

ADVENTURES IN THE FORGOTTEN REALMS



FROM CYAN DEPTHS

EPISODE 5

ONE POWER-HUNGRY WIZARD'S SEARCH FOR an arcane and dangerous artifact has finally come to an end. He has found his prize. And so new troubles begin. With his newfound power, this villainous wizard promises to conjure castles for cold-hearted mercenaries and wayward armies who pledge fealty to him. These are the early days of a plan to wage war on the Sword Coast, and it falls to the characters to fight the wizard behind it before he musters an army around the artifact he pulled from the cyan depths of Highstar Lake.

This short DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® adventure is written to suit four to six characters of 10th level. With this text and the core D&D manuals, you have everything you need to play. You may find the *Sword Coast Adventurer's Guide* of additional use for its coverage of the High Moors of Faerûn—the chilly, grassy highlands where this adventure is set.

END OF A SERIES

This adventure is written as the finale of a five-part series. If you have not made use of the prior adventures in this series, you'll find this scenario to be the start of something rather than the end. By the finale of this adventure, the characters may be in possession of a potent and dangerously tempting artifact. What will they do with it?

The villain of this adventure—a wizard called Tyreus, from the vast city-world of Ravnica—was the antagonist of previous adventures in this series. More about his history can be discovered in those adventures. If you prefer not to dwell on the past, or if you want to substitute another villain in for ours, you can adapt this adventure to refer to a power-hungry enemy of your own. The lure and power of the *Stone of Creation* could attract any number of villains.

This adventure might be the end of this series, but it needn't be the end of the tale. What happens next is in the hands of you and your players. Whether this is the end of Tyreus or the start of the characters' control of a powerful artifact, future adventures (and consequences from this series) await.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

This adventure hinges on the players' choices and their characters' tactics. So much depends on the

actions undertaken by the adventurers—they are the most crucial variable in this equation.

Once word reaches the adventurers that a nefarious, evil wizard is summoning callous and wicked mercenaries into the High Moors with a plan to build an army, their response dictates the flow of the adventure. Everything is underway at a conjured fortress on Highstar Lake, at the northern edge of the High Moors near Faerûn's Sword Coast. That location is the heart of this short adventure, for that is where the villain dwells. When the adventurers arrive at the peculiar fortress, they find the wizard making bargains with mercenary captains. These are the first days of a grand plan to lay claim to the High Moors and besiege the surrounding lands. If the adventurers want to quash these evil schemes now, they must deal with elementals, mercenaries, and the power-hungry wizard himself. And they must hurry.

Will the adventurers launch a direct assault on the magical castle or try something more subtle? Do they seek to slay the wizard or merely rob him of his powerful artifact? What fate awaits the *Stone of Creation*—and who, if anyone, ends up with it?

Whether this adventure feels like a climactic final confrontation with Tyreus or the start of a new challenge (or both) depends a great deal on what adventures the players and their characters have undertaken before this one. The outcome of this short adventure series, and the fate of Tyreus, is in their hands.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

The adventurers can become involved in this scenario in several ways, whether they're continuing along from previous scenarios or entering into the fray with this one.

THE MOMENT TO STRIKE

Adventurers already entwined in this adventure series might have ample reason to confront Tyreus by now. They can locate him either by searching the High Moors or by following leads in Secomber, as described in "The Lure of Power." Depending on what allies the adventurers have made in previous adventures, any number of NPCs could seek out the characters to let them know about a mysterious new



castle on the shore of Highstar Lake and the blue-coated wizard some call the Cobalt Mage.

Otherwise, while passing through Secomber, the adventurers could encounter mercenaries headed for Highstar Lake. The mercenaries post bills looking for sword-arms to defend the Castle of the Cobalt Mage, whom they say can grow castles from the ground. Tyreus isn't afraid of drawing the adventurers to him—he wants to face them, defeat them, and move on with his plans for the Sword Coast.

THE LURE OF POWER

If the players' characters have not played prior adventures in this series, they may hear rumors of mercenary companies sending warriors into the High Moors, drawn by stories of a wizard mustering an army “and paying in conjured castles.” These mercenary platoons are stopping all along the route

to gather resources and muster troublemakers on the way, giving the adventurers plenty of time to beat them to the fortress and learn more about Tyreus and the *Stone of Creation* there. The Cobalt Mage doesn't hide his ambitions for power anymore.

WHEN TO ACT

Don't let things stagnate at the fortress. If the adventurers give Tyreus and the mercenaries time to muster forces before they intervene, that decision has consequences. The number of mercenaries on site at the fortress grows over time. The mercenary leaders (and even the elementals) move on, leaving more numerous but less potent foes behind to serve Tyreus. And those departing leaders likely each has a *keystone* with them, which could change the choices the adventurers make if they come into possession of the *Stone of Creation*.

THE FORTRESS OF THE COBALT MAGE

The adventure begins when the adventurers get close enough to Tyreus's fortress to scout the area. Exactly how close that is depends on the spells and other powers available to them. The fortress is easy to spot, located right on the shore in the southwest region of Highstar Lake. The fortress also has excellent sight lines to the surrounding countryside, with at least half a mile of open wetlands and grasslands in every direction offering minimal cover to approaching creatures.

FORCES GATHERED

In these early days of faction-forming and army-building, Tyreus's defenses are dangerous but full of holes. The fortress is staffed with dozens of *unseen servants*, conjured when the fortress was. They make poor defenders but can respond to trouble by ringing the wall-mounted bells meant to summon the servants. Meanwhile, some of the mercenaries present likely stand watch atop the walls and towers, looking out for approaching trouble. They are few in number but confident in their belief that any travelers in sight are potentially trouble.

ELEMENTALS

Tyreus has used up a number of magical resources he once possessed to form tenuous bonds with a few elementals in the region. He tasked them with scouring the lakeshore for the *Stone of Creation*. When it was found, just offshore amid heaps of loose stones, Tyreus used a *telekinesis* spell and the elementals' help to bring the *Stone* into his keep's cellar vault (area 8).

A handful of ill-tempered elementals still roam the area. They are not loyal to Tyreus or the mercenaries, but they welcome opportunities to do battle with Tyreus's enemies—until they grow bored with Tyreus or find better allies, that is. Then they might turn on him and his mercenaries. It is often difficult to predict the whims of elementals.

Two **air elementals**, two **water elementals**, and one **earth elemental** roam the lakeshore's waters, stony edges, and skies near the fortress.

MERCENARIES

The mercenaries on site have come to see about making a client of Tyreus. He has summoned them so that he can bribe each mercenary army with a *keystone of creation*. Tyreus has promised each mercenary leader a fortress in exchange for their service pacifying the High Moors and bringing Se-comber into his control. Neither mercenary captain has agreed—yet—but both will if given time. None of the mercenaries trust Tyreus, but they believe he

can be endured long enough to build up wealth and then possibly be usurped or defeated in a few years.

By day, the mercenaries train in the fortress's narrow yard or the surrounding fields. By night, they drink and tell stories, occasionally meeting and mingling with their counterparts. Most of them are eager to get their *keystone* and leave, but Tyreus is drawing their visit out until the mercenaries' reinforcements arrive to serve and defend Tyreus.

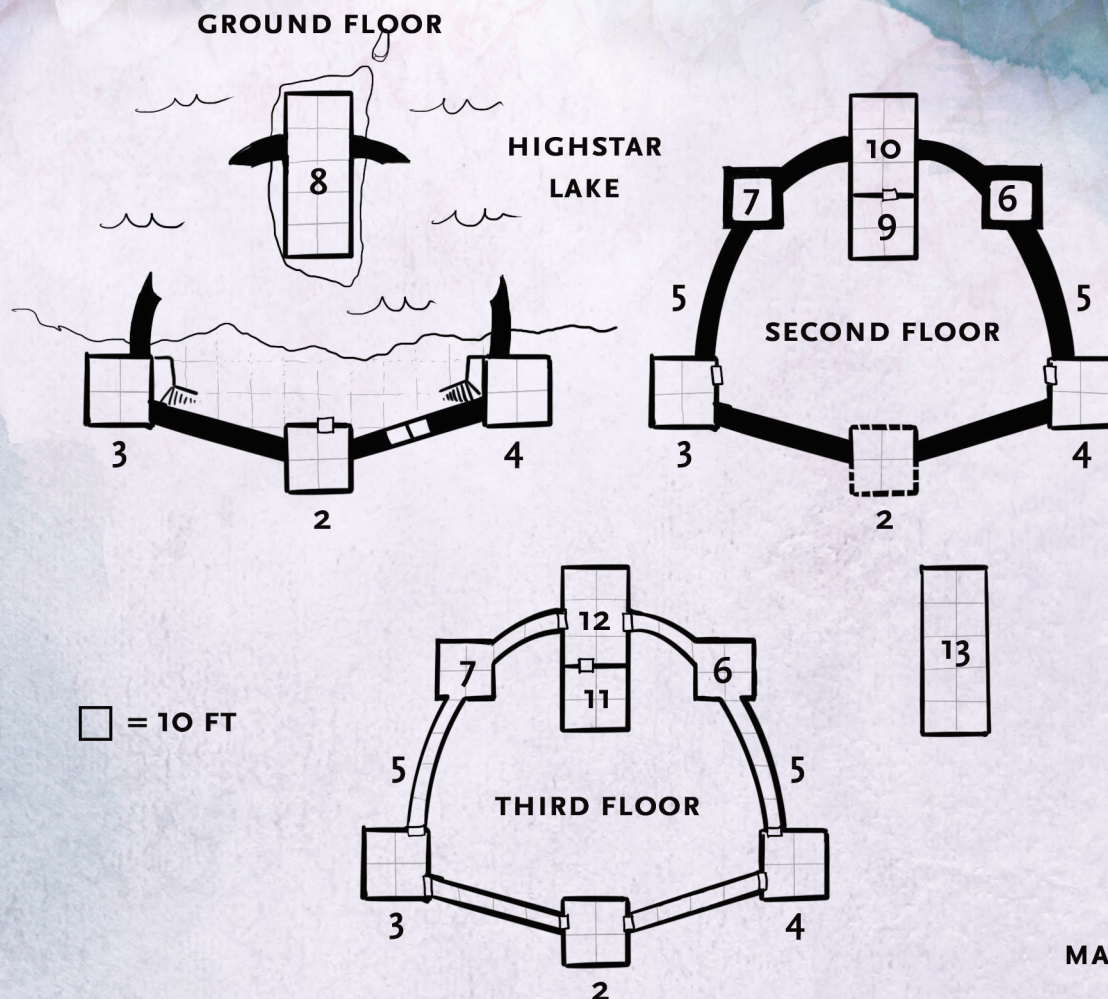
Each of the visiting, villainous cadres consists of five **mercenary envoys** (see appendix A) and a leader who together represent a larger group of soldiers of fortune. The larger groups these envoys represent are waiting elsewhere in the Realms for their envoys to return with *keystones* of their own.

The Banner of Blades. Founded and led by Audra Drakesblade (female half-elf, lawful evil, **gladiator**) just ten years ago, the mercenaries of the Banner of Blades have a growing reputation in the Sword Coast. Some see them as troublemakers, others as troubleshooters, but they are undeniably effective. Supposedly trained and tested by battles throughout lands to the south, rumors claim they are an invading army in disguise. In truth, the Banner of Blades has attracted outcasts, survivors, and other remnants from broken armies—soldiers who crave regimented diligence and the capable leadership Audra provides. Soldiers of the Banner see themselves not as a single army of three-hundred mercenaries but as five- and ten-person squads with reinforcements throughout the Realms. They simply all fight under the same emblem: a green banner decorated with swords arrayed in diamond formation.

The Iron Lions. For decades, the Iron Lions have fancied themselves a secret menace. Most fighting folk of the Sword Coast have never heard of them, and the Lions like it that way—all warfare is based on deception—leaving the Lions to boast, brag, and lie in equal measure about battles they've won or survived. Today, the Iron Lions consist of a hundred or so seasoned soldiers in search of fortune. This is the smallest their makeshift army has ever

MERCENARIES WITH FAMILIAR FACES

If your campaign made use of the first adventure in this series, "In Scarlet Flames," these mercenaries present an opportunity to involve some familiar NPCs. Presuming they survived previous adventures and are still in the mercenary business, Lothar Stoutsmark (male human, chaotic neutral, bandit captain) and his cohorts—Gordo, Vic, and Rora (all spies)—can also be in attendance at Tyreus's fortress. They camp in the lakeshore yard. Their history with the adventurers may create new opportunities or challenges for everyone involved.



been; these are lean times. Their current commander, Gollis “Leonid” Stamper (male human, neutral evil, **gladiator**), is the grandson of the company’s founder, Goran, but he didn’t inherit his role. Gollis took leadership of the Lions two years ago by coaxing his commander into a duel and slaughtering him. The emblem of the Iron Lions is a simple iron-gray lion’s head on a red flag.

FEATURES OF THE FORTRESS

Every part of the fortress mimics some aspect of another castle, keep, or fort seen by Tyreus over the years. The result is a strange hodgepodge of architectural styles, from the mundane functionality of the central guard tower to the fanciful sweeping arches of the northern and southern walls. Those walls offer little protection against any kind of military attack or siege. Their purpose is to imitate the decorative walls of a large scholastic building Tyreus admired in Ravnica.

Tyreus doesn’t care that so much of the structure serves little purpose as a fortress. Its job is to intrigue and entice, and it doesn’t have to last long. He expects to revise or dispel the fortress any-

way and conjure another fortress when the mood strikes him.

Ceilings. In the towers, rooms are 9 feet high with flat, stone ceilings. In his own keep, Tyreus conjured 10-foot ceilings with decorative timber rafters from which he could hang lanterns and other details he imagined into existence.

Doors. Most doors here are conjured wood with iron hinges and fixtures. Each door is 7 feet tall and rounded at the top.

Light. Much of the fortress allows ample natural light during the day, despite the security risks. The servants light conjured torches and candles all throughout the fortress around dusk, keeping things well lit. Guests are welcome to snuff out lights overnight as they see fit.

Sound. Most areas have stone floors without rugs or rushes to soften them. Tyreus didn’t think to include such details outside of his own keep. Every floor of every tower features a simple handbell hung from the wall somewhere, allowing the place’s servants to be summoned—or to raise an alarm.

LOCATIONS AT THE FORTRESS

Each key area of the fortress is described here, often with different floors grouped together by the tower or other structure they are part of.

1. LAKESHORE GATE

It's an impressive wooden gate with ornate iron fixtures. The door itself is etched deep with depictions of a sprawling castle beneath a starry sky and a fiery meteor rocketing in from above. The castle is filled with armored soldiers, and atop its highest tower stands a male human figure in a long coat, either welcoming or summoning the meteor.

The gate is typically barred from the inside. The yard within the gated wall is a small patch of grass and a wide stretch of pebbly beach lining the cold shore of Highstar Lake. The fortress does little to disrupt the winds and chill coming off the lake. This yard's primary purpose is to provide a small patch of ground where supplicants can camp and petition Tyreus—or pledge fealty to him.

The waters here hide or once hid the *Stone of Creation*.

2. CENTRAL GUARD TOWER

This spare, simple tower feels new and somehow rote. It looks sturdy but bland, built without any adornment or decorations. It serves a purpose but has nothing to say.

Tyreus hardly gave this tower a second thought when he conjured the fortress. He imagined it as a place for half-real guards to look out over the lakeshore gate in an endless vigil—and that is all it is.

Ground Floor. Other than the stairs leading up to the rest of this tower, this chamber holds only a barrel for collecting rainwater. It has no arrow loops or other openings for looking outside the fortress.

Second Floor. This spare, bare chamber squints out at the world through narrow arrow loops.

Third Floor. The taller windows in this area allow views of the outside world. Doorways open onto the crenelated battlements atop the fortress walls here, too.

Roof. This level is little more than the stone ceiling of the level below, ringed by a crenelated wall to provide easy cover to guards overseeing the lakeshore gate or surrounding countryside.

3. SOUTHERN GUARD TOWER

Another basic tower of solid construction. It smells like fresh mortar, lake water, and the body odors and boiled dinners of the mercenaries camped here.

The mercenaries of the Iron Lion flag have made this tower their camp. They've made themselves comfortable but do not show much respect for the place.

Ground Floor. Accessible primarily via the stairs from the second floor, this space is intended as a refuge for guests or a storage area for their supplies and equipment. A door, latched from the inside only, leads out to the lakeshore.

Second Floor. Stairs lead up from the lakeshore yard, hug the inner wall, and let out here on the second floor, which has been turned into a recreational area for mercenaries.

Third Floor. This floor now serves as the personal quarters and command post of the mercenary leader, Gollis (male human, neutral evil, **gladiator**). He keeps the room a bit of a mess, anchored by a large table to which he has a map of the High Moors pinned down with daggers. Doors lead from this room to the central guard tower and the southern arched walkway.

Roof. Low battlement walls surround an empty roof overlooking the green hills of the High Moors and the steely waters of the lake.

4. NORTHERN GUARD TOWER

Another basic tower of solid construction. Aside from the smell of fresh mortar, the air tastes like cinnamon branches.

Audra's mercenaries, under her Banner of Blades, reside here for now. They conduct an orderly, regimented existence here, using cinnamon branches and incense to add comfort without diminishing their military orderliness.

Ground Floor. Accessible primarily via the stairs from the second floor, this space is intended as a refuge for guests or a storage area for their supplies and equipment. Audra's mercenaries sleep here. A door, latched from the inside only, leads out to the lakeshore.

Second Floor. Stairs clinging to the inner wall of the fortress lead here from the yard below. This floor serves as the gathering area for mercenaries from Audra's company; they leave someone here most of the time to watch for trouble.

Third Floor. Audra (female half-elf, lawful evil, **gladiator**) claimed this floor for herself. She sleeps and reads here but meets with her people downstairs. This chamber is comfortable enough, with piles of furs as a bed and half a dozen history books stacked by a deep leather chair, where she studies and plans. This floor exits onto walkways leading toward the central guard tower and the northern arched walkway.

Roof. This crenelated roof is bare but offers a grand view of the surrounding highlands and the crisp waves of Highstar Lake.

5. ARCHED WALKWAYS

High winds whistle through this area. The glittering lake ebbs below.

Up here, winds are often powerful enough to impose disadvantage on ranged attacks. The low guarding walls on each side of the walkway are only 3 feet tall, offering little protection for travelers along this path. (Tyreus wants people to feel precarious on their way to visit him.)

6. NORTHERN TURRET

This curious architectural feature appears to have been left unguarded. Much of the floor is made up of an iron grate, through which you can see the waves of the lake dozens of feet below.

This hanging turret, like its counterpart, is meant to appear as an architectural flourish but is also part of Tyreus's defenses against intrusion by creatures on foot.

Ground Floor. This tower has no ground floor. It is part of the arched northern wall of the fortress, conjured into existence by Tyreus, and suspended above the lake. The bottom of this tower is about 20 feet above the water.

Second Floor. This empty chamber is open to the lake below.



Third Floor. This area is an overlook and a check-point, designed by Tyreus to harm intruders and alert him of approaching threats. It has no ceiling and is open to the air, allowing air elementals to reach it with ease. The floor of this area includes a wide, metal grate that can be opened to create a pit into the lake below; the switch is by the doorway on the keep's side of the room.

The third floor's eastern doorway is trapped with a *glyph of warding's* explosive runes and a *linked glyph* connected to an alarm glyph (DC 18 to detect both); the effect glyph for the alarm is in Tyreus's sanctum (area 10). The glyphs respond to any creature that does not say the password "visionary" before passing through the doorway. If Tyreus is alerted to an intruder, he prepares for combat as described in his entry in appendix A. For more about *linked glyphs*, see appendix B.

7. SOUTHERN TURRET

The unusual turret appears empty. Much of the floor is little more than an iron grate, with the lake's waves ebbing dozens of feet below.

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8. CELLAR VAULT

This arched chamber of stone feels less like a cellar and more like a vault, with barrels full of coins and precious gold and silver wares piled up carelessly in the corner. A large landscape painting of the lake rests atop the heap.

The double doors in the eastern wall are blocked by the stone of the outer wall, which Tyreus can reshape using the *keystone* or other magical means when he likes. Tyreus intends this room to be storage for treasures and supplies collected from those paying tribute to him. Aside from a table and a scale for weighing treasure, the room contains treasures and traps.

The *keystone* for this fortress is fitted into the arched ceiling here, 10 feet above the ground.

Traps. Two magical glyphs are hidden in the floor in the center of this room (DC 18 to detect them both) and keyed to activate if anyone but Tyreus or the fortress's mystical servants touches the 10-foot area in the center of the room. The first is an alarm glyph from a linked glyph spell; its effect glyph is located in Tyreus's sanctum. The second glyph is a spell glyph that casts wall of force to create a dome over intruders, theoretically trapping intruders and buying Tyreus or his minions time to arrive. The wall of force's dome covers a circle with a 10-foot radius out from the center of the room.

Treasure. A hoard of coins that Tyreus has looted over the years, now intended for current and future mercenaries, are kept in a pair of kegs here. One keg holds 7,090 gp in assorted coins, the other holds 7,120 gp worth of coins. Assorted art objects (worth 3,200 gp) sit in a heap in the northwest corner, capped by a landscape painting of Highstar Lake painted years ago by Saraque Skyhill (worth 800 gp).

The *Stone of Creation* has been recovered by Tyreus and is here, set upon a clean bronze brazier at one end of the room, near the doors.

9. WIZARD'S RESIDENCE

This lavish room is softened by velvet curtains and colorful wall hangings, including what seems to be a banner ornately stitched with a golden letter T. The ceiling's timber rafters are hung with sweet-smelling dried herbs. A portrait hangs above the fireplace, showing a kingly white human with an exquisitely trimmed white beard and a cobalt blue coat. He wears a silver crown.

Tyreus keeps a tidy but plush residence, with lush tapestries, soft rugs, velvet curtains, and a large round bed, all summoned into existence as part of the fortress. The portait over the fireplace is of Tyreus himself. It depicts him as he wishes to be in ten or twenty years. Nothing of actual value is here aside from a book of arcane history he stole from another wizard's library.

10. SANCTUM

Big, wooden tables with metal legs dominate the room. Each boasts complex collections of glass instruments and silvery lab equipment, for studying arcane things, perhaps, but the room is sparkling clean and has no smell.

This room is meant as a sanctum and laboratory, but Tyreus has hardly put it to use. The scales, graduated glass objects, and other lab equipment are pristine—all conjured up as part of the fortress.

Treasure. A *chip of creation* sits on a wooden plate under a glass lid here.

11. STUDY

Hulking, hardwood bookshelves line the walls here, teeming with tomes boasting colorful, pristine spines. Layers of soft carpets lay between them, capped with a plush leather reading chair and a wide, square table scattered with more books. Despite all this, the room has no smell.

Every book on the shelves is blank, conjured up by Tyreus when he imagined this place.

Treasure. The books stacked on the floor and scattered on the table were all looted from other wizards' collections. They include speculations on the origins and location of the *Stone of Creation* as well as the sigil combinations for various *teleportation circles* (in locations of the DM's choosing). One of them is a spellbook containing the spells *teleport*, *teleportation circle*, *stone shape*, *stone-skin*, and *wall of stone*. The historical and arcane texts are worth a total of 2,250 gp to the right collectors.

12. MEETING HALL

A long dining table dominates the room, framed by a huge fireplace at one end. Above the fireplace, a taxidermy head of a blue dragon is frozen in mid-snarl; its eyes seem to be diamonds. The dark table is decorated with a cobalt-blue runner, and a sideboard gleams with golden cups on a golden tray, next to a decanter of dark-red wine. The table is set with six low chairs and a single, high-backed chair at the head, near the fireplace.

Here Tyreus meets with the mercenary commanders and any other visitors he deigns to entertain—or impress. The long table seats three to each long side; the high-backed chair at the head of the table is for Tyreus. The dragon's head, the cups, the tray, the wine, everything is part of the conjured fortress and has no real value.

13. OBSERVATORY

This place is almost empty save for a shiny telescope and a small iron chest near a wide, open window looking west over the lake. A heavy, stone throne made of black slate marbled with gold and platinum stands in the center of the room. A circle of sigils is carved in the floor. Natural light filters in through high windows and airshafts in the ceiling. The ceiling itself is vaulted stone and timber rafters.

Even Tyreus isn't sure what this room is for other than adding height to the keep and looking out at the stars of Faerûn. The circle of sigils is a place for Tyreus to cast teleportation circle and other spells but is not an active or permanent magical feature.

The throne quietly serves two purposes: first, to aggrandize Tyreus, and second, to make visitors think he has mastered the *Stone of Creation* and made it his own. The throne, of course, is not magical at all—it is another conjured part of Tyreus's fantasy castle.

If he can, Tyreus attempts to intimidate (or even combat) intruders here.

Treasure. The telescope is worth 250 gp. The iron chest is unlocked and contains a crystal decanter of brandy from Waterdeep and a single glass tumbler. The brandy and the chest are genuine; everything crystal or glass in the chest is part of the fortress.

APPENDIX A: MONSTERS & NPCs

These statistics describe some of the key NPCs that appear in this adventure.

MERCENARY ENVOYS

These mercenaries stand for the Banner of Blades and the Iron Lions at Tyreus's fortress, but they might not be representative of those armies. These are rank-and-file warriors capable of demonstrating coordinated attacks and formations. They are neither the most capable lieutenants nor the rough-and-tumble masses of these small armies.

For the purposes of their Inspired Courage feature, the mercenaries of both companies consider each other allies while at the fortress—unless the adventurers do something to drive them apart.

TYREUS

When he was young, living in the vast, internecine planar city of Ravnica, Tyreus's parents, Tyberio and Ayraea, forbade him from pursuing any study of magic or wizardry. They didn't want Tyreus embroiled in a life of danger and skullduggery—as

MERCENARY ENVOY

Medium humanoid

Armor Class 15 (chain shirt)

Hit Points 26 (4d8+8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	15 (+2)	15 (+2)	10 (0)	12 (+1)	9 (-1)

Saving Throws Str +4, Con +4

Skills Athletics +4, Perception +3

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages Common

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Proficiency Bonus +2

Inspired Courage. The mercenary has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, frightened, grappled, or restrained while within 5 feet of at least one ally.

Martial Advantage. Once per turn, the mercenary can deal an extra 7 (2d6) damage to a creature it hits with a weapon attack if that creature is within 5 feet of an ally of the mercenary that isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The mercenary makes two longsword attacks.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) slashing damage.

Heavy Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d10 + 2) piercing damage.

was common in Ravnica. But Tyreus came to understand that at least part of his father's motive for forbidding magic was Tyberio's own rebellion against his adventurous parents. When he learned that his grandmother had once been a powerful mage, Tyreus wanted to follow in her footsteps.

Power Hungry. Tyreus has always wanted to be distinctive, admired, and powerful. He saw magic as a way to achieve a greatness he felt Tyberio had tried to deny him. In secret, Tyreus sought out ways to learn magic, but as he was forced to hide his ambition and his studies, he found cohorts in the worst places. Evil mages stoked his hunger for power and eroded his conscience.

Mundane Fury. Tyreus went months without speaking to his parents. Before he even knew they were sick, Tyberio and Ayraea passed away. Furious at his inability to help them—and their silent stubbornness—Tyreus sought the kind of power that would help him create places he could control. First, he studied the magic of illusions. He thought he could create illusions so real that he could live within them, fool others, and thus control his own destiny. Then he found another possibility.

Selfish Pursuits. In journals Tyberio had hidden from him, written by Tyberio's mother, the wizard Sylvene, Tyreus found tales of the *Stone of Creation*, an artifact capable of creating places and structures seemingly from the imagination alone. Tyreus thus sought out everything he could learn about Sylvene and the *Stone*, leading him to another world—Faerûn—and the remote Highstar Lake, where the *Stone* was lost long ago.

LOST TO AMBITION

It may be too late for Tyreus. He has devoted himself to his own grandeur now and lost sight of why he wanted power in the first place. He doesn't want to help anyone but himself. He sees those who would help him or share in his ambitions as threats to his own power. He doesn't want approval or alliances; he wants subservience. Whether he realizes it or not, he doesn't care whom he hurts to get what he wants.

Personality Traits. "I laugh to buy myself time to think, even though my gut instincts are often better than most people's calculated efforts."

Ideals. "Power. People try to take things from me, to limit or deny me, but I don't allow it. Real power is deciding other people's fates."

Bonds. "I'll make time for other people when I have a kingdom to call my own. Then I'll know who I can trust: the people who don't get in my way."

Flaws. "I have a bad temper. Why can't people see I know what I'm doing?"

APPENDIX B: SPELLS

The effects of these wizard spells appear in this adventure. The spell *mighty fortress* originally appeared in *Xanathar's Guide to Everything*.

LINKED GLYPHS

4th-level abjuration

Casting Time: 1 hour

Range: Touch

Components: V, S, M (incense and powdered diamond worth at least 300 gp, which the spell consumes)

Duration: Until dispelled or triggered

When you cast this spell, you inscribe a detection glyph that later activates a magical effect at the site of a separate, linked glyph. You inscribe the detection glyph either on a surface (such as a table or a section of floor or wall) or within an object that can be closed (such as a book, a scroll, or a treasure

chest) to conceal the glyph. The glyph can cover an area no larger than 10 feet in diameter. If the surface or object is moved more than 10 feet from where you cast this spell, the detection glyph is broken, and the spell ends without being triggered.

Both glyphs are nearly invisible and finding either requires a successful Intelligence (Investigation) check against your spell save DC.

You decide what triggers the detection glyph when you cast this spell. For glyphs inscribed on a surface, the most typical triggers include touching or standing on the glyph, removing another object covering the glyph, approaching within a certain distance of the glyph, or manipulating the object on which the glyph is inscribed. For glyphs inscribed within an object, the most common triggers include opening that object, approaching within a certain distance of the object, or seeing or reading the glyph. Once a glyph is triggered, this spell ends.

You can further refine the trigger so the spell activates only under certain circumstances or ac-

TYREUS, ILLUSIONIST

Medium humanoid (human), neutral evil

Armor Class 13 (16 with mage armor)

Hit Points 156 (24d8+48)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	20 (+5)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Int +10, Wis +7

Skills Arcana +12, Deception +8, History +10, Perception +7

Damage Resistances damage from spells; nonmagical bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing (from stonemage)

Senses passive Perception 17

Languages Common, Deep Speech, Draconic, Primordial, Sylvan

Challenge 13 (10,000 XP)

Proficiency Bonus +5

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). If Tyreus fails a saving throw, he can choose to succeed instead.

Illusory Reality. When Tyreus casts an illusion spell of 1st level or higher, he can choose one inanimate, nonmagical object that is part of the illusion and make that object real. He can do this on his turn as a bonus action while the spell is ongoing. The object remains real for 1 minute. The object can't deal damage or otherwise directly harm anyone.

Spellcasting. Tyreus is a 16th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 18, +10 to hit with spell attacks). He has the following wizard spells prepared.

Cantrips (at will): fire bolt, light, mage hand, minor illusion, shocking grasp

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

2nd level (3 slots): invisibility*, mirror image*, phantasmal force*

3rd level (3 slots): counterspell, fly, lightning bolt, major image*

4th level (3 slots): banishment, hallucinatory terrain*, phantasmal killer*, stonemage

5th level (2 slots): conjure elemental, mislead*, telekinesis

6th level (1 slot): disintegrate

7th level (1 slot): plane shift

8th level (1 slot): maze

* (Illusion spell of 1st level or higher)

Displacement (Recharges after Tyreus Casts an Illusion Spell of 1st Level or Higher). As a bonus action, Tyreus projects an illusion that makes him appear to be standing a few inches from his actual location, causing any creature to have disadvantage on attack rolls against Tyreus. The effect ends if Tyreus takes damage, he is incapacitated, or his speed becomes 0.

ACTIONS

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage.

Modify Illusion. When Tyreus casts an illusion spell that has a duration of 1 minute or longer, he can use his action to change the nature of that illusion (using the spell's normal parameters for the illusion), provided that he can see the illusion.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Tyreus can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Tyreus regains spent legendary actions at the start of his turn.

Scrutinize. Tyreus makes an Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Perception) check.

Cast Cantrip. Tyreus casts a cantrip from his spell list.

Cast Spell (Costs 1–3 Actions). Tyreus uses a spell slot to cast a 1st-, 2nd-, or 3rd-level spell that he has prepared. Doing so costs 1 legendary action per level of the spell.

ording to physical characteristics (such as height or weight), creature kind (for example, the ward could be set to affect aberrations or drow), or alignment. You can also set conditions for creatures that don't trigger the glyph, such as those who say a certain password.

When you inscribe the detection glyph, choose an alarm glyph or spell glyph to link to it.

Alarm Glyph. You create and magically link two glyphs: a detection glyph and an effect glyph. Each of these two glyphs must stay within 100 miles of the other or the spell effect ends. When the detection glyph is triggered, the effect glyph reacts like an alarm spell, creating a mental ping in your mind if you are within 1 mile of the effect glyph. This ping awakens you if you are sleeping.

Spell Glyph. You create and magically link two glyphs: a detection glyph and an effect glyph. These two glyphs must be within 100 feet of each other. You can store a prepared spell of 4th level or lower in the effect glyph by casting it as part of creating the glyphs. The spell must target a single creature or an area. The spell being stored has no immediate effect when cast in this way. When the detection glyph is triggered, the spell stored in the effect glyph is cast. If the spell has a target, it targets the creature that triggered the glyph. If the spell affects an area, the area is centered on the effect glyph. If the spell summons hostile creatures or creates harmful objects or traps, they appear as close as possible to the effect glyph. If the spell requires concentration, it lasts until the end of its full duration.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 5th level or higher to create a spell glyph, you can store any spell of up to the same level as the slot you use.

MIGHTY FORTRESS

8th-level conjuration

Casting Time: 1 minute

Range: 1 mile

Components: V, S, M (a diamond worth at least 500 gp, which the spell consumes)

Duration: Instantaneous

A fortress of stone erupts from a square area of ground of your choice that you can see within range. The area is 120 feet on each side, and it must not have any buildings or other structures on it. Any creatures in the area are harmlessly lifted up as the fortress rises.

The fortress has four turrets with square bases, each one 20 feet on a side and 30 feet tall, with one turret on each corner. The turrets are connected to each other by stone walls that are each 80 feet long, creating an enclosed area. Each wall is 1 foot thick

and is composed of panels that are 10 feet wide and 20 feet tall. Each panel is contiguous with two other panels or one other panel and a turret. You can place up to four stone doors in the fortress's outer wall.

A small keep stands inside the enclosed area. The keep has a square base that is 50 feet on each side, and it has three floors with 10-foot-high ceilings. Each of the floors can be divided into as many rooms as you like, provided each room is at least 5 feet on each side. The floors of the keep are connected by stone staircases, its walls are 6 inches thick, and interior rooms can have stone doors or open archways as you choose. The keep is furnished and decorated however you like, and it contains sufficient food to serve a nine-course banquet for up to 100 people each day. Furnishings, food, and other objects created by this spell crumble to dust if removed from the fortress.

A staff of one hundred invisible servants obeys any command given to them by creatures you designate when you cast the spell. Each servant functions as if created by the unseen servant spell.

The walls, turrets, and keep are all made of stone that can be damaged. Each 10-foot-by-10-foot section of stone has AC 15 and 30 hit points per inch of thickness. It is immune to poison and psychic damage. Reducing a section of stone to 0 hit points destroys it and might cause connected sections to buckle and collapse at the DM's discretion.

After 7 days or when you cast this spell somewhere else, the fortress harmlessly crumbles and sinks back into the ground, leaving any creatures that were inside it safely on the ground.

Casting this spell on the same spot once every 7 days for a year makes the fortress permanent.

APPENDIX C: ARTIFACTS

This appendix details three kinds of artifacts that appear throughout this adventure.

STONE OF CREATION

Wondrous item, artifact (requires attunement)

Rare legends and lore that speak of the *Stone of Creation* claim it fell to the Material Plane like a meteor from some distant edge of the Outer Planes or the Far Realm. Similar legends across various worlds, all describing stones that grow buildings and islands from magic, like a house from a seed, suggest the *Stone of Creation* is not a unique artifact—or that all the various pieces of it are derived from a single source of stone even larger than sages imagine.

The raw, black stone appears flaky like slate but is as hard as granite and marbled with veins of gold and platinum. The original, complete *Stone of Creation* took the form of a blocky slab like a standing stone, but it may be impossible to know the *Stone's* true size, or if the concept of a "whole" *Stone of Creation* even ap-

plies to the artifact. Perhaps other slabs and boulders made from the *Stone* have been scattered across the multiverse, being cut down and recombined through interplanar movements and the magic of the artifacts themselves.

Random Properties. The *Stone of Creation* has the following random properties:

- 2 minor beneficial properties
- 1 major beneficial property

Stone Smithing. While attuned to the *Stone of Creation*, you are proficient with mason's tools and can use them to cut pieces from the *Stone's* slab, thereby creating lesser artifacts.

Cut into Pieces. The *Stone of Creation* is a source for smaller artifacts that derive their power from it. These pieces allow you to shape and bestow a portion of the slab's power for yourself or others.

You can cut pieces in two general sizes: a *chip of creation* or a *keystone of creation*. These lesser artifacts require their own attunement.

Up to eleven *chips of creation* can be created from the existing slab, plus up to nine keystones. A *chip* resembles a flake of rock about the size of an adult human's hand. A *keystone* is at least five times that thickness.

When all *chips* and *keystones* have been cut away, a portion of the *Stone* remains but proves impervious to additional attempts to cut or chisel pieces from it. This smallest version of the *Stone* is the same size as a Tiny creature.

Raze or Reshape Creations. Although the *Stone of Creation* cannot create structures or demiplanes of its own, while you are attuned to it you can revise or renovate any structure or demiplane created by a keystone or chip, provided you are within 1 mile of the *Stone* and you can see or otherwise perceive the structure or demiplane. For example, you may add doors, seal windows, change the arrangement of rooms, or even dispel a structure created by a keystone. To do so, you must concentrate for 1 minute, as if on a spell, while picturing the changes you wish to make in your mind; over the course of that minute, the changes slowly occur. These changes cannot deal damage or directly harm a creature. A dispelled structure gradually recedes and diminishes to nothing, leaving creatures unharmed.

Destroying the Stone. The *Stone of Creation* is a strange artifact that can be divided into smaller artifacts, yet the *Stone* is impervious to most damage. Only the smith attuned to the *Stone* can carve it. Destroying the *Stone's* lesser, derived artifacts (and their creations) does no damage to the *Stone* itself.

The *Stone of Creation* is destroyed if it reaches the Elemental Chaos or is struck with a forked metal rod attuned to the Elemental Chaos (as per the *plane shift* spell). The *Stone* then shatters into harmless, inert shards of rock. Places created by the slab's *chips* and *keystones* crumble, decay, or fade away to nothing after the *Stone of Creation* is destroyed.

Whether the *Stone of Creation* is itself a piece of a larger artifact remains unknown.

CHIP OF CREATION

Wondrous item, artifact (requires attunement)

This solid, hand-sized flake of rock is a minor piece of the *Stone of Creation* and contains a portion of its power.

Linked Room. Each *chip of creation* is inextricably linked to its own demiplanar room, as per the demiplane spell. This room exists as long as both this *chip* and the *Stone of Creation* do. A door to the room only exists when created using a demiplane spell, whether a *chip of creation* is used in the casting or not.

Demiplane. While attuned to a *chip of creation*, you can cast *demiplane* at will but only to reach the demiplanar room associated with that *chip of creation* or another demiplane that you know the nature and contents of, and only if the target demiplane was created by another piece of the *Stone of Creation*.

Destroying a Chip. A *chip of creation* is an artifact in its own right and impervious to most damage, but a *disintegrate* spell is sufficient to destroy it.

After it has been attuned once, a *chip* that has gone 1d4 + 1 days unattuned becomes an inert, powerless bit of rock.

If the *Stone of Creation* is destroyed, all its *chips* break attunement, lose all magical properties, and linked demiplanar rooms cease to exist at once. Creatures or objects within the room are instantly expelled into the immediate vicinity of the destroyed *chip*.

If it reaches the Elemental Chaos or is struck by a forked, metal rod attuned to the Elemental Chaos (as per the *plane shift* spell), a *chip* is destroyed.

KEystone OF CREATION

Wondrous item, artifact (requires attunement)

A *keystone of creation* is a piece of the *Stone of Creation*, usually between 6 to 10 inches on a side, and can be rough-hewn or cleanly cut and polished by a mason attuned to the *Stone of Creation*.

Random Properties. A *keystone of creation* has the following random properties:

- 1 minor beneficial property
- 1 beneficial manifestation
- 1 detrimental manifestation

Extradimensional Places. You can use the *keystone* to conjure an extradimensional space such as *Mordenkainen's magnificent mansion*. The easiest way is to simply cast the spell using the artifact's power, which requires no spell slots or material components. Each time you cast a spell with the artifact, the subsequent casting replaces the prior one. For more detailed control of a conjured demiplane or extradimensional space, see "Construction Details."

Raising Structures. You can use the *keystone* to conjure a physical structure on the Material Plane. The easiest way is to simply cast the mighty fortress spell using the artifact's power, which requires no spell slots or material components. Each time you cast a spell with the artifact, the subsequent casting replaces the prior

one. For more detailed control of a conjured demiplane or extradimensional space, see “Construction Details.” Locations conjured by *keystones* cannot become permanent through repeated spell castings.

Connected Spaces. You can use multiple *keystones* to create larger spaces, whether adjacent to each other or even interlinked. You can even combine structures on the Material Plane and extradimensional spaces this way. If you are attuned to one *keystone* when you attune to a second *keystone*, the *keystones* combine to become a single artifact (utilizing a single attunement slot), combining their features and their fates forevermore. You cannot attune to, and thus combine, more than three *keystones* at once.

Destroying a Keystone. A *keystone* is an artifact in its own right and impervious to most damage, but a disintegrate spell is sufficient to destroy an unattuned *keystone*.

After it has been attuned at least once, a given *keystone* requires attunement to maintain its magical power. Otherwise, its creations on the Material Plane gradually rot and decay over 1d12 + 1 days, and a demiplane relying on the *keystone* collapses over 1d20 + 10 minutes. Additional destructive forces like fire may hasten the destruction. A demiplane created or upheld by a *keystone* ejects all creatures within it to their home planes when it collapses.

When a *keystone*'s creation is fully destroyed, the *keystone* becomes an inert, powerless rock. If the *Stone of Creation* is destroyed, all its *keystones* break attunement, lose all magical properties, and their creations decay or collapse to nothing.

If it reaches the Elemental Chaos or is struck by a forked, metal rod attuned to the Elemental Chaos (as per the *plane shift* spell), a *keystone* is destroyed.

Construction Details

You can customize a *keystone*'s creation with cosmetic details you can imagine. You can also rearrange the floorplans and structural details of your creations as follows.

Demiplane Design

With a single *keystone*, you can conjure an extradimensional space in the shape of a dome or pyramid, up to 1 mile on each side, with whatever terrain you wish. The edges of this space are solid and impassable but

may be invisible, so that your space can appear to go on forever if you wish. With additional *keystones*, you can add an additional square mile to your creation, adding or combining terrain types.

Each square mile can include a single structure up to the size of *Mordenkainen's magnificent mansion*, with all the attendant servants and feasts, or any number of smaller structures that together equal a magnificent mansion in total area.

You cannot create flora or fauna that deal damage or otherwise harm creatures. If you create cliffs, waters, or other natural features, however, creatures in the space might fall, drown, or otherwise be harmed.

Physical Structure Design

With a single *keystone*, you can create a structure akin to a mighty fortress with the added flexibility to customize that fortress not only for cosmetic details but for substantive effects. With a single *keystone*, you can rearrange the walls, open spaces, floors, doors, and other features of the mighty fortress provided you do not exceed 150 10-foot-wide cubes of interior space. Your fortress can reach across a creek, river, or other waters. It can take reckless or even dangerous shapes to include deep pits, flooded chambers, and so on. Your design, once conjured, is not guaranteed to be capable of supporting its own weight or surviving the stresses of attacks, weather, or time.

You may post any number of your structure's servants as guards, if you wish. They have statistics identical to an unseen servant with the addition of a passive Perception score equal to your own, though you cannot perceive through their senses. The servants can ring bells or otherwise manipulate the environment to raise an alarm.

Manifestations

Each place or structure conjured by a *keystone of creation* has special, unforeseen manifestations that affect its makeup and appearance. Some manifestations are beneficial, some are detrimental. These manifestations change each time a *keystone* is used to conjure a structure or place. The DM may roll or choose from the following tables, or devise unique manifestations based on the specific creations being conjured.



BENEFICIAL MANIFESTATIONS

d100 Manifestation

- 01–20 Your creation has a smell that is pleasing to you, even if there is no source for it.
- 21–30 You can spend 1 minute to dispel any lightly obscuring conditions within 120 feet in your creation.
- 31–40 Within your creation, you can cast create food and water once per day without using a spell slot.
- 41–50 You can understand any language spoken within 30 feet of you while within your creation.
- 51–60 Beasts find your creation appealing or off-putting (you decide).
- 61–70 When your creation is made, you decide what weather is possible within it.
- 71–80 You cannot be charmed or frightened while within your creation.
- 81–90 All structures in your creation have +2 AC.
- 91–00 You have advantage on your passive Perception score within your creation.

DETRIMENTAL MANIFESTATIONS

d100 Manifestation

- 01–20 Your creation has an unpleasant smell, even if there is no source for it.
- 21–30 Your creation is prone to haze, fog, and other lightly obscured conditions.
- 31–40 Your creation has uncommonly long days or nights (DM decides).
- 41–50 Structures in your creation only have arrow loops instead of windows.
- 51–60 Beasts either infest or avoid your creation (DM decides).
- 61–70 Strange weather patterns occur in your creation (DM decides what and when).
- 71–80 All DCs to detect or track creatures in your creation increase by 2.
- 81–90 All structures in your creation have –2 AC.
- 91–00 You have disadvantage on your passive Perception score within your creation.



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