

Toltis Academy

A Living Tal'Dorei module for 5th Level Characters

Optimized for 5 5th Level Characters

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Play tested and perfected by the Critter Community

You are empowered to make modifications to the module so long as the story progresses as outlined. However you may not alter the items given out nor add to them. Please refer to the online FAQ for guidelines on what may be changed and to what degree. Players should log this session as follows on their log sheet: • Living Tal'Dorei 1-7 Toltis Academy

Adventure Background

For reasons unknown to the general populace the Arcana Pansophical has opened its membership doors and brought in new talent for the first time since before the Conclave attacks. One of the newer members goes by the name Merrick and has established a starter dungeon in Emon. Somewhere between training tool and attraction it has captured the attention of many an adventurer. Its purpose is to identify groups who work together and can be of value in the fight against Vecna.

The city of Emon has been in disarray as of late, and some of the local guilds have had some unfortunate events befall them. In preparation for the coming festival, the guilds are doing some tightening up of their ranks and affairs. New members are being welcomed into the fold of these factions, seemingly in preparation for any new happenings to come. With the Arms of Emon and its military busy with regulating laws and keeping the streets safe, adventurers are a priceless commodity, used by these factions to quell the other problems that have been growing. Now the Arcana Pansophical, recruiting new talent, and has opened its doors and placed a call for adventurers to both join. Those who pass the test will be offered a retainer for well paying jobs that they have in their agenda. But they will only accept those who prove worth the coin... do you have what it takes?

Adventure Overview

The adventure is broken up into 4 parts.

- **Part 1: Academic Affairs** (30 minutes): Arriving at the common place to find work, Gilmores Glorious Goods, the adventurers learn of new work in the city. They then go to meet with Merrick, a young looking spellcaster and professor at the Academy. He will inform the party of what is expected and give general overview of the situation they have been called to.
- **Part 2 Testy, Aren't We?** (90 minutes): The party is sent into the "Training dungeon" used by the Pansophical fountain new recruits. Often a Ranking Pansophical agent takes a few fledgling recruits in with them to show them the ropes or give pointers and advice. Too busy for such things, and with the need for self-sufficient adventuring parties, they are sending parties in to gauge their usefulness and adaptability.
- **Part 3: Fast Food Delivery** (90 minutes): Something unexpected happens and leaves the party in a place more dangerous than previously expected. The party will have to adapt to a new dungeon unfolding before them and survive to escape and send word back to the Pansophical.
- **Part 4: All Apologies** (30 minutes): The conclusion of events. Meeting with Merrick and explaining

everything that transpired. The Pansophical will be very interested in what has occurred and will want as much information as possible to work with.

Adventure Hook

Anyone around Emon would have seen postings in taverns and on lamp posts calling to “any adventurer who is skilled at magic or has an interest in dungeon delving.” Of course any adventurer is welcome if they have the gumption to show up. Directions that lead to the Academy are posted on the parchment along with the call. There is a test to be taken to prove one’s worth, and those who pass are to be paid a sizable retainer, should they accept the deal.

Gilmore's Glorious Goods: A Friend in Need

Give the players time to access Gilmore’s: *15 Minutes* –This gives Players a window both before and after the game to use his services at the table. If the players have the Story Award: A Friend in Need, they are able to purchase the following items at Gilmore’s Glorious Goods before setting off on their adventure. They can also shop upon returning but only once per mod not both.

- First Level Spell Scroll - 100gp (non healing only)
 - If a character has the **Acolyte Background** they may acquire 1 free first level non-healing spell scroll.
- Second Level Spell Scroll – 250gp (non healing only)
- Third Level Spell Scroll – 500gp (non healing only)
- Scroll of Cure Wounds level 2 250gp (2d8+3) *Limit one per party*
- Scroll of Faerie Fire 100gp *Limit one per party*
- Scroll of Catnap 500gp *Limit one per party*
- Potion of Healing – 50gp *Limit one per Player*
- Potion of Greater Healing – 500gp *Limit one per Player*
- Potion of Climbing – 250gp
- Potion of Frost Giant Strength – 1000gp *Limit one per Player*

Part 1
Academic Affairs
(30 minutes)

The players find themselves once again at the popular locale of Gilmore's Glorious Goods, in search of work. Sherri, the half-elven lady who works for Gilmore is stocking goods and cleaning up as the party enters. The shelves seem a bit more empty today than last the players recall. Sherri is moving about quickly to replace merchandise where the empty spaces are on the shelves. She turns seeing people enter and flashes a warm, welcoming smile.

“Wonderful to see you all again! We’ve had some interesting opportunities for work pop up and I was thinking of finding you for a job or two. The Pansophical is looking for adventuring groups. There’s some kind of entry exam, but you have proven able, and it sounds like something you can handle.”

She directs the players toward a notice that has been posted at the front of the store. There are a few other people clustered around the spot where the parchment has been hung.

When they get closer, they can see the paper is a very elegantly written writ.

The Academy of Magic formally calls to any who seek to help Emon reach new heights and have a desire to protect our home!

We seek adventurous souls who are skilled in the magical arts or otherwise endowed with an aptitude for dungeon delving.

Please seek Merrick at the Academy for more details.
Gold will be paid to those qualified and interested, once the proper assessment has been completed and all contracts agreed upon.

Directions to the Academy are included at the bottom of the writ.

Talking Points for Sherri

- Rumor is Merrick is originally from Westruun and was an adventurer for some years.
- A few parties have gotten together and made an attempt. So far none have passed.
- Only one semester has graduated but there is some talent at the academy.
- It was considered an attraction or event at first. As people started to fail it though it became a challenge to be defeated.

A short walk through city leads the party to the finely crafted front doors of the Arcane Academy.

The building sits in the middle of the Central District. Carvings of mystical creatures and arcane sigils adorn the doors here in incredible detail. The brickwork of the building looks seamless, as expected of those likely built by magic with great intellect and precision. Above the archways an alabaster carved sphinx looms above an open book.

A glowing sigil is clearly displayed on the door, with words written in a dozen languages surrounding it. It reads: *“Place hand here for entry.”*

Whoever touches the sigil feels a tiny pulse from the door, and then all can hear the deep tolling of a bell within the walls. After a few moments, a human man in dark grey robes answers the door through a hole that slowly appears in the door big enough for a conversation and to see one another through.

Lachlan is a lanky Wizard of middle age and middle talent. Dressed in unflattering robes his tone and demeanor echo the bland sentiment. Rather than wasting time with questions he simply states, “You must be here to answer the call. Come this way.”

With a gesture the doors open slowly allowing the party entry into the main hall.

As they are led into the building, they see it is indeed a very academic setting. The entry hall looks like a converted library and prominently displays several oil paintings. They appear to be portraits, and by their similar garb it can be surmised that they are well-known faces of the Academy staff. Beneath each portrait are placards with brief descriptions of whom the painting displays.

As he shuffles along, the man in grey robes speaks up, though his voice remains rather monotone as he says, “I am the wizard Lachlan; charged with the grounds keeping, which also includes things like this.”

He pauses, muttering under his breath, “Twenty years of wizarding and *I'M* the tour guide...”

RP Notes for Lachlan

- With a flourish he points out a main hall and varying classrooms flanking it.
- We cover each school of Wizardry with its own classroom and curriculum.
- Magic has many forms you see, and being a place of knowledge and wisdom, we cover all subjects here.
- There are special courses and tracks for people who get magic in other ways. Namely Warlocks, Bards and Sorcerers

He gestures right and left as the party traverses the winding hall, passing portrait after portrait. Lachlan points out a few of the more known wizards, sorcerers, and what he refers to as “dark arts practitioners.” If anyone in the party questions what he means by that last category, he grudgingly says, we cover all subjects here... under watchful eye, of course.”

Each player may make a **Perception** check, DC13. On a success they notice that one of the portraits Lachlan skips over explaining is that of a slug floating on a mage hand, tiny robes similar to the uniforms of the humanoid alumni draped around him. On the placard below they are able to catch the line, “Henry, first in his class—” as they pass by.

The paintings get noticeably newer as they proceed further into the Academy. The group passes by one painting with the name Merrick beneath it on the placard. He appears to be a young looking man, possibly mid 20’s or early 30’s, with short dark hair and neatly trimmed goatee. He is depicted in a suit of half plate armor, a shield standing before him with his hands folded atop it. His armor and shield both emblazoned with a Phoenix rising from fire and ash.

Anyone with a **Passive Perception** of 13 or higher is able to catch the dates on the placard before the group is pressed on. The dates shown place him at about 80 years of age currently, with the painting having been done about 60 years ago.

Lachlan leads them into in a hallway full of doors. Each door appears as expertly crafted as the front door, but different scenes are depicted upon each. One features two open hands with a key, seemingly shedding some kind of aura or magic within it’s open palms adorns the first. Another second seems to be depictions of fire, ice, and lightning. The third door is open, and it is through this door that their guide leads them.

Half office, half classroom, the interior room is full of trinkets and knickknacks stands laid out before the party as Lachlan steps aside and motions a hand in, and in the same monotone voice devoid of excitement he states, "May I introduce Merrick, academic advisor to all new students, head of the training program, and martial defense instructor..."

Within the room, seated at his desk polishing one of his prized trinkets, is Merrick. Looking exactly as he does in the painting, minus his armor which is on a dummy behind him in the corner of the room. Behind the dummy is a banner that reads 'A Firehawk never forgets.' Dressed in fine clothing of deep red and gold, the youthful gentleman perks up as he hears Lachlan announce him. A smile creeps onto his face as he looks the group over.

Talking Points for Merrick

- “Ah, finally... a group of people who look to be worth the gold we are offering. As you now know, I am Merrick. Welcome to the Academy! It is my duty to welcome all new members to the faction as well as new students to the academy.”
 - If any of the party are Pansophical members make sure to personally welcome them to the fold, and he makes sure to be extra polite and inviting to any obvious magic user not currently on their roster.
- “The coming times would appear to be busy moving forward in the city, and we are expanding as such. Our esteemed leadership in their great wisdom has proposed that we place some of the adventurers here on retainer, as you may or may not have heard.”
- “Brave souls are in short supply and demand for those of talent is great. We do, however, want to know that you are worth the gold before we pay up.”
- “As such a test is in order. We happen to have such a test we use for new members, but you will be going in unsupervised. Prove you can handle our basics and you get paid... assuming you accept our terms. We are offering 1500 gold per person to be on retainer for the day we Gate you somewhere.” If asked he does not know where.

A single person may attempt a **Persuade**, DC18, to raise the retainer price to 2000 each. The party may

not use the Guidance cantrip nor the Help action. If successful Merrick says he sure hopes you prove worth it in the test. On a failure he chuckles warmly as he says not going to happen.

Anyone proficient in **History** may roll it at a DC13. On a success they have heard of the “test dungeon.” It has a reputation of being run for a handful of new groups. On a 15 or better they know that it’s really to see how people handle common dungeon scenarios like puzzles, traps, and common dungeon tricks. Alternatively anyone that is a member of the Pansophical, or Sage background knows this without rolling.

After the party accepts Merrick’s offer, he says:

“You have till tomorrow morning to prepare for the test. Buy any supplies you think you may need, prepare the spells you think you will use. Come as prepared as you can... impressive adventurers may be offered more money than others. Fair warning though, so far no one has been up to the challenge. Meet me here at the main hall in the morning, they will be expecting you.”

If the party has no more questions, they are free to leave and purchase any equipment they deem necessary for their attempt at the training dungeon. Any basic equipment from the PHB is available, including the one per person healing potion that is available from Gilmore's This does not allow an extra use of the *Friend in Need* story award. Let them prepare a new list of spells if needed and then proceed to part 2.

Part 2
Testy, Aren't We?
(90 minutes)

The next morning Merrick is awaiting the party in the main hall when the party arrives and he does not waste any time in ushering the characters inside the Academy. He leads the way to his classroom and turns to explain the exam once everyone is inside the room.

RP & Talking Points for Merrick

- “The exam is in four parts, logic, survival, combat, and investigation. I will be watching here and evaluating the outcomes.”
- He gestures to a crystal ball in the back of the room, beside which is a teleportation circle. “This circle will take you to the beginning of the course, once there you may begin at any time.”
- He will not answer any specific questions about the exam if asked, simply responding with general versions of “Well, that’s what we are going to test.” or “You are going to have to find out.”
- He gifts each party member one potion of healing before the test begins.

Once the party steps onto the circle and the magic words are uttered, a flash of light is followed by a momentary feeling of moving. In an instance the characters find themselves in the first room. It is a plain 10’ by 10’ room. The room is empty except for a single door and another crystal ball that is attached to a wall by a small metal hand gripping it and holding it out. It cannot be removed without destroying the orb.

A magic mouth spell with Merrick’s voice appears. “Enter when ready for stage one.”

Stage One: Puzzles and Logic

Within the next room there are three small platforms—west, center, and east—upon each a sort of puzzle. A small set of stairs leads onto each platform. Once again the magic mouth spell that carries Merrick’s voice can be heard. “Go in any order you wish, you may begin when ready.”

The western puzzle looks to be a set of blocks set into a table. The blocks can be moved, but not removed from the table. There are 4 different colors of blocks and there are different shapes of block. *(Refer to the picture provided in Puzzle Handout A)*

Upon the central platform sits a clockwork construct, whose shape is that of a winged lion with the head of a humanoid female. It speaks as soon as someone ascends the stairs to the platform. If players solve fast, use both riddles. If they are unsure, time them a little bit and then have Merrick give them the hints through his spell.

- Riddle 1
 - “I can be cracked I can be played. I can be told, I can be made. What am I?”
 - Answer: A joke
 - Hint: Merrick-” I find it funny you can't think of the answer”
- Riddle 2:
 - “The faster you run the harder I am to catch, what am I?”
 - Answer: Your breath
 - Hint: Merrick-” It’s not something you chase”

The eastern puzzle is a setup of a dragonchess game, with the pieces already in place, as if there have already been moves made in this game. The player is expected to finish the game. This requires a series of checks. Characters with Proficiency in a Gaming Set can look and make proficient **Intelligence** checks at DC14. Anyone who is proficient in **Arcana** or **Investigation** may roll it as well. Failing all that, others can roll straight **Intelligence** checks at DC 15.

A player may use **Guidance** for a single roll and the help action for another. Each person may attempt rolls and receive aid but the overall goal is to make either 3 successes or failures, whichever comes first.

When all three puzzles have been completed or Merrick has provided answers a 10ft door opens leading to another room.

Stage Two: Traps

Through the door from the puzzle area is a 50' long hallway. Ceilings are 10' high in this section. In the center of the hallway, midway between the door the party enters through and the far door at the opposite end is a pit. The pit is 10' deep and 10' long. A **Reverse Gravity** spell sits over the pit. The space above the pit opens up and goes up for 10ft. There are broken pencils and some parchment littering the top of the pit.

After spending about a minute watching at least one of them fall up into the actual pit Merrick lets them attempt to overcome the obstacle before speaking up.

Any party member may attempt an Acrobatics or Athletics DC15 for the initial check. This helps them figure out how the spell effect works and how to work around it. This check may be made with help and Guidance, but it must be called before any dice are rolled. On a success they realize they need to jump down into the pit and use the reverse gravity to slingshot into the other side, clearing the radius of the spell. On a failure they miss the other side and fall straight up into the pit. They take 4 damage and are prone on the ceiling of the pit.

RP Points for Merrick

- The pit might have a pit behind it.
- it might not be a pit at all.
- Sometimes the true threat will be something you cannot see.
- You're lucky that ceiling didn't have spikes on it. Always be willing to test a pit before you jump.

A Locked door at end of hall has arrow trap, arrows are blunted and won't do lethal damage.

Merrick will comment after the trap springs to trust no door and perhaps take precaution or have the most armored or prepared person open the door.

Perception/investigate DC 15 find

Disable DC 15 To hit +6

Damage 1d6+2 (5) anyone within 5' of door, if someone is "helping" at the door they are targeted as well.

Mimic chest- The mimic will only bite the person who touches it, and then will immediately revert back to chest form. This isn't to be a combat, more of a trap and an example of things to look out for.

Merrick will comment that things aren't always what they appear to be, and most often greed and haste are the death of an adventurer.

Mimic to hit +5

Damage 1d8+3 (7)

Stage Three: Combat

The next room is quite simple in design in comparison to the first two. It is a 60' square, with no furnishings or major features save one pedestal with a few buttons on it and a door on each wall. The doors appear plain, with no knobs, handles, or keyholes.

The buttons on the pedestal are labeled 1 through 4.

Merrick's voice echoes through the room once again. "This room will test what general knowledge of combat and monsters you have. You may press any button to begin."

Upon pressing a button one of the doors will slide open revealing what is behind it.*

*All the "monsters" are just effigies created to represent the monster it is supposed to be. These "combats" should be kept short, as learning exercises. They are only meant to be educational tools. Victory conditions apply. Try to keep it all to 2-3 rounds max before cutting combat to assess and give critiques. Treat all monsters as Armor Class 13, with speed 30 ft, and attacks do 1d6+2 bludgeon for non-lethal. The dragon however is Armor Class 15 and may once use a 30' Cone of Sleep, DC13 vs poison. It won't leave its pile of coins. The Gelatinous Cube is Armor Class 6 and will eject an engulfed creature in 1 round. Its speed is 15ft.

Merrick offers congratulatory statements to all people who help to fulfil the conditions for victory.

Door 1:

- A large sized wooden carved Troll sits behind the door. It has large eyes and is made of wood dyed slightly green. It is well carved and has the word TROLL painted across its chest. The wood is carved a bit rough and bumpy on purpose to simulate a trolls look.
- People using acid or fire against it fulfils the victory condition.

Door 2

- Another large wooden effigy sits behind this door. It has large carved eyes that seemed to spin in its head. The eyes are painted with spiral patterns, the rest of the wood is also dyed a tinted green color. Its massive upper body dwarfs the smaller bottom half. It looks like a large bug upright on two legs with pincers on either side of the mouth. Across the chest of this creature reads UMBER HULK.
- People averting their eyes and fighting for a full round fulfils the victory condition.

Door 3

- It slides away to reveal a large cube of what seems to be water held together by some magical means. Inside the cube floats some carved wooden bones a wooden sign. The entire party rolls Perception, DC12 or better. On a success they see a sign that reads GELATINOUS CUBE.
- Everyone hears Merrick speak of the fact that many oozes will ruin your weapons for attacking them or the armor you're wearing if the ooze hits it. Also be careful using certain weapons as some oozes will simply split into two pieces when cut.
- Kiting the monster and not standing close will fulfill the victory condition.

Door 4

- The fourth door will only open once the three other doors have been opened. If pressed early Merrick explains they save the best for last, if the party insists, he will unlock the 4th door.
- Inside a carefully created scene awaits the party. A throne room looks to be set up, small wooden effigies spread through the room look like small dragon people, and at the far end a large clockwork dragon sits before you, atop a pile of gold painted lead coins. A door behind the dragon is shut and seems to be the way out to the next section.
- Merrick's voice picks up yet again and the party hears, "Not every encounter you face will be one might can prevail over. Or maybe it can... Let's see how you would handle this scenario if you came across it in a dungeon."
- This is meant to be an open RP encounter, victory conditions would include convincing the dragon to leave you be, offering it a trade, or fighting their way out.

Stage Four: Exploration

Through the next door, the party enters a large cavernous room. Merrick's voice explains that that not all explorations in the real world will be cut and dry, and that the pool of water could have had far more dangers lurking inside. A true dungeon won't be so forgiving.

At the opposite end of the room you can see a locked gate, beyond which you surmise is the exit from the testing chambers. However, a keen eye notices that there is also a lock twenty feet below the waterline of a pool in the center of the room. The water in the pool seems to be moving in a whirling pattern, alerting the water is likely rough and would require skilled swimming.

There is only one key in the room, and it resides on a shelf—100 feet up a wall. Which lock leads to the exit—and how are you going to get to it?

Allow the party time to figure out how they want to proceed. This is mostly skills based as a challenge, such as **Athletics** or **Acrobatics** DC15. In addition, this is somewhat easily solved via tier appropriate magic. This exercise simply serves as a stepping off point to give advice for critical thinking of the use of skills and spells.

Climb and **Swim** checks can be made with a DC15. Failure of either will result in 1d6 (4) damage from taking a fall or hitting a wall within the pool being swept up by water. Any fall from the wall is slowed by a Featherfall spell... until the final few feet, where the person will fall and take the small fall damage as a penalty. 3 consecutive swim check fails will eject a swimmer from the pool.

The key is to the lock submerged in the pool. If they try to use it upon the locked gate, it will not fit. Once the lock in the pool is turned the gate opens automatically, leading to the exit room. Attempting to pick the lock in the water is done at disadvantage if the character does not have a swim speed.

Exit Room

This plain empty room simply has a glyph on the far wall, surrounded by words much like the entry to the Academy. Written in a dozen or so languages, so it can be read by a majority of races, is the word EXIT around the glyph.

Touching the glyph will teleport the people within the room. The last thing the party hears before the glyph activates when someone touches it, is Merrick hurriedly trying to get words out "No, wait, don't—"

But the flash comes too quickly...

Part 3

Fast Food Delivery

(90 Minutes)

Room One: Finger Lickin' Good

A flash of light after touching the EXIT glyph leaves the party in the dark. (Unless someone has a light or darkvision) They find themselves in a rough carved room about thirty feet wide, and twenty feet deep, obviously underground.

The walls have a wet, dank look to them and are cold to the touch. Some barrels and boxes are the only other things immediately noticed. An iron gate separates the party from the only exit out of this room. The smell of death lingers in their air. Without warning something in the darkness shifts and rises to its feet.

Before the party realizes, there are figures around them coming from behind barrels and dark corners.

Those who can see or have darkvision will have an easier time spotting the ghouls/ghasts who are not quiet once spotting a meal.

At this point the entire party rolls **Perception**, DC13. If they can see or have darkvision, this roll is made with advantage. On a success they do not have the surprised condition. On a failure they do. If a person cannot be surprised for a (**Thieves Tools**) check, or a DC16 **Athletics** check to break. Breaking the lock will be very loud.

Room 2: Have It Your Way

This room is also dark, with no torches or anything burning for light save what the party has on them. More barrels and chests are strewn about this room, marking it as a sort of storage area of some sort. The only exit from this room is a ladder rising about 30 feet to an opening in the ceiling.

There are four chests that contain mixed coins and small gems to the amount of 2000 gold. None of the gems are diamonds.

The barrels contain food rations and two barrels of what smells like ale. A fifth chest is empty, except for the poison gas that is let out on whomever opens it. DC13 Constitution saving throw when it is inhaled, on a failure the target is poisoned. While poisoned this way the target is also blind. On a success they shrug off the effect and nothing happens.

Room 3: Think Outside the Bun

Climbing up into this room, the players find a trapdoor that leads into a room lit by candlelight with a single door leading out of this room. It appears to be a makeshift bedroom with a shoddy desk and some books. In the corner they see a cage. Within the cage squats a tiny Sprite, with an even tinier fiddle.

Adjusting the Encounter

Very Weak:

4 Ghouls

Weak:

1 Ghast and 2 Ghouls

Average:

2 Ghasts and 2 Ghouls

Strong:

3 Ghasts and 1 Ghoul

Very Strong

4 Ghasts

“PSSST!” Comes the tiny voice “Hey, down here! Lemme outta this thing will ya?”

The Sprite's name is Orlan and he has been prisoner here for some time now. He can relate to the party that there is a wizard down here who fancies undead company, but keeps him around as entertainment, since he's such a talented player of the fiddle.

The cage is locked, DC15 Thieves Tools to pick. A player can also attempt a Strength ability check or an Athletics skill check at DC20 to force open the cage door. Orlan knows the wizard, whom he refers to as “Ol' dusty,” has the key on his person. “There's more of those things lurking around too, watch yourself. And if you get to the entrance, those statues aren't statues.”

If freed, Orlan will stay close to the party, but he's not a talented fighter and will hide when combat starts.

On the desk is a spellbook containing the spells prepared by the mage (plus sleep, chromatic orb, identify, and ray of sickness), and a scroll beside that he was planning to copy of the spell Fly. On the desk also sits a vial of red liquid that is a Potion of Greater Healing.

Room 4: I'm Lovin' It

Behind the door is another larger room, 30 feet by 50 feet long. There's an acrid smell hanging in the air.

A pale man looks up and ceases his chanting when he seems the party enter into his room. “Interesting,” he states quite matter-of-factly. “I'd have thought my pets would tear you apart. Oh well.” With a hand wave shadows appear from the walls and floor and begin to take shape. “Now the only thing left is to do my duty and be rid of you.”

A large circle drawn into the ground with an exotic instrument is here, the obvious ritual space the mage is working in. (Any arcane caster can tell it is a necromantic symbol and the mage is performing some kind of ritual currently)

Adjusting the Encounter

Very Weak:

Necromage and 1 Shadow

Weak:

Necromage and 2 Shadows

Average:

Necromage and 3 Shadows

Strong:

Necromage and 4 Shadows

Very Strong

Necromage and 5 Shadows

He draws a dark wand and readies himself to take on the party. The wand is a Wand of Fear.

Upon defeat, the wizard tells the party, regardless if it's his dying breath or just crazy ranting at them if captured, “You can savor today's victory all you like. In the end you won't stop what's coming!”

The exit to this room is locked, but the key is on the Necromage in his robes. Any search will uncover it.

Room 5: Slicing Up Freshness

The entry into this underground hideout is flanked by statues of small stone creatures with wings and claws in various

poses. They sit atop small columns that form a line right to the exit staircase. This room is twenty feet to the ceiling and twenty feet wide by 30 feet long.

Moving through the room, a few of the statues come to life and attack the party. This leads to the combat shown here.

When the combat ends the ground rumbles and the party needs to get out quickly. It's easy enough for them to get out and they have enough time.

Adjusting the Encounter

Very Weak:

1 Gargoyle

Weak:

2 Gargoyles

Average:

3 Gargoyles

Strong/Very Strong:

4 Gargoyles

Part 4

All Apologies

(30 minutes)

When the party exits the dungeon, they can see the city of Emon in the distance to the east. Assuming Orlan made it out with the party, he wishes them well and explains he has been gone some time and he would like to get back to his home and family. He tells the party they made a lifelong friend in him and not to be a stranger. His home isn't far from Emon, and he hopes they will all meet again.

The party wasn't taken far away from the city, but it will still be a short walk home along the Silvercut Roadway. Upon arrival the city guards ask you the normal questions and once the party explains the situation (or not) the guards allow you passage once they assess who the party is and why they are coming back into the city.

The Academy is busy upon their return, and seeing the players' faces the commotion seems to halt. Some clanking is heard coming closer, and around a corner comes Merrick himself. He is dressed in his armor and was preparing to go out in search of the party himself feeling it his duty as the man who sent them in.

He lets out a sigh of relief seeing everyone back and questions things appropriately if anyone is missing or brought back dead. He offers them a sincere apology.

Talking & RP Points for Merrick

- I am so relieved you are have come back.
- I was just gathering our people to search you out... our scrying of you failed, and my only option was to try to replicate what happened to you.
- I was preparing to go into our training dungeon after you. That final glyph was tampered with, and I intend to find out by whom and why.
- Of course, it goes without saying that you've earned the retainer, and something else as an apology from me. It was given to me a while ago for heroism, but I believe it will serve you all better."

He invites them into his office just around the corner from the main hall, and produces a brooch from what seems to be an polished obsidian box. He holds it out to the party. It has the symbol of a fiery hawk rising from the grasslands depicted upon it. It functions as a Brooch of Shielding, and the wearer can understand and speak draconic while its attuned.

“Now, if you would please, I would like to know every detail you can give me about what happened when you vanished. This is a very serious offense and I personally hold a stake in this. I have never faltered at my job, and this wrongs me greatly. Your information today earns you an ally in me, and I will speak for any of you who wish to join our ranks as well. Tell me all you can recall...”

Allow the players to give the information and allow for any more RP the players wish with Merrick or questions about the faction itself. Merrick is very apologetic and any insight reveals he deeply takes this seriously and is truthful in his words always when speaking with them.

Experience Summary

Social XP: 2,500(for good rp with Merrick, the dragon exam section socially, or freeing Orlan)

Combat XP: 2,500 (For fighting the necromage or for passing more than half of the combat tests)

Exploration XP: 2,500 (For completing the obstacles and Puzzles and not having Merrick intervene. Hints are ok.)

Honor

1 Honor

Off Hours

10 off hours

Treasure

- 1500-2000 gp per player retainer from Merrick. This is a onetime payment for future services rendered. The player who accepts this gold takes the story award: Owes a Favor.
- 2000 gp in random coins and gems. No diamonds.
- Spell scroll of Fly at 3rd level
- Greater healing potion (4d4+4)

Magic Items

Merrick's Brooch of Shielding

- This brooch is well polished and depicts a hawk rising from fire set on the backdrop of grasslands. The wearer once attuned can speak and understand draconic if they did not previously.

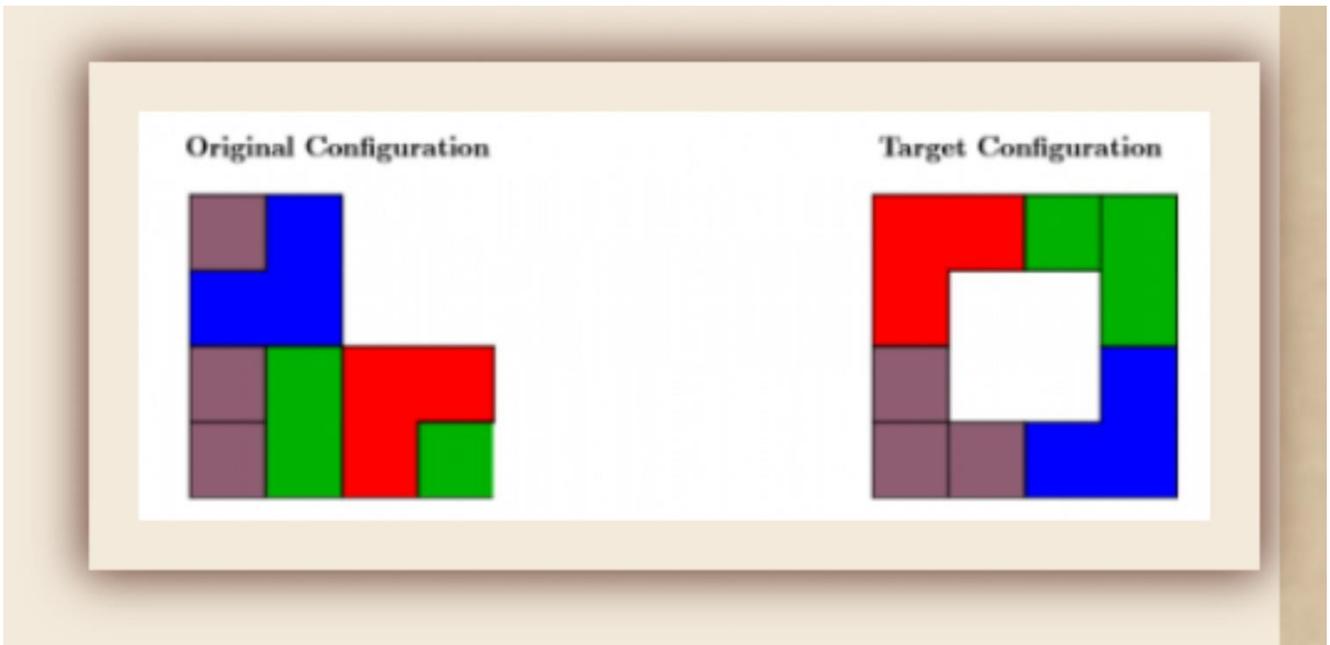
Wand of Fear

- This dark wood wand is tipped with a shrunken head, its face twisted forever in the agony of its death. The wand has 7 charges for the following properties. It regains 1d6+1 charges daily at dawn. If you expend the wand's last charge, roll a d20. On a 1 the wand crumbles and is destroyed.
- **COMMAND.** While holding the wand you can expend 1 charge to command another creature to flee or grovel, as with the command spell (save DC 15).
- **CONE OF FEAR.** While holding the wand, you can use an action to expend 2 charges, causing the wand's tip to emit a 60-foot cone of amber light. Each creature in the cone must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened of you for 1 minute. While it is frightened in this way, a creature must spend its turns trying to move as far away from you as it can, and it can willingly move to a space within 30 feet of you. It also can't take reactions. For its action, it can use only the Dash action or try to escape from an effect that prevents it from moving. If it has nowhere it can move, the creature can use the Dodge action. At the end of each of its turns, a creature can repeat the saving throw, ending the effect on itself on a success.

GM Rewards

XP 3750, GP 2400, 10 Off Hours, 1 Honor

Puzzle Handout



Enemy Stat Blocks

Ghoul

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 22

speed 30'

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

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, poisoned

senses darkvision 60ft., passive perception 10

Actions

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +2 to hit, reach 5ft., one creature

Hit: 9(2d6+2) piercing damage.

Claws. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5ft., one target.

Hit: 7 (2d4+2) slashing damage. If the target is a creature other than an elf or undead, it must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed for one minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on a success.

Ghast

medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 13

Hit points 36

speed 30 ft.

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

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, poisoned

senses darkvision 60ft., passive perception 10

Stench. Any creature that starts its turn within 5 feet of the ghast must succeed on a DC 10

Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the start of its next turn. On a successful saving throw, the creature is immune to the ghast's Stench for 24 hours. Turning Defiance. The ghast and any ghouls within 30 feet of it have advantage on saving throws against effects that turn undead

Turn Defiance. The ghast and any ghouls within 30ft of it have advantage on saving throws against effects that turn undead.

Actions

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +3 To hit, reach 5ft., one creature.

Hit: 12 (2d8+3) piercing damage

Claws. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5ft., one target.

Hit: 10 (2d6+3) slashing damage. If the target is a creature other than an elf or undead, it must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed for one minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on a success.

Necromage

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 12 (15 with mage armor)

Hit Points 40 (9d8)

Speed 30ft.

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

Saving Throws Int +6, Wis +4

Skills Arcana +6, History +6

Senses passive Perception 11

Spellcasting. The necromage is a 8th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). The necromage has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): Chill touch, light, mage hand, prestidigitation

1st level (4 slots): detect magic, mage armor, magic missile, shield

2nd level (3 slots): misty step, ray of enfeeblement

3rd level (3 slots): counterspell, dispel magic, animate dead

4th level (2 slots): greater invisibility, Evards black tentacles

ACTIONS

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

Shadow

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 16 (3d8 + 3)

Speed 40ft.

Darkvision 60' Passive Perception 10

STR 6 (-2) DEX 14 (+2) CON 13 (+1) INT 6 (-2) WIS 10 (+0) CHA 8 (-1)

Skills Stealth +4 (+6 in dim light or darkness)

Damage Vulnerabilities radiant

Damage Resistances acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from non magical weapons

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained

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

Shadow Stealth. While in dim light or darkness, the shadow can take the Hide action as a bonus action.

Sunlight Weakness. While in sunlight, the shadow has disadvantage on attack rolls, ability checks, and saving throws.

ACTIONS Strength Drain. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 9 (2d6 + 2) necrotic damage, and the target's Strength score is reduced by 1d4. The target dies if this reduces its Strength to 0. Otherwise, the reduction lasts until the target finishes a short or long rest. If a non-evil humanoid dies from this attack, a new shadow rises from the corpse 1d4 hours later.

Gargoyle

Medium elemental, chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 52 (7d8 + 21)

Speed 30 ft., fly 60ft.

STR 15 (+2) DEX 11 (+0) CON 16 (+3) INT 6 (-2) WIS 11 (+0) CHA 7 (-2)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from non magical weapons that aren't adamantine

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, petrified, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 10

False Appearance. While the gargoyle remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from an inanimate statue.

Actions

Multiattack. The gargoyle makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its claws.

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

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

We value the feedback of our players and GM's. Your input is intended to have an impact on the story moving forward. While this part is not required, we do encourage it. Send responses to contact@livingtaldorei.com

Questionnaire

1. Did players react favorably to Merrick's request yes/no?
2. Did players do well during their testing yes/no?
3. Did the character's treat Orlan well and rescue him yes/no?
4. Did the players keep the necromage alive yes/no?
5. Did any cool stories happen? This is your chance to tell us something awesome your group did. Please keep it to less than 500 words.