

SECTION A3

This section of Undercity is intended for four to six 1st-level characters.

The characters discover the entrance to this section of Undercity hidden beneath a loose cobblestone in a forgotten alley of the bustling city, revealed only when they decipher the cryptic riddle etched onto an ancient, tattered map.

Keyed Encounters

The following area descriptions are keyed to the map of Section A3 as shown on the cover.

1—Humid

Columns. Multiple columns hold up the ceiling.

Steam Mephits. Three **STEAM MEPHITS** fight over a gold bracelet worth 25 gp. They took it off an adventurer who they fed to the gray oozes in area 2. They're supposed to be keeping watch but are distracted.

Locked Door. The door to area 28 is locked.

2—Murky

Dropbox. The door leading to this chamber pulls outward into the hallway like a large dropbox door.

Low Floor. The floor of this chamber is 5 feet lower than the rest of the dungeon.

Stench. The smell of rotten garbage and offal permeates this area.

Gray Oozes. Two **GRAY OOZES** act as garbage disposals for the cultists that inhabit this dungeon. They are hidden among the slime and rot.

3—Vaporous

Locked Door. The southernmost door in this chamber is locked.

Cistern. Barrels of fresh water crowd this chamber.

Air Elemental. An **AIR ELEMENTAL**, accidentally summoned by the cultists, lurks here. It is not aggressive, but will defend itself if attacked.

4—Slick

Slick Floors. The floors here are covered in ooze, a byproduct of the mephit's mopping and its dust. Treat the area as **difficult terrain**. A creature that walks through the area must succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check or fall prone. The creature has advantage on the check if it moves at half speed.

Janitor. A **DUST MEPHIT** swabs the floors here. Of course, the dust falling off him continues to make a mess wherever he goes.

5—Misty

Fog. A *fog cloud* (as the spell, but not magical) sits over this area. A strong wind disperses it.

6—Abyss

Chasm. Part of the floor here has collapsed, creating a 10-foot-wide, 10-foot-deep chasm filled with rubble. Rickety planks bridge the gap.

Cultists. A motley collection of tables and chairs serve as an area for six cultists to gather and socialize. The **CULTISTS** attack anyone they view as an outsider.

Locked Door. The door to area 7 is locked.

7—Dank

Locked Door. The door to this room is locked.

Ritual. Thick pipe smoke fills this chamber. A **CULT FANATIC** sits at the center of the room, meditating and smoking.

Treasure. The cult fanatic's ornate pipe is worth 150 gp.

8—Neon

Neon Fungus. Neon fungus covers the walls and floors of this chamber.

When a creature starts its turn within 30 feet of the fungus' flashing lights, the creature must make a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed saving throw, the creature can't take reactions until the start of its next turn and rolls a d8 to determine what it does during that turn. On a 1 to 4, the creature does nothing. On a 5 or 6, the creature takes no action but uses all its movement to move in a random direction. On a 7 or 8, the creature makes one melee attack against a random creature, or it does nothing if no creature is within reach. 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 the fungus until the start of its next turn, when it can avert its eyes again. If the creature looks at the fungus in the meantime, it must immediately make the save.

Sunlight or any amount of fire damage instantly destroys one 5-foot patch of neon fungus.

Dead Cultist. A dead cultist lies on the floor. A successful DC 11 Wisdom (Medicine) check discerns that their head was caved in—they got

confused by the fungus' lights and smashed into the nearby wall. The dead cultist carries a pouch with 100 sp.

Secret Door. A passage that leads to area 10 is hidden in the western wall

9—Gritty

Broken Furniture. Huge piles of broken furniture cover this entire area, creating an area of **difficult terrain** throughout.

Xorn. A **XORN** digs through the wreckage looking for gems or coins to eat. It's harmless, but will demand in broken Common that the characters give it something to munch on.

10—Pickled

Dust. Thick dust and cobwebs cover everything in this room, suggesting that it hasn't been used in decades.

Necromantic Jars. Dust-caked shelves line the walls of this area. The shelves contain hundreds of small jars, which hold detached eyes, severed hands, preserved animals, and other medical oddities.

Ice Mephit. An **ICE MEPHIT** found its way into this area. It's currently infatuated by a pile of bones in the western passage (10b)

Exploding Jars. There is a pressure plate at the center of the room (marked with a "P" on the map). A creature that steps on the pressure plate triggers a gas trap (see below).

All of the jars on the shelves explode. Each creature in the area must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw, taking 3 (1d6) piercing damage on a failed saving throw or half as much on a

successful one. Noxious gas then fills the room and remains for 1 minute. A creature that starts its turn in the area with the gas must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for 1 minute.

Finding the trap requires a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check. A successful DC 13 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check disables the device.

The exploding jars alert the ice mephit lingering in area 10b.

11—Blasphemy

Locked Doors. The four doors leading to areas 12, 13, and 28 are locked.

Massive Chamber. This huge room has 40-foot high ceilings and looks as if it may have once been a temple.

Inscriptions. Abyssal inscriptions cover the columns, walls, floors, and even the arched ceilings of this area.

Skraalath's Worshipers. A character who can read Abyssal who reviews the inscriptions can make a DC 13 Intelligence (Religion) check to recognize that this temple belongs to Skraalath, the Vrock Lord of Desolation. See the Skraalath, Vrock Lord of Desolation sidebar.

12—Iridescent

Locked Door. The door leading to this chamber is locked.

Will-o'-Wisp. A **WILL-O'-WISP** lurks here. It attacks any living creature it sees.

13—Glistening

Locked Doors. The two doors connecting this area to area 11 are locked.

SKRAALATH, VROCK LORD OF DESOLATION

Those familiar with Skraalath—DC 13 Intelligence (Religion) check—know the following information:

Sacrificial Offerings: The Vrock Lord of Desolation demands ritualistic sacrifices, usually involving the hearts of fallen enemies, to be offered in complex ceremonies led by his cultists.

Feather Sigils: Skraalath is known to communicate with his followers through prophetic feathers, which are plucked from his own wings and infused with dark magic; these feathers serve as powerful talismans and are highly sought after by his cultists.

Territorial Dominance: Skraalath is not just a spiritual entity, but also a territorial being, said to have a specific lair within Undercity where his most devout followers gather; the lair is believed to be a nexus of dark energies and a gateway to other, even more malevolent realms.

Cat and Mouse. The pit trap at 13a has been triggered and there is an inexperienced adventurer (**GUARD**) trapped inside. A **THUG** dressed as a cultist of Skraalath stands over the pit, tormenting the hero.

Cultist Mask. The thug's mask is nicer than the other cultists'. It is made of silver and worth 50 gp.

New Friend. The guard will gladly join the party if given the opportunity. Otherwise, they quickly return to the exit (area 1) and enjoy an early retirement.

Furnace. There is a furnace tucked into the alcove of the western passage (13b). Earthquakes damaged it some time ago, so now it periodically belches flames. Once every 10 minutes the characters are here, roll a d6. On a result of 5 or 6, the furnace erupts in a 30-foot-long line that's 10-feet wide. Each creature in the line must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw, taking 3d6 fire damage on a failed saving throw, or half as much damage on a successful one.

14—Debauchery

Tie on the Door. There is a piece of fabric tied to the knob of the door that leads to this room. A creature with a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 13 or better hears the “sounds of vigorous exercise” coming from within.

Barracks. This small room is crowded with cots.

Afternoon Delight Two **BANDITS** and a **CULTIST** are engaging in “vigorous exercise” on one of the cots. Unless the characters are particularly loud, the three won't notice them immediately. None of them are wearing armor—reduce their AC by 1. They spend the first round searching for their weapons.

Chest. A character who searches the barracks and succeeds on a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check finds a small locked chest hidden under a floor tile. A successful DC 13 Dexterity check using thieves' tools unlocks the chest. There is 50 gp and a *potion of heroism* inside.

15—Charcoal

Hot Plate. Intense heat radiates from the floor of this room, hinting at the trap within.

Loose Floor. Many 10-foot-square sections of the floor in this area (marked with a “T” on the map) are made of brittle porcelain. When a creature weighing 30 pounds or more steps onto one of these plates, the square shatters. Any creature standing on the square falls 5 feet into a pit filled with hot charcoal. When a creature falls into the charcoal pit and each time it starts its turn in the charcoal pit, it takes 3 (1d6) fire damage. Spotting the brittle porcelain plates requires a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check. All of the cultists in this section of Undercity know which plates are real and which are fake.

16—Devours

Pit Trap. There is a pit trap hidden here (see General Features). Inside, there is a dead adventurer who has been partially eaten by something.

17—Gelatinous

Sleeping Cubes. There are four **GELATINOUS CUBES** sitting at the center of the room. All four cubes are incapacitated and have movement speeds of 0. However, their Ooze Cube and Transparent features still function. Characters who aren't careful might walk into one. Destroying an inactive cube awards only 50 XP.

Floating Coins. Although the cubes are transparent, the coins inside them aren't. Each cube contains 1d10 gold coins and 2d6 silver coins.

18—Gristly

Temple. This is a small temple dedicated to Skraalath. The column at the top of the dais (18b) is carved to look like vulture demons standing upon each other's backs, hoisting the ceiling.

They're Watching You. An illusion cast on the vulture column (18b) makes it look like the heads turn and stare at anyone that enters the chamber.

Cultists. When the characters first enter this chamber, two **CULTISTS** emerge from the secret door connecting this area to area 19. They attack the characters as soon as they see them. If one is killed, the other retreats to area 19 to alert the high cultist.

Secret Door. There is a secret door connecting this area to area 19. If the characters witnessed the cultists emerging from the passage, they have advantage on checks made to find it.

19—Lich

Private Chambers. This hidden chamber is a study. Bird feathers, small bones, and other detritus litter the floor, clear signs of Skraalathian worship.

Fake Lich. The cultist's high priest, an undead creature named Verenthis, the Dark Whisperer of Skraalath, uses this area as his meditation room and chambers. He is served by two hand maidens (**THUGS**). Verenthis' withered emaciated appearance and robes make him look like a lich. Only a successful DC 13 Intelligence (Religion) check identifies him for what he truly is—a **WIGHT**. Verenthis carries a key to the iron chest (see below).

Verenthis' Hoard. There is an iron footlocker shoved against one wall of these chambers. A successful DC 18 Dexterity check using proficiency in thieves' tools opens the lock. The chest contains a *spell scroll of speak with dead*, a *ring of protection*, and a pouch with 700 sp.

20—Abrupt

A giant spider uses this section of the Undercity as its lair.

Webs. Thick **spider webs** cover these halls. A creature entering the webbed area for the first time on a turn or starting its turn there must succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or become restrained by the webs. A restrained creature can use its action to try to escape, doing so with a successful DC 12 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check. Each 10-foot cube of giant webs has AC 10, 15 hit points, vulnerability to fire, and immunity to bludgeoning, piercing, poison, and psychic damage.

Screams. The cultists in area 20d cry for help.

Feces and Drained Victims. The northwestern alcove (area 20b) contains the shriveled remains of dead cultists and other unfortunate souls as well as spider feces.

Fake Door. It looks like there is a webbed-over door in the southwesternmost alcove (area 20c). If the characters clear away the webs here, they discover that it's just a door that's been torn from its hinges—this way is a dead end.

Trapped Cultists. There are three **CULTISTS** trapped in the webs in the two southeastern alcoves (area 20d). They hang from the ceiling like stalactites. A **GIANT SPIDER** lurks nearby, hoping to catch more creatures drawn by their screams. Freeing the cultists does nothing to win their favor—they still treat the characters as outsiders.

Secret Door. The cultists are webbed ovetop a concealed door that leads to area 21. Neither they nor the giant spider are aware of its existence.

Pit Trap. An old pit trap stands at the center of the hallway leading to area 21.

21—Chandelier

Stone Table. A stone table sits at the center of the room. A stone vulture idol rests atop it. The idol is worthless, but it triggers the chandelier trap.

Chandelier Trap. An iron chandelier decorated with bones, feathers, and black candles hangs above the table. Touching the idol causes the chandelier to drop.

When the chandelier falls, each creature in the 10-foot-square directly below the chandelier must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw. A creature takes 3 (1d6) bludgeoning plus 3 (1d6) piercing damage on a failed saving throw. Spotting the trap in advance requires a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check. A successful DC 12 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check disables the trap.

22—Insomnia

Lost Cultist. A **CULTIST**, cut off from his allies (see area 20d) hides in this room. Paranoid and terrified of the giant spider, he hasn't slept in days—he suffers from two levels of exhaustion. His speed is halved and he has disadvantage on all ability checks.

Lost Treasures. This chamber holds treasures long ago lost to the cultists, cut off by the giant spider in area 20. A locked chest at the center of the room contains 11,000 sp and a jeweled dagger worth 10 gp.

23—Spacious

Warnings. Signs on the two doors leading in to this chamber read: “Warning! Extradimensional magic present within this chamber. Do not bring bags of holding, portable holes, handy haversacks, or similar items in this room at the risk of being blown into the Astral Plane!”

Spacious Room: As the signs suggest, extradimensional conjuration magic makes the interior of this room 10 times larger than it actually is. Each square on the map counts as 100 feet. Doors remain the same size.

If a *bag of holding*, *portable hole*, *handy haversack*, or similar item is brought into the room, the offending item is instantly destroyed, the room returns to its original dimensions, and a gate opens to the Astral Plane. The gate originates at the center of the room. Any creature in the room when this happens is sucked through it to a random location on the Astral Plane. The gate then closes. The gate is one-way only and can't be reopened.

24—Delirious

Stables. Large, domed cages—ones like a bird might occupy—stand against the walls of this room.

Rubble. There is a pile of rubble at the center of the room. It looks like part of the ceiling may have collapsed.

Locked and Trapped Door. The northernmost door connecting this area to area 26 is locked and trapped. See below.

If a creature attempts to pick the door's lock or force it open, spears spring out of the walls in the 30-foot corridor

directly in front of the door. Each creature in the corridor must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw. A creature takes 2d6 piercing damage on a failed saving throw, or half as much damage on a successful one. The holes in the floor are obvious, requiring no check to find. Jamming them all with mud, glue, wooden dowels, or some other appropriate material stops them from emerging, but it will take a few hours to do this. Finding the mechanism in the door that triggers the trap takes a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check. Disabling the device requires a successful DC 18 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check. Failing this check by 5 or more triggers the trap.

25—Juicy

Temple. This temple is dedicated to Skraalath (see page 4). Vulture iconography covers nearly every surface.

Statues of Skraalath. Three statues dedicated to Skraalath decorate this chamber. Two of them serve as columns while the third (25b) stands on its own. The statue holds a stone bowl, within which there is colorful, savory-looking fruit.

Deadly Fruit. The fruit was picked from the abyss and brought here to the temple. It does not decay, but it is extremely hazardous. A creature that touches the fruit finds their fingers coated in sticky residue. The creature takes 3 (1d6) acid damage immediately and then 2 (1d4) acid damage at the end of its next turn. A creature that eats the fruit must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw, taking 25 (10d4) acid damage on a failed saving throw, or half as much on a successful one.

26—Catapult

Locked Doors. The doors leading into this area from area 1 and 24 are locked.

Siege Engine. A rusty mangonel lies on its side at the center of the room. Rubble surrounds it, and the ceiling directly above it appears patched, suggesting it fell from the city above. There is a skeleton pinned under it.

Don't Disturb the Dead. Pulling the skeleton from out under the mangonel causes it to shift and collapse. Any creature within 10 feet of the mangonel when this happens must succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw. A creature that fails its saving throw takes 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage and becomes pinned under the mangonel. The pinned creature is prone and restrained. One or more creatures with combined Strength scores of 20 can lift the mangonel enough to release a pinned creature.

27—Tunnel

Statue of Skraalath. An 8-foot-tall statue depicting the vrock demon Skraalath stands at the center of the circular chamber (27a). This statue is actually a **MIMIC** in disguise. It waits for a creature to come close to it before revealing its true nature.

Diseased Cultist. When the characters first enter the southern corridor (10b) they encounter an emaciated cultist covered in black welts. The cultist is suffering from a debilitating illness called abyssal withering (see the sidebar). Although they are sick (their current Strength score is 5), they will fight in honor of Skraalath. Any character who touches the cultist or hits the cultist with a melee weapon attack while within 5 feet of the cultist must

ABYSSAL WITHERING

When a humanoid comes into contact with a creature that carries the abyssal withering disease, it must succeed on a DC 11 Constitution saving throw or become infected. It takes 1d4 days for the symptoms of abyssal withering to manifest. Symptoms include chronic pain and chills. Once every 24 hours, the creature must make a DC 11 Constitution saving throw. On a failed saving throw, the creature's Strength score is reduced by 1d4. The creature dies if its Strength score falls below 0. Otherwise, this reduction lasts until the disease ends and the creature completes a long rest. A creature that dies from the disease returns as a **SHADOW** in 1d4 hours.

A success has no effect by itself. On the diseased creature's third success, the disease ends. The successes don't need to be consecutive.

Shadows and other creatures that drain strength ignore creatures stricken with abyssal withering.

check to see if they contract abyssal withering.

Cell. The diseased cultist keeps a filthy cell at the end of the corridor (10c). A **SHADOW** lurks here. The shadow does not attack anyone infected with abyssal withering.

28—Rubble

Locked Doors. The doors to area 1 and 11 are locked.

Rubble. A massive pile of rubble blocks the passage west, to area 29.

Big Gem. There is a curiously large gem resting on top of the rubble pile. Despite its "obviousness", there is nothing wrong with the gem, and it's actually worth 250 gp.

29—Ferrous

Rust Monsters. The first time a character opens either of the doors leading to this area (those leading to areas 26 and 28), four **RUST MONSTERS** pour out into the hallway, ravenous for fresh steel.

Docks. Four small wooden docks offer access to the waterway. Two of the docks have rafts large enough for four Medium or Small creatures or one Large creature to ride.

Giant Vultures. Two **GIANT VULTURES**, allies of the cultists, guard this section of the Undercity. They roost in the supports above the waterway (29b), and attack any outsiders that enter this area. The rust monsters and giant vultures ignore each other.

Section A2. The waterway exit (29c) leads to section A2 of the Undercity, as featured in Undercity A2.

30—Designed

Storage. This large room is used to store food and water for the cultists.

Boat Keeper. A **BANDIT CAPTAIN** named Kurgan uses this chamber to rest, work, and keep himself busy. He maintains the boats. Although he is loyal to the cultists, he's an easy bribe. Ω

Notes

Notes

Beneath the sprawling metropolis lies Undercity, a labyrinthine complex of ancient chambers, twisting corridors, and decrepit architecture that tells tales of forgotten civilizations. A mixture of rotting wood, rusted iron, and age-worn stone constitutes the bulk of its construction, with claustrophobic passages opening into grand halls supported by intricately carved columns. Hidden waterways filled with stagnant, murky water snake through the subterranean maze, while an array of traps and hazards lie in wait for the unwary. The air is thick with the smells of dampness and decay, punctuated by chilling echoes and unsettling silence. Serving as a haven for the unspeakable—cultists, creatures, and malevolent entities—it remains a place shrouded in darkness, both literal and metaphorical, where the line between the mortal realm and other, darker planes of existence grows perilously thin.

General Features

Unless stated otherwise, this section of the Undercity has the following features in common.

Architecture: The architecture of Undercity is a mix of ancient stone work and decaying, wooden reinforcements, with labyrinthine corridors leading to large, open chambers. In corridors, the ceiling is generally about 7 feet high, while the chambers boast vaulted ceilings reaching up to 20 feet.

Columns: In chambers that have them, stone columns rise from the floor, intricately carved but worn by age, and some appear to be load-bearing while others might be purely decorative.

Doors: Doors in this section are mostly made of rotting wood bound with rusty iron, many of them warped or partially broken, requiring force or finesse to open.

Locked Doors: Some of the doors in Undercity feature ancient, rusted locks that are complicated but frail, requiring either skilled lockpicking or brute force to bypass. A locked door requires a successful DC 15 Dexterity check using proficiency in thieves' tools to unlock, or a successful DC 20 Strength (Athletics) check to break open. Doors have AC 15, 18 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage.

Secret Doors: Hidden throughout Undercity are secret doors, masterfully camouflaged to blend in with the surrounding stone or woodwork, often requiring keen observation or magical detection to discover. These doors require a successful DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) or Intelligence (Investigation) check (character's choice) to discover.

Cultists. All cultists encountered in the dungeon are worshippers of Skraalath, the Vrock Lord of Desolation. Skraalath's cultists dress in tattered,

dark robes adorned with feathers and bones, meant to mimic the appearance of their vrock lord. Their faces are often obscured by twisted, beak-like masks, and their hands are frequently stained with ash and dried blood from ritualistic offerings. All cultists fight until killed.

Illumination: The majority of Undercity is shrouded in darkness, broken only by the occasional flicker of phosphorescent fungi or the rare, enchanted sconce.

Pit Traps: Numerous pit traps are scattered throughout (marked with an X on the map), usually hidden under thin layers of earth or debris, dropping unwary adventurers into spiked pits or pools of foul water. Spotting a trap requires a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check. Tapping the floor with a pole or similar prod also reveals it. A creature that falls into a pit trap falls 10 feet, lands prone, and takes 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage.

Sounds and Smells: The air is filled with the pungent odors of dampness, decay, and an underlying note of something metallic, like rust or old blood. Echoing footsteps, the distant drip of water, and occasional screeches or growls fill the otherwise eerie silence.

Waterways: Shallow, murky waterways crisscross various sections, filled with dark, stagnant water that sometimes conceals lurking dangers. These waterways are 5 feet deep and count as difficult terrain.

Section A3 Random Encounters (1/Hour)

d100	Encounter
01	1d6 + 1 cultists
02	1d2 thugs and 1d3 + 1 cultists
03	1 cult fanatic and 1d4 cultists
04	1 cult fanatic , 1 thug , and 1d4 cultists
05	1d8 bandits
06	1 bandit captain and 1d4 bandits
07	1d2 thugs and 1d4 mastiffs
08	1d4 swarms of rats
09	1d6 giant rats
10	1d3 gray oozes
11	1d3 ghouls
12	1 mimic
13	1d2 specters
14	2d4 stirges
15	1 crocodile
16—00	No encounter.