

INTRODUCTION

A D&D Encounters™ adventure for four to six 1st-level characters

Welcome to an exciting official D&D play program called D&D Encounters. This adventure is a mini-campaign "season" designed to be played in one-encounter sessions once per week at your local Wizards Play Network location. Each Wednesday, players will earn both in-game rewards for their characters (such as treasure) and accumulate Renown Points towards special program-exclusive D&D Encounters Cards that can be used in this and future seasons of D&D Encounters.

PREPARING FOR PLAY

In order to DM this adventure, everything you need should be provided in the D&D Encounters play kit - this adventure, the poster maps of all the encounter areas (inside the adventure), and a sheet of tokens to use for monsters, adventurers, and battlefield effects. Preparing the adventure for play is easy, simply follow the steps below.

Before you DM your first session:

- Read over the Introduction, Adventure Synopsis, Adventure Summary, and Resting sections.
- Read **Session 1: Escape the Storm** under the **Chapter 1: An Obsidian Rain** section, and read **Encounter 1-1: Salvage in the Storm**. (Alternatively, if you are starting at some other point in the adventure, read the appropriate sections and what's come before.)

At the table of your first session:

- Ensure each player has a character to play. Players use one of the characters provided in the play kit. At the end of Chapter 1, all players' characters reach 2nd level. At the end of Chapter 2, all players' characters reach 3rd level.
- Ensure each player has a D&D Encounters Play Tracker. This sheet can be found in the play kit, and allows the players to track their character's treasure, experience, and Renown Points earned for each play session.
- Get a session tracking sheet from the organizer. Record all the players' DCI/RPGA numbers on it, along with your DCI/RPGA number. If you or any of the players don't have a DCI/RPGA number, ask the organizer for a membership card.

During the session:

- Remember, each session is one encounter in length. Just DM the encounter assigned for that week's session. A typical play time for one encounter is about 90 minutes - 2 hours.
- Remember to make decisions and adjudications that enhance the fun of the game when possible. As the DM, you can make some adjustments to the adventure (see the sidebar) to facilitate the fun of the players.

At the end of your first session:

- Have the adventurers take a short rest if they want, but remind them to track their daily abilities. Healing surges used, daily powers expended, and other daily resources do not refresh in-between each session; only at the end of each chapter. Make sure your players track this information on their D&D Encounters Play Tracker.
- Turn in your session tracking sheet to the organizer. Make sure you've recorded all the DCI/RPGA numbers on it, along with your names and the play date.
- Report Renown Point totals earned for each player to the organizer. The organizer will fill out the Renown Point Tracker for the location, and will determine if any players have earned a D&D Encounters Card.
- Give out rewards to the players. This includes treasure and possibly D&D Encounters Cards (the organizer will tell you if any players have earned this reward). Make sure the players write down their rewards on their D&D Encounters Play Tracker.
- Collect your reward! You should receive a special reward for providing your time as a DM to make the event happen. Your organizer will have more details on your reward.

At the end of the final session of this chapter:

- The adventurers take an extended rest, regaining all of their healing surges, hit points, and daily powers. In addition, their action point totals reset to 1.
- The adventurers level up to 2nd level. They apply the changes listed on their character card to their character in preparation for the beginning of Chapter 2.

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Unlike some seasons of D&D Encounters, this special DARK SUN preview season doesn't award experience points in the standard method. Instead, characters level up at the end of each chapter.

XP Awards: The XP awards listed throughout this adventure are for reference only, as characters level up automatically at the end of each chapter.

Milestones: For every 2 encounters a character completes without taking an extended rest (offered at the end of a chapter), the character reaches a milestone, gaining an action point and possibly gaining use of another magic item daily power.

THE EVER-CHANGING GROUP

Since you can never tell who's going to show up to a D&D Encounters session from week to week, you might wind up with a different group of players. Some players might be starting in "mid-stream," some may have missed a session or two, and others may have played all the sessions with a different DM. That's OK. Catch up new players with a brief summary of what's come before, and make sure that returning players have marked off resources they spent (healing surges, daily powers, etc.) since their last extended rest.

Majority Rules: If some element of the adventure plot hinges on the adventurers making a decision in a previous session, and the group is different during the current session, simply find out how the decision went down from the players. Go with the majority, and if it's an even split, side with the most positive result.

TREASURE

As the characters progress through the mini-campaign, they will have the opportunity to gain treasure in the form of gold pieces, valuables, and magic items. At the end of each session, determine if the players earned any treasure. Use the following rules to divide up treasure amongst the characters.

Gold and Valuables: If the adventurers earn it, each character gets a share as noted on the table below. All valuables like gems and jewelry are converted to gold pieces (gp). Note that the amounts have already been divided up per character, do not modify the amounts based on the size of the group playing.

Magic Items: During the adventure, there are a number of magic items that may be discovered. They are listed on the table below. Give out magic items according to the sidebar Awarding Magic Items.

AWARDING MAGIC ITEMS

When the characters find a permanent magic item, most of the time, the group will decide who gets to keep what. However, if the players can't agree who gets what, use the following system to award magic items in the priority listed.

1. Characters without permanent magic items.
2. Character with the lowest-level permanent magic item.

If there's more than one character that doesn't have a magic item, or two characters tie for the lowest-level magic item, have those players decide who gets it. If they still can't decide, have each roll a d20; high roll gets the item. A player that wants to "opt out" of a pick can do so. You can also do the same with the potions of healing and the ritual book if the players can't decide who gets them (but don't count these items as permanent magic items).

Any one character may not have more than 3 permanent magic items at the conclusion of this season.

RENOWN POINTS

One of the great rewards for playing in a D&D Encounters season is the accumulation of Renown Points (RPs), which are given out for accomplishments made by players during (and sometimes in-between) sessions. These Renown Points are tracked at the Wizards Play Network location, and reaching certain thresholds garners the player a tangible reward - a D&D Encounters Card!

These cards can be used by players during the current D&D Encounters season, subsequent seasons, or possibly both. Each card has all the information on how it works printed right on the card itself.

As the DM, it's your task to award Renown Points at the end of a session of play, just like you would award experience and treasure. Unlike experience and treasure though, you'll need to report the Renown Point totals earned for each player to the organizer at the conclusion of the session when you turn in your session tracking sheet. The organizer will then tell you if any players have qualified for a card.

The Renown accomplishments, their frequency (how often they can be awarded during the current season), and the point values of each are listed below.

TREASURE FOUND

Name of Treasure	Where Found
2 healing fruits	Encounter 1-1
3 survival days	Encounter 1-3
+1 acidic obsidian spear	Encounter 1-3
+1 amulet of psychic interference	Encounter 1-3
Mystery of the hidden veil	Encounter 1-4
2 stonemeal biscuits	Encounter 1-4
4 healing fruit	Encounter 1-4
2 healing fruit	Encounter 1-5
+1 orb of debilitating languor	Encounter 1-5

RENOWN POINT AWARDS

Accomplishment	Frequency	RPs
Complete an encounter	1/Session	3
Hit a milestone	2/Chapter	2
Moment of greatness	1/Chapter	2
Revive a dying adventurer ally	1/Season	1
Hit for 15+ damage against 1 enemy	1/Season	1
Kill 3 minions in 1 attack	1/Season	1
Take 50 enemy damage in 1 session	1/Season	1
Use the reckless breakage rule	1/Season	1
Survive 10+ sessions without dying	1/Season	2
Complete all quests	1/Season	5

Moment of Greatness: This is a discretionary award given out by the DM or through party vote to a player for doing something inventive, daring, or just plain cool during a session of play. Each player may earn this award once per chapter.

CHARACTER DEATH

If a character dies during a session, the player has 2 choices: they can either bring the same character back at the beginning of the next session with a death penalty of -1 to attack rolls, saving throws, skill checks, and ability checks until they've hit one (1) milestone (2 encounters), or they can select another character, losing any extra treasure they may have gained along the way.

RENOWN REWARDS

When a player hits 10 points, they earn their first D&D Encounters Card, called the Delver Reward. This is awarded to the player at the conclusion of the session in which they earned enough points to qualify. The second award is called the Explorer Reward, and a player qualifies for the reward by obtaining 35 Renown Points in this season. The third award is called the Adventurer Reward, and a player qualifies for the reward by obtaining 60 Renown Points in this season.

The final two awards are given out at the conclusion of the season. At the end of the season, a limited number of D&D Encounters Cards will be distributed amongst those that qualify for the reward. If there are more players that qualify for the reward than cards available, the organizer will determine how they will be distributed.



The world of the DARK SUN campaign setting is unique in several ways. Many familiar trappings of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game are missing or turned on their heads. Athas is not a place of shining knights and robed wizards, of deep forests and divine pantheons. To venture over the sands of Athas is to enter a world of savagery and splendor that draws on different traditions of fantasy and storytelling. Simple survival beneath the deep red sun is often its own adventure.

Newcomers to Athas have many things to learn about the world, its people, and its monsters, but the following eight characteristics encapsulate the most important features of the DARK SUN campaign setting.

1. THE WORLD IS A DESERT

Athas is a hot, arid planet covered with endless seas of dunes, lifeless salt flats, stony wastes, rocky badlands, thorny scrublands, and worse. From the first moments of dawn, the crimson sun beats down from an olive-tinged sky. Temperatures routinely exceed 100 degrees by midmorning and can reach 130 degrees or more by late afternoon. The wind is like the blast of a furnace, offering no relief from the oppressive heat. Dust and sand borne on the breeze coat everything with yellow-orange silt.

In this forbidding world, cities and villages exist only in a few oases or verdant plains. Some places don't see rain for years at a time, and even in fertile regions, rain is little more than a humid mist that falls for a few weeks each year before giving way to long months of heat and drought. The world beyond these islands of civilization is a barren wasteland roamed by nomads, raiders, and hungry monsters.

Athas was not always a desert, and the parched landscape is dotted with the crumbling ruins of a planet that once was rich with rivers and seas. Ancient bridges over dry watercourses and empty stone quays that face seas of sand tell the tale of a world that is no more.

2. THE WORLD IS SAVAGE

Life on Athas is brutal and short. Bloodthirsty raiders, greedy slavers, and hordes of inhuman savages overrun the deserts and wastelands. The cities are little better; each chokes in the grip of an immortal tyrant. The vile institution of slavery is widespread on Athas, and many unfortunates spend their lives in chains, toiling for brutal taskmasters. Every year hundreds of slaves, perhaps thousands, are sent to their deaths in bloody arena spectacles. Charity, compassion, kindness—these qualities exist, but they are rare and precious blooms. Only a fool hopes for such riches.

3. METAL IS SCARCE

Most arms and armor are made of bone, stone, wood, and other such materials. Mail or plate armor exists only in the treasuries of the sorcerer-kings. Steel blades are almost priceless, weapons that many heroes never see during their lifetimes.

4. ARCANES MAGIC DEFILES THE WORLD

The reckless use of arcane magic during ancient wars reduced Athas to a wasteland. To cast an arcane spell, one must gather power from the living world nearby. Plants wither to black ash, crippling pain wracks animals and people, and the soil is sterilized; nothing can grow in that spot again. It is possible to cast spells with care, avoiding any more damage to the world, but defiling is more potent than preserving. As a result, sorcerers, wizards, and other wielders of arcane magic are generally reviled and persecuted across Athas regardless of whether they preserve or defile. Only the most powerful spellcasters can wield arcane might without fear of reprisals.

5. SORCERER-KINGS RULE THE CITY-STATES

Terrible defilers of immense power rule all but one of the city-states. These mighty spellcasters have held their thrones for centuries; no one alive remembers a time before the sorcerer-kings. Some claim to be gods, and some claim to serve gods. Some are brutal oppressors, where others are more subtle in their tyranny. The sorcerer-kings govern through priesthoods or bureaucracies of greedy, ambitious templars, lesser defilers who can call upon the kings' powers. Only in the city-state of Tyr does a glimmer of freedom beckon, and powerful forces already conspire to extinguish it.

6. THE GODS ARE SILENT

Long ago, when the planet was green, the brutal might of the primordials overcame the gods. Today, Athas is a world without deities. There are no clerics, no paladins, and no prophets or religious orders. Old shrines and crumbling temples lie amid the ancient ruins, testimony to a time when the gods spoke to the people of Athas. Nothing is heard now but the sighing of the desert wind.

In the absence of divine influence, other powers have come to prominence in the world. Psionic power is well known and widely practiced on Athas; even unintelligent desert monsters can have deadly psionic abilities. Shamans and druids call upon the primal powers of the world, which are often sculpted by the influence of elemental power.

7. FIERCE MONSTERS ROAM THE WORLD

The desert planet has its own deadly ecology. Many creatures that are familiar sights on milder worlds have long since died out or never existed at all. Athas has no cattle, swine, or horses; instead, people tend flocks of erdlus, ride on kanks or crodlus, and draw wagons with inixes and mekillots. Wild creatures such as lions, bears, and wolves are almost nonexistent. In their place are terrors such as the id fiend, the baazrag, and the tembo. Perhaps the harsh environment of Athas breeds creatures tough and vicious enough to survive it, or maybe the touch of ancient sorcery poisoned the wellsprings of life and inflicted monster after monster on the dying world. Either way, the deserts are perilous, and only a fool or a lunatic travels them alone.

8. FAMILIAR RACES AREN'T WHAT YOU EXPECT

Typical fantasy stereotypes don't apply to Athasian heroes. In many *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS* settings, elves are wise, benevolent forest-dwellers who guard their homelands from intrusions of evil. On Athas, elves are a nomadic race of herders, raiders, peddlers, and thieves. Halflings aren't amiable river-folk; they're xenophobic headhunters and cannibals who hunt and kill trespassers in their mountain forests. Goliaths—or half-giants, as they are commonly known—are brutal mercenaries that serve as elite guards and enforcers for the sorcerer-kings and their templars in many city-states.

FEATURES OF THE TYR REGION

The remains of civilization that tenuously clings to life on the harsh world of Athas exists in an area of land known as the Tyr Region, named after the oldest of the city-states. Beyond this area, bordered by a massive chain of peaks known as the Ringing Mountains and the vast Sea of Silt, lie wastelands devoid of civilization and culture.

The Tyr Region still has a number of towns and villages present, but most civilized life is huddled into seven great city-states, each ruled by the ancient and despotic sorcerer-kings. These Seven Cities define life not only for those living in them, but for the rest of the cultures that exist in the expanses between them. What follows is a brief description of the city-states and the other major features of the Tyr Region.

Tyr: A massive golden ziggurat and Golden Tower impress visitors to the oldest Athasian city-state. Tyr is currently in a state of change and uncertainty, as the sorcerer-king Kalak was recently overthrown and killed. The city is now a hotbed of intrigue,

hope, and fear as freedom struggles against centuries of tyranny. Because of its current status, Tyr has become a common destination for adventurers seeking fortune and a free life.

Balic: The wealthiest of the city-states, Balic sits on the shores of the Forked Tongue Estuary. Renowned for its thinly-veiled democratic traditions, the sorcerer-king Andropinis serves as dictator ruling over a senate known as the Chamber of Patricians, who dare not defy his edicts. Balic's mercantile status allows it to prosper and it has developed into one of the most cultured of the Seven Cities as a result.

Draj: Farthest from the hub of civilization on the outskirts of the Tyr Region, Draj is an isolated, brutal city-state embroiled in never-ending conflict. Known as the City of the Moons, the mad sorcerer-king Tectuktitlay rules Draj through fear and overt strength. Tectuktitlay's templars, the moon priests, are constantly looking for suitable sacrifices to bring their king at the grand and bloody Father and Master Temple.

Gulg: Within the verdant confines of the Crescent Forest, the smallest of the city-states exists as a community collective of villages drawing its sustenance from the rare bounty of the lush land. Its residents consider their queen Lalali-Puy a goddess and most willingly serve her and her templars. The people of Gulg believe that only the Oba (their name for Lalali-Puy) can keep the primal spirits from harming them, and many in her service use primal magic to control the dangerous spirits.

Nibenay: Also known as the City of Spires, the people of Nibenay see themselves as the last bastion of true civilization on Athas, an arrogance propagated by their king, who bears the same name as the city-state. The architecture of Nibenay is a reflection of the Shadow King's worldview – grand, opulent, and awe-inducing. The reclusive king's templars are all females wedded to him upon acceptance into his service.

Raam: A populous city-state in the constant grip of chaos, its queen Alabach-Re cares little for anything more than her own pleasure. Her citizens have broken themselves into squabbling factions, tearing at what scraps of sustenance haven't been claimed by the sorcerer-queen. Its citizens teeter on the brink of hopelessness, desperate to be removed from their current state of strife.

Urik: A powerful, militarized city-state, Urik is ruled by Hamanu, a rigid-minded strategist whose battle prowess knows no equal. The self-styled King of the World long ago erected fortress walls around his city, and the authoritarian nature of his rule demands peace and order be kept within Urik's gates. The laborers and craftsmen here are industrious, keeping Hamanu's war machine supplied and providing a vast output of trade goods.

Forest Ridge: A vast expanse of lush wilderness beyond the Ringing Mountains, the Forest Ridge is a primeval land filled with bounty and danger, home to tribes of fierce halflings. Few have ever journeyed to see even the outer edges of the Forest Ridge; for most people, it is no more than a mythical place.

Ivory Triangle: The crossroads of the Tyr Region, the Ivory Triangle is a wasteland that serves as a haven for raiders and fierce monsters. With the exception of a small belt of vegetation known as the Crescent Forest, there are only a handful of villages scattered throughout the wastes here. The low-lying Mekillot Mountains are also found here, in the middle of the Great Ivory Plain, a far-stretching salt flat that defines this area.

Ringing Mountains: At the western edge of the Tyr Region, the Ringing Mountains are the greatest range known to the people of Athas. Peaks are over 20,000 feet in many areas, and even though there are many high vales here over 12,000 feet, some tribes of goliaths, halflings, and other folk try to eke out an existence in the harsh altitudes free from the reach of the sorcerer-kings.

Sea of Silt: A great dust sink that extends far into the unknown reaches of Athas, the Sea of Silt is effectively impassible by any means short of flying or magic. Silt skimmers and waders are able to skirt the shoreline where the dust is shallow. This eastern edge of the Tyr Region lies almost completely unexplored as a result of not only its vastness, but also the hazard of succumbing to the Gray Death - suffocation by breathing in large amounts of silt kicked up from siroccos.

Tablelands: The vast expanse of scrub plains, desert, and rocky badlands forms the western cradle of civilization in the Tyr Region. Here, Tyr and Urik claim influence over the wastes, and most of the settled peoples of Athas that dwell outside the city-states live in this area. The fortified town of Altaruk is one of the more important settlements here, an important way stop on the trade route between Balic and Tyr. Oases such as Grak's Pool and Silver Spring, along with a few well-used trade routes, make this wilderness of the Tyr Region more hospitable than other areas.

PEOPLE AND RACES OF ATHAS

Amongst worlds of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game, Athas stands unique not only due to its harsh, savage environment, but also the people that can be found living in it. A social order exists for those living amongst the masses of the city-states, with the sorcerer-king at the pinnacle, templar enforcers and nobles in high stations, merchants and free citizens forming the middle ranks, and the ubiquitous slave labor force providing the foundation at the bottom.

Humans dominate the racial composition of most of the settlements, and indeed, all of the sorcerer-king are (or were once) of human stock. Elves ply the dunes and marketplaces, usually as shifty traders or opportunistic raiders. Dwarves labor with resolute determination on their tasks, usually as builders or farmers. Goliaths, also known by civilized folk as half-giants, often make their living as bodyguards and mercenaries, working for those in power or the wealthy.

Farther afield, tieflings make their homes in the wastes, frequently using their unsettling appearance to conduct fierce raids. Dragonborn (also known as dray), find shelter in citadels of their own kind, and journey forth to bring prosperity to their clan. Halflings feel most at home dwelling in the Forest Ridge, their ancestral homeland, but are feared for their "savage ways" amongst many folk of Athas. The secretive eladrin live in the few wild places still touched by what they call the Lands within the Wind (the Feywild), and are a near-mythical race to most.

In addition to the more familiar D&D races, Athas is home to the mul and the thri-kreen. Although taller than most humans, the mul are a hairless race of half-dwarves; a strong, tough, quick people that often serve as slaves, gladiators, and laborers. The nimble, mantislike thri-kreen are truly adapted to living in the wastes of Athas, hunting, raiding, and preying on those that show signs of weakness.

ADVENTURERS OF ATHAS

Unlike a typical DUNGEONS & DRAGONS world, the heroes of Athas are often fired from a different kiln, constantly having to fight for survival and opportunity in an unforgiving land. In addition, the history of Athas and its people have made certain paths unattainable or dangerous to pursue.

Martial adventurers, such as fighters, rangers, rogues, and warlords, are common enough amongst the communities both in the cities and the outlands. Anyone who can wield a weapon can find ample work as a guard, hunter, gladiator, or agent with a bit of ambition.

Primal magic is powerful, revered, and sometimes feared by those in the wastes and wilderness. Those in the city-states do not fully understand it, and are often suspicious of those that wield it. But to travelers, an encounter with a barbarian, druid, shaman, seeker, or warden is not particularly unusual, especially far from the typical settled areas.

Arcane magic is dangerous - it is the misuse of this power that despoiled the world and continues to defile it if not wielded with care (an art called "preserving"). The sorcerer-kings, the greatest arcane wielders, seek to control arcane magic and punish its unsanctioned use. Arcane casters such as bards, sorcerers, wizards, and warlocks are hated and persecuted for wielding their power, even if they walk the path of a preserver.

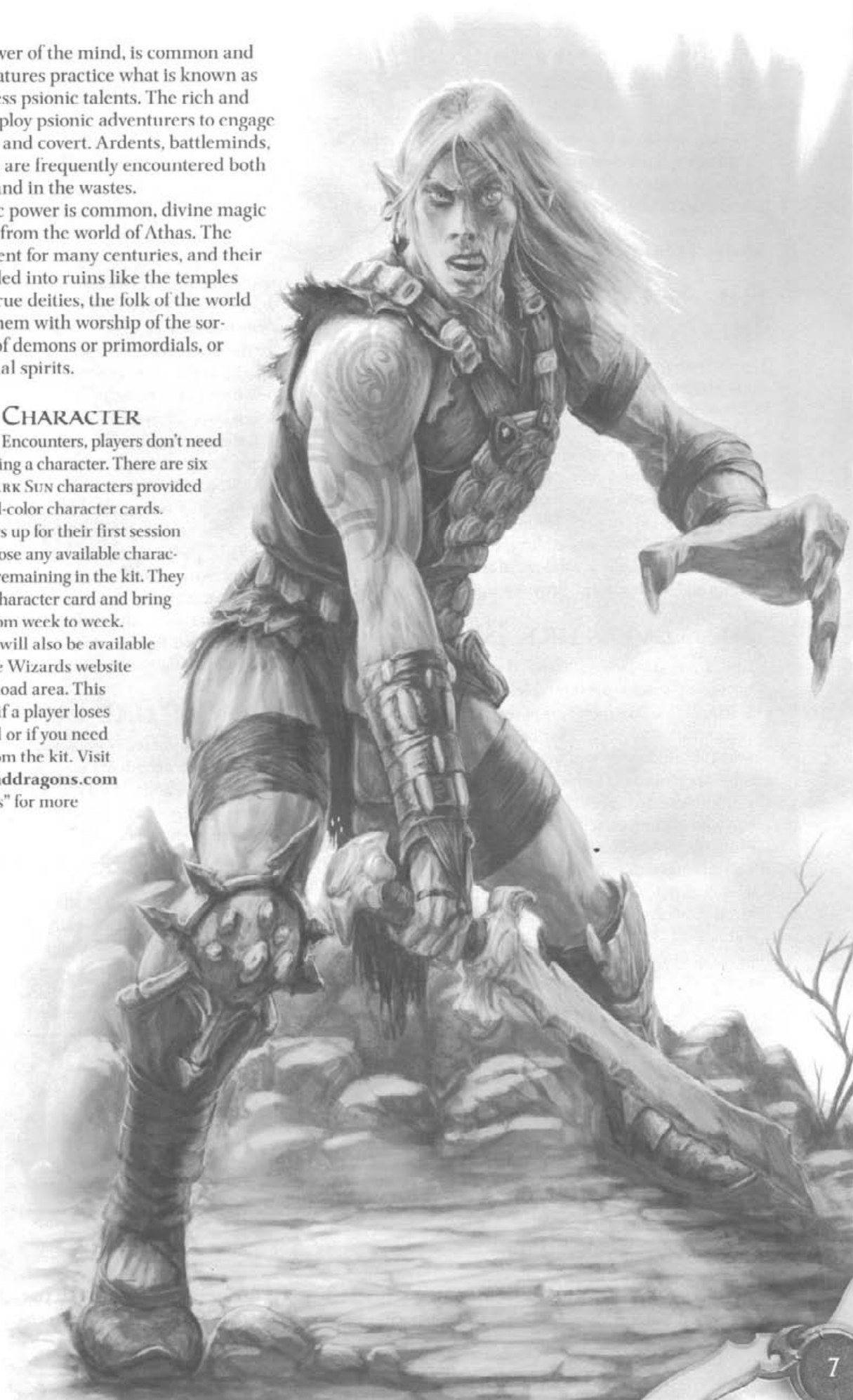
Psionics, the power of the mind, is common and many folk and creatures practice what is known as "the Way" or possess psionic talents. The rich and powerful often employ psionic adventurers to engage in tasks both overt and covert. Ardents, battleminds, monks, and psions are frequently encountered both in civilized lands and in the wastes.

Whereas psionic power is common, divine magic is essentially gone from the world of Athas. The gods have been silent for many centuries, and their faiths have crumbled into ruins like the temples of old. Instead of true deities, the folk of the world have supplanted them with worship of the sorcerer-kings, cults of demons or primordials, or veneration of primal spirits.

CHOOSING A CHARACTER

This season of D&D Encounters, players don't need to worry about creating a character. There are six specially-created DARK SUN characters provided in the play kit on full-color character cards. When a player shows up for their first session of play, they can choose any available character card from those remaining in the kit. They can then keep that character card and bring it back with them from week to week.

Character cards will also be available for download on the Wizards website in the Events download area. This is especially useful if a player loses their character card or if you need to replace a card from the kit. Visit www.dungeonsanddragons.com and click on "Events" for more information.



DARK SUN: *Fury of the Wastewalker* introduces the world of DARK SUN, a parched and perilous campaign setting for 4th edition, to both new and veteran players. Their characters explore the blasted wastes of a world defiled by arcane magic. This section provides background information and a summary of the adventure.

THE ANTAGONIST: THE WASTEWALKER

The ssurran (desert lizardfolk) shaman, known to the Common-speaking races as the Wastewalker, has been warped by the cruel Athas environment—his face twisted; his back crooked. The Wastewalker's connection to the primal powers of the world is strong, however. His ability to sense and control the winds and stones of the wasteland has earned him the admiration of a small cabal of fanatical followers. Spurred by the Wastewalker's abiding hatred for arcanists who brought such ruin to the world, his followers are dedicated to hunting and destroying all arcane magic wielders.

THE ADVENTURE BEGINS!

A caravan recently left the fortified trade town of Altaruk for a trek across the Tablelands to the famous city-state of Tyr. Two members of the Veiled Alliance, an organization devoted to the beneficial use of arcane magic, ride among the wagons. Other travelers include a noble-born woman fleeing her family for the thrill of the unknown and three slaves in the service of the merchant who commissioned the trip. These six characters (or suitable replacements, depending on the group) are the adventurers, the protagonists of this story.

The first night out in the wastes, the psion, Jarvix, noticed a subtle shower of meteors among the stars in the ebony sky. The caravan overseer, a practical man, thought nothing of this dire omen, but Jarvix made sure his companions and a few others were aware of the potential trouble ahead. The next day, a sandstorm erupted early in the morning and quickly turned deadly. The scouring sand was filled with unnatural obsidian shards that tore through the travelers and pierced the thick hide walls of the wagons, shredding the cargo. The winds have lessened a bit, but have not completely subsided. A few survivors rise from the wreckage.

History DC 10: The Tablelands are a true cross-section of Athas. This region features herders, elf tribes, raiders, dwarf miners, trading posts, and ruins teeming with savage marauders. Scores of tiny hamlets, remote camps, and nomadic tribes are scattered about the area.

Nature DC 10: Sandstorms are a common occurrence in the Tablelands. Survival depends on hoarding as many supplies as possible without hindering yourself too much.

Nature DC 15: Obsidian storms are so unusual that they are considered myths by most people. Something decidedly odd is occurring.

CHARACTER THEMES

The *DARK SUN Campaign Setting* presents a new character option: a theme. All six characters included in this adventure have it. A theme is a career, calling, or archetype not tied to a particular class or role. Just as race or class help to identify you, a theme serves to refine your place in the world. You might be an elf rogue, but are you an elf rogue dune trader, an elf rogue nomad, or an elf rogue who spies for the Veiled Alliance? Each theme offers a different twist on a basic character concept. If a background details how or where your character grew up, theme describes how and why your character became a hero.

A theme embraces characters of any class. For example, many templar characters are warlocks, but a templar who serves chiefly as a commander of the sorcerer-king's troops could be a warlord, whereas a templar who is part of the sorcerer-king's secret police might be a rogue. Similarly, gladiator characters are often fighters—but barbarians, battleminds, rangers, rogues, or warlords can be just as successful in the arena. "Templar" and "gladiator" are themes that, although particularly appropriate for warlocks and fighters respectively, extend beyond the warlock and fighter classes.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

DARK SUN: *Fury of the Wastewalker* is a mini-campaign that spans the length of the summer 2010 D&D Encounters season. The adventure is broken into three chapters—story arcs divided by opportunities for extended rests. Each chapter contains 5 sessions, which are one encounter in length and designed to be run once per week.

To give the Dungeon Master an overview of the storyline, the Chapter 1 summary and the individual play sessions are listed below. Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 are in separate adventure packages, available through your organizer after the previous chapters' play is completed.

WEAPONS OF INFERIOR MATERIALS

Metal is so scarce on Athas that most armaments are made of bone, wood, or stone. These substances are weaker than metal and fracture more easily. A broken weapon is at best an improvised weapon. Damaged magic weapons lose their enhancement, properties, and powers until repaired. The following option simulates the relative fragility of nonmetal weapons, making combat more unpredictable and exciting.

Reckless Breakage: When you roll a natural 1 on an attack roll, your weapon has a chance to break. You can

accept the result, automatically missing the attack as usual, but keeping your weapon intact. Alternatively, you can reroll. Regardless of the reroll result, a nonmetal weapon breaks once the attack is complete. A metal weapon breaks only if you roll a natural 5 or lower on the reroll. This rule gives you a say in whether a weapon breaks. You can play it safe and accept the errant attack, or you can attempt to avoid a miss by risking your weapon.

CHAPTER 1: AN OBSIDIAN RAIN

The adventurers are harried by constant attacks from a dark, unseen villain—the Wastewalker—throughout the first chapter. This chapter evokes a tiresome retreat into the foothills of the Ringing Mountains, highlighted by scenes depicting the major events along the way. A minor quest is achieved by surviving the continuous assault and escaping into the ancient, crumbling tomb at the base of the mountains (after **Encounter 1-5: Backs Against the Wall**).

SESSION 1: ESCAPE THE STORM

The adventurers must raid the destroyed caravan for as many supplies as they can before escaping the continuing storm and the onslaught of silt runners allied with the Wastewalker. **Encounter 1-1: Salvage in the Storm** is found on page 14.

SESSION 2: ELEMENTAL ASSISTANCE

In a fortunate twist of fate, the adventurers encounter an elemental fire spirit, a remnant of a lost age. It tells a brief tale of its existence then disappears as a swarm of insectlike creatures called kanks attack. **Encounter 1-2: Banishing the Hive** is found on page 16.

SESSION 3: FRUITS OF THE DESERT

Escaping the assault of the storm for a moment, the adventurers find a beautiful desert plant and resupply. The peace doesn't last long, however. A band of goblin raiders had their eyes on the fruits. Now, they covet the adventurers' treasures as well. **Encounter 1-3: Bush and Ambush** is found on page 18.

SESSION 4: RALO

The adventurers cross paths with a wasteland nomad named Ralo. He tells them about the Wastewalker and his cult of arcanist hunters. As soon as this information is conveyed, elemental forces sent by the Wastewalker arrive to capture or kill his enemies. **Encounter 1-4: Devilish Dust** is found on page 20.

SESSION 5: CORNERED

Pushing deeper into the Ringing Mountains, the adventurers are blocked by a sheer wall of stone. Fortunately for them, the area is badly defiled and the Wastewalker's shock troops fear entering. After driving off a group of pursuers, the adventurers find a ruined tunnel leading into the mountain. **Encounter 1-5: Backs Against the Wall** is found on page 22.

ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTERS

Chapter 1 assumes a party of 5 1st level characters. Compare your adventurers to the chapter's recommended level with the following guidelines:

Your party is a **"weak party"** if it consists of any of the following:

1. 4 characters
2. Most or all of the players are new to D&D or roleplaying games

Your party is a **"strong party"** if it consists of any of the following:

1. 6 characters
2. Your players are veteran D&D 4th Edition players and like added challenge

If you have a weak party, remove one of the lowest level monsters from the encounter. If you have a strong party, add one monster among the types listed for each encounter whose level matches the encounter level.

For instance, in **Encounter 1-1** (a level 1 encounter), you might subtract a silt runner darter (level 1 artillery) from the encounter if your party is weak, or add a third silt runner rager (level 1 brute) if your party is strong.

RESTING

Although the adventurers can take short rests between sessions, they are allowed to take extended rests only between chapters. During Chapter 1, the adventurers are harried by the forces of the Wastewalker and would be overwhelmed if they paused long enough to take an extended rest.

This section collects all the treasure awarded in this chapter, including the new items from the *DARK SUN Campaign Setting*.

CONTINUING THE ADVENTURE

Note that the adventure included here is the first of 3 chapters of play for this D&D Encounters season. The subsequent two chapters will be available separately as the season progresses. Check with your organizer upon completion of this chapter to receive the next chapter.

ENCOUNTER 1-3: BUSH AND AMBUSH

Amulet of Psychic Interference Level 5+

A shrunken head carved from bone hangs from a rough twine. It animates and cackles madly when you call on its power.

Lvl 5	+1	1,000 gp	Lvl 20	+4	125,000 gp
Lvl 10	+2	5,000 gp	Lvl 25	+5	625,000 gp
Lvl 15	+3	25,000 gp	Lvl 30	+6	3,125,000 gp

Item Slot: Neck

Enhancement: Fortitude, Reflex, and Will

Property: You make saving throws to end charm, fear, or psychic effects at the start of your turn. If you fail any of these saving throws, you do not make a saving throw to end that effect at the end of your turn.

Power (Daily + Psychic): Immediate Reaction. Trigger: An enemy you can see hits or misses you using a power that has the charm, fear, or psychic keyword. Effect: The triggering enemy takes 10 psychic damage. Level 10 or 15: 15 psychic damage.

Acidic Weapon Level 4+

A stream of acid lashes out from this melee weapon, burning a target who might otherwise be out of reach.

Lvl 4	+1	840 gp	Lvl 19	+4	105,000 gp
Lvl 9	+2	4,200 gp	Lvl 24	+5	525,000 gp
Lvl 14	+3	21,000 gp	Lvl 29	+6	2,625,000 gp

Weapon: Heavy Blade, Light Blade, Spear

Enhancement: Attack rolls and damage rolls

Critical: +1d6 acid damage per plus

Power (Encounter + Acid): Standard Action. Make a melee basic attack with the weapon against a target within 5 squares of you. All damage dealt by this basic attack is acid damage.

Power (Daily + Acid): Free Action. Use this power when you hit with the weapon. Deal ongoing 5 acid damage (save ends).

Level 14 or 19: Ongoing 10 acid damage.

Level 24 or 29: Ongoing 15 acid damage.

ENCOUNTER 1-4: DEVILISH DUST

Mystery of the Hidden Veil Level 3+

Through misdirection and concealing magic, you obscure your spellcasting.

Lvl 3	680 gp	Lvl 18	85,000 gp
Lvl 8	3,400 gp	Lvl 23	425,000 gp
Lvl 13	17,000 gp	Lvl 28	2,125,000 gp

Veiled Alliance Mystery

Property: You gain a +1 item bonus to Bluff checks.

Level 13 or 18: +2 item bonus to Bluff checks.

Level 23 or 28: +3 item bonus to Bluff checks.

Power (Daily + Illusion): Free Action. Trigger: You use an arcane power. Effect: You become invisible until the end of your next turn, and you can shift 1 square.

Level 8: Shift 2 squares.

Level 13: Shift 3 squares.

Level 18: Shift 4 squares.

Level 23: Shift 5 squares.

Level 28: Shift 6 squares.

Stonemeal Biscuit Level 3

This coarse dwarven fare tastes foul but keeps you going throughout the day.

Other Consumable 30 gp

Property: A single stonemeal biscuit weighs one-tenth of a pound and has the nutritional value of a full day's worth of food.

Power (Consumable + Healing): Standard Action. You eat the stonemeal biscuit. You gain a +1 power bonus on Endurance checks for 12 hours. In addition, you regain an extra 1 hit point the next time you spend a healing surge this day.

ENCOUNTER 1-5:
BACKS AGAINST THE WALL**Orb of Debilitating Languor** Level 2+

This shadowy orb leaves your enemy enfeebled.

Lvl 2	+1	520 gp	Lvl 17	+4	65,000 gp
Lvl 7	+2	2,600 gp	Lvl 22	+5	325,000 gp
Lvl 12	+3	13,000 gp	Lvl 27	+6	1,625,000 gp

Implement (Orb)

Enhancement: Attack rolls and damage rolls

Critical: +1d6 damage per plus

Power (Daily): Free Action. Use this power when an attack with this orb hits the target's Fortitude defense. The target is slowed (save ends).



The first five encounters span a relentless, extended chase. As the players move from encounter to encounter in this chapter, play up the constant threat from the environment and the Wastewalker's forces.

SESSION 1: ESCAPE THE STORM

The adventure begins with a devastating assault on a caravan making its way from Altaruk to Tyr. The adventurers are survivors of a terrifying obsidian shard storm that took the caravan by surprise. As the storm continues to pelt them, another threat emerges: a wicked pack of silt runners. Go to **Encounter 1-1: Salvage in the Storm** (page 14).

SURVIVAL DAYS

Travel between Athasian city-states is dangerous at best. Even with ample supplies and proper safeguards, travelers are at risk from sandstorms, raiders, thirst, exhaustion, and the punishing sun. The **DARK SUN** setting abstracts necessary supplies for travel on Athas through the use of survival days. These expendable resources account for food, water, proper clothing, and other supplies. Each survival day allows a single character to travel in the dangerous wastes of Athas for one day without being subjected to starvation or thirst.

In **DARK SUN: Fury of the Wastewalker**, it is important to track survival days from session to session just like treasure and experience points. Any unsupplied character faces a sun sickness attack in the early portions of Chapters 2 and 3. Survival days can also be used to alleviate the effect of the ongoing skill challenge, **Fleeing Across the Wastes**, in Chapter 1.

For any player that joins after Session 1, give his or her character 2 survival days. This supply grants sufficient resources for extended rests, but the hero still experiences the daunting task of surviving travel through sun-scorched Athas.

Sun Sickness

Level 2

The sun's punishing rays leech vitality from your body.

Attack: Level + 4 vs. Fortitude

Endurance improve DC 17, maintain DC 13, worsen DC 12
The target is cured.

❑ **Initial Effect:** The target loses one healing surge or hit points equal to the target's surge value. The healing surge or hit points cannot be regained until the target is cured.

❑ The target takes a -2 penalty to all attack rolls and defenses.

❑ The target is slowed and weakened.

❑ **Final State:** The target dies.

ONGOING SKILL CHALLENGE

Once the adventurers escape the immediate danger of the silt runner attack, they enter rocky badlands near the Ringing Mountains. They hear the constant clatter of the shard storm that stalks them. This looming threat is represented by an ongoing skill challenge that spans Chapter 1, starting after the first session.

FLEEING ACROSS THE WASTES

Survival in the desert wasteland is difficult under normal circumstances. With the added pressure of storm and stalkers, it is truly daunting. This skill challenge simulates two days of excruciating travel and survival.

At the beginning of Sessions 2 through 5, each character makes one skill check for this ongoing skill challenge. Tabulate the results from week to week and apply the conclusion just before the final encounter.

Level: 1 (500 XP).

Complexity: 5 (requires 12 successes before 3 failures).

Primary Skills: Athletics, Endurance, Heal, Nature.

Athletics (DC 10): The character climbs ledges, leaps across chasms, and trudges through silt, helping the party bypass obstructing terrain. This skill can be used to gain 4 successes in this challenge.

Endurance (DC 15): The adventurer keeps moving, shrugging off fatigue that threatens to overtake the party. This skill can be used to gain 6 successes in this challenge.

Heal (DC 10): Using the meager resources the party has, the character treats injuries and soothes abrasions caused by the heat and grit. This skill can be used to gain 4 successes in this challenge.

Nature (DC 10): The hero finds the best paths through the desert, identifying hazards before the party runs into them, hunting creatures for food, and finding small amounts of water. This skill can be used to gain 6 successes in this challenge.

Secondary Skills: Arcana, Perception.

Arcana (DC 15): The character discreetly uses his or her arcane abilities to create minor illusions or distant diversions to throw off pursuers. Success on this check negates one previous skill challenge failure.

Perception (DC 10): The adventurer keeps a lookout for landmarks, dangers, or hazardous terrain. This watchfulness grants a +2 to the next Nature check made as part of this skill challenge.

DESERT SETBACKS

Each week, after each adventurer has made one skill check in this challenge, the perilous environment causes a setback. Roll 1d4 to determine which setback occurs.

If more than half the party members succeed on the skill check imposed by the setback, the heroes gain 1 success in the skill challenge. If not, they do not suffer a skill challenge failure, but all characters apply the listed detriment. This effect lasts until the end of that session's encounter.

1. Extreme Heat (Endurance DC 10): If the party fails the group Endurance check, it loses one survival day per member. If the group has insufficient survival days, the deficit must be accounted for with lost healing surges. The heroes determine the distribution of surge losses, but no character can lose more than one as a result of this setback.

2. Mirage (Perception DC 10): Led astray by an illusory image and a failed group Perception check, each character takes a -1 penalty to all defenses during this encounter.

3. Silt Storm (Endurance DC 15): If the party fails the group Endurance check, all enemies are treated as having concealment during this encounter.

4. Treacherous Terrain (Acrobatics DC 5): If the party fails this group Acrobatics check, each character takes a -1 penalty to speed for the session's encounter.

CONCLUSION

Success: If the group achieves 12 successes after the skill checks at the beginning of **Encounter 1-5: Backs Against the Wall**, the characters survive the chase in fine form. Each hero regains a healing surge for use in the chapter's final session.

Partial Success: If the group did not achieve 12 successes but also did not get 3 failures, its trek across the desert was a significant hardship. No healing surges are regained before the last encounter.

Failure: If the characters get 3 failures, the harsh desert and constant attacks take their toll. Each character loses a healing surge before the final encounter. If an adventurer is out of healing surges, he or she takes 5 damage.

SESSION 2: ELEMENTAL ASSISTANCE

Keeping the darkened sky behind them and moving far from any known trade routes, the adventurers discover a copse of petrified trees in a small valley. Read:

From your vantage point at the edge of the valley, you see that it is littered with exotic bones from long-extinct creatures. As the sun passes overhead, a small flame spirit appears in the clearing and waves in your direction.

The fire spirit communicates by using jets of flame to melt sand into glass script letters. If prompted, it imparts the following information.

What are you? *I am a Spirit of the Flame, an elemental force. I collected here centuries ago, shortly after the lush Athasian lands were destroyed by warfare.*

Where did you come from? *I once walked Athas as you do, patrolling these lands as a protector of life.*

Why are you here now? *I am bound to this place by strong elemental forces unknown to me. I await the return of another Green Age to free me.*

How can we free you? *You cannot. Only a collective effort by all Athasians can restore Athas's lands to their long-lost fertility.*

After interacting briefly, the spirit vanishes abruptly in a puff of smoke. Moments later, a colony of kanks attacks—proceed to **Encounter 1-2: Banishing the Hive** (page 16).



ROLEPLAYING PAST ENCOUNTERS

Veteran D&D players might recount among their favorite game sessions a time when they spent the evening roleplaying with the creatures the Dungeon Master had designed to fight them. Although *DARK SUN: Fury of the Wastewalker* was designed with classic, combat-centered D&D play in mind, several encounters lend themselves to differing approaches toward defeating the weekly threat. For these events, a well-prepared Dungeon Master can shine.

If your players hesitate to draw swords and start swinging, they can try to convince the enemy that they mean no harm. If they succeed, find a way to make the consequences of their actions result in another tense situation. For example, perhaps the players think that the goblins in session 3 are simple fellow desert survivors seeking food and water. After a dramatic and tense negotiation using applicable skills (Diplomacy, Nature, and perhaps a little Intimidate to get their point across), some supplies are traded and the party is considered to have "defeated" the encounter. If time remains in the session and the group is interested, the adventurers cross paths with more aggressive monsters shortly thereafter. Throw some miniatures onto the table and pick a level-appropriate sample encounter from one of the *Monster Manuals*. You can make up your own map on the spot or just use the tactical map provided. Remember, it's about giving the players what they want and, most of all, having fun!

SESSION 3: FRUITS OF THE DESERT

In the badlands canyons, the adventurers lose track of the obsidian shower briefly. They pause near a ripened cactus plant bearing sweet and tangy fruit. As they catch their breath, they are beset by a group of goblins. Run **Encounter 1-3: Bush and Ambush** (page 18).

SESSION 4: RALO

As they rush toward the mountains, the adventurers cross paths with a wandering wastelander named Ralo. If they ask him questions, he can reveal the following information.

Who are you? I was once a miner in the iron mines of Tyr, but my mine was destroyed by a frightening band of brigands known as hejkin. They burrow through the earth and have a particular dislike for arcanists and pointy-eared folk.

What are you doing out here? I have long studied preserving magic, but some Athasians believe all arcane magic is dangerous. That is why I'm a wanderer.

What can you tell us about this area? Sandstorms are commonplace here. That is why I wear this headdress. Keeps the sand, sun, and wind off my face. Still, something odd is going on.

Can you tell us about obsidian shard storms? I've never seen obsidian rain from the sky before. I have heard tales of a twisted lizardfolk shaman called the Wastewalker who uses storms and other primal forces of the desert to destroy arcane magic users. Have you aroused his wrath somehow?

At some point, Ralo pauses, glances around, and then whispers, "It's not safe." At that moment, a ssurran magus and several elemental air spirits attack. The lizardfolk curses the "defiler" dwarf and menaces the adventurers. Proceed to **Encounter 1-4: Devilish Dust** (page 20).

SESSION 5: CORNERED

The adventurers flee toward the mountains, but the eastern edge of the range is impassable in many places. In time, they find themselves trapped against a sheer rock wall rising a hundred feet in the air. Go to **Encounter 1-5: Backs Against the Wall** (page 22).

CHAPTER 1 FINALE

The adventurers have survived so far but the dark clouds remain. For a brief moment no one approaches and it appears that the heroes are safe. Read:

After the threat is gone, you have a few moments to explore your surroundings. Within the defiled area, you notice a small cave leading below. Outside, the desert promises only more storm and more attacks. Perhaps the passage offers a way out?

The characters gain a level 1 minor quest reward (100 XP) for surviving the Wastewalker's harassment.

After the heroes enter the mountain and proceed a short distance, they hear the Wastewalker's minions. Emboldened by the direct orders of their champion, they have braved the defiled terrain and rolled a large boulder over the mouth of the cave. If the adventurers double back, they are unable to remove the blockage by any means. The heroes clearly have time for an extended rest, but must find another way out. The adventure continues in **Chapter 2: The Tomb of a Long, Lost Age**.

ENCOUNTER 1-1: SALVAGE IN THE STORM

Encounter Level 1 (525 XP)

SETUP

Silt runner inciter (I)

2 silt runner ragers (R)

2 silt runner darters (D)

A sense of urgency fills this encounter. The adventurers set up in the outlined area of the encounter map around the wagon. The silt runners attack from an area of boulders nearby. The characters have two goals: Collect as many survival days (page 11) worth of supplies as possible from the broken wagon and flee the worsening shard storm by exiting the map edge beyond the silt runners. Read:

The deafening clatter of the shards begins to subside, and you notice few of your fellow travelers are still alive. As your wits return, you see small bipedal reptiles leap from the surrounding silt. They are light on their feet and keen to pick through the remaining cargo. You quickly scan the area and see more of them lurking on all sides. The best path away from the hordes and the worst of the storm is directly through the nearest foes.

TACTICS

The silt runners try to prevent the adventurers' escape. They hate fey creatures and take particular notice of Castri, if he is among the party. They gang up on him, cursing his fey heritage.

The inciter begins by dropping *psionic detonation* between the adventurers and their escape path (at the top of the map). The inciter then keeps close to its allies to make full use of *incite fury*.

The ragers team with the inciter as a frontline force. They advance quickly and engage in melee combat, targeting Castri or the two humans first.

The darters attack from range, attempting to immobilize any heroes fleeing the area. Their goal is to keep the adventurers close to the ragers.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: The desert is brightly lit, though the shard storm limits visibility to 12 squares.

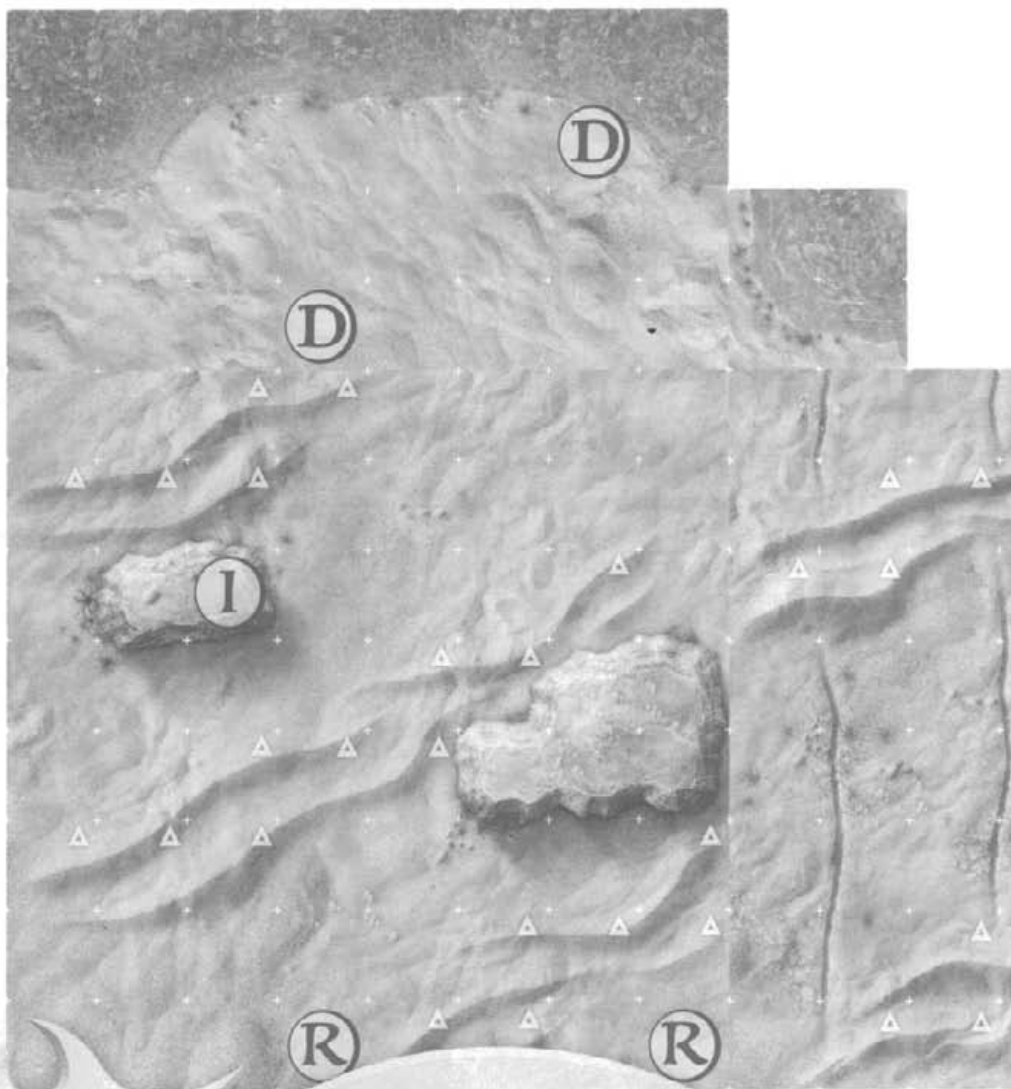
Boulders: These 2-square tall obstacles provide cover and require a DC 10 Athletics check to climb.

Covered Cart: The cart provides cover. It also grants shelter from the shard storm and contains many survival days of food and water. When inside or adjacent to the cart, a character can retrieve 1 survival day of supplies as a minor action.

Shard Storm: The fantastic effect of the shard storm is hazardous to any creature out in the open (not inside the covered cart). At the start of an exposed creature's turn, it takes 2 damage.

Silt: The blue squares on the right edge are part of a depression filled with silt. Entering these squares immobilizes a creature (save ends). With a save, the character pulls himself or herself to an adjacent square of solid ground. Silt runners are immune to this effect.

Treasure: Two healing fruits (*potion of healing*; PH 255) lie among the caravan merchants' personal effects.



DEVELOPMENT

The adventurers have 5 rounds to collect supplies (survival days) and clear a path through the enemies. At the end of the fifth round and every 5 rounds after that, more silt runners arrive from any of the map sides near the wagon. Each group of reinforcements is composed of two ragers, two darters, and an inciter.

Keep track of the number of survival days the adventurers have taken from the cart. They can be important during Chapter 1's Fleeing Across the Wastes skill challenge.

2 Silt Runner Ragers (R)	Level 1 Brute
Small natural humanoid (reptile)	XP 100 each
HP 34; Bloodied 17	Initiative +2
AC 13, Fortitude 13, Reflex 13, Will 13	Perception +2
Speed 7	Low-light vision
TRAITS	
Silt Runner Swarm	
An enemy that starts its turn adjacent to two or more silt runners takes 2 damage.	
STANDARD ACTIONS	
① Bone Spear (weapon) ♦ At-Will	
Attack: Melee 2 (one creature); +6 vs. AC	
Hit: 2d6 + 5 damage.	
† Brutal Spear (weapon) ♦ Recharge when first bloodied	
Attack: Melee 2 (one creature); +6 vs. AC	
Hit: 4d6 + 4 damage.	
† Penetrating Spear (weapon) ♦ Encounter	
Requirement: The rager must be bloodied.	
Attack: Melee 2 (one creature); +6 vs. AC	
Hit: 4d6 + 4 damage, and the target gains vulnerable 5 to all damage until the end of the rager's next turn.	
Skills Athletics +5, Stealth +7	
Str 11 (+0) Dex 15 (+2) Wis 14 (+2)	
Con 14 (+2) Int 6 (-2) Cha 10 (+0)	
Alignment unaligned Languages Draconic	
Equipment bone spear	

Silt Runner Inciter (I)	Level 2 Controller (Leader)
Small natural humanoid (reptile)	XP 125
HP 38; Bloodied 19	Initiative +3
AC 16, Fortitude 14, Reflex 14, Will 15	Perception +3
Speed 7	Low-light vision
TRAITS	
Silt Runner Swarm	
An enemy that starts its turn adjacent to two or more silt runners takes 2 damage.	
STANDARD ACTIONS	
① Bone Sword (weapon) ♦ At-Will	
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC	
Hit: 1d10 + 5 damage.	
✦ Psionic Detonation (force, zone) ♦ Recharge [1]	
Attack: Area burst 1 within 10 (enemies in burst); +6 vs. Reflex	
Hit: 1d10 + 5 force damage. The burst creates a zone that lasts until the end of the encounter. Enemies treat squares within the zone as difficult terrain.	
Miss: Half damage.	
↖ Incite Fury ♦ Recharge when first bloodied	
Effect: As a free action, each silt runner within a close blast 5 shifts 1 square and makes a basic attack before or after it shifts.	
TRIGGERED ACTIONS	
↖ Incite Frenzy ♦ Encounter	
Trigger: The inciter is first bloodied.	
Effect (Free Action): As a free action, each ally within a close burst 5 shifts 1 square and makes a basic attack before or after it shifts.	
Skills Athletics +6, Intimidate +9, Stealth +8	
Str 11 (+1) Dex 14 (+3) Wis 15 (+3)	
Con 14 (+3) Int 8 (+0) Cha 16 (+4)	
Alignment unaligned Languages Draconic	
Equipment bone sword	

2 Silt Runner Darters (D)	Level 1 Artillery
Small natural humanoid (reptile)	XP 100 each
HP 25; Bloodied 12	Initiative +4
AC 13, Fortitude 11, Reflex 14, Will 13	Perception +2
Speed 7	Low-light vision
TRAITS	
Silt Runner Swarm	
Any enemy that starts its turn adjacent to two or more silt runners takes 2 damage.	
STANDARD ACTIONS	
① Wooden Dagger (weapon) ♦ At-Will	
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +6 vs. AC	
Hit: 1d4 + 5 damage.	
③ Blowgun (weapon) ♦ At-Will	
Attack: Ranged 12 (one creature); +8 vs. AC	
Hit: 1d10 + 4 damage.	
✦ Poison Dart (poison, weapon) ♦ Recharge [X] [1]	
Attack: Ranged 12 (one creature); +6 vs. Fortitude	
Hit: 2d10 + 3 poison damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends).	
Aftereffect: The target is slowed (save ends).	
Miss: Half damage, and the target is slowed until the end of the darter's next turn.	
Skills Athletics +5, Stealth +9	
Str 10 (+0) Dex 18 (+4) Wis 14 (+2)	
Con 13 (+1) Int 6 (-2) Cha 11 (+0)	
Alignment unaligned Languages Draconic	
Equipment wooden dagger, blowgun, 20 darts	

PC
START
AREA

ENCOUNTER 1-2: BANISHING THE HIVE

Encounter Level 2 (725 XP)

SETUP

2 kank soldiers (S)

3 kank spitters (A)

Before this encounter, each character performs a single skill check in the ongoing Fleeing Across the Wastes skill challenge (page 11). Make a note of the successes and failures.

The adventurers set up in the outlined area of the encounter map. The kanks surround the adventurers, attacking from all sides. Read:

The stench of brimstone as the fire spirit snuffs out is supplemented by the harsh smell of acid. Looking up, you notice that large, armored, green-eyed insects approach from all directions. Their feet click against the rocky terrain as they close around you.

TACTICS

The kanks are looking for food for their hive. They attempt to pick off the weakest characters, but otherwise attack in straightforward fashion.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: This area of desert is brightly lit.

Boulders: These 2-square tall obstacles provide cover and require a DC 10 Athletics check to climb.

Petrified Trees: These ossified plants provide cover against ranged attacks from creatures on the opposite side of the trees.

3 Kank Spitters (A)	Level 2 Artillery
Small natural beast	XP 125 each
HP 30; Bloodied 15	Initiative +4
AC 14, Fortitude 13, Reflex 15, Will 14	Perception +3
Speed 8	
Resist 5 acid, 5 poison	
STANDARD ACTIONS	
⚔ Bite (acid) ♦ At-Will	
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC	
Hit: 1d4 + 1 damage plus 1d8 acid damage.	
☞ Kank Spit (acid) ♦ At-Will	
Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); +7 vs. Reflex	
Hit: 1d4 + 1 damage, and the target is slowed and takes ongoing 5 acid damage (save ends both). If the target is already slowed, it is instead immobilized (save ends).	
Str 13 (+2)	Dex 17 (+4)
Con 12 (+2)	Int 2 (-3)
Alignment unaligned	Cha 6 (-1)
Languages –	

2 Kank Soldiers (S)	Level 4 Soldier
Large natural beast (mount)	XP 175 each
HP 54; Bloodied 27	Initiative +7
AC 20, Fortitude 17, Reflex 16, Will 14	Perception +8
Speed 8	
Resist 5 acid, 5 poison	
TRAITS	
Grabbed Advantage (mount)	
A friendly rider of 4th level or higher mounted on the soldier has combat advantage against any creature grabbed by the soldier.	
STANDARD ACTIONS	
⚔ Bite ♦ At-Will	
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +9 vs. AC, or +11 against creatures grabbed by the soldier. While the soldier has a creature grabbed, it can use bite against the grabbed creature only.	
Hit: 2d4 damage, or 2d4 + 10 against creatures grabbed by the soldier. In addition, the soldier grabs the target.	
☞ Kank Venom (poison) ♦ Recharge ☞ ☞	
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature grabbed by the soldier); +9 vs. Fortitude	
Hit: The target is slowed and takes ongoing 10 poison damage (save ends both). First Failed Saving Throw: The target is immobilized (save ends).	
Str 18 (+6)	Dex 16 (+5)
Con 14 (+4)	Int 2 (-2)
Alignment unaligned	Cha 6 (+0)
Languages –	





ENCOUNTER 1-3: BUSH AND AMBUSH

Encounter Level 1 (500 XP)

SETUP

2 goblin cursespewers (S)
Spiretop drake (D)
2 goblin archers (A)
2 goblin cutters (C)

Before this encounter, each character performs a single skill check in the ongoing Fleeing Across the Wastes skill challenge (page 11). Tabulate the successes and failures with those from previous sessions.

The adventurers begin in the outlined area of the encounter map around the desert tree. The goblins have taken positions out of view on top of the high rocks overlooking the area.

This encounter begins with a surprise round. The goblins and any adventurers with Passive Perception 15 or higher get to act initially. In the surprise round, the tamed drake drops a lasso loop around a pack of supplies and the goblins yank them away. Read:

A tribe of small green-skinned creatures emerges from atop the badlands heights. They wear bone armor arranged to make them appear as skeletons. These trappings seem more ceremonial than practical. Two of creatures have odd fins attached to their legs.

Nature DC 10: You've never seen these creatures before, but you've heard tales of desert humanoids that survive off the land and keep away except in times of desperate need.

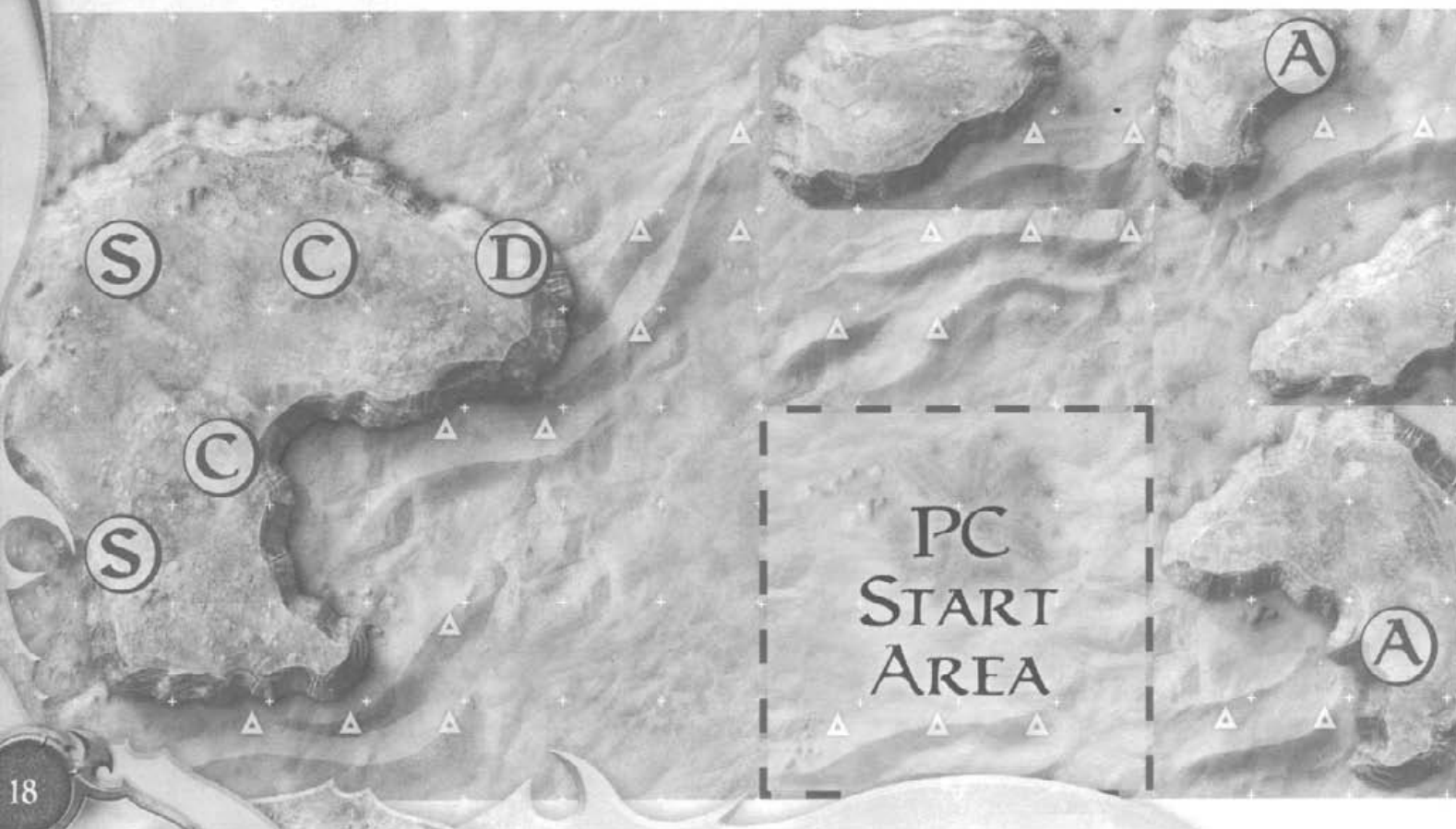
TACTICS

The goblins do not try to go head-to-head with the adventurers. They use their advantageous positions and high mobility to attack from the fringes. They are after the tree fruit and any other supplies they can steal from the party.

The goblin archers have small desert air-elemental gliders that harness the hot desert winds so they can fly across the battlefield, peppering the adventurers with arrows.

The goblin cutters protect the cursespewers from atop the large cliff. The cursespewers dispatch them one at a time to engage the adventurers, so they can make full use of *goblin doom*. When the cursespewers fall, any remaining goblins break and run.

The spiretop drake does not harm the adventurers, flying away if attacked.



FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Twilight fills this area with dim illumination.

Brambleweed Heights: The rocks are 4 squares high and covered with brambleweed. A creature that starts its turn in a brambleweed square takes 5 damage. A creature that ends its turn in a brambleweed square is restrained until the start of its next turn. Brambleweed squares are difficult terrain. The goblins are immune to this terrain effect, having carefully surveyed their position here.

Treasure: The goblins have 3 survival days (page 11) worth of food and water with them. They also have a +1 *acidic obsidian spear* (level 4 item; page 10; *Adventurer's Vault*, page 62) and a +1 *amulet of psychic interference* (level 5 item; page 10; *DARK SUN Campaign Setting*).

Spiretop Drake (D) Level 1 Skirmisher

Small natural beast (reptile)

XP 100

HP 29; Bloodied 14

Initiative +6

AC 16, Fortitude 11, Reflex 14, Will 13

Perception +3

Speed 4, fly 8 (hover)

STANDARD ACTIONS

④ Bite ♦ At-Will

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +6 vs. AC

Hit: 1d6 + 4 damage.

④ Snatch ♦ At-Will

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +4 vs. Reflex

Hit: 1 damage, and the drake steals a small object from the target, such as a vial, scroll, or coin.

Flyby Attack ♦ At-Will

Effect: The drake flies 8 squares and makes one melee basic attack at any point during that movement. The drake doesn't provoke opportunity attacks when moving away from the target of the attack.

Str 11 (+0)

Dex 18 (+4)

Wis 16 (+3)

Con 13 (+1)

Int 3 (-4)

Cha 11 (+0)

Alignment unaligned

Languages –

2 Goblin Cutters (C) Level 1 Minion

Small natural humanoid, goblin

XP 25 each

HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.

Initiative +5

AC 16, Fortitude 12, Reflex 14, Will 11

Perception +1

Speed 6

Low-light vision

STANDARD ACTIONS

④ Short Sword (weapon) ♦ At-Will

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +5 vs. AC

Hit: 4 damage, or 5 damage if the goblin has combat advantage against the target.

TRIGGERED ACTIONS

Goblin Tactics ♦ Encounter

Trigger: The goblin is missed by a melee attack.

Effect (Immediate Reaction): The goblin shifts 1 square.

Skills Stealth +5, Thievery +5

Str 14 (+2)

Dex 17 (+3)

Wis 12 (+1)

Con 13 (+1)

Int 8 (-1)

Cha 8 (-1)

Alignment evil

Languages Common, Goblin

Equipment leather armor, short sword

2 Goblin Archers (A) Level 1 Skirmisher

Small natural humanoid, goblin

XP 100 each

HP 29; Bloodied 14

Initiative +5

AC 17, Fortitude 13, Reflex 15, Will 12

Perception +1

Speed 6, fly 8 (glider)

Low-light vision

TRAITS

Great Position

If, on its turn, the goblin ends its move at least 4 squares away from its starting position, it deals 1d6 extra damage on ranged attack until the start of its next turn.

STANDARD ACTIONS

④ Short Sword (weapon) ♦ At-Will

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +6 vs. AC

Hit: 1d6 + 2 damage.

④ Shortbow (weapon) ♦ At-Will

Attack: Ranged 15/30 (one creature); +6 vs. AC

Hit: 1d8 + 2 damage.

✧ Mobile Ranged Attack ♦ At-Will

Effect: The goblin moves half its speed. At any point during that movement, it makes one ranged basic attack without provoking opportunity attacks.

TRIGGERED ACTIONS

Goblin Tactics ♦ Encounter

Trigger: The goblin is missed by a melee attack.

Effect (Immediate Reaction): The goblin shifts 1 square.

Skills Stealth +10, Thievery +10

Str 14 (+2)

Dex 17 (+3)

Wis 12 (+1)

Con 13 (+1)

Int 8 (-1)

Cha 8 (-1)

Alignment evil

Languages Common, Goblin

Equipment leather armor, short sword, shortbow, arrows x40

2 Goblin Cursespewers (S) Level 2 Artillery (Leader)

Small natural humanoid

XP 125 each

HP 68; Bloodied 34

Initiative +2

AC 14, Fortitude 14, Reflex 13, Will 15

Perception +2

Speed 6

Low-light vision

STANDARD ACTIONS

④ Sacrificial Knife (weapon) ♦ At-Will

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC

Hit: 1d4 + 3 damage.

✧ Confounding Curse ♦ At-Will

Attack: Ranged 10 (two creatures); +7 vs. Will

Hit: 1d6 + 3 damage, and the target grants combat advantage to the goblin's allies until the end of the cursespewer's next turn.

TRIGGERED ACTIONS

✧ Goblin Doom (poison) ♦ At-Will

Trigger: A goblin within 5 squares is hit by a melee attack.

Attack (Immediate Interrupt): Area burst 2 centered on the triggering goblin (creatures in burst); +5 vs. Reflex

Hit: 1d10 + 3 poison damage, and ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends).

Goblin Tactics ♦ Encounter

Trigger: The goblin is missed by a melee attack.

Effect (Immediate Reaction): The goblin shifts 1 square.

Skills Religion +5

Str 11 (+1)

Dex 14 (+3)

Wis 12 (+2)

Con 16 (+4)

Int 9 (+0)

Cha 17 (+4)

Alignment chaotic evil

Languages Common, Goblin

Equipment leather armor, sacrificial knife, wand

ENCOUNTER 1-4: DEVILISH DUST

Encounter Level 1 (575 XP)

SETUP

Poisonscale magus (M)

3 dust devils (D)

3 deep silt spots (S)

Before this encounter, each character performs a single skill check in the ongoing Fleeing Across the Wastes skill challenge (page 11). Tabulate the successes and failure with those of previous sessions.

Ralo, a dwarf wastelander, is surprised by the dust devils. Characters with passive Perception 20 or higher detect the approach and can act in the surprise round. The heroes and Ralo set up in the outlined area of the encounter map; the enemies attack from all sides.

Ralo has the following basic stats. He does not wield a weapon and will not join combat.

Ralo, Dwarf Wastelander	Level 1 NPC
HP 18; Bloodied 9	
AC 14, Fortitude 15, Reflex 12, Will 11	
Speed 5	

Before the surprise round, read:

Dust kicks up all around you, swirling in ever denser patterns. You steel yourself against the off-putting alkaline taste that gathers in your mouth. Suddenly, the desert seems to rise up and attack.

TACTICS

The dust devils are after Ralo by command of the ssurran magus. They concentrate their attacks in the surprise round on him, then turn on whichever adventurer is the most immediate threat.

The poisonscale magus believes Ralo is a defiler and wants him vanquished. It stays back, near the edge of the battlefield, allowing the dust devils to confront the heroes directly.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: The dawn provides bright light throughout the area.

Boulders: The rocks in this area are 1 square high. A DC 10 Athletics or Acrobatics check allows a creature to hop onto a boulder square from the ground without spending any extra movement. Failure results in that square being treated as difficult terrain.

Poisonscale Magus (M)	Level 2 Artillery
Medium natural humanoid (reptile), lizardfolk	XP 125
HP 32; Bloodied 16	Initiative +2
AC 14, Fortitude 14, Reflex 16, Will 16	Perception +8
Speed 6 (swamp walk)	

STANDARD ACTIONS

⚔ Dagger (weapon) ♦ At-Will

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +6 vs. AC

Hit: 1d6 + 3 damage.

☠ Poison Blood (poison) ♦ At-Will

Attack: Ranged 10/20 (one creature); +7 vs. Fortitude

Hit: 1d6 + 3 poison damage, and ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends).

☠ Poison Barrage (poison) ♦ Encounter

Attack: Area burst 3 within 10 (creatures in burst); +5 vs. Fortitude

Hit: 1d6 + 3 poison damage, and the target gains vulnerable 5 poison (save ends).

Miss: Half damage, and the target gains vulnerable 5 poison until the end of its next turn.

MINOR ACTIONS

☠ Corrupt Poison (poison) ♦ At-Will

Attack: Ranged 10/20 (one creature taking ongoing poison damage); +7 vs. Fortitude

Hit: The magus slides the target 3 squares, and the target is slowed (save ends).

Skills Arcana +9, Athletics +7

Str 12 (+2) Dex 12 (+2)

Wis 14 (+3)

Con 14 (+3) Int 15 (+3)

Cha 8 (+0)

Alignment unaligned

Languages Draconic

Equipment dagger

3 Dust Devils (D)	Level 3 Skirmisher
Small elemental magical beast (air, earth)	XP 150 each
HP 47; Bloodied 23	Initiative +7
AC 18, Fortitude 14, Reflex 16, Will 14	Perception +0
Speed 8	

Immune disease, poison

TRAITS

Moving Defense

A dust devil takes a -2 penalty to all defenses while slowed or immobilized.

STANDARD ACTIONS

⚔ Grasping Winds ♦ At-Will

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +8 vs. Reflex

Hit: 1d10 + 3 damage, and the dust devil slides the target 2 squares.

☠ Stinging Sands ♦ Encounter

Attack: Close burst 3 (enemies in burst); +8 vs. Fortitude

Hit: 3d6 + 3 damage, and the target is blinded until the end of the dust devil's next turn.

MOVE ACTIONS

⚔ Gale Blast ♦ Recharge ☉ ☹

Effect: The dust devil shifts 5 squares and makes one attack against each enemy it moves adjacent to.

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +8 vs. Fortitude

Hit: The target falls prone.

Skills Stealth +10

Str 8 (+0)

Dex 18 (+5)

Wis 8 (+0)

Con 15 (+3)

Int 5 (-2)

Cha 15 (+3)

Alignment unaligned

Languages Primordial

Silt Pools: The blue areas of the map are silt pools and are difficult terrain. The squares marked with “S” are *silt deep spots*.

Silt Deep Spot (S)

At-Will Terrain

Within a shallow pool of silt, occasional deep spots can be exploited by observant combatants.

Standard Action

Check: Nature check (hard DC) to recognize a deeper spot in the silt pool.

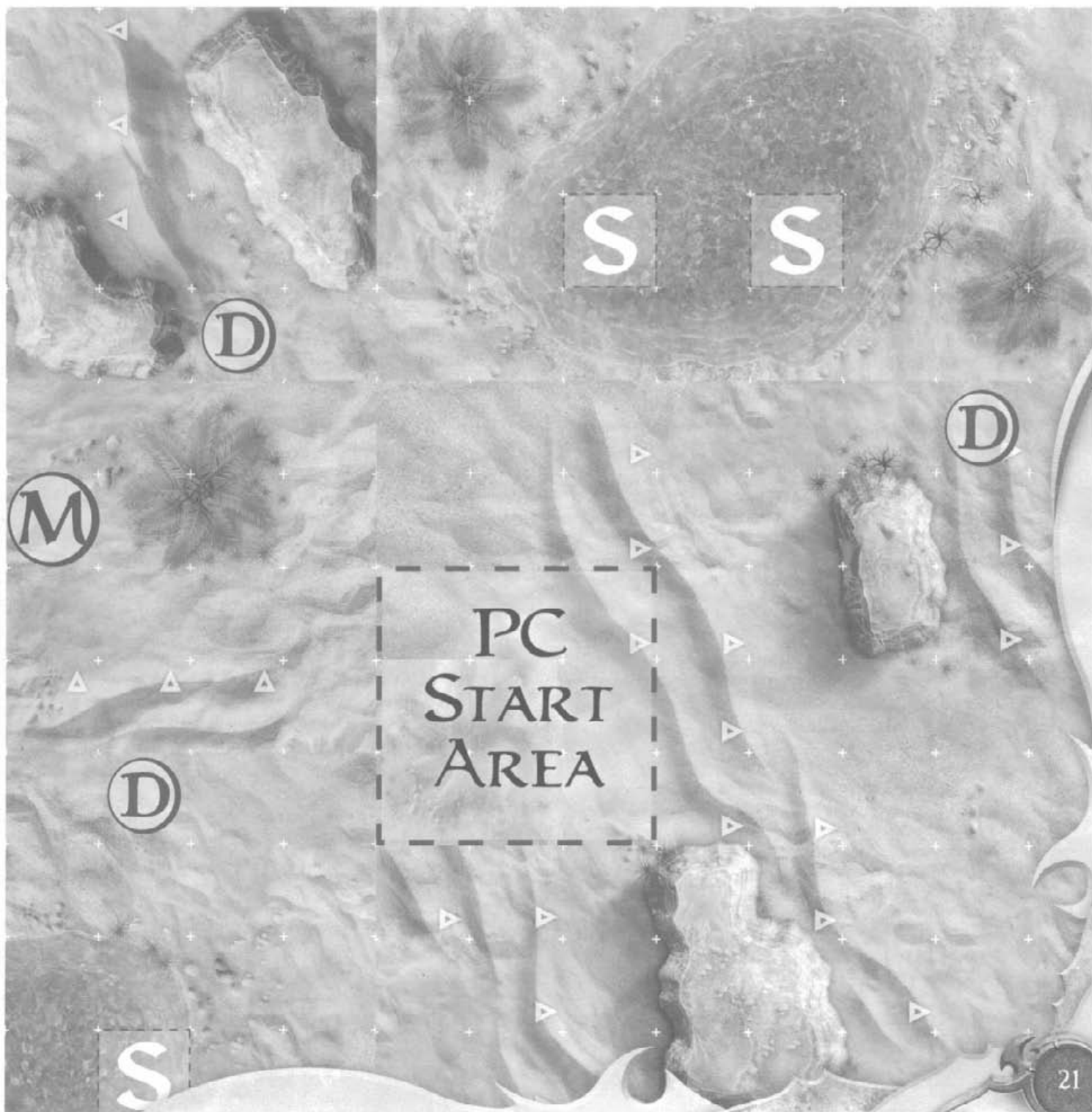
Target: One creature you choose within a silt pool

Attack: Level + 3 vs. Reflex

Hit: The target is restrained (save ends).

Trees: These small cacti provide cover against ranged attacks from creatures on the opposite side of the trees.

Treasure: Once the ssuran and his servants are defeated, Ralo bestows upon the two Veiled Alliance characters the *mystery of the hidden veil* (level 3 award; page 10; DARK SUN Campaign Setting). He also gives the party 2 *stonemeal biscuits* (level 3 item; page 10; Adventurer's Vault, page 192) and 4 *healing fruits* (potion of healing; PH 255).



ENCOUNTER 1-5: BACKS AGAINST THE WALL

Encounter Level 2 (675 XP)

SETUP

Ssurran shaman (S)

3 poisonscale slitherers (P)

Ankheg (A)

Before this encounter, each character performs a single skill check in the ongoing Fleeing Across the Wastes skill challenge (page 11). Once that's done, apply the results of the skill challenge conclusion.

When you are ready to begin, read:

Your path is blocked by the sheer face of a cliff that towers above you. The pursuing dark clouds mass behind you, but the storm of stone does not arrive. In the distance, you hear hissing and screeching. Although you keep a careful eye on the looming tempest, the attack comes instead from four ssurrans that scramble over the rocks.

The top and left side edge of the map forms a steep, 20-square tall cliff of black rock. The adventurers begin in the outlined area of the encounter map. They seem trapped, but the enemy will not enter the defiled area of black sand.

3 Poisonscale Slitherers (P)		Level 2 Soldier
Medium natural humanoid (reptile), lizardfolk		XP 125 each
HP 36; Bloodied 18		Initiative +6
AC 17, Fortitude 14, Reflex 15, Will 13		Perception +7
Speed 5 (swamp walk)		
TRAITS		
Slitherer Bravery		
A poisonscale slitherer gains a +2 bonus to attack rolls while it is adjacent to at least one ally.		
Slitherer Stability		
A poisonscale slitherer cannot be knocked prone and ignores forced movement.		
STANDARD ACTIONS		
⚔ Spear (weapon) ♦ At-Will		
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +8 vs. AC		
Hit: 1d10 + 3 damage.		
🏹 Javelin (poison, weapon) ♦ Encounter		
Attack: Ranged 10/20 (one creature); +6 vs. AC		
Hit: 1d6 + 3 damage, and the poisonscale makes a secondary attack against the same target.		
Secondary Attack: +4 vs. Fortitude		
Hit: 2d6 + 3 poison damage.		
Skills Athletics +8, Stealth +9		
Str 14 (+3)	Dex 17 (+4)	Wis 12 (+2)
Con 12 (+2)	Int 8 (+0)	Cha 8 (+0)
Alignment unaligned Languages Draconic		
Equipment spear, javelin x2		

TACTICS

The shaman has been sent by the Wastewalker to capture the adventurers, in particular the two arcane casters. The ssurrans' mission is hindered, however, because the adventurers have stumbled upon a defiled area that terrifies the lizardfolk. They refuse to enter or stand adjacent to the map section marked in black outline. If forced into that area, they retreat back to "safe" ground as soon as possible, incurring attacks of opportunity to do so.

If the adventurers remain wholly in the defiled area, the ssurrans take cover atop the boulders, using what ranged attacks they possess. One of the ssurrans carries a bundle of 20 extra bone javelins. If necessary, the ssurrans can make ranged basic attacks with these javelins at ranged 10/20 (one creature); +8 vs. AC; 1d6 + 3 damage.

DEVELOPMENT

At the end of the first round of combat, the ankheg bursts out of the ground and onto the battlefield. It detects food and does not care who it eats first. Both sides can attempt to control the ankheg's attacks by making contested Nature rolls (the shaman rolls for the ssurrans; up to two characters can roll or aid for the party). The higher result directs the ankheg's action for that round. The beast uses only basic attacks against the ssurrans. If one side controls the beast for three consecutive rounds, it sides with that group until its opponents have been defeated. Then, it turns on its former "allies."

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: The obsidian storm clouds looming over the area reduce the illumination to dim light.

Black Sand: The outlined area on the map is defiled land called black sand. A creature in a square of black sand regains half the normal hit points when targeted by healing powers or when spending healing surges.

Boulders: The smaller boulders in this area are 2 squares high. The two large, crescent-shaped boulders are 3 squares high. All boulders provide cover and require a DC 10 Athletics check to climb.

Treasure: The shaman carries a +1 orb of debilitating languor (level 2 item; page 10; Adventurer's Vault, page 93) and 2 healing fruits (potion of healing; PH 255).

Ankheg (A)

Large natural beast

Level 3 Elite Lurker

XP 300

HP 100; Bloodied 50

Initiative +10

AC 17, Fortitude 14, Reflex 16, Will 14

Perception +9

Speed 8, burrow 4 (tunneling)

Tremorsense 5

Resist 5 acid

Saving Throws +2; Action Points 1

TRAITS**Mandible Carry**

The ankheg can move at normal speed while grabbing a creature that is Medium or smaller.

STANDARD ACTIONS**① Claw ♦ At-Will**

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +8 vs. AC

Hit: 1d8 + 5 damage.

† Mandible Grab ♦ At-Will

Requirement: The ankheg cannot be grabbing a creature.

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +8 vs. AC

Hit: 1d8 + 5 damage, and the target is grabbed.

⚡ Acid Spray (acid) ♦ Recharge when first bloodied

Attack: Close blast 3 (creatures in blast); +8 vs. Reflex

Hit: 1d8 + 5 acid damage, and the target is slowed and takes ongoing 5 acid damage (save ends both).

MINOR ACTIONS**† Gnaw and Scuttle (acid) ♦ At-Will (1/round)**

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature grabbed by ankheg); +8 vs. AC

Hit: 1d8 + 2 damage, and ongoing 5 acid damage (save ends).

The ankheg then shifts 2 squares and pulls the target to a space adjacent to its new location.

Skills Stealth +11

Str 15 (+3)

Dex 20 (+6)

Wis 16 (+4)

Con 18 (+5)

Int 13 (+2)

Cha 4 (-2)

Alignment unaligned

Languages —

Ssuran Shaman (S)

Medium natural humanoid (reptile), lizardfolk

Level 3 Controller

XP 150

HP 47; Bloodied 23

Initiative +2

AC 18, Fortitude 15, Reflex 14, Will 16

Perception +9

Speed 6 (earth walk)

STANDARD ACTIONS**① Spear (weapon) ♦ At-Will**

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +8 vs. AC

Hit: 2d8 damage, and the shaman pushes the target 1 square.

② Sun Curse (fire) ♦ At-Will

Attack: Ranged 5 (one creature); +7 vs. Reflex

Hit: 2d6 + 2 fire damage, and the target is dazed until the end of the shaman's next turn.

☞ Treacherous Spirit (charm) ♦ Recharge if the power misses

Attack: Ranged 5 (one creature); +7 vs. Will

Hit: The target is dominated (save ends).

Skills Athletics +7, Nature +9

Str 12 (+2)

Dex 12 (+2)

Wis 17 (+4)

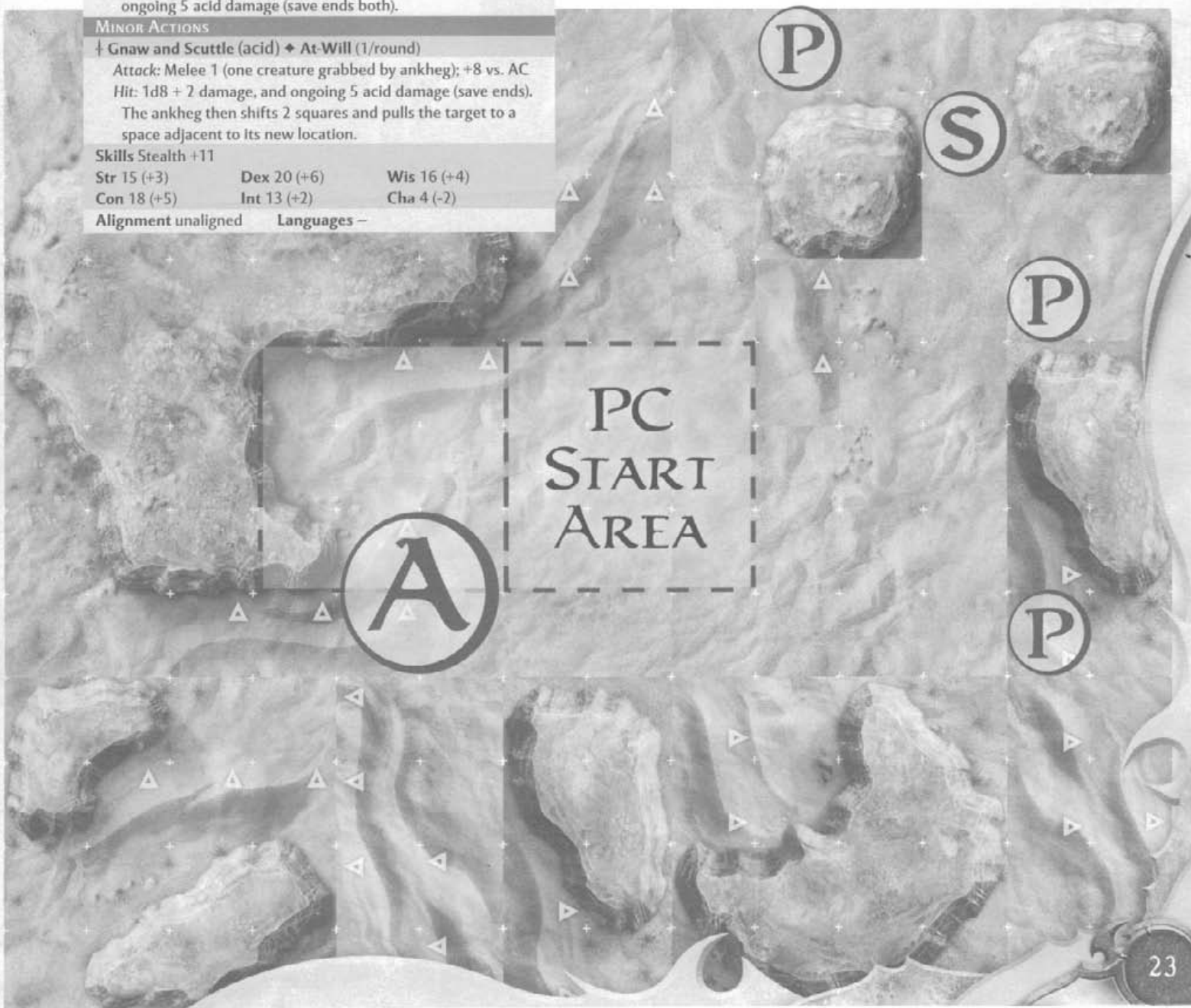
Con 15 (+3)

Int 10 (+1)

Cha 10 (+1)

Alignment unaligned

Languages Draconic





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