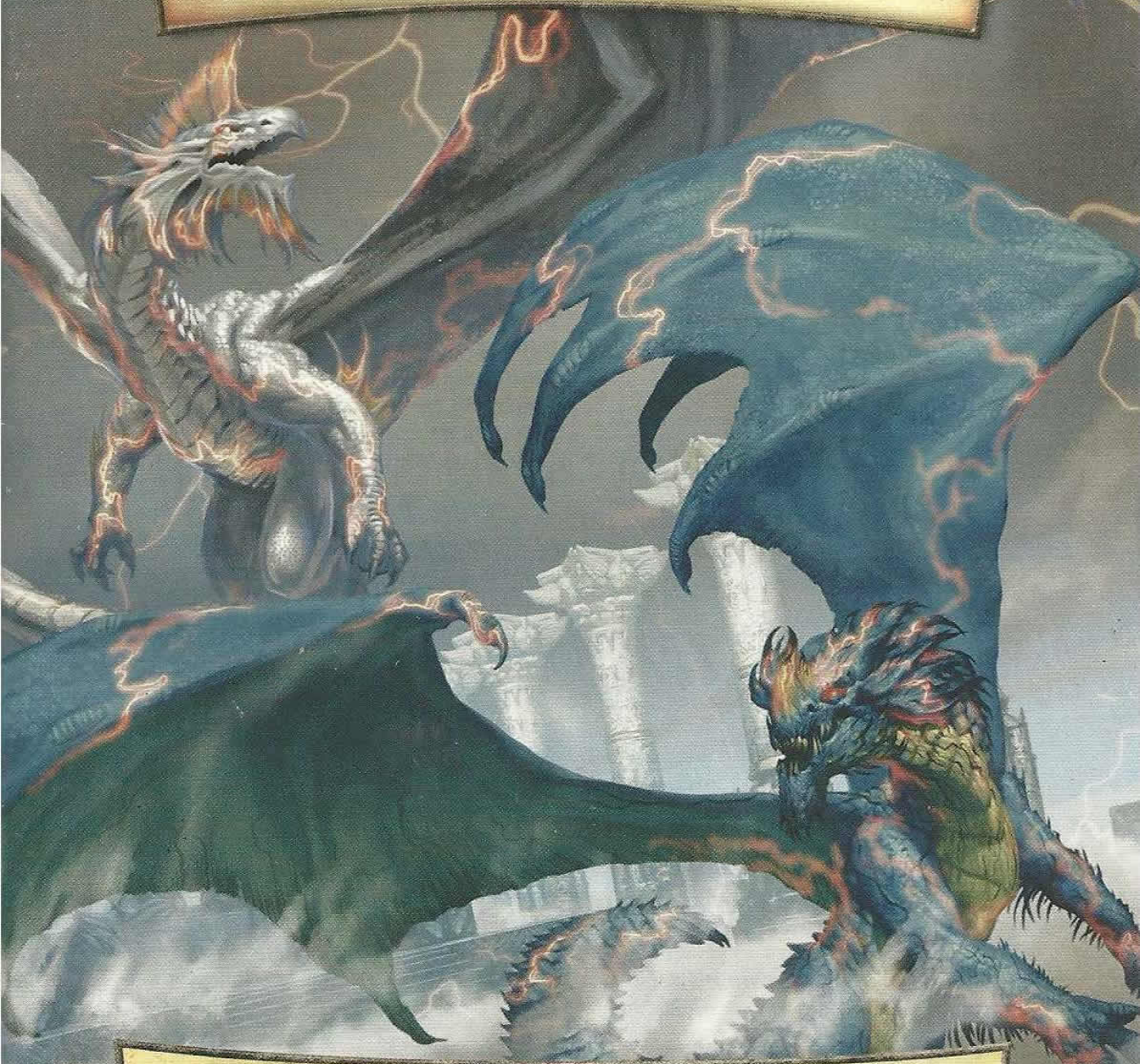


AGE 12+

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS[®]

LAIR ASSAULT



TEMPLE OF THE SKY GOD™

A CHALLENGE FOR CHARACTERS OF 7TH LEVEL

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DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®

LAIR ASSAULT:

TEMPLE OF THE SKY GOD™

Astride the legendary Mounts of Wind, the brave heroes venture into a corrupted temple in the clouds. Will the party survive the battle with the dark force that dwells there, or will they fall before the might of the temple's new master?

Welcome to the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS LAIR ASSAULT program! You hold in your hands a booklet that contains an ultra-challenging encounter designed to be played in a single game session. Odds are the characters will be annihilated, but that's part of the fun.

In this challenge, the heroes must liberate a temple in the sky from the clutches of an evil dragon. As the DM, your job is not simply to challenge the characters but to kill them outright—again, all in good fun. You can't play favorites or fudge die rolls. This adventure is tough enough that you don't need to. Let the dice fall where they may!

This challenge takes 2 to 4 hours to complete, depending on the experience level of the players.

CHARACTER CREATION

Going into this challenge, tell the players that the encounters are intentionally difficult, and characters and parties optimized for success are the most likely to succeed. Some players might know details about the scenario from previous sessions, which they are free to share with other players.

Players should create 7th-level characters, using any official 4th Edition DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® sources. Players can also use D&D FORTUNE CARDS™ during the challenge.

Each character has the following treasure.

- ◆ One magic item of 7th level or lower, one magic item of 8th level or lower, and one magic item of 6th level or lower. Only one of these items can be rare.
- ◆ 1,800 gp to spend on other items, only two of which can be consumable. The consumable items must be of the character's level or lower.

BACKGROUND

For centuries, the faithful of Shaundakul have sought prophecies from the "Voice of the Wind," an ancient oracle that serves the Rider of the Winds in a floating temple high above the wild and treacherous Stonelands north of Cormyr. Even after Shaundakul disappeared during the Spellplague, pilgrims continued to visit the site. They scaled the sharp-sided peak known as the Windspire, where they mounted trained flying creatures to bear gifts and offerings to the oracle in hopes of receiving insights into the future.

In recent months, travelers seeking the oracle have not returned, and foresters and prospectors in the Stonelands have reported a crimson light in the night sky where the blue radiance of the temple once shone. Cadellos Erethond, a priest of Shaundakul, has grown concerned. He has sought out brave adventurers to discover what has befallen the temple.

Unknown to Erethond, a blue dragon named Valraun has imprisoned the oracle with magic and corrupted the guardians of the temple. Styling himself the new Lord of the Windspire, Valraun leaches power from the temple with a dark ritual, hoping to steal the oracle's power of foresight and use it to gain dominion over the skies.

Assisted by the legendary Mounts of the Winds, the heroes must fly to the temple above the Windspire, face the corrupted temple guardians, and ultimately battle Valraun.

Will they defeat the dragon and free the oracle, or will Valraun blast them from the sky?

PREPARATION

This booklet comes with components needed to run the challenge. Prior to starting this challenge, familiarize yourself with the rules for mounted combat in the back of this booklet or those in the *Rules Compendium*.

Battle Map: The first part of the challenge uses the map that shows the undamaged temple. The reverse side depicts what happens to the temple when Valraun arrives.

Token Sheet: In addition to tokens representing the various monsters, this sheet includes special tokens representing the runes imprisoning the oracle.

Mount Cards: The challenge includes eight mount cards, from which players can select a mount to use during the challenge. Wait until starting the challenge before giving the mount cards to the players.

STARTING THE CHALLENGE

Allow the players to introduce their characters.

Then read:

You have journeyed to a temple of Shaundakul in the foothills outside the Cormyrean city of Arabel to meet with Cadellos Erethond. The aged high priest of Shaundakul seeks heroes to undertake a journey on behalf of his god, the Rider of the Winds. Cadellos and the acolytes have watched you compete against other adventurers in bouts of strength and skill, for they want only the most capable adventurers. You have defeated all your rivals, and now you stand before the senior priest to receive your reward.

“Brave adventurers!” Cadellos begins. “Above the clouds dwells the Voice of the Winds, an oracle of the skies who has served holy Shaundakul, even in his prolonged absence. For centuries upon centuries, pilgrims have sought the wisdom of the Voice. They come to us, and we provide them with mounts like those before you, which bear them to the temple where the oracle dwells.

“Yet in recent months, none who have journeyed to the temple have returned, and the sky around the temple has turned the color of blood. The few who have scaled the Windspire report hearing the mad howls of some angry beast upon the summer wind. We would know what has become of the Voice. If you would undertake this mission for us, we would be most grateful.

“Before you stand the legendary Mounts of the Winds. If you would venture into the sky and face its perils, you will need their assistance. Choose your mounts, champions of Shaundakul, and best of luck in your quest.”

IMPROVISING RULES IN LAIR ASSAULT

In D&D Lair Assault play, situations arise that aren't covered by the rules. Due to the adversarial nature of the challenge, it can be tempting to make calls that do not favor the players. If a situation arises where you must make such a call, avoid rulings that might seem unfair, biased, or against the spirit of the game. In general, make rulings that give the players a chance at success with an element of risk or chance.

Let's say a character falls, and his or her mount is unable to use *aerial rescue*. If another character is close by, either adjacent or on a mount somewhere below, you might allow that character to use an immediate reaction to grab the falling character. You might require a DC 23 Athletics check, with failure resulting in the character who made the attempt being knocked prone.

Alternatively, a character's mount might die, causing it and the adventurer to fall. You might allow the character to make an Athletics check to jump from the mount to a nearby surface, mount, or monster.

Discuss with the players the extent to which they want you to run the challenge “by the book.” Then exercise your judgment to make the challenge fun and interesting.

Mounts of the Winds

Distribute the mount cards to the players. Each player should choose one mount at the start of the challenge to serve as his or her faithful steed. Encourage the players to familiarize themselves with the flying, falling, and mounted combat rules in *Rules Compendium*. Each mount has the following characteristics, which you should describe to the players.

- ◆ **No Attacks:** The Mounts of the Winds are peaceful creatures. Though they gladly bear the adventurers, they don't attack enemies.
- ◆ **No Ability Scores:** A mount card does not show a creature's ability scores. Use 14 for a needed score, or +5 if a modifier is required.
- ◆ **Intelligent:** All the mounts understand Common. They are intelligent and extremely loyal. They obey reasonable commands.
- ◆ **Legendary Trait:** Each mount has a unique trait it bestows upon its rider.
- ◆ **Aerial Rescue:** Each mount has a power that allows it to swoop in once during the encounter to rescue a rider from falling. A mount can use this power even if it is not being ridden.
- ◆ **Loyal:** The mounts are extremely loyal. As such, they do not willingly leave the map once combat begins.
- ◆ **Hit Points and Healing Surges:** Each mount has one healing surge it can spend if a healing power allows it to do so. A mount that drops to 0 hit points dies. Mounts do not have the ability to use second wind.
- ◆ **Swapping Mounts:** Characters can swap mounts during the challenge. However, due to the bond formed when a mount is chosen, a mount can use aerial rescue only on the character who chose it at the start of the challenge.

When each player has chosen a mount, read:

You climb onto your mounts and depart amid the prayers and blessings of the priests of Shaundakul. Soon, the temple and foothills vanish in the distance. The air is chill, and the only sound is the beat of your mounts' wings.

Before long, the sky around you fades from clear blue to an ominous gray. You spy the Temple above the Windspire in the distance, an open marble structure rising out of the clouds with two rows of towering pillars flanking it. On nearby clouds, cobalt statues of sphinxes glare as eldritch lightning dances around them. Above the temple hovers a massive shape—a silver dragon, perhaps the guardian of this high holy place. Unnatural crimson energy writhes across its scaly hide.

Beneath you, in the heart of the temple, floats the oracle, a bald humanoid with no mouth or nose. Tendrils of crimson energy cage the oracle. They ripple from the floor, where arcane runes shimmer with a red light. At your approach, the voice of the imprisoned being emanates from the temple.

"This future is not known," it says. "They shall free us, or they shall perish."

What the Players Know

Tell the players the following circumstances of the challenge.

- ◆ No short rests are possible during the challenge, and due to the aerial journey, the adventurers have no time to perform rituals before the challenge. The characters roll initiative only once, at the start of the challenge.
- ◆ Describe the party and individual awards, but not the secret awards (page 23). Reveal fulfilled secret awards after the challenge is complete.
- ◆ Characters cannot willingly leave the map, and they can fly no more than 20 squares above or below it. Winds around the temple become fierce once combat begins, and any creature attempting to move too far beyond the temple risks being blown away. If a character is knocked out of combat, though, this rule does not prevent him or her from reentering the battle.
- ◆ The challenge ends in victory if the adventurers free the oracle. If the party is slain, the challenge ends in defeat.
- ◆ All the features of the area (see below).

Features of the Area

The following features and effects are consistent throughout the challenge area.

Illumination: The entire area is in bright light.

Clouds: The clouds in this challenge are solid, and creatures can walk on them. The clouds are 5 squares thick. A flying creature can fly through a hole in the clouds and travel beneath the clouds. The clouds block line of sight and line of effect.

Elevation: The temple is 5,000 feet (1,000 squares) above the ground.

Pillars: The pillars are 5 squares high, and creatures can stand on them.

Statues: The statues and their pedestals are made of marble. The pedestals are 2 feet high and are normal terrain. The statues are 1 square high and are blocking terrain.

Temple: The temple has a staircase leading up to the platform. The temple is 1 square above the clouds. The stairs are normal terrain.

Walls: The walls are 5 squares high, and creatures can stand on them.

Encounter Options

This challenge is designed for five party members. Here are some options for different difficulties and party sizes.

Nightmare Mode: If all players agree, you can run the challenge on “nightmare mode” by adding a second silver dragon or by adding an additional rune.

Four Players: Remove one of the guardians.

Six Players: Add two guardians of any type other than the silver dragon.

PART 1: THE GUARDIANS

This part of the encounter uses one side of the battle map. In this initial stage of the battle, the party members must engage the corrupted guardians of the temple and force Valraun to join the fray.

This part of the encounter uses the following tokens and tiles.

- ◆ 4 temple guardian tokens: the corrupted silver dragon (S) plus three additional temple guardians of your choice—but no more than two of one kind—chosen from among the air elemental (E), the hornstone gargoyle (G), and the shardstorm vortex (V)
- ◆ 5 rune tokens (R)
- ◆ Oracle token (O)



To begin the encounter, read:

As you approach the temple, three figures emerge from behind the statues of the sphinxes. [Describe your chosen Guardians from among the air elemental, gargoyles, and shardstorm vortex.] The silver dragon speaks in a low rumble. “So, the Oracle spoke truly. The heroes have come. Would you like to know your fate? Come then, and let us show you.”

Reveal the map of the undamaged temple, and place the monsters. Place the dragon above the temple, up to 10 squares above the ground (hereafter, the clouds and temple floor are called “solid ground”). Place each additional temple guardian adjacent to one of the three sphinx statues. Each guardian must be adjacent to a different statue.

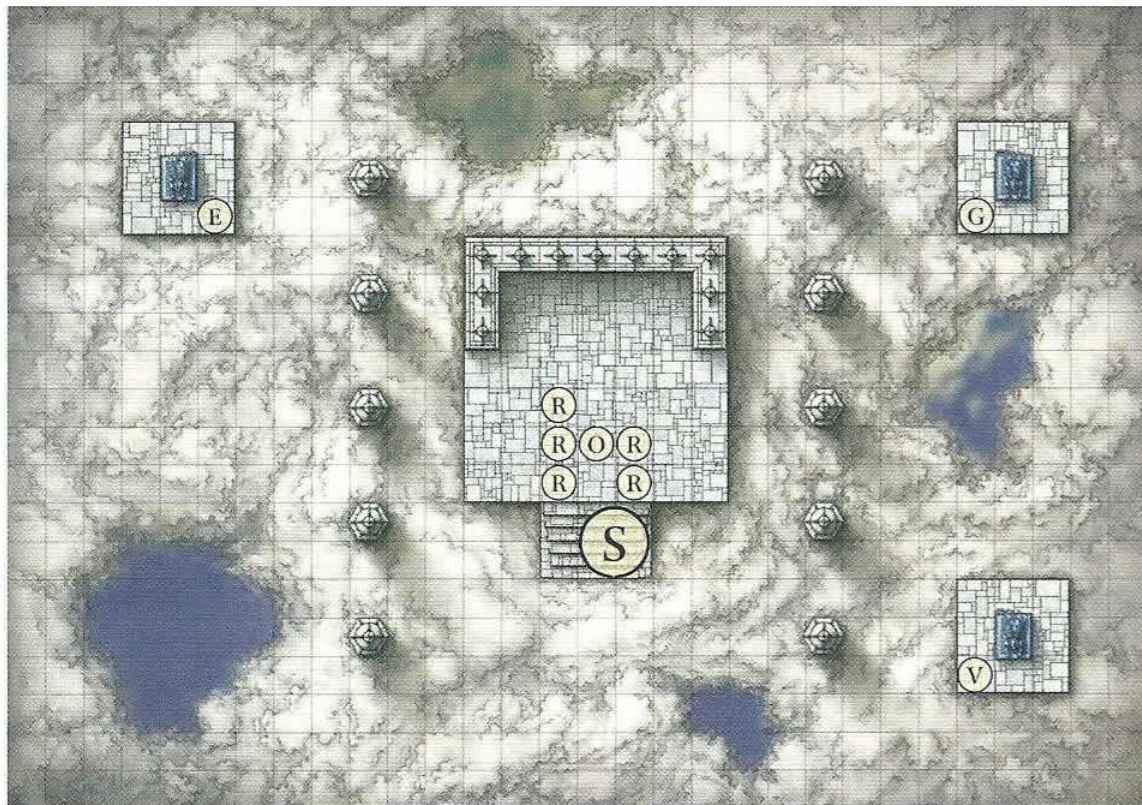
Have players place their mounts adjacent to any of the map’s borders. A player can have his or her character begin mounted or adjacent to his or her mount. A mount can start the encounter flying up to 5 squares above the clouds.

In one of the center squares in the temple, place the oracle. Place the rune tokens adjacent to the oracle with their brighter sides up. No runes should be placed on temple sections that collapse at the end of part 1.

Roll initiative for the monsters. Have the players roll initiative for their characters.

If any player wants to tie his or her character to his or her mount, allow it. Record who is tied in and who is not. A character tied to his or her mount gains a +5 bonus to saving throws that force him or her to dismount. A character tied to a mount cannot willingly dismount unless he or she teleports, spends a standard action to cut the bonds, or takes a similar action.

In addition to the monsters, the sphinx statues act on an initiative of 10 (see the “Hazards” section). At the end of each round, the oracle weakens one of the runes of his prison (see the “Freeing the Oracle” section), making it dimmer.



Sample tactical layout for part 1

Temple Guardians

The guardians have become corrupted. Crimson energy darts across their bodies, and their eyes shine red. A character can make the following skill checks to determine more information about the guardians.

- ◆ **Arcana DC 16:** Some kind of abyssal energy, the source of which is close by, has corrupted the guardians.
- ◆ **Insight DC 16:** Before being corrupted, these creatures were the guardians of the temple. Their behavior is unnatural.

Freeing the Oracle

In the heart of the temple is the oracle, an angelic humanoid bound to the temple. The oracle occupies 1 square, and creatures cannot pass through that square. The oracle is immune to damage and effects, including forced movement.

Several writhing crimson bars of eldritch energy tether the oracle. Beneath each tendril, an arcane rune etched into the ground glows brightly with an ominous red light. Although the oracle lacks the power to free itself, it has enough power to weaken the runes so that the adventurers can disable or destroy them. A character cannot affect a rune until the rune is weakened.



At the end of each round, the oracle extends its arm toward one of the runes closest to the character who is nearest to the oracle. The rune ceases to shine brightly and instead begins to flicker. Flip the rune tile to the weakened side.

When the oracle first weakens a rune, read:

The oracle says, "I have weakened the rune, but my power is limited. You will do the rest."

Any character adjacent to a rune knows the following countermeasure.

- ◆ **Disable Weakened Rune (Arcana, Athletics, Dungeoneering, or Thievery DC 16):** An unmounted character who is adjacent to one of the weakened runes can attempt to disable it as a standard action. On a success, the rune is destroyed (remove the token from the map). In addition, the disabling character takes 10 lightning damage, and all effects on the character (positive or negative) end.

The oracle can maintain the weakened state of only one rune at a time. If a rune is weakened but not disabled at the end of a round, then the oracle does not weaken an additional rune during that round.

Tactics

You can target characters' mounts to make the challenge more difficult. All the guardians focus on preventing characters from disabling runes. If a character uses an effect on the party that needs to be sustained, such as *moment of glory*, you can target that character to try to knock him or her unconscious.

Corrupted Silver Dragon: The corrupted silver dragon prefers to engage in melee with several opponents. It starts by using *instinctive fury* to pick out a mount. If three or more enemies engage it, the dragon uses *frightful presence* and *dragon onslaught*. The dragon avoids flying above gaps in the clouds, so it doesn't risk a high-altitude fall in doing so.

Sphinx Statues: Use *boon of the sphinx* to keep monsters from becoming immobilized or otherwise incapacitated. If none of the monsters need assistance,

TRACKING ALTITUDE

Running three-dimensional combat can be difficult. Consider using a d10 or a d20 to track the altitude of each creature by placing the die adjacent to the creature or in front of the respective creature's controller.

Since the temple is so high above the ground, a creature that falls through a hole in the clouds is not necessarily out of the challenge. If a creature does fall, it immediately plummets 100 squares (see "High-Altitude Falls" in the "Falling" section). During the creature's turn, though, if it is able to fly, it might be able to stop its descent and return to the temple (see the "Falling" section).

use *charm of the sphinx* to damage enemies and slide them toward gaps in the clouds.

The Guardians: The guardians can operate in melee or at range, depending on which ones you selected. Have the air elemental hide in holes in the clouds to gain the benefit of *phantom on the wind*. A gargoyle can pluck a rider from a mount and then use *skewering drag* to pull the character to a hole in the clouds before dropping him or her as a free action.

Ending Part 1

The map flips when one of the following conditions is met.

- ◆ Two runes are disabled.
- ◆ The corrupted silver dragon is bloodied or suffers a high-altitude fall.

If the map would flip in the middle of a creature's turn, complete that creature's turn before flipping the map.

When the map flips, sections of the clouds disintegrate, and Valraun, an abyssal blue dragon, emerges. Mark creatures' locations on the minimap and flip over the battle map. Place Valraun and the abyssal vortexes anywhere on the border of the map.

When the map flips, read:

Jagged red lightning erupts from the clouds, reducing portions of the temple to rubble and chipping large fragments off the cobalt statues. Shrieking winds rip through the entire area, toppling some of the pillars and sending them careening to the ground far below. The clouds part, leaving only open sky where they once were.

A large blue dragon wreathed in shadows and crimson light appears. Nearby, vortexes of wind and fire swirl.

"You shall not free the oracle, mortals!" the dragon snarls. "I am Valraun, the new lord of Windspire. Through the powers of the oracle, I have seen your doom!"

The storm persists into part 2, where it has a significant impact on the battle.

PART 2: RISING STORM

This part of the encounter uses the following additional tokens and tiles.

- ◆ Valraun token (B)
- ◆ 4 abyssal vortex tokens (A)

When the map flips, add Valraun and the abyssal vortexes to the initiative order immediately after the creature that ended its turn before the map flipped. Record Valraun's *instinctive lightning* in the initiative order, as well.

The Storm

When Valraun arrives, he summons a vast storm of jagged lightning and shrieking winds. The storm has the following effects.

- ◆ **Damage:** Each sphinx statue takes 25 damage.
- ◆ **Terrain Change:** Sections of the ground fall away. Any nonflying creature that is standing on a square that no longer exists as solid ground on the reverse side of the map immediately falls. If the character is adjacent to an unoccupied square of solid ground, he or she can make a saving throw to avoid falling. On a success, the character slides into the square of solid ground.
- ◆ **Electrified Clouds:** The clouds are electrified with red lightning. Whenever a creature ends its turn standing on clouds, it takes 10 lightning damage.

Tactics

Any remaining guardians act as they did in part 1.

Valraun: Valraun opens with *breath weapon* or *lightning burst* if enemies are grouped. He uses *instinctive lightning* to keep himself out of melee.

Abyssal Vortex: The vortexes use *gale* to slide enemies off edges, or they swarm the runes to drive away anyone who attempts to disable them. Keep at least one vortex safe and prepared to use *aerial rescue* to prevent Valraun from being knocked out of the sky.



Sample tactical layout for part 2

Ending the Challenge

If the characters kill Valraun, they must still disable the runes to free the oracle and achieve victory.

When the party disables the final rune, read:

The oracle's prison collapses, and it raises its arms in triumph.

If any guardians are alive, read:

The crimson light fades from the guardians, and they look angrily toward Valraun.

If Valraun is alive, read:

A shadowy rift opens in the red sky and pulls Valraun toward it. The dragon flaps its wings and claws at the air, but to no avail. Turning furious eyes on the oracle, he cries, "But you showed me . . . victory . . ." He disappears into the rift, and it closes behind him.

Finally, read:

The storm dissipates as quickly as it came, and the sky shines a brilliant shade of blue. Clouds start to form again around the temple. The oracle, no longer wan and haggard, turns to face you.

"Would you like to know what the future holds?" it asks.

HAZARDS

At three of the four corners of the map are cobalt statues of sphinxes set atop short marble pedestals. The statues defend the temple and help keep the temple's guardians aloft. The statues always act on an initiative of 10.

Whenever an allied creature would fall, *blessing of the sky god* prevents it. The statues coruscate with eldritch blue energy and send out a bolt of it to suspend a creature in danger of falling. Only when all the statues are disabled or destroyed is it possible for a guardian to fall.

A character adjacent to a statue can inspect or interact with it. If a character inspects a statue, inform him or her of the options in Countermeasures only if a character is trained in the respective skill.

Corrupted Sphinx Statue

Level 8 Hazard

Object

Detect automatic

Initiative 10

HP 75

AC 22, Fortitude 20, Reflex 4, Will –

Immune necrotic, poison, psychic, ongoing damage, all conditions, forced movement

TRAITS

☀ **Blessing of the Sky God** ♦ Aura 30

A temple guardian that has at least 1 hit point cannot fall while in the aura. If a guardian would fall, it instead hovers in its initial position until it can fly on its own again or until it drops to 0 hit points.

STANDARD ACTIONS

✂ **Charm of the Sphinx** (charm, psychic) ♦ At-Will

Attack: Ranged 30 (one creature); +11 vs. Will

Hit: 3d6 + 5 psychic damage, and the statue slides the target up to 3 squares.

Boon of the Sphinx ♦ At-Will

Effect: One temple guardian in the statue's aura can make a saving throw against an effect that a save can end.

COUNTERMEASURES

♦ **Disable:** Arcana or Thievery DC 23 (standard action). *Requirement:* The character must be adjacent to the statue and trained in the skill used. *Success:* The statue can take no actions, and its aura is deactivated.

♦ **Suppress:** Arcana DC 16 (minor action). *Requirement:* The character must be adjacent to the statue and trained in Arcana. *Success:* The statue cannot take a standard action until the end of the character's next turn.

♦ **Topple:** Athletics DC 23 (standard action). *Requirement:* The character must be adjacent to the statue. *Success:* The statue topples over and is destroyed, so that it is difficult terrain rather than blocking terrain.

MONSTERS

Shardstorm Vortex

Level 8 Skirmisher

Medium elemental magical beast (air, earth)

HP 88; Bloodied 44

Initiative +10

AC 22; Fortitude 20, Reflex 21, Will 20

Perception +7

Speed 0, fly 8 (hover)

Immune disease, poison



TRAITS

Sandblast ◆ Aura 1

Enemies in the aura take a -2 penalty to all defenses.

STANDARD ACTIONS

⊕ Abrasive Slam ◆ At-Will

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +11 vs. Fortitude

Hit: 2d8 + 7 damage.

↔ Whirling Blast ◆ Recharge ☼ ☼

Effect: The shardstorm vortex shifts up to 4 squares and makes the following attack.

Attack: Close burst 1 (enemies in the burst); +11 vs. Reflex

Hit: 2d10 + 7 damage, and the vortex pushes the target 1 square.

Miss: Half damage.

Str 10 (+4)

Dex 19 (+8)

Wis 16 (+7)

Con 16 (+7)

Int 5 (+1)

Cha 6 (+2)

Alignment unaligned

Languages Primordial

Air Elemental

Level 8 Lurker

Medium elemental magical beast (air)

HP 69; Bloodied 34

Initiative +13

AC 22, Fortitude 19, Reflex 21, Will 20

Perception +4

Speed 0, fly 8 (hover)

Vulnerable 5 fire



TRAITS

Phantom on the Wind

The air elemental becomes invisible whenever it starts its turn without an enemy adjacent to it.

The invisibility lasts until the end of its next turn or until it attacks.

STANDARD ACTIONS

⊕ Slam ◆ At-Will

Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +13 vs. AC

Hit: 2d8 + 7 damage.

↔ Rampant Storm ◆ At-Will

Attack: Close blast 3 (enemies in blast); +11 vs. Reflex

Hit: 3d8 + 7 damage, and the target is dazed until the end of the air elemental's next turn if it could not see the elemental before the attack.

Skills Stealth +15

Str 17 (+7)

Dex 20 (+9)

Wis 11 (+4)

Con 15 (+6)

Int 5 (+1)

Cha 8 (+3)

Alignment unaligned

Languages understands Primordial

Hornstone Gargoyle**Level 8 Brute**

Medium elemental humanoid (earth)

HP 107; Bloodied 53**AC 20, Fortitude 22, Reflex 19, Will 19****Speed 6, fly 8****Immune petrification****Initiative +7****Perception +12****Darkvision****STANDARD ACTIONS****⊕ Claw ♦ At-Will***Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +13 vs. AC*Hit:* 2d10 + 9 damage.**⊕ Impaling Charge ♦ At-Will***Effect:* The gargoyle charges and makes the following attack in place of a melee basic attack.*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +13 vs. AC*Hit:* 2d10 + 9 damage, and the target is grabbed (escape DC 16) and takes ongoing 5 damage until the grab ends.**MOVE ACTIONS****Skewering Drag ♦ At-Will***Effect:* The gargoyle moves up to half its speed, pulling a creature grabbed by it with it. The gargoyle provokes no opportunity attacks from the grabbed creature for this movement.**Skills Stealth +12****Str 20 (+9)****Dex 16 (+7)****Wis 16 (+7)****Con 17 (+7)****Int 5 (+1)****Cha 11 (+4)****Alignment unaligned****Languages Primordial****Abyssal Vortex****Level 9 Minion Controller**

Medium elemental magical beast (air, fire)

HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.**Initiative +7****AC 23, Fortitude 21, Reflex 22, Will 20****Perception +4****Immune force, lightning, poison****Speed 0, fly 8 (hover)****STANDARD ACTIONS****⊕ Gale ♦ At-Will***Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +12 vs. Fortitude*Hit:* 8 damage, and the vortex slides the target 1 square.**TRIGGERED ACTIONS****Aerial Rescue ♦ Encounter***Trigger:* Valraun falls within a number of squares of the vortex equal to the vortex's speed + 1.*Effect (Free Action):* The vortex flies up to its speed to a square adjacent to Valraun, and Valraun stops falling until the end of his next turn.**Str 3 (+0)****Dex 17 (+7)****Wis 10 (+4)****Con 13 (+5)****Int 4 (+1)****Cha 15 (+6)****Alignment chaotic evil****Languages –**

Corrupted Silver Dragon

Level 8 Solo Brute

Large natural magical beast (dragon)

HP 376; Bloodied 188

Initiative +7

AC 20; Fortitude 22, Reflex 19, Will 18

Perception +10

Speed 7, fly 7 (hover)

Darkvision

Resist 15 cold

Saving Throws +5; Action Points 2



TRAITS

Action Recovery

Whenever the dragon ends its turn, any dazing, stunning, or dominating effect on it ends.

Instinctive Fury

On an initiative of 10 + its initiative check, the dragon can use a free action to charge and use *bite*, or to use *bite*. If the dragon cannot use a free action to make this attack due to a dominating or stunning effect, then that effect ends instead of the dragon making the attack.

STANDARD ACTIONS

⊕ Bite ◆ At-Will

Attack: Melee 2 (one creature); +13 vs. AC

Hit: 2d8 + 11 damage.

⊕ Claw ◆ At-Will

Attack: Melee 2 (one creature); +13 vs. AC

Hit: 2d8 + 7 damage.

↔ Dragon Onslaught ◆ At-Will

Effect: Close burst 2 (enemies in the burst); the dragon uses *claw* against each target.

↔ Breath Weapon (cold) ◆ Recharge ☼ ☼

Attack: Close blast 5 (creatures in the blast); +11 vs. Reflex

Hit: 2d8 + 10 cold damage, and the target gains vulnerable 5 to all damage (save ends).

Miss: Half damage.

↔ Frightful Presence (fear) ◆ Encounter

Attack: Close burst 5 (enemies in the burst); +11 vs. Will

Hit: The target is stunned until the end of the dragon's next turn.

TRIGGERED ACTIONS

↓ Wing Slice ◆ At-Will

Trigger: While flanking the dragon, an enemy hits or misses the dragon with an attack.

Attack (Immediate Reaction): Melee 2 (the triggering enemy and an enemy flanking with the triggering enemy); +13 vs. AC

Hit: 2d6 + 7 damage.

↔ Bloodied Breath ◆ Encounter

Trigger: The dragon is first bloodied.

Effect (Free Action): *Breath weapon* recharges, and the dragon uses it.

Skills Athletics +16, Insight +10

Str 24 (+11)

Dex 16 (+7)

Wis 12 (+5)

Con 22 (+10)

Int 12 (+5)

Cha 13 (+5)

Alignment unaligned

Languages Common, Draconic

Valraun**Level 8 Solo Artillery**

Large natural magical beast (dragon)

HP 360; Bloodied 180**AC 22, Fortitude 22, Reflex 19, Will 20****Speed 8, fly 10 (hover)****Resist 10 lightning****Saving Throws +5; Action Points 2****Initiative +7****Perception +12****Darkvision****TRAITS****Action Recovery**

Whenever Valraun ends his turn, any dazing, stunning, or dominating effect on him ends.

Instinctive Lightning

On an initiative of 15, Valraun can use a free action to fly up to his speed and use *lightning burst*. This movement does not provoke opportunity attacks. If Valraun cannot use a free action to make this attack due to a dominating or stunning effect, then that effect ends instead of Valraun making the attack.

STANDARD ACTIONS⚡ **Gore (lightning) ♦ At-Will**

Attack: Melee 2 (one creature); +13 vs. AC

Hit: 4d6 + 7 lightning damage.

⚡ **Claw ♦ At-Will**

Attack: Melee 2 (one or two creatures); +13 vs. AC. If Valraun targets only one creature, he can make this attack twice against that creature.

Hit: 2d8 + 5 damage.

⚡ **Lightning Burst (lightning) ♦ At-Will**

Attack: Area burst 2 within 20 (creatures in the burst); +11 vs. Reflex

Hit: 2d10 + 7 lightning damage.

Miss: Half damage.

⚡ **Breath Weapon (lightning) ♦ Recharge ☹☹**

Attack: Close blast 10 (up to three creatures in the blast); +11 vs. Reflex.

Hit: 3d10 + 8 lightning damage.

Miss: Half damage.

MINOR ACTIONS⚡ **Bringer of Storms ♦ At-Will (1/round)**

Requirement: Fewer than four abyssal vortexes are present in the encounter.

Effect: One abyssal vortex appears adjacent to Valraun. The vortex acts on the same initiative count as the other vortexes.

TRIGGERED ACTIONS⚡ **Wing Backblast ♦ At-Will**

Trigger: An enemy hits Valraun with a melee attack.

Attack (Immediate Reaction): Close burst 2 (enemies in the burst); +11 vs. Reflex

Hit: The target falls prone.

Effect: Valraun flies up to half his speed. This movement does not provoke opportunity attacks.

⚡ **Bloodied Breath ♦ Encounter**

Trigger: Valraun is first bloodied.

Effect (Free Action): Breath weapon recharges, and Valraun uses it.

Skills Athletics +15, Insight +12

Str 22 (+10)

Dex 16 (+7)

Wis 17 (+7)

Con 18 (+8)

Int 12 (+5)

Cha 13 (+5)

Alignment evil

Languages Common, Draconic

MOUNTED COMBAT

The mounted combat rules define the relationship between rider and mount, specify how to mount a creature and how to dismount, and explain how to combine the actions and options of the two creatures, almost as though mount and rider were a single creature.

Mounting and Dismounting

The most common ways for a rider to get on or off a mount are the mount and dismount actions. Uncommon ways include teleportation and jumping.

Mount (Move Action): The rider mounts a creature adjacent to it and enters its space.

Dismount (Move Action): The rider dismounts, moving from the mount's space to a square adjacent to it.

Rules for the Mount and Rider

A mount and rider follow these rules while the rider is mounted.

Space: A rider and its mount both occupy the mount's space and are considered adjacent to each other. However, the origin square of any of the rider's powers and other effects is not affected by the mount's size. Whenever a rider uses an effect that has an origin square (such as a melee, a ranged, a close, or an area power), the rider first picks where that square is located in the mount's space, and the effect uses that origin square. (The rider still shares the mount's space for the purpose of triggering effects, such as opportunity attacks.) For instance, if a Medium rider uses a close burst attack power, the rider chooses a single square within the mount's space, and the burst emanates from that square. This rule means that if the burst targets each creature within it, rather than each enemy, it can hit the mount.

Initiative: A mount and its rider act on the rider's initiative count, even if the mount had a different initiative before the rider mounted it. The two continue to act on the same initiative count after the rider dismounts.

Actions (Adventurers Only): An adventurer and his or her mount have a shared set of actions: a standard action, a move action, and a minor action. However, they each have their own free actions. The player chooses how the two creatures divide up the set of actions on the adventurer's turn. Most commonly, the mount takes a move action to walk or shift, and the adventurer takes a standard action to attack. The adventurer and the mount also share a single immediate action each round and a single opportunity action each turn. If one of the creatures can't take actions, the shared set of actions is still available to the other creature. If either creature is dazed, that creature can take only one of the shared actions.

If the adventurer dismounts, the two still share one set of actions on that turn, but they have separate sets of actions on subsequent turns.

Charging: When the rider charges, the rider and the mount move up to the mount's speed and then the rider makes the charge attack.

Targeting the Mount and Rider: Even though a mount and its rider occupy the same space, they are still separate creatures and are targeted separately. For instance, an attack that targets only one creature can target either the mount or the rider, not both. In contrast, area and burst attacks can affect both mount and rider, since the two are in the same space.

Provoking Opportunity Attacks: If the mount's movement provokes an opportunity attack, the attacker chooses to target either the mount or the rider, since the two of them move together. If the mount or the rider provokes an opportunity attack by using a ranged or an area power, the attacker must target whichever one of them provoked the opportunity attack.

Forced Movement: If a mount is pulled, pushed, or slid, its rider moves with it. If the rider is pulled, pushed, or slid and the mount isn't, the rider can have the two of them move together. Otherwise, the rider is dismounted and falls prone in the destination space of the forced movement.

Teleportation: If either a mount or its rider is teleported, the other does not teleport with it. If a mount is teleported without its rider, the rider is dismounted and falls prone.

Falling Prone: If a mount is flying when it is knocked prone, it falls. If a mount falls prone while it is on solid ground, its rider is dismounted and falls prone in an unoccupied space of the rider's choice adjacent to the now-prone mount.

A rider who is knocked prone while mounted can immediately make a saving throw. On a roll of 9 or lower, the rider is dismounted and falls prone in an unoccupied space of the rider's choice adjacent to the mount. On a roll of 10 or higher, the rider is neither dismounted nor knocked prone.

A rider who voluntarily drops prone falls prone in an unoccupied space of the rider's choice adjacent to the mount.

FLIGHT TRAITS

Many flying creatures have traits related to flight, which are noted in a creature's stat block.

Altitude Limit: If a creature has a specified altitude limit, the creature falls at the end of its turn if it is flying higher than that limit. For example, a creature that has an altitude limit of 2 falls at the end of its turn if it is flying higher than 2 squares.

Hover: A creature that can hover, such as a beholder, can remain in the air even when it is stunned.

Fly Speed: To fly, a creature takes the walk, run, or charge action but uses its fly speed in place of its walking speed. A creature that has a fly speed can also shift and take other move actions, as appropriate, while flying.

Moving Up and Down: While flying, a creature can move straight up, straight down, or diagonally up or down. There is no additional movement cost for moving up or down.

Falling Prone: If a creature is knocked prone while it is flying, it falls (see also “Flying Creatures” in the “Falling” section). This means a flying creature falls when it becomes unconscious or is subject to any other effect that knocks it prone. The creature isn’t actually prone until it lands and takes falling damage.

Remaining in the Air: A flying creature does not need to make a special effort to remain aloft; the creature is assumed to be flying as it fights, moves, and takes other actions. However, a flying creature falls the instant it is stunned or knocked unconscious, unless it can hover (see the “Flight Traits” sidebar).

Landing: If a creature flies to a surface it can hold onto or rest on, the creature can land safely.

Terrain: Terrain on the ground does not affect a flying creature if the terrain isn’t tall enough to reach the creature. Because of this rule, flying creatures can easily bypass typical difficult terrain, such as a patch of ice on the ground.

Falling

When a creature falls at least 10 feet, it is likely to take damage. Most often, a creature falls because of forced movement.

Falling Damage: A creature takes 1d10 damage for each 10 feet it falls, to a maximum of 50d10. The creature falls prone when it lands, unless it somehow takes no damage from the fall.

- *Fast Alternative:* If a creature falls more than 50 feet, it takes 25 damage per 50 feet, plus 1d10 damage for each 10 extra feet.

Large, Huge, and Gargantuan Creatures: If only part of a creature’s space is over a pit or a precipice, the creature doesn’t fall. (Sometimes a creature ends up in such a position as a result of forced movement.) On the creature’s next turn, it must either move to an unoccupied space that is at least as large as its space or squeeze if it wants to remain on the edge of the drop.

Reducing Falling Damage: If a creature has training in Acrobatics, it can make a check to reduce the damage of a fall.

No Opportunity Actions Triggered: When a creature falls past an enemy, the creature does not trigger opportunity actions, such as opportunity attacks, from that enemy that are normally triggered by movement.

High-Altitude Falls: Some encounters take place very far above the ground. In such an encounter, it is possible for a creature to spend more than 1 round falling to the ground. As a rule of thumb, such a creature falls 500 feet during its first turn of falling. If it is still falling at the start of its turn, it can take actions on that turn as normal. If none of those actions expressly halts the fall, the creature falls 500 feet at the end of the turn. This sequence continues until the creature ceases falling or lands.

Flying Creatures: If a creature falls while it is flying, it descends the full distance of the fall but is likely to take less damage than a creature that can't fly. Multiply the creature's fly speed by 5 and subtract that value from the distance of the fall, then figure out falling damage. If the difference is 0 or less, the creature lands without taking damage from the fall. For instance, if a red dragon falls when it is 40 feet in the air, subtract its fly speed of 8 (8 squares = 40 feet) from its altitude. The difference is 0, so the dragon lands safely and is not prone.

If a creature is flying when it starts a high-altitude fall, it has one chance to halt the fall by making a DC 30 Athletics check as an immediate reaction, with a bonus to the check equal to the creature's fly speed. On a successful check, the creature falls 100 feet and then stops falling. On a failure, the creature falls as normal.

award earns a player 10 glory, so a player can earn a total of 200 glory for collecting all the awards. Have the players record their awards and glory on the player tracking form. A player can earn a specific award only once, regardless of the number of times he or she plays the challenge.

Party Awards

Back from Whence You Came: Defeat the challenge.

Conquer the Guardians: Slay all four temple guardians.

Dragonslayer: Slay Valraun before disabling all the runes.

Dropping Like Flies: More than one party member falls to his or her death.

Epic Win: Defeat the challenge on nightmare mode.

TPK: Every character in the party dies.

Individual Awards

And the Horse You Rode in On: Your mount dies.

Bad Breath: Get caught in a dragon's *breath weapon*.

Crunchy, and Good with Ketchup: A dragon scores a critical hit on you.

Dragon Banter: Engage Valraun in some banter.

High-Ho Silver: Your mount rescues you from falling.

Mighty Blow: Score a critical hit.

Runesmith: Disable one or more runes.

See You Next Fall: Cause an enemy to have a high-altitude fall.

Stormchaser: Kill three or more abyssal vortexes.

See You at the Bottom: Fall to your death.

Secret Awards

Friend of Shaundakul: Defeat the challenge without slaying any guardians.

Who Needs Mounts: Use a power to fly at any point during the challenge.

Rider on the Storm: Take lightning damage from the clouds.

Riddle of the Sphinx: Disable or destroy a sphinx statue.

Maura Raincloud

Level 7 Manticores

Large natural magical beast (mount)

HP 78; Bloodied 39 Healing Surge 1
AC 21, Fortitude 18, Reflex 19, Will 20
Speed 6, fly 8
Skills Athletics +10, Perception +8

TRAITS

Aerial Advantage (mount)

Maura's rider's has combat advantage against creatures that are not currently flying.

TRIGGERED ACTIONS

Aerial Rescue (mount) + Encounter

Trigger: Maura's rider falls and is within a number of squares of Maura equal to Maura's speed + 1.

Effect (Free Action): Maura flies up to its speed to a square adjacent to the rider, and the rider stops falling and becomes mounted on Maura.

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Borsok Mightyspikes

Level 7 Manticores

Large natural magical beast (mount)

HP 78; Bloodied 39 Healing Surge 1
AC 21, Fortitude 18, Reflex 19, Will 20
Speed 6, fly 8
Skills Athletics +10, Perception +8

TRAITS

Tail Spikes (mount)

Whenever an enemy makes a melee attack against Borsok's rider, that enemy takes 5 damage.

TRIGGERED ACTIONS

Aerial Rescue (mount) + Encounter

Trigger: Borsok's rider falls and is within a number of squares of Borsok equal to Borsok's speed + 1.

Effect (Free Action): Borsok flies up to its speed to a square adjacent to the rider, and the rider stops falling and becomes mounted on Borsok.

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Garogg of the North Wind

Level 7 Hippogriff

Large natural beast (mount)

HP 82; Bloodied 41 Healing Surge 1
AC 21, Fortitude 20, Reflex 19, Will 18
Speed 6, fly 10
Skills Athletics +12, Perception +3

TRAITS

Fast as the Wind (mount)

Garogg's rider gains a +8 power bonus to initiative.

TRIGGERED ACTIONS

Aerial Rescue (mount) + Encounter

Trigger: Garogg's rider falls and is within a number of squares of Garogg equal to Garogg's speed + 1.

Effect (Free Action): Garogg flies up to its speed to a square adjacent to the rider, and the rider stops falling and becomes mounted on Garogg.

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Tulanni the Indomitable

Level 7 Hippogriff

Large natural beast (mount)

HP 82; Bloodied 41 Healing Surge 1
AC 21, Fortitude 20, Reflex 19, Will 18
Speed 6, fly 10
Skills Athletics +12, Perception +3

TRAITS

Eagle's Spirit (mount)

Tulanni's rider gains a +1 power bonus to all defenses.

TRIGGERED ACTIONS

Aerial Rescue (mount) + Encounter

Trigger: Tulanni's rider falls and is within a number of squares of Tulanni equal to Tulanni's speed + 1.

Effect (Free Action): Tulanni flies up to its speed to a square adjacent to the rider, and the rider stops falling and becomes mounted on Tulanni.

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Telosi of the White Sun

Level 7 Pegasus

Large immortal magical beast (mount)

HP 80; Bloodied 40 Healing Surge 1
AC 21, Fortitude 18, Reflex 20, Will 19
Speed 6, fly 9 (hover)
Skills Athletics +8, Perception +5

TRAITS

White Sun's Blessing (mount)

Telosi's rider gains resist 5 lightning and resist 5 cold.

TRIGGERED ACTIONS

Aerial Rescue (mount) + Encounter

Trigger: Telosi's rider falls and is within a number of squares of Telosi equal to Telosi's speed + 1.

Effect (Free Action): Telosi flies up to its speed to a square adjacent to the rider, and the rider stops falling and becomes mounted on Telosi.

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Sarala the Silver Arrow

Level 7 Pegasus

Large immortal magical beast (mount)

HP 80; Bloodied 40 Healing Surge 1
AC 21, Fortitude 18, Reflex 20, Will 19
Speed 6, fly 9 (hover)
Skills Athletics +8, Perception +5

TRAITS

Sure-Footed Charge (mount)

When Sarala's rider charges, Sarala's movement during the charge does not provoke opportunity attacks.

TRIGGERED ACTIONS

Aerial Rescue (mount) + Encounter

Trigger: Sarala's rider falls and is within a number of squares of Sarala equal to Sarala's speed + 1.

Effect (Free Action): Sarala flies up to its speed to a square adjacent to the rider, and the rider stops falling and becomes mounted on Sarala.

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Shiriki Sharpbeak

Level 7 Griffon

Large natural beast (mount)

HP 88; Bloodied 44 Healing Surge 1
AC 19, Fortitude 21, Reflex 19, Will 17
Speed 6, fly 10
Skills Athletics +13, Perception +3

TRAITS

Fury of Sharpbeak (mount)

If Shiriki's rider scores a critical hit, the target takes 10 extra damage.

TRIGGERED ACTIONS

Aerial Rescue (mount) + Encounter

Trigger: Shiriki's rider falls and is within a number of squares of Shiriki equal to Shiriki's speed + 1.

Effect (Free Action): Shiriki flies up to its speed to a square adjacent to the rider, and the rider stops falling and becomes mounted on Shiriki.

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Orien the Golden Lion

Level 7 Griffon

Large natural beast (mount)

HP 88; Bloodied 44 Healing Surge 1
AC 19, Fortitude 21, Reflex 19, Will 17
Speed 6, fly 10
Skills Athletics +13, Perception +3

TRAITS

Leonine Surge (mount)

Orien's rider can use his or her second wind as a minor action.

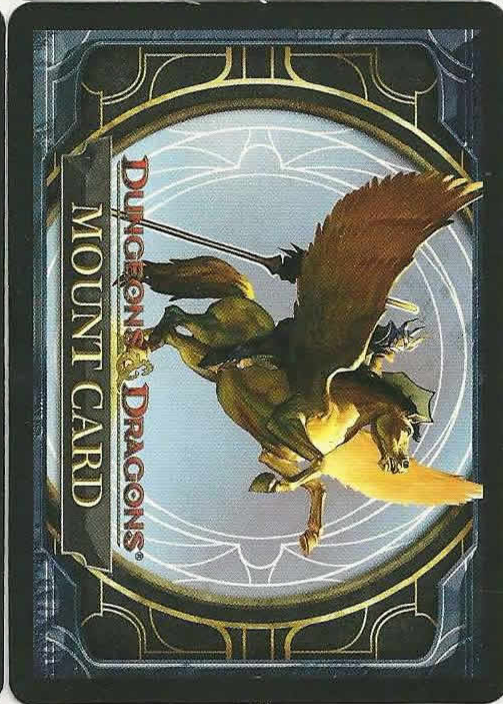
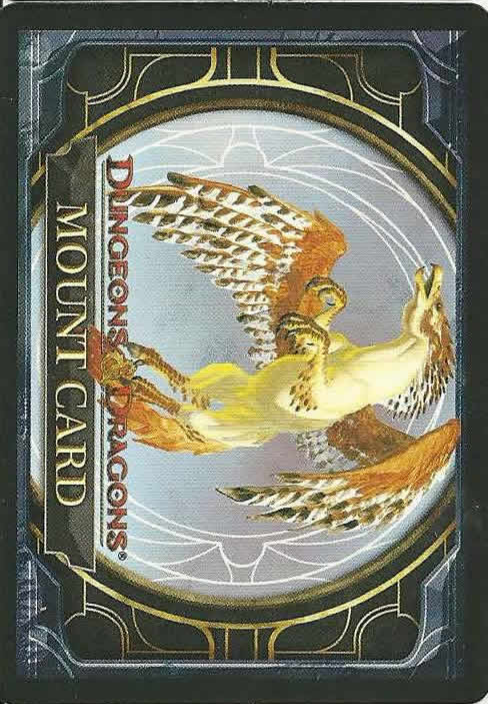
TRIGGERED ACTIONS

Aerial Rescue (mount) + Encounter

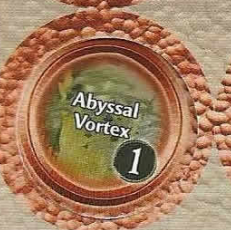
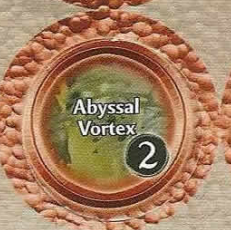
Trigger: Orien's rider falls and is within a number of squares of Orien equal to Orien's speed + 1.

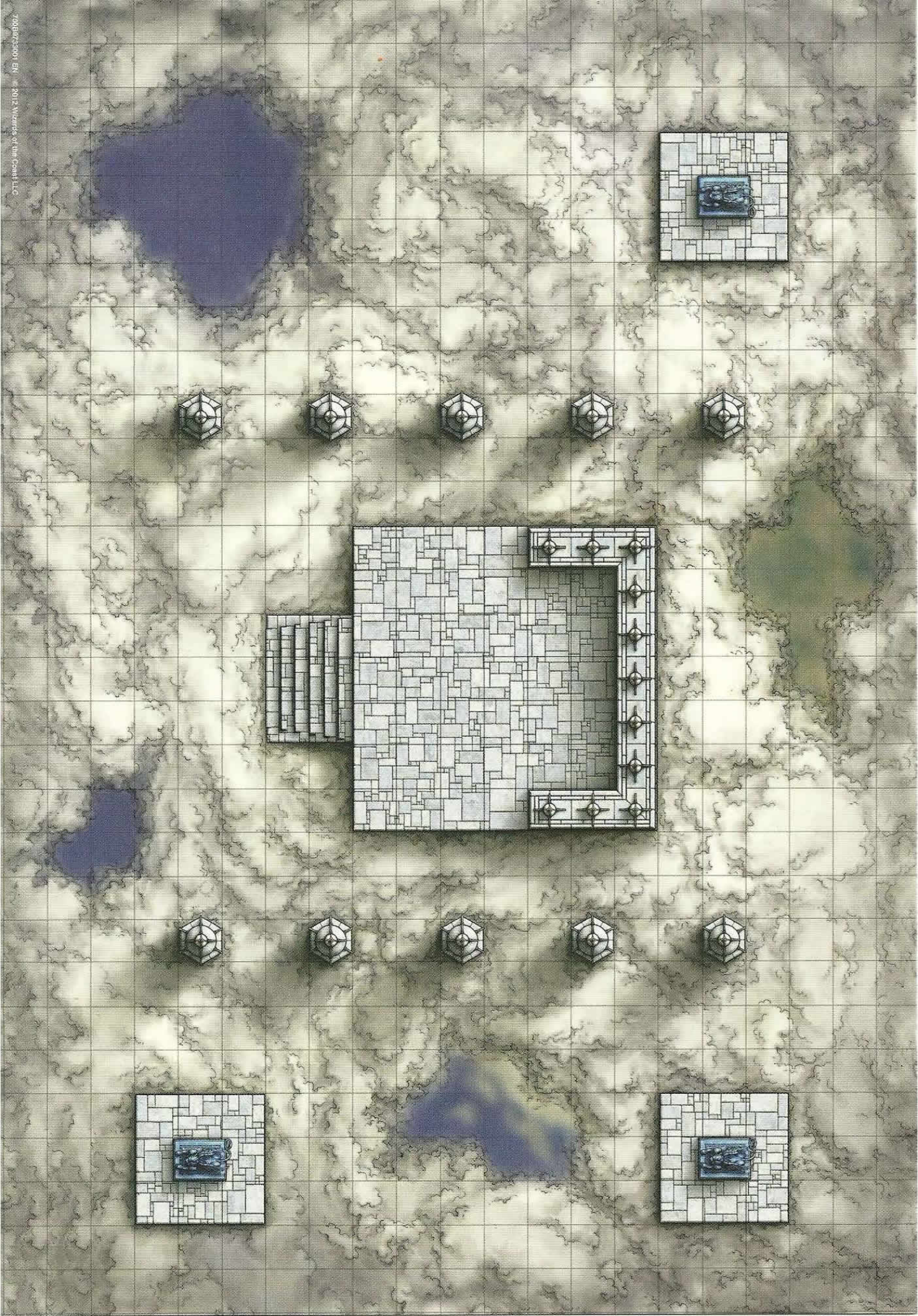
Effect (Free Action): Orien flies up to its speed to a square adjacent to the rider, and the rider stops falling and becomes mounted on Orien.

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DUNGEONS & DRAGONS

LAIR ASSAULT

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