ADVENTURES IN THE FORGOTTEN REALMS





DEEPEST NIGHT

EPISODE 4

LARGE, GRASSY HILL STANDS IN THE HIGH Moors, cracked by some ancient stress. It was thought to be a barrow, once, but it was never meant to be a tomb. It is a vault turned into a prison as punishment for the poor souls who vowed to defend it ... and failed.

Inside this hill, beneath it, and beyond it, secrets await—secrets that could destroy an artifact of great power, for good or ill. Despite the danger and despite the woe that befell previous trespassers inside the hill, someone must venture inside to learn those secrets. The artifact could already be in the wrong hands.

This short Dungeons & Dragons® adventure is written to suit four to six characters of 9th level. With this text and the core D&D rulebooks, you have everything you need to play.

PART OF A SERIES

This adventure is written as the fourth in a five-part series. Whether you're playing this as part of our adventure series or weaving this adventure into another campaign, read "Part 3: What's Next?" to get an idea of where some of these threads lead and how you can change those threads to accommodate your campaign.

This adventure alludes to a recurring villain named Tyreus, who is searching for an artifact called the *Stone of Creation*. More about his plans are revealed in other adventures in this series. If you prefer not to use him and want to substitute another villain in for ours, you can adapt this adventure to refer to a villainous NPC of your own.

By combining the immediacy of the players' choices with the mysterious histories and ambitions of key NPCs, this scenario explores themes of past mistakes and current consequences. The final adventure in this series expands on these themes to explore how the characters confront and conclude the larger tale.

BACKGROUND

A powerful mage is at work enacting a villainous plan near the Sword Coast. He is a trespasser from another plane here in pursuit of power, following in the footsteps of forebears who came here long ago. He is called Tyreus, though few here know him by name. He seeks an artifact called the *Stone*

of Creation, from which he has already claimed smaller pieces.

To challenge and defeat Tyreus in the next adventure, the heroes return to the site of the *Stone's* arrival in the Realms to learn how it all went wrong and, maybe, how to capture or neutralize the artifact.

FALL OF AN ANCIENT METEOR

Thousands of years ago the *Stone of Creation* existed in another world in the multiverse, where it had been used and abused by warring mages. To protect the *Stone* and themselves, the mages of that world locked it in a colossal sphere of stone with two guardians to tend it: a gorgon called Kyrilla and a male human called Kathikon. They swore an oath to their gods to defend the *Stone* and protect its vault, for the sphere was meant to float, hidden, between various elemental planes of existence until the mages could decide what to do with it. But when the mages went looking for it, they could not find it.

The spherical vault fell out of the elemental planes and into the Material Plane, landing by chance in the High Moors of the Realms, near the Sword Coast. There, things become unclear.

First, creatures of the ancient Realms cracked open the shell and took the *Stone*. Even the guardians, Kyrilla and Kathikon, cannot recall who they were—it was so long ago. But rather than die defending the *Stone*, they hid, each afraid of losing the other. Thus they broke their oaths to the gods and thus they were each cursed with hideous beauty and a petrifying gaze—so that they would find it impossible to see each other's faces again.

For centuries, they dwelled alone in what remained of the sphere. That ended when yuan-ti cultists from the Serpent Hills found the sphere and dug into it, thinking it was a burial mound that might contain lost treasures. When the cultists found, instead, Kyrilla and Kathikon, they mistook them for medusae from legends. The cultists bestowed upon them powers to summon snakes. They gave them gifts, from supplicants to servitor snakes. They wanted to know the guardians' secrets—they wanted to know more about the *Stone of Creation*.

During this time, in a fit of sorrow and desperation, Kyrilla and Kathikon looked upon each other for the first and only time since they were cursed. Kyrilla survived. Kathikon was turned to stone.



Furious, heartbroken, and now alone, Kyrilla took out her anguish on the yuan-ti. Many of them were petrified by her gaze. Others were slain and devoured by the huge serpents they had once given unto her as gifts. And so the yuan-ti sealed up the sphere like a tomb and left it, never to return.

But rumors spread even out of the Serpent Hills.

HAMISH'S TALE

More than 50 years ago, a wizard from the planar city of Ravnica by the name of Sylvene followed legends about a lost artifact all the way to the world of Faerûn. In Waterdeep, she found two strong allies: a dwarven rogue called Artura and a generous giant named Hamish Hewland. Artura wanted to discover lost treasures. Hamish—who believed himself to be descended from a giant of Ravnica—wanted to see the world his ancestors came to explore. As they all set out to explore the High Moors near the Sword

Coast, they met a human fighter named Waltarn Everlake in the village of Secomber, and he joined their party. But the adventure met with disaster when the party delved into the lair of Kyrilla without knowing what they were getting into. Sylvene and Artura managed to recover pieces of the artifact they sought, but Waltarn was slain by arrows out of the darkness, and Hamish was turned to stone while attempting to secure everyone's escape by closing up the entrance to the monster's lair.

Hamish's petrified body still stands at the verge of the monster's lair, awaiting new heroes and a chance to breathe again.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

The adventure is set in motion when a ghost pleads with the adventurers to pursue a way to interfere with Tyreus's plans—or even to destroy the *Stone*

of Creation—by venturing into a monster's lair in search of secret lore. When the adventurers arrive at the site of the lair, they likely find evidence of a previous adventuring party, whose misadventures here still echo through the years. Once inside the lair, they find a harrowing collection of monsters defending the secrets needed to destroy the Stone of Creation. Along the way, they may discover more about its strange origins and the danger it poses.

Can they also put an end to the monster that inhabits this strange place? What price will they pay for the information they seek? And what plans do they make for their final confrontation with Tyreus?

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 TOMB'S GHOST

If the adventurers have access to Waltarn's crypt from the prior adventure, "A Verdant Tomb," Waltarn's ghost appears to them there and sets things in motion. He explains that the *keystones* Tyreus stole from the tomb were recovered from the place where Waltarn was killed: a place that fell to the Realms from some far plane of existence. He tells them to head 110 miles southeast of the confluence of the Delimbiyr, east of Secomber, where a huge hill "looks as if it had been cracked by lightning." More secrets about the *stones* can doubtless be found there. "You are more powerful now than we were then," Waltarn says. "But be wary all the same."

A VISIT FROM A SPIRIT

If the adventurers need another way into the adventure, whether they've played prior installments or not, another spirit comes into play. The spirit of Artura—who is not dead but rather lost on the Astral Sea—reaches out to the adventurers as if she were a ghost. She hasn't chosen them personally but sees their futures entwined with her past in her surreal vision.

She sees the *Stone of Creation* like a dark, black anchor in the water, holding her spirit in place, pulling down on fate. "Something bad is going to happen, and I know that damn thing is part of it!" To find out more about it, she tells the party to journey to where the *Stone* came from: 110 miles southeast of the Delimbiyr confluence east of Secomber. "That's where things went wrong. Maybe it's not too late to set them right?"

PART 1: THE OUTER LAIR

The adventure begins when the adventurers first lay eyes on the mysterious hill they seek, 110 miles southeast of the fork in the Delimbiyr River. There they find a high, irregular hill with a crack in its side like a wound.

If you choose to play out the journey to this spot, take special note of the regional effects of Kyrilla's lair, described in appendix A.

1. CLEFT IN THE ROCK

Though fog shrouds everything here, it's easy to recognize the huge, dome-like mound of earth and the great, dark cleft in its western edge. The domed hill must be more than sixty feet high, and the crack cuts half that high. A few tall boulders have fallen into the cleft—though the hill is so grassy and clear otherwise, those boulders look more like they've been placed there.

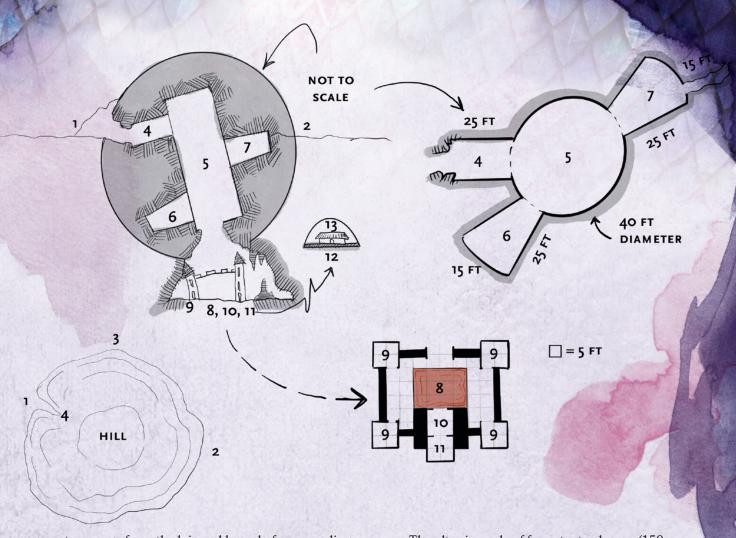
This is the place. The tall boulders are Medium-sized stones, each about 1,000 pounds, set in place by the **galeb duhrs** in area 2. They're meant to discourage trespassers and protect the statue that blocks the way into area 4. A creature that is Small or smaller can squeeze between the boulders to see into area 4, but it is difficult terrain all the way.

2. BOULDER TRIO

Three squat boulders are here amid the long grasses and shallow water of the moor. Each is spotted with lichen and patches of rich, dark moss. They're arranged on the ground as if they are the points of a triangle.

The ground here is littered with small, lifeless rocks amid windswept grasses. The three largest boulders are actually a trio of **galeb duhrs** quietly contemplating the countryside—and now, the adventurers. They came along after Sylvene's and Hamish's adventuring party fled the site, then animated boulders into area 4 to protect that area from later trespassers. Since then, the **galeb duhrs** have wandered the area slowly, returning to this place every twenty years or so to see what has changed. They've been sitting here for almost five years on this visit.

These elementals aren't looking for a fight. They'd love to hear a good story, though, if it isn't told too fast. If the adventurers talk openly about needing access to the cleft in the rock and do not seem to have villainous intent, the galeb duhrs animate the boulders out of their way. The elementals then stick around for a week waiting for the adventurers



to emerge from the lair and leave before resealing the lair. The galeb duhrs become dismayed with (and thus bored of) the adventurers if they ignore or damage the statue of Hamish in area 4. While dismayed, they sit motionless and silent in the grass, stubbornly waiting for the adventurers to leave, then reseal the lair.

3. ABANDONED ALTAR

Carved into the hillside here is a ten-foot-high alcove of simple stones, framing a low stone altar. It might've been ornate once, but years of weather have smoothed its features. A wide, table-like slab of stone stands on four short supports carved like serpents. The ground under the altar is loose gravel atop a wide stone base.

This altar was built by yuan-ti from the Serpent Kingdom, southeast of here. For a time, the cultists used the altar to perform ceremonies invoking the spirits of dead yuan-ti inside the structure below, but the cultists haven't been back in years. Their magic created the skeletal horrors inside the lair but could not control them.

The altar is made of four stout columns (150 pounds each) and a slab (400 pounds), all standing on a single 250-pound boulder, still under the gravel beneath the altar. That boulder caps a natural fissure in the ground which the yuan-ti cultists used to access the inner lair. If the altar and the boulder beneath it are moved, a 5-foot-diameter tunnel is revealed. It leads to area 7 inside the lair.

PART 2: THE INNER LAIR

The colossal sphere that is now Kyrilla's lair was meant to traverse various planes of existence for decades, until someone could decide what to do with the *Stone of Creation*. The idea was to use an extradimensional space conjured by Kyrilla's *keystone of creation* to feed and house Kyrilla and Kathikon. They would navigate the well shaft using levitate spells—to which Kyrilla no longer has access.

Almost nothing went as hoped.

GENERAL FEATURES

The interior of Kyrilla's lair was meant to hold the *Stone of Creation* in a copper grip at its center, to protect it from people—and people from it. Now, the encasing shell of the *Stone* is a prison for Kyrilla.

The sphere's meteoric arrival left this whole place almost exactly upside down. Iron sconces and hooks for tapestries are all upside down, relative to the current layout. The panoramic mural and various carved details at what is now the top of the well shaft also appear upside down.

Construction. None of this was built; all of it was conjured, either by distant mages' spells or by forgotten powers of the *Stone* itself. Individual stones and mortar were never set in place by hand. The whole place has a cold orderliness to it, made uneven by the passage of time. Water seeping into this place over thousands of years has been poisoned by the stone shell—and by Kyrilla's curse.

Light. No natural light makes it into the lair. The creatures that dwell here reside in almost total darkness most of the time. Whatever light the adventurers bring is what they have.

Sound. Despite any mundane acoustical properties, the inside of Kyrilla's lair feels eerily quiet. Even the sounds of a battle seem strangely muted. Movement. The following effects apply to areas 4, 5, 6, and 7:

- The angled floors make these areas difficult terrain for any creature on the ground that is not climbing. No check is necessary to climb in these areas under normal circumstances.
- A creature that takes the Dash action can make a DC 12 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to ignore the effects of difficult terrain until the start of its next turn. Make the check at the start of the creature's movement.
- A creature without a climbing speed that takes damage while on the ground must make a Dexterity saving throw with a DC equal to the damage it takes; if it fails the save, it loses its footing.
- A creature that is knocked prone must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw to avoid losing its footing.

Lost Footing. A creature that loses its footing is knocked prone and tumbles downhill until it reaches an occupied space or the edge of the area where it lost its footing. There, it either stops (if it hits a barrier like a wall) or it may make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw to catch itself on the edge of the area; otherwise it falls into the next adjacent area.

THE CONJURED AREAS

Areas 8, 9, 10, and 11 were all conjured through the power of a *keystone of creation* to which Kyrilla is attuned. She created them in a time of fury and despair, resulting in their warped and strained appearances. Where these areas come into contact with the surrounding stone—whether it is the sphere or the ground itself—the conjured surfaces appear like

they were hardened in mid-pour or frozen while rippling.

All these areas dissolve harmlessly into rock dust and smoke if Kyrilla's linked *keystone* becomes inert.

KYRILLA'S TACTICS

Kyrilla has been corrupted by her gods and twisted by the pains she has endured, but she has no desire to die and little hope that she can ever be pardoned by the distant powers that cursed her. She attempts to put arrows into intruders from as far away as possible. She hides, moves, and strikes as needed. She will sic snakes and skeletal horrors on her enemies as she can in hopes that intruders either flee or are slain. If she thinks she's near defeat, she flees through the arcane doorway in area 11 and into area 12.

She has little interest in using her gaze and keeping the adventurers around as statues, forever haunting her. It is her least favorite weapon. The gaze embodies her curse—and it killed Kathikon (whose statue is in area 12). Of course, she cannot control it and isn't willing to surrender, only triumph or die.

After a day or so, Kyrilla usually commands her monstrous minions to destroy the petrified remains of trespassers so she does not have to see them anymore.

4. AT THE THRESHOLD

The cleft is little more than a fracture in the stone underneath the turf of the hillside. It's tall and narrow and might be easily traversed at ground level if not for half a dozen six-foot-tall boulders set into the cleft now, almost like they're neatly queued up to go inside.

The **galeb duhrs** in area 2 animated six Medium-sized boulders into position here to seal off the cleft in hopes of keeping idle trespassers out—and thereby protecting the statue beyond, if they could. If four Medium-sized boulders are removed from the cleft, enough smaller rocks fall loose to allow Medium-sized creatures to reach the interior of the passage.

TOO MANY FOES

The encounters within the lair can be formidable—even deadly—if allowed to spill over into each other. This is not an easy dungeon to retreat from! If the players go slow and work together, they'll probably have better luck. If the adventurers get in over their heads, one or more of the galeb duhrs outside might come to help them, with hopes of dispelling the effects of Kyrilla's lair on the surrounding lands.

The cleft shrinks to become a recessed passage leading into the hillside beneath a rough ceiling of rock. At the end of that natural passage is a huge, humanoid statue made of stone, with its back to you.

This area is dimly lit from natural light.

The statue leans against a huge stone slab, as though holding it in place; its hands even grip the stone with perfect precision. The giant depicted in the statue is fully detailed with a backpack, finely wrought hair, a coil of rope, laced boots—all rendered sharply from a single stone. He's positioned near the only gap around the slab, just a foot or so wide, and seems to peer through it.

The statue, of course, is the petrified form of **Hamish Hewland** (see appendix A), the giant who accompanied Sylvene, Waltarn, and Artura here more than 50 years ago. Hamish tried to reseal the lair but caught sight of Kathikon on the other side just as he was fixing the slab into position. Kathikon was satisfied to leave Hamish there, holding the

slab in place, in hopes that it would slow or thwart future visitors.

Hamish's round, wooden shield—big enough for a giant—is still propped up near the statue's feet, but it has rotted beyond practical use.

If restored to life with a *greater restoration* spell or similar magic, Hamish comes back to life with a gasp. As far as Hamish is concerned, he had been fleeing the dark well beyond, alongside his adventuring peers, just moments ago. He realized he was being petrified for one fleeting moment, then he was unthinking stone. Hamish was down to 11 hit points when he was petrified.

Hamish is willing to help the adventurers if he believes their intentions are good. He shares any lore he knows from the section "Hamish's Tale," if he thinks it won't get people needlessly hurt. He wants to avoid descending the well shaft, or venturing beyond, after his last experience in there. He's happy



to help with climbing gear, provide light, and otherwise be of use.

5. A DEEP, DARK WELL

This dark, squared well shaft descends into the earthen darkness at a steep angle, as if bored out of the rock itself. Three long, hefty, coppery poles jut at even intervals from the walls of the shaft, almost meeting in the center, and each one ends in an empty clamp or claw. If they held something once, it would have been suspended at the center of the shaft.

The top of this chamber was meant to be the floor when the structure was made. The walls at that end of the structure are etched with deep carvings of humanoid figures of many races, all of them with heads upturned and arms outstretched toward their sky as if basking or reveling. Behind them, a depiction of a long wall of tall towers and spiked battlements runs all along the well shaft. The only break in the ring of people features a carved set of double doors in the depiction of the wall—but it is only a picture. (This was intended to be the location of the mystic door now located in area 11.)

The floor at the feet of the carved figures is dominated by a silver disc almost 10 feet in diameter, etched with sigils and symbols in concentric circles and anchored by a short, iron pedestal and a simple mounting bracket designed to hold something that is no longer there. (It was made to hold the tuning fork that is now located in area 10.)

Irregularities in the rock walls, plus a variety of hooks and sconces (all upside down), make it easy to secure ropes and other climbing gear throughout the well shaft. The copper arms sticking out of the walls once grasped the *Stone of Creation*. Their clamping grippers were bent and mangled when ancient intruders stole the *stone* centuries ago and are still misshapen. The arms themselves were designed to support almost 1,000 pounds and are still strong.

Three original chambers extend off this center well shaft: areas 4, 6, and 7.

What is now the bottom of the shaft has fallen into the ground and become part of the physical construction made by Kyrilla and Kathikon using one of the *keystones*. The drop from area 5 to the floor of area 8 is a distance of 30 feet.

A **giant zombie constrictor snake** (see appendix A) clings comfortably to this chamber, nestled into an angle where walls meet the floor. It came from area 6.

Treasure. The silver seal in the floor is mostly iron under a layer of silver leaf worth 525 gp. Etched

into it is an inscription in a rare dialect of Terran, explaining lore about the *Stone of Creation* and its lesser artifacts—whatever lore you may want to convey to bring your players and their characters up to speed—and the names of Kyrilla and Kathikon, who were meant to be guardians of the artifacts.

6. GIANT SNAKE DEN

The floor angles away from you, down to a section of wall that bristles with snagged and cast-off scales and piled dry refuse and remains, collected over hundreds of years.

This is where the giant zombie constrictors usually wait out eternity. Unless it has been drawn out by sounds of battle, a second giant undead constrictor snake is coiled here.

Treasure. Among the detritus and remains at the back of the chamber are a ruby-studded bracer (90 gp), four golden rings (30 gp each), and a silver circlet (45 gp), all leftover from yuan-ti cultists devoured years ago.

7. Lost Bones

This angled chamber is home to a pile of yellowed, rotten bones large enough to be human or similar. The angle of the room has caused all the bones to heap in one corner. Lots of slender rib bones suggest serpentine bodies or copious humanoid ribcages. Snake-like skulls—each the size of a human's or a dwarf's—peer out from the pile. They all look to be caught in place by the rough walls and whatever gore once clung to the bones—but they look like they could fall toward you at any moment.

The mass of bones clinging in place here is the body of a **skeletal horror** (see appendix A). It has braced itself into position to await intruders and attacks when living creatures investigate its bones or attempt to leave the area—even if they disturb nothing. It is unmoved by the sights or sounds of battle in the well shaft.

Centuries ago, yuan-ti cultists slipped into the lair and arrived in this chamber. They closed up the tunnel when they left the site for good, capping that tunnel with the boulder and the altar at area 3.

Any treasures taken from the bodies of the yuan-ti whose bones make up this skeletal horror are now at the bottom of the poison pool in area 8.

8. Poison Pool

The floor here is hidden in a dark-red liquid with the consistency of thin mud. Something like algae clouds it, too. A musty, slightly sweet pond-scum smell fills the air.

This foul liquid combines all the fluids that have ebbed, flowed, or been bled into the lair over time. Most of it is rain and groundwater that have seeped in but all of it has become a gruesome and powerful poison through the accursed power of Kyrilla's lair.

The poison pool is 2 feet deep and difficult terrain. The bottom of it is covered in broken pieces of statues made from yuan-ti cultists she petrified and then had destroyed.

A living creature whose eyes, nose, ears, or mouth are submerged in the poison must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw, suffering 11 (2d10) poison damage if it fails, or half as much if it succeeds. A creature that starts its turn submerged repeats the saving throw.

A creature that drinks a mouthful of the poison must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 minute. The creature can attempt a new saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the condition on a success.

The pool also hides a mass of bones that are actually the prone body of another skeletal horror. Merely disturbing the pool isn't enough to stir its attention; it waits until living flesh touches the pool—or when Kyrilla commands it—then rises to attack intruders.

Treasure. Near the northern edge of the poison pool, amid loose rocks on the ground, is a *brooch of shielding*. It is all that remains of an emissary from the Serpent Kingdoms. Also, Kyrilla's keystones are set into the floor at the center of the poison pool.

9. ABANDONED CHAMBERS

This chamber is early empty. A layer of rock dust and stray earth blankets the space. Nothing has moved through this area in a long, long time.

These rooms were meant to be part of Kyrilla's and Kathikon's living space in this ornate prison, but as they fell into rote habits, they wandered their own spaces less and less.

10. ROTTING CEREMONIAL CHAMBER

A simple stone chair is the only furniture in this colorful room. It stands in the center of the space, beneath the peak of a vaulted ceiling. The walls are hung with once-lavish, rotting silks and abstract tapestries. The vaulted ceiling is painted with a flaking mural across four sections, portraying a tale of humanoid figures and a black slab of stone marbled with gold. From the ceiling where the four sections join, someone has hung a single metal chime on a simple cord.

This area received all of Kyrilla's attention when she conjured the place with her *keystone of creation*. She created the ceiling's mural from memory and saved the chime after it fell from a wall during the sphere's arrival in Faerûn. There used to be five of them, hung from the walls at the base of the well shaft.

The ceiling depicts four pieces of lore about the *Stone of Creation*:

- First, the Stone was placed inside the sphere, depicted by three wizards raising it magically into
 the grip of the three copper arms while a white
 male human and a green-skinned gorgon look on.
- Second, the Stone is carried away by tall figures, possibly giants, as depicted by figures that make the human and the gorgon look small by comparison. They appear to be carrying the stone to a lake or inland sea.
- Third, the human and the gorgon are struck by a curse depicted as green flames that surround their bodies and replace their eyes.
- Fourth, the *Stone* is shown breaking into pieces by lightning, fire, and wind where a simple silver tuning fork touches it. Beneath it, towers turn to smoke.

Treasure. The chime, like its siblings, plays precisely the frequency needed to plane shift into the Elemental Chaos. The chime is not magical.

11. MAGIC DOOR

The air buzzes and thrums. A five-foot-wide doorway swirls with dull light here, seemingly leading into the stone wall beyond, though its arcane glow hides whatever is on the other side.

This area holds only the mystical door that leads to Kyrilla's extradimensional refuge.

PART 3: STARRY REFUGE

Once through the portal, the fullness of Kyrilla's refuge becomes apparent—as well as a terrible price she has paid in her cursed form.

12. Deepest Night

The ground is low grass that looks to have been nibbled by sheep or goats. The soil is good, strong dirt. The horizon seems to reach as far as you can imagine. The sky is deep and vast and brilliant, filled almost to bursting with stars undimmed by moonlight and glittering in a sea of colorful, stellar clouds.

This extradimensional space is a peculiar variation on a *magnificent mansion*, conjured into existence by Kyrilla and her linked *keystone*. Despite appearing to be outdoors, the space is actually an enclosed dome with a grassy floor. The ceiling of the dome is an image of stars—the night sky of another world, without any city or moon to disrupt the light of the stars. The "mansion" consists of a single, cozy cottage in a wide meadow. The air smells like wheat in autumn but is utterly still.

It is all an easy illusion to see through, no ability check required. Any creature that walks to the outer edge of the refuge can touch the sky—that is, the dome encasing the extradimensional space—and finds it smooth and solid. The stars twinkle and the clouds drift about, but they are merely imagery.

This place was never real and represents only a fantasy that Kyrilla shared with Kathikon for a time. Alas, about 30 feet from the cottage door, a statue of Kathikon kneels amid the grass, petrified by Kyrilla's gaze.

13. A COZY COTTAGE

From outside, it appears to be a cozy cottage with stone walls and a roof of sod. Smoke rises gently from the chimney.

TUNING CHAOS

The instruments tuned to the arcane frequency of the Elemental Chaos can be used in at least two ways. First, the chimes can be used to create components for a plane shift spell leading to the tumultuous Elemental Chaos—components like the tuning fork itself, which is already crafted for such a purpose. Second, the fork (or another of its kind tuned to the Elemental Chaos) can be used to destroy the Stone of Creation or its related artifacts, as described in appendix B.

Here Kyrilla and Kathikon pretended they were whiling away eternity in some tranquil plane of existence, taking turns seeing for each other, or existing solely by touch. Everything they truly valued was here.

Inside, the cottage is mundane—even quaint. It's made of a single, long room with a fur-covered bed at one end and a large cooking hearth at the other. A wood fire crackles.

Treasure. A ring inset with a black diamond sits under a wooden bowl on the mantlepiece. Once, the ring was meant as a reminder of their duties here, but Kyrilla came to resent it even before it would become dangerous for her to look at it—lest she catch sight of her own reflection. It is a ring of protection.

Additionally, a simple silver tuning fork hangs from the ceiling from the same cord as another surviving chime (like the one in area 10).

PART 4: WHAT'S NEXT

The adventurers have new information and, perhaps, everything they need to confront Tyreus and decide what fate shall befall the artifact he seeks. The final adventure in this series likely brings the players to the edge of Highstar Lake in the High Moors to deal with Tyreus and the *Stone of Creation* as they see fit, using what they've learned or recovered from Kyrilla's lair.



APPENDIX A: MONSTERS & NPCs

These NPCs and new monsters appear throughout the adventure.

GIANT ZOMBIE CONSTRICTOR SNAKE

These enormous, rotten husks were living, Medium-sized constrictors when the yuan-ti brought them to honor and entice Kyrilla to share her knowledge and powers. They grew to their full, Huge size on a diet of supplicants and prisoners, many of whose bones can be found elsewhere in the lair. When the yuan-ti turned against Kyrilla, they fought and slew these snakes—only to find them slithering again through cursed, ambient magic in Kyrilla's lair.

The constrictors die if they leave the lair.

GIANT ZOMBIE CONSTRICTOR

SNAKE

Huge undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 187 (22d12 + 44)
Speed 30 ft., climb 20 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	1 (-5)	15 (+2)	4 (-3)

Skills Perception +5, Stealth +6

Damage Vulnerabilities poison

Senses blindsight 15 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

Languages -

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP) Proficiency Bonus +3

Sunlight Vulnerability. While in sunlight, the snake has disadvantage on attack rolls and on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight. When the snake begins its turn in sunlight, it immediately suffers 10 radiant damage.

Undead Fortitude. If damage reduces the snake to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the snake drops to 1 hit point instead.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The snake makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with a constrict attack.

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 17 (3d8 + 4) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 17 (5d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Constrict. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 17 (3d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 16). Until this grapple ends, the creature is restrained and the snake cannot constrict another target.

HAMISH HEWLAND

A gentle giant with a ferocious laugh, Hamish hails from the city of Waterdeep. He was never one for the wilderness in his younger days, but he wanted adventure. He joined his friends, Sylvene and Artura, on their journey into the wilds of the Sword Coast, all those years ago, and was part of their adventuring party with a human from Secomber named Waltarn Everlake. That Hamish would be willing to risk his life to protect his friends was never in doubt.

Hamish has brown skin, great posture, and wears his long hair in three tidy braids. He is the sort of fellow who overpacks for an adventure. His pockets usually teem with snacks or rations. Being a giant, he brought both a dungeoneer's pack and an explorer's pack in his knapsack. He carries a big axe, suitable for his size. He also carried a round, wooden shield, made just for him by Artura, but it has rotted to bits.

Personality Traits. "I am curious about the road not taken, sometimes to a fault. I try to always have food with me."

Ideal. "Bravery. I would risk my life for true friends. In fact, I have!"

Bond. "Friendships you choose can mean more than family. A friend made is an enemy defeated."

Flaw. "I often believe in people to the point of being naive."

HAMISH HEWLAND

Huge giant, neutral good

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 85 (10d12 + 20)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Str +9, Wis +5

Skills Athletics +9, History +3, Insight +5, Perception +5

Senses passive Perception 15

Languages Common, Dwarvish, Giant

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Proficiency Bonus +3

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Hamish makes two attacks with his axe or throws two rocks.

Axe. Melee Weapon Attack: +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 17 (2d10 + 6) slashing damage.

Rock. Ranged Weapon Attack: +9 to hit, range 60/240 ft., one target. Hit: 17 (2d10 + 6) bludgeoning damage.

REACTIONS

Parry. Hamish adds 2 to his AC against one melee attack that would hit him. To do so, he must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon or a shield.

KYRILLA THE ACCURSED

Some small part of Kyrilla hopes she might be pardoned from her immortal curse one day, but her ire and spite have overtaken her heart, and the only way she can imagine escaping eternity is by impressing the gods with her tenacity. She doesn't want pity nor compassion. She wants to be feared and loathed and to press on with existence despite it all. And now that Kathikon is dead and she is alone, she cannot remember mercy.

Personality Trait. "I am quick to judge others and find them wanting."

Ideal. "Spite. I survive despite a curse from the gods—I'm not about to go out into the world where fools will try to kill me."

Bond. "Kathikon was the love of my life. No one else matters to me."

Flaw. "I never admit when I am wrong."

Horrific Appearance. Once, Kyrilla looked much like other gorgons of her world. Now, with her curse upon her, Kyrilla's healthy greenish skin has grown sickly pale, and the segmented cables she wore like hair have gone from shiny black to matte gray and green. Her legs became a long, segmented tail. Her eyes now glow green, bright enough to create dim light in front of her. She has grown four needle-like fangs in her mouth, and her hands have become slicing claws.

She reverts to her original appearance when she dies.

Bestowed Power. The malevolent powers bestowed to Kyrilla by her curse, as well as those given to

Kyrilla, Accursed Gorgon

Large monstrosity, lawful evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor) Hit Points 127 (15d10 + 45) Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Wis +6, Cha +6

Skills Deception +6, Insight +6, Perception +6, Stealth +7
Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities charmed
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16
Languages Common, Draconic, Primordial
Challenge 10 (5,900 XP)
Proficiency Bonus +4

Feed on Pain (2/Day). The first time she hits with a weapon attack on her turn, Kyrilla can deal an extra 16 (3d10) poison damage to the target and regains a number of hit points equal to half the damage dealt.

Legendary Resistance (2/Day). If she fails a saving throw, Kyrilla can choose to succeed instead.

Petrifying Gaze. When a creature that can see Kyrilla's eyes starts its turn within 30 feet of her, Kyrilla can force it to make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw if Kyrilla isn't incapacitated and can see the creature. If the saving throw fails by 5 or more, the creature is instantly petrified. Otherwise, a creature that fails the save begins to turn to stone and is restrained. The restrained creature must repeat the saving throw at the end of its next turn, becoming petrified on a failure or ending the effect on a success. The petrification lasts until the creature is freed by the greater restoration spell or other magic.

Unless surprised, a creature can avert its eyes to avoid the saving throw at the start of its turn. If the creature does so, it can't see Kyrilla until the start of its next turn, when it can avert its eyes again. If the creature looks at Kyrilla in the meantime, it must immediately make the save.

Kyrilla's accursed gaze does not affect undead or constructs. If Kyrilla sees herself reflected on a polished surface within 30 feet of her and in an area of bright light, she is, due to her curse, affected by her own gaze.

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in sunlight, Kyrilla has disadvantage on attack rolls and on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Kyrilla makes one attack to constrict and two attacks with her claws, or she makes three attacks with her longbow.

Claw. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 13 (3d6 + 3) slashing damage.

Constrict. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 10 (3d6) bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 13) if it is a Large or smaller creature. Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and Kyrilla can't constrict another target.

Longbow. Ranged Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. Hit: 16 (3d8 + 3) piercing damage.

Summon Swarm of Poisonous Snakes (Recharge 5–6). Kyrilla conjures a swarm of poisonous snakes into an empty space within 10 feet of her. The swarm is under Kyrilla's control and acts on her turn, immediately after her in the initiative order. It remains in existence for up to 1 hour. She can summon no more than three swarms per day. Kyrilla can banish any or all of her summoned swarms with a bonus action.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Kyrilla 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. Kyrilla regains spent legendary actions at the start of her turn.

Claw. Kyrilla or a swarm of poisonous snakes makes a weapon attack.

Detect. Kyrilla makes a Wisdom (Perception) check.

Slither. Kyrilla moves up to her speed without provoking opportunity attacks.

her by the yuan-ti cult, are hardly of interest to her. She doesn't relish power but instead has taken to wallowing in misery and dwelling in her hatred for the beings that cursed her so long ago that she can hardly remember them.

Magic Ring. Kyrilla wears a ring of water walking that she was given by an emissary from the Serpent Kingdoms long ago. It is made of a bluish jade and does not reflect light.

Immortal Curse. Kyrilla does not require food or drink but does breathe and sleep.

Lair Actions

When fighting inside her lair, Kyrilla can invoke the ambient magic there to take lair actions. On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), she takes a lair action to cause one of the following effects:

- Kyrilla casts moonbeam (no components required). While maintaining concentration on this effect, she can't take other lair actions.
- Kyrilla casts cloud of daggers (no components required), except the daggers are flying snakes and the spell deals piercing damage. While maintaining concentration on this effect, she can't take other lair actions.
- Pools of liquid within 60 feet of Kyrilla surge and froth, splashing and soaking any creature on the ground within 5 feet of such pools. Creatures that succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw avoid getting liquid in their eyes and mouths. Kyrilla can't use this lair action again until she has used a different one.

REGIONAL EFFECTS

The region containing Kyrilla's lair is warped by her accursed nature and the meteoric stone around her, which together create the following effects:

• Water sources within the lair are supernaturally fouled and poisonous. Creatures that drink these waters must make a DC 14 Constitution saving

THE ONLY HOPE?

Perhaps there is one way to inspire Kyrilla to hope: Introduce her to a restored Hamish and let her see that life might exist beyond the effects of her curse. If the adventurers restore Kathikon to flesh and blood, Kyrilla could be so moved as to break her attunement to her keystones and share everything about the ceremonial chamber, its chime, and the tuning fork, as described in the sidebar "Tuning Chaos." Destroying the Stone of Creation could even end the curse on Kyrilla and Kathikon!

If you need statistics for Kathikon, use Kyrilla's.

- throw or be poisoned for 1 minute. Afflicted creatures can make a new saving throw at the end of each of their turns, ending the condition on a success.
- Plants within 1 mile of the lair suffer from a calcifying mold that dries and hardens leaves, killing many otherwise hearty thistles and heather.
- Fog lightly obscures the land within 3 miles of the lair.

SKELETAL HORROR

This horrid mass of bones clambers along on a dozen hands and feet without maintaining any consistent shape. One moment it moves like a centipede, the next it rears back to claw like a bear. The only consistent feature is a weird absence: no matter how many skulls make up its mass, this strange horror always seems to be headless.

The skeletal horrors in Kyrilla's lair are made from the bones of yuan-ti supplicants and cultists who came to learn her powers or, later, to steal them. She spared none of these intruders' lives, and in death their remains do her bidding.

SKELETAL HORROR

Large undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 13 Hit Points 150 (20d10 + 40) Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	6 (-2)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

Skills Perception +3

Damage Vulnerabilities bludgeoning

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages —

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Proficiency Bonus +3

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The horror makes two attacks with its claws.

Claw. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 19 (3d10 + 3) slashing damage.

Wave of Bones (Recharge 5–6). The horror crashes into foes like a wave before quickly reforming. Each creature within 10 feet of the horror must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 18 (4d8) bludgeoning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. A creature that fails this saving throw is also knocked prone.

Appendix B: New Magic Items

The following artifacts either appear in this adventure or are important to foreshadowing the next adventure in the series. The *Stone of Creation* does not appear in this adventure but is included to help the DM understand it and allude to its powers.

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 applies to the artifact. Perhaps other slabs and boulders made from the *Stone* have been scattered across the multiverse, being cut down and recombed 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.

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.

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.

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

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.

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.

WANT TO CONTINUE THE ADVENTURE?

EPISODE 5: FROM CYAN DEPTHS

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