>levitate</i> , <i>misdirection</i> (DC 14), <i>rage</i> (DC 15) 1/day— <i>charm monster</i> (DC 16), <i>crushing despair</i> (DC 16), <i>dimension door</i>	
<b>Abilities</b> Str 17, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 14 <b>SQ</b> pass without trace (wolf form) <b>Feats</b> Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Track <b>Skills</b> Bluff +11, Diplomacy +6, Disguise +2 (+4 acting), Hide +11 (+15 in wolf form), Intimidate +13, Jump +12, Listen +11, Move Silently +10, Search +11, Sense Motive +11, Spot +11, Survival +11 (+13 following tracks) <b>Possessions</b> none	
<b>Change Shape (Su)</b> A barghest can assume the shape of a goblin or a wolf as a standard action. In goblin form, a barghest cannot use its natural weapons but can wield weapons and wear armor. In wolf form, a barghest loses its claw attacks but retains its bite attack.	
<b>Feed (Su)</b> When a barghest slays a humanoid opponent, it can feed on the corpse, devouring both flesh and life force, as a full-round action. Feeding destroys the victim's body and prevents any form of <i>raising</i> or <i>resurrection</i> that requires part of the corpse. There is a 50% chance that a <i>wish</i> , <i>miracle</i> , or <i>true resurrection</i> spell can restore a devoured victim to life. Check once for each destroyed creature. If the check fails, the creature cannot be brought back to life by mortal magic.	

A barghest advances in Hit Dice by consuming corpses in this fashion. For every three suitable corpses a barghest devours, it gains 1 Hit Die, and its Strength, Constitution, and natural armor increase by +1. Its attack bonus and saves improve as normal for an outsider of its Hit Dice, and it gains skill points, feats, and ability score improvements normally.

The barghest only advances by consuming the corpses of creatures whose Hit Dice or levels are equal to or greater than its own current total. A barghest that reaches 9 Hit Dice through feeding immediately becomes a greater barghest (see *MM*) upon completion of the act.

### Tactics

True to their nature, the barghests choose ambush over frontal assault. They use their *blink* ability to slip through walls (especially in the garden), disorienting the party and working to split them up. Except for the barghest that fed on Master Aleon, all can still use their *dimension door* ability, but they typically reserve it only to flee otherwise certain death.



The barghests use *crushing despair* and *charm monster* to disrupt any coordinated offense once melee has begun (except for the leader, who continues to *rage*). They have accepted that without the keys, they will never leave this place, and fight to the death. They kill without reservation, but cannot feed on any characters of 5 HD or less.

This final confrontation can run into any part of the citadel, limited only by any still-guarded doors and the imagination of you and the players. The barghests might try to hold the party to the garden, using its walls to their advantage. If the party managed to come through this area without confronting the phasm, the barghests might seek to drive them toward the south shed.

Likewise, the PCs could recognize the barghests' fear of the shadows and drive them toward the bestiary, or retreat to the tower of learning in the hope of convincing the wymling dragons to come to their aid. An enterprising PC with access to *resist energy* might even make use of the *teleport* alcoves, waiting until one or more barghests are on the flagstone before turning the key and transporting all to the inferno in the hidden library. (If the party shows this kind of resourcefulness, assume the *teleport* mechanism affects the *blinking* barghests.)

In the end, make the final battle as wide-ranging and memorable as possible—a suitable ending to what has hopefully been an exciting adventure.

## Barghest Buffet

The two masters the advanced barghest has slain represent two of the three humanoids it needs to feed on in order to advance again. Though it's unlikely to happen so long as 6th-level characters play this adventure, the creature becomes a greater barghest should it feed on one more humanoid creature of 8 HD or more.

If you believe the party is making such short work of the defenses of Citadel Ceranir and feel they need an additional challenge, have Master Derishar flee from the hidden library (after doing as much damage to the party as possible, of course) in order to be attacked and killed by the advanced barghest. Once the barghest feeds on Derishar, it advances to a greater barghest of 9 HD and continue to *rage* while it fights.

**Greater Barghest:** hp 67, see *MM* for statistics. (Adjust hit points if this creature has faced the PCs in combat.)



# Appendix I: New Monsters

The following new monsters are introduced in *Escape from Ceranir*.

## Arakai

*This gaunt and leathery humanoid has a feral cast to its features, its lidless eyes burning with a faint light. The rags it wears are the same dusty grey as its spiky skin, and its clawed fingers clutch a wand.*

ARAKAI	CR 4
Usually N Small monstrous humanoid <b>Init</b> +2; <b>Senses</b> darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0 <b>Languages</b> Draconic	
AC 15, touch 13, flat-footed 13 (+1 size, +2 Dex, +2 natural) <b>hp</b> 19 (3 HD) <b>SR</b> 15 <b>Fort</b> +3, <b>Ref</b> +5, <b>Will</b> +5	
<b>Spd</b> 20 ft. (4 squares), climb 20 ft. <b>Melee</b> 2 claws +4 (1d4) <b>Space</b> 5 ft.; <b>Reach</b> 5 ft. <b>Base Atk</b> +3; <b>Grp</b> –1 <b>Special Actions</b> wand draw, wand mastery <b>Combat Gear</b> 2 minor wands (determine randomly) <b>Spell-like Abilities (CL 5th):</b> At will— <i>detect magic</i> 1/week— <i>dispel magic, identify</i>	
<b>Abilities</b> Str 11, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 14 <b>SQ</b> absorb dweomer, innate trigger <b>Feats</b> Iron Will, Weapon Focus (ray) <b>Skills</b> Climb +16, Listen +0, Spot +0, Use Magic Device +16 <b>Possessions</b> combat gear plus 1d20 gp	
<b>Wand Draw (Ex)</b> An arakai can draw or stow a single wand as a free action.	
<b>Wand Mastery (Ex)</b> An arakai can make two wand attacks as a standard action, either activating two wands in either hand or expending two charges to make a double attack from a single wand. If making a double attack from a single wand, both attacks must target the same creature or area.	
<b>Absorb Dweomer (Su)</b> Though their spell-like abilities are innate, the arakai must fuel those abilities by absorbing the power imbued in a magic item as a full-round action. Every 1,000 gp of an item's price can fuel an arakai's spell-like abilities for one week, but an arakai can only safely hold a number of weeks' worth of dweomer equal to his Charisma score. Each additional week's worth of dweomer absorbed deals 1d6 points of damage and 1 point of Intelligence damage. Magic items become normal items when their dweomer is absorbed. An item's dweomer cannot be partially absorbed. The item gets a DC 15 Will save against the effect, but an arakai can make new attempts to absorb an item's dweomer indefinitely. An arakai cannot attempt to absorb the dweomer of a magic item attended by another creature.	
<b>Innate Trigger (Ex)</b> An arakai can automatically cast any spell of 3rd level or lower from a spell trigger item, as if it has that spell on a class list and knows any necessary command words. (An arakai can still make a Use Magic Device check to cast more powerful spells from a spell trigger item.)	
<b>Skills</b> An arakai has a +8 racial bonus on Use Magic Device checks. An arakai has a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks and can always choose to take 10 on a Climb check, even if rushed or threatened. An arakai may substitute its Dexterity modifier for its Strength modifier when making Climb checks.	

An arakai is a strange subterranean creature with an unusual penchant for using magic wands.

### Tactics

Wands are the arakai's preferred weapon, but they favor clandestine assault over direct confrontation. A single arakai snipes or strikes from a distance; a band overwhelms foes with nonstop magical attacks even as they stay out of melee range, most commonly by climbing walls or ceilings. An arakai needs both hands to climb, but can draw a single wand as a free action, make a double wand attack as a standard action, then stow the wand as a free action and be ready to move again next round.

Though their stone-sharpened claws deal reasonable damage, arakai undertake melee combat only as a last resort. An arakai without magic at his disposal does almost anything to avoid conflict.

### Organization

Arakai gather into small bands of three to twelve members to benefit from greater numbers. Occasionally, a single arakai might be encountered, but in these instances, his fellows are likely close by or the arakai is a more powerful member of his kind.

### Ecology

Arakai inhabit the depths of the Underdark, haunting the ruins of lost civilizations, ruined dark elf enclaves, and anywhere there is a sizeable body of magical devices. They subsist on fungi and small creeping things, finding centipedes especially to their liking. Since they require little sustenance, and are relatively peaceful beings, they fit in well with their environments.

### Environment

The arakai are almost always found underground. While attracted to large caches of magical items, they are fearful of the more powerful denizens of the depths. Thus, they keep to the periphery of the most violent societies of the Underdark.

### Physical Characteristics

Arakai are perfectly adapted to a subterranean existence. Their skin has the coarseness of hardened leather, with barbed callus spikes on fingers, toes, elbows and knees that enable them to climb.

### Society

Nomadic hunter-gatherers living in remote underground caverns, the arakai have long forgotten their own origins and history. Within their small family groups, the arakai have none of the social infrastructure normally associated with a spellcasting tradition. However, a long history of plundering the magic of lost underground vaults and the remains of unlucky adventurers has given the arakai a racial predisposition towards the Use Magic Device skill, as well as the ability to automatically use many spell trigger magic items as if they were spellcasters of an appropriate class.

### Alignment

Left to their own devices, Arakai bands tend to neutrality, looking out for their own interests. However, if threatened, caught up in conflicts between other factions, or tempted by the lure of powerful magic, they fight with a ferocity not quickly forgotten. Arakai generally back down from any foe of clearly superior strength, but when seriously threatened, they fight to the death.

### Treasure

Arakai are attracted to powerful magic, and thus much of their wealth is invested in magic items. They prefer wands to other sorts of items, and have double items for their Challenge Rating. In every case, these items include two wands and one of which always contains a 3rd level spell. In addition to their magical treasures, they keep one-tenth the normal coins.

**Typical Treasure:** A typical arakai might have a *wand of fireball* (CL 5, 4 charges), *wand of web* (4 charges), and 10 gp.

## - Appendices -

### Advanced Arakai

Arakai advance by character class. Their favored class is rogue, but a great many advance as sorcerers.

Level Adjustment: +2

## Rot Monster

*This squat creature is the size of a dog. Its articulated joints and long, feathery antennae suggest some enormous insect, but its thick hide and armored tail give it an almost saurian appearance.*

ROT MONSTER	CR 2
N Small aberration <b>Init</b> +3; <b>Senses</b> darkvision 60 ft., scent; Listen +6, Spot +6 <b>Languages</b> None	
AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 15 (+1 size, +3 Dex, +4 natural) <b>hp</b> 16 (3 HD) <b>Fort</b> +2, <b>Ref</b> +4, <b>Will</b> +4	
<b>Spd</b> 40 ft. (8 squares) <b>Melee</b> antennae touch +3 (rot) <b>Space</b> 5 ft.; <b>Reach</b> 5 ft. <b>Base Atk</b> +2; <b>Grp</b> -2 <b>Special Actions</b> rot	
<b>Abilities</b> Str 10, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 8 <b>Feats</b> Alertness, Track <b>Skills</b> Listen +6, Spot +6 <b>Rot (Ex)</b> A rot monster that makes a successful touch attack with its antennae causes nonliving plant matter to decompose into a fine, dry compost. The touch can destroy up to a 2-foot cube of wood, leaves, plant-based cloth (cotton and linen, for example, but not wool, leather, or silk), and so on. Magic items are not affected by this ability (see <b>Advancement</b> ). A nonmagical wooden weapon that deals damage to a rot monster decomposes immediately. Stone and metal weapons are not affected, but their wooden handles and hafts are.	

A rot monster is a curious creature that corrodes and destroys plant matter with a touch of its antennae.

### Tactics

A rot monster targets the softest materials available, choosing leaves, straw, and cloth over wood. These creatures are much less predatory than are their rust monster cousins, and unless a rot monster is starving, it typically flees if attacked.

### Organization

Rot monsters lack much in the way of defenses, being mostly harmless creatures—unless, of course, you are made of wood! As a result, they prefer to gather in small packs of two to five along with a 5-HD pack leader. They are rarely encountered alone.

### Ecology

A rot monster can scent any plant-based materials (leaves, wood, food, plant-based fabrics, and so on) from up to 90 feet away. When it detects such materials, it races toward the source and attempt to strike with its antennae. Once rotted, the materials are consumed.

### Environment

Rot monsters live anywhere there is an ample food supply, preferring forests, jungles, and the like. They live in small caves or rocky shelters to hide from predators when not foraging for food. One can always identify areas infested with these creatures by the mounds of gritty black ash—the leavings of their meals.

### Physical Characteristics

Rot monsters resemble smaller versions of rust monsters, but their coloring is a greenish brown. This similarity often leads to misunderstanding for a party that encounters these creatures, for instead of rusting metal, a rot monster's prehensile antennae cause nonliving plant matter to rot away. A typical rot monster measures 3 feet long and 2 feet high, and weighs 50 pounds.

### Society

Rot monsters have animal intelligence and behave as such despite their curious physiologies. They gather in small family units provided they have ample food supplies. When they have exhausted an area of plant matter, they pick up and move to a new area. Rot monsters mate for life and mothers and fathers share the responsibility of raising the young.

### Alignment

Rot monsters are not sophisticated enough to be concerned with matters of morality and ethics and are therefore always neutral.

### Advancement

Most rot monsters have 3 or 4 Hit Dice and are Small creatures. Males that live 20 years or longer have 5 Hit Dice and grow to Medium size. These larger rot monsters are able to affect magic items with their rot ability. Affected items must succeed on a DC 17 Reflex save or rot away. The save DC is Constitution-based and includes a +4 racial bonus.

# Appendix II: Pre-generated Characters

This appendix includes a number of pre-generated characters for use with this adventure. If the players already have characters, you can use these as extra NPCs or as replacement characters for fallen PCs.

ANGRIST THE CLEAVER	CR 6
Male dwarf fighter 6 LG Medium humanoid <b>Init</b> +1; <b>Senses</b> darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +2, Spot +2 <b>Languages</b> Common, Dwarven	
AC 23, touch 11, flat-footed 22; Dodge, +4 against giants (+1 Dex, +9 armor, +3 shield) <b>hp</b> 55 (6 HD) <b>Resist</b> stability (+4 against bull rush or trip) <b>Fort</b> +9 (+11 against poison), <b>Ref</b> +4, <b>Will</b> +4 (+6 against spells and spell-like effects)	
<b>Spd</b> 20 ft. in plate mail (4 squares), base speed 20 ft. <b>Melee</b> +1 dwarven waraxe +11/+6 (1d10+6/×3)	

<b>Ranged</b> mwk composite longbow (Strength +3) +8/+3 (1d8+4/×3) <b>Base Atk</b> +6; <b>Grp</b> +9 <b>Atk Options</b> Cleave, Great Cleave, Power Attack, +1 on attacks against orcs and goblinoids <b>Combat Gear</b> alchemists fire, oil of bless weapon, 2 potions of cure moderate wounds, potion of shield of faith +3, 2 tanglefoot bags, thunderstone	
<b>Abilities</b> Str 16, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 6 <b>SQ</b> stonemasonry <b>Feats</b> Cleave <sup>B</sup> , Dodge <sup>B</sup> , Endurance, Great Cleave, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (dwarven waraxe) <sup>B</sup> , Weapon Specialization (dwarven waraxe) <sup>B</sup> <b>Skills</b> Appraise +0 (+2 metal or stone), Climb -1, Craft +0 (+2 metal or stone), Intimidate +6, Jump +1, Listen +2, Search +0 (+2 stonework), Spot +2 <b>Possessions</b> combat gear plus +1 full plate of light fortification, +1 heavy steel shield, +1 dwarven waraxe, masterwork composite longbow (Strength +3), cloak of resistance +1, antitoxin, backpack, waterskin, three day's trail rations, bedroll, sack, flint and steel, quiver with 20 +1 arrows, 71 gp	



## Divine Might

**Prerequisites:** Str 13, turn or rebuke undead ability, Power Attack.

**Benefit:** As a free action, spend one of your turn or rebuke undead attempts to add your Charisma bonus to your weapon damage for 1 full round.

### DIERDRA

CR 6

Female human cleric 6  
NG Medium humanoid  
**Init** -1; **Senses** Listen +3, Spot +3  
**Languages** Common

**AC** 23, touch 10, flat-footed 23 (-1 Dex, +9 armor, +3 shield, +1 deflection, +1 natural)

**hp** 36 (6 HD)

**Fort** +6, **Ref** +1, **Will** +8

**Spd** 20 ft. in full plate (4 squares), base speed 30 ft.

**Melee** +1 heavy mace +7 (1d8+3)

**Ranged** mwk light crossbow +4 (1d8/19-20)

**Base Atk** +4; **Grp** +6

**Atk Options** Divine Might, Power Attack

**Special Actions** feat of strength +1, greater turning 1/day, turn undead 8/day (+3, 2d6+7, 6th)

**Combat Gear** 2 flasks of holy water, potion of bear's endurance, potion of bull's strength, potion of cure moderate wounds, potion of lesser restoration, 2 scrolls of divine favor, 2 scrolls of lesser restoration, 2 scrolls of sanctuary, scroll of sound burst, 5 sunrods, wand of cure light wounds (50 charges)

**Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 6th):**

3rd—dispel magic, empowered inflict light wounds (melee touch +6, DC 17), magic vestment<sup>D</sup>, prayer

2nd—aid, align weapon, bull's strength, heat metal (DC 15)<sup>D</sup>, hold person

1st—bless, divine favor, enlarge person<sup>D</sup>, magic weapon, shield of faith

0—detect magic, guidance, light, resistance, virtue

D: Domain spell. Deity: God of the Sun. Domains: Strength, Sun

**Abilities** Str 14, Dex 8, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 13

**SQ** strong aura of good

**Feats** Divine Might<sup>B</sup>, Empower Spell, Extra Turning, Power Attack

**Skills** Concentration +6, Diplomacy +6, Knowledge (history) +3, Knowledge (religion) +8, Listen +3, Spellcraft +6, Spot +3

**Possessions** +1 full plate, +1 heavy steel shield, +1 heavy mace, masterwork light crossbow, ring of protection +1, amulet of natural armor +1, backpack, waterskin, one day's trail rations, bedroll, sack, flint and steel, case with 10 bolts, silver holy symbol of the sun god, three torches, 5 sp

### ELOTHIN

CR 6

Male elf wizard 6  
CG Medium humanoid  
**Init** +3; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +5, Spot +5  
**Languages** Common, Draconic, Elven, Sylvan, empathic link

**AC** 15, touch 13, flat-footed 12 (+3 Dex, +1 armor, +1 natural)

**hp** 16 (6 HD)

**Immune** sleep

**Fort** +2, **Ref** +5, **Will** +6 (+8 against enchantments)

**Spd** 30 ft. (6 squares)

**Melee** mwk longsword +4 (1d8/19-20)

**Ranged** mwk shortbow +7 (1d6/×3) or

**Ranged** mwk shortbow with +1 arrows +7 (1d6+1/×3)

**Base Atk** +3; **Grp** +3

**Combat Gear** 4 potions of cure light wounds, 2 scrolls of acid arrow, scroll of expeditious retreat, 2 scrolls of fireball (DC 16), scroll of mirror image, scroll of obscuring mist, scroll of see invisibility, staff of fire (10 charges), wand of magic missiles (CL 5th, 50 charges)

**Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 6th; 1d20+8 to overcome SR):**

3rd—dispel magic, fireball (DC 17), haste+1

2nd—cat's grace, false life, invisibility, scorching ray (ranged touch +5)

1st—burning hands (DC 13), mage armor, shocking grasp (touch +2), true strike

0—acid splash (ranged touch +5), detect magic, light, ray of frost (ranged touch +5)

**Abilities** Str 10, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 16, Wis 13, Cha 8

**SQ** able to notice secret or concealed doors, familiar, share spells

**Feats** Alertness<sup>B</sup> (if familiar is within 5 ft.), Craft Wand<sup>B</sup>, Scribe Scroll<sup>B</sup>, Skill Focus (Spellcraft), Spell Focus (evocation), Spell Penetration

**Skills** Concentration +9, Decipher Script +12, Knowledge (arcana) +12, Knowledge (the planes) +6, Listen +5, Search +5, Spellcraft +14, Spot +5 (+8 in bright light)

**Possessions** combat gear plus masterwork longsword, masterwork shortbow with 20 arrows and 10 +1 arrows, amulet of natural armor +1, bracers of armor +1, backpack, waterskin, one day's trail rations, bedroll, sack, flint and steel, 10 candles, map case, three pages of parchment, ink, inkpen, spell component pouch, spellbook, quiver, 40 gp, 5 sp

**Spellbook** all prepared plus all cantrips, 1st—expeditious retreat, magic missile, obscuring mist, shield, sleep; 2nd—blur, mirror image; 3rd—heroism, invisibility sphere

### STRIFE

CR —

Male hawk

N Tiny magical beast (augmented animal)

**Init** +3; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +4, Spot +16

**Languages** empathic link, speak with master

**AC** 20, touch 15, flat-footed 17 (+2 size, +3 Dex, +5 natural)

**hp** 8 (6 HD)

**Resist** improved evasion

**Fort** +2, **Ref** +5, **Will** +6

**Spd** 10 ft. (2 squares), fly 60 ft. (average)

**Melee** talons +7 (1d4-2)

**Space** 2-1/2 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

**Base Atk** +2; **Grp** -8

**Atk Options** deliver touch spells

**Abilities** Str 6, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 8, Wis 14, Cha 6

**Feats** Alertness, Weapon Finesse<sup>B</sup>

**Skills** Concentration +9, Listen +4, Spot +16

### FERRA

CR 6

Female halfling rogue 6

N Small humanoid

**Init** +4; **Senses** Listen +9, Spot +7

**Languages** Common, Elven, Halfling

**AC** 23, touch 16, flat-footed 23; Dodge, Mobility, uncanny dodge (+1 size, +4 Dex, +4 armor, +2 shield, +1 deflection, +1 natural)

**hp** 29 (6 HD)

**Resist** evasion

**Fort** +4, **Ref** +10, **Will** +2 (+3 against fear)

**Spd** 20 ft. (4 squares)

**Melee** +1 short sword +7 (1d4+2/19-20)

**Ranged** +1 light crossbow +10 (1d6+1/19-20) or

**Base Atk** +4; **Grp** +1

**Atk Options** Combat Reflexes, sneak attack +3d6

**Combat Gear** elixir of hiding, elixir of sneaking, potion of blur, 2 potions of cure moderate wounds, potion of jump, tanglefoot bag

**Abilities** Str 12, Dex 18, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 10

**SQ** trap sense +2, trapfinding

**Feats** Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Mobility

**Skills** Balance +8, Bluff +6, Climb +4, Diplomacy +2, Disguise +0 (+2 acting), Disable Device +11, Hide +17, Intimidate +2, Jump +7, Listen +9, Move Silently +15, Open Lock +11, Perform (dance) +5, Search +8, Spot +7, Tumble +14

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**Possessions** mithral shirt, +1 buckler, +1 short sword, +1 light crossbow, 3 +1 bolts, ring of protection +1, amulet of natural armor +1, universal solvent, backpack, waterskin, one day's trail rations, bedroll, sack, flint and steel, masterwork thieves' tools, hooded lantern, three pints of oil, case with 10 bolts, 29 gp

### GERALD

CR 6

Male gnome bard 6  
CG Small humanoid  
**Init** +6; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +6, Spot +0  
**Languages** Common, Draconic, Dwarven, Gnome

AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 15; Dodge, +4 against giants (+1 size, +2 Dex, +4 armor)  
**hp** 35 (6 HD)  
**Fort** +3, **Ref** +6, **Will** +3 (+5 against illusions)

**Spd** 20 ft. (4 squares)  
**Melee** mwk longsword +5 (1d6–1/19–20)  
**Ranged** +1 light crossbow +8 (1d6+1/19–20)  
**Base Atk** +4; **Grp** –1  
**Atk Options** +1 on attacks against kobolds and goblinoids  
**Special Actions** bardic music 6/day (suggestion [DC 17], inspire competence, inspire courage +1, fascinate 2 targets, countersong)  
**Combat Gear** 2 flasks of acid, 4 flasks of alchemist fire, antitoxin, 2 potions of cure light wounds, 3 tanglefoot bags, thunderstone, wand of color spray (13 charges)  
**Bard Spells Known (CL 5th):**  
2nd (3/day)—blur, daze monster (DC 17), eagle's splendor  
1st (4/day)—cause fear (DC 15), cure light wounds, lesser confusion (DC 16), sleep (DC 16)  
0 (3/day)—daze (DC 15), mage hand, message, open/close, read magic, resistance  
**Spell-like Abilities (CL 1st):**  
1/day—dancing lights, ghost sound (DC 14), prestidigitation, speak with animals (burrowing mammal, 1 minute)

**Abilities** Str 8, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 8, Cha 18  
**SQ** bardic knowledge +8  
**Feats** Dodge, Improved Initiative, Spell Focus (enchantment)  
**Skills** Bluff +10, Concentration +8, Craft (alchemy) +7, Decipher Script +9, Diplomacy +14, Disguise +4 (+6 acting), Escape Artist +4, Gather Information +11, Hide +9, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (local) +7, Listen +6, Perform (wind instruments) +14, Sense Motive +5, Spellcraft +8, Spot +0, Use Magic Device +8 (+10 scrolls)  
**Possessions** combat gear plus +1 studded leather, masterwork longsword, +1 light crossbow, cloak of Charisma +2, feather token (bird, fan), gloves of Dexterity +2, backpack, waterskin, one day's trail rations, bedroll, sack, masterwork lute, flint and steel, three torches, case with 10 bolts, flute, spell component pouch, 5 sunrods, 15 tindertwigs

### HELEN

CR 6

Female half-elf ranger 3/rogue 3  
NG Medium humanoid (elf)  
**Init** +3; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +8, Spot +8  
**Languages** Common, Elven

AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 14; Two-Weapon Defense (+3 Dex, +4 armor)  
**hp** 27 (6 HD)  
Immune sleep  
**Resist** evasion  
**Fort** +3, **Ref** +9, **Will** +3 (+5 against enchantments)

**Spd** 30 ft. (6 squares)  
**Melee** +1 longsword +7 (1d8+2/19–20) or  
**Melee** +1 longsword +5 (1d8+2/19–20) and  
**Melee** +1 kukri +5 (1d4+1/18–20)  
**Ranged** +1 composite longbow (Strength+1) +9 (1d8+2/×3) or  
**Ranged** +1 composite longbow (Strength+1) +7/+7 (1d8+2/×3) w/ Rapid Shot  
**Base Atk** +5; **Grp** +6

**Atk Options** Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot, favored enemy outsiders (evil) +2, sneak attack +2d6

**Combat Gear** elixir of hiding, potion of cat's grace, 3 potions of cure light wounds

**Abilities** Str 13, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 12  
**SQ** trap sense +1, trapfinding, wild empathy +4 (+0 against magical beasts)  
**Feats** Endurance<sup>B</sup>, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot<sup>B</sup>, Track<sup>B</sup>, Two-Weapon Defense, Two-Weapon Fighting  
**Skills** Balance +5, Bluff +2, Diplomacy +5, Gather Information +5, Hide +11, Jump +9, Knowledge (nature) +5, Listen +8, Move Silently +10, Perform (oratory) +4, Search +4, Spot +8, Survival +9 (+11 aboveground natural environments), Tumble +11  
**Possessions** combat gear plus +1 studded leather, +1 longsword, +1 kukri, +1 composite longbow (Strength +1), amulet of health +2, backpack, waterskin, one day's trail rations, bedroll, sack, flint and steel, three torches, quiver with 20 arrows

### JOLINE

CR 6

Female human avatar\* 2/paladin 4  
\*See Green Ronin's *Avatar's Handbook* for details.  
LG Medium humanoid  
**Init** +1; **Senses** Listen +1, Spot +1  
**Aura** courage (10 ft.)  
**Languages** Common

AC 23, touch 11, flat-footed 22 (+1 Dex, +9 armor, +3 armor)  
**hp** 46 (6 HD)  
**Immune** disease, fear  
**Fort** +12, **Ref** +5, **Will** +8

**Spd** 20 ft. in full plate (4 squares), base speed 30 ft.  
**Melee** mwk longspear +8 (1d8+3/×3)  
**Melee** mwk morningstar +8 (1d8+2)  
**Ranged** mwk light crossbow +7 (1d8/19–20)  
**Base Atk** +5; **Grp** +7  
**Atk Options** Cleave, Power Attack, smite evil 1/day (+3 attack, +3 damage)  
**Special Actions** lay on hands (12), turn undead 6/day (+5, 2d6+4, 1st)  
**Combat Gear** potion of cure moderate wounds  
**Avatar Spells Known (CL 2nd):**  
1st (4/day)—command (DC 14), cure light wounds, shield of faith, summon monster I  
0 (6/day)—cure minor wounds, detect magic, flare (DC 13), guidance, resistance, virtue  
**Paladin Spells Prepared (CL 1st):**  
1st—divine favor  
**Spell-Like Abilities (CL 1st):**  
At will—detect evil

**Abilities** Str 15, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 16  
**SQ** moderate aura of law and good  
**Feats** Augment Summoning, Cleave, Power Attack, Spell Focus (conjunction)<sup>B</sup>  
**Skills** Concentration +5, Diplomacy +4, Heal +4, Knowledge (religion) +4, Knowledge (the planes) +4, Listen +1, Ride +5, Sense Motive +3, Spellcraft +4, Spot +1, Survival +1 (+3 on other planes)  
**Possessions** +1 full plate, +1 heavy steel shield, masterwork longspear, masterwork morningstar, masterwork light crossbow, gauntlets of ogre power, periapt of Wisdom +2, backpack, waterskin, one day's trail rations, bedroll, sack, flint and steel, case with 10 bolts, wooden holy symbol, three torches

### ZED

CR 6

Male human thanemage\* 4/barbarian 2  
\*See the *Advanced Player's Manual* for details.  
N Medium humanoid  
**Init** +1; **Senses** Listen +4, Spot +1  
**Languages** Common, Draconic, Elven

AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 16; uncanny dodge (+1 Dex, +4 armor, +1 shield)  
**hp** 46 (6 HD)



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### Resist evasion

Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +5

Spd 40 ft. (8 squares)

Melee +1 battleaxe +10/+5 (1d8+4/×3)

Melee mwk morningstar +10/+5 (1d8+3)

Ranged mwk composite longbow (Strength +2) +8/+3 (1d8+2/×3)

Base Atk +6; Grp +8

Atk Options Cleave, Combat Expertise, Power Attack, rage 1/day, spirit strike 2/day

Combat Gear *potion of bull's strength*, 2 *potions of cure light wounds*, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of jump*, *potion of shield of faith* +2, 2 *tanglefoot bags*

Thanemage Spells Prepared (CL 4th):

1st—*true strike*

0—*daze* (DC 12), *detect magic*, *ray of frost* (ranged touch +6)

Abilities Str 16, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 15, Wis 10, Cha 8

Feats Cleave, Combat Casting, Combat Expertise<sup>B</sup>, Great Cleave, Power Attack<sup>B</sup>

Skills Concentration +9, Intimidate +4, Jump +14, Knowledge (arcana) +9, Listen +6, Ride +10, Spellcraft +11, Spot +1, Survival +6, Swim +9

Possessions combat gear plus +1 *studded leather*, masterwork light steel shield, +1 *battleaxe*, masterwork morningstar, masterwork composite longbow (Strength +2), *cloak of resistance* +1, *gauntlets of ogre power*, backpack, waterskin, one day's trail rations, bedroll, sack, flint and steel, quiver with 20 arrows, wooden holy symbol, three torches

Spellbook all prepared plus *acid splash*, *dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *disrupt undead*, *flare*, *ghost sound*, *read magic*, *resistance*, *touch of fatigue*; 1st—*magic missile*

Rage (Ex) When raging, Zed uses the following statistics for 7 rounds:

AC 14, touch 9, flat-footed 13

hp 58

Fort +9, Will +7

Melee +1 battleaxe +12/+7 (1d8+6/×3)

Melee mwk morningstar +12/+7 (1d8+5)

Grp +11

Abilities Str 20, Con 18

Skills Jump +16, Swim +11

**Spiritstrike (Su)** As a free action, Zed can charge a weapon or his hand with supernatural energy. As part of an attack or full attack, he may deliver the spiritstrike with a melee touch attack or in conjunction with a melee weapon, though not as part of a touch spell. This attack can strike incorporeal creatures without the usual miss chance and ignore damage reduction as though the weapon were magical. On a successful touch, the spiritstrike deals 1d6 points of damage. If used with a weapon, the weapon deals an additional 1d6 points of damage. As well, if he confirms a critical hit with a weapon augmented by spiritstrike, he doesn't multiply the spiritstrike damage, but instead deals an additional 1d10 points of damage with his morningstar and 2d10 with his battleaxe.

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