D&D

ADVENTURERS LEAGUE

GUILD

ESCAPE FROM WHELOON



Unravel a plot both secret and sinister in this adventure for the world's greatest roleplaying game

ESCAPE FROM WHELOON

The walled city of Wheloon holds the criminal population of Cormyr. The residents of that place are bound to it forever and cut off from the outside world. Inside, plans are made and malcontents pool their resources – and outside, forces influence the innocent to ensure that a dire plot can be realized without interference from the knights and mages that guard the realm. Now you're here with no memory of what brought you to Wheloon, and all you can think of is finding out why!

A Four- (or More-) Hour Adventure for 1st Level Pregenerated Characters

Optimized For: APL 1

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Introduction

You hold in your hands an experience by the name of *Escape from Wheloon*. This *D&D* adventure can be used to teach new players the ins and outs of the game, but for more experienced players there is a greater reward: an exploration of the storylines that drive the game.

In these pages we will gain insight about the conflict between the dwarves and their cousins, the duergar – the dark dwarves. We will see the soured relationship between the duergar and the mind flayers, and we will be faced with the stark realization that even in the Faerunian kingdom of Cormyr, not all individuals are treated equally.

This adventure is designed for **four pregenerated characters of 1st level**. More experienced players may choose to use characters of their own creation; if this is the case, they must be of levels 1 through 4.

Adjusting This Adventure

This adventure provides suggestions in making adjustments for smaller or larger groups, characters of higher or lower levels, and characters that are otherwise a bit more powerful than the adventure is optimized for. You're not bound to these adjustments; they're here for your convenience.

To figure out whether you should consider adjusting the adventure, add up the total levels of all the characters and divide the total by the number of characters (rounding .5 or greater up; .4 or less down). This is the group's APL. To approximate the party strength for the adventure, consult the following table.

Determining Party Strength

Party Composition Party	Party Strength
3-4 characters, APL less than	Very weak
3-4 characters, APL equivalent	Weak
3-4 characters, APL greater than	Average
5 characters, APL less than	Weak
5 characters, APL equivalent	Average
5 characters, APL greater than	Strong
6-7 characters, APL less than	Average
6-7 characters, APL equivalent	Strong
6-7 characters, APL greater than	Very strong

Some encounters may include a sidebar that offers suggestions for certain party strengths. If a particular recommendation is not offered or appropriate for your group, you don't have to make adjustments.

Before Play at the Table

Before you start play, consider the following:

- Read through the adventure, taking notes of anything you'd like to highlight or remind yourself of while running the adventure, such as a way you'd like to portray an NPC or a tactic you'd like to use in a combat. Familiarize yourself with the adventure's appendices and handouts.

- Gather any resources you'd like to use to aid you in running this adventure–such as notecards, a DM screen, miniatures, and battlemaps.
- Ask the players to provide you with relevant character information, such as name, race, class, and level; passive Wisdom (Perception), and anything specified as notable by the adventure (such as backgrounds, traits, flaws, etc.)
- Determine how familiar the players are with D&D rules. There are several points in the adventure that call out some scripted events; if your party does not need those events, feel free to adjust the story as you see fit.

Playing the Dungeon Master

You have the most important role—facilitating the enjoyment of the game for the players. You provide the narrative and bring the words on these pages to life.

To facilitate this, keep in mind the following:

You're Empowered. Make decisions about how the group interacts with the adventure; adjusting or improvising is encouraged, so long as you maintain the adventure's spirit. This doesn't allow you to implement house rules or change those of the Adventurers League, however; they should be consistent in this regard.

Challenge Your Players. Gauge the experience level of your players (not the characters), try to feel out (or ask) what they like in a game, and attempt to deliver the experience they're after. Everyone should have the opportunity to shine.

Keep the Adventure Moving. When the game starts to get bogged down, feel free to provide hints and clues to your players so they can attempt to solve puzzles, engage in combat, and roleplay interactions without getting too frustrated over a lack of information. This gives players "little victories" for figuring out good choices from clues. Watch for stalling—play loses momentum when this happens. At the same time, make sure that the players don't finish too early; provide them with a full play experience.

Adventure Primer

"I was an entertainer once. It was great: adoring crowds, bountiful food and drink, endless travel and exploration. And then the passion got the best of me. I lost control, and now I have Wheloon to call home. Never mind the blue sky; watch the stones and mind the gap. My songs now are hollow and but an echo of what they once were."

— Janneth Houlesque, Waterdhavian bard
incarcerated 1455 DR

Adventure Background

For nearly a hundred years, the city of Wheloon has lurked behind Cormyrian-built walls and spells. It is stuffed beyond capacity with ne'er-do-wells, criminals, deviants, and anyone else that the crown of Cormyr has decreed should be held captive in this lawless place. Once over the wall, anyone in the city is there for life as there is no escape, even with the aid of powerful magic spells and items.

The Purple Dragon Knights of Cormyr are tasked with the token effort of keeping watch over the city. They know there is no escape from that place, and as such they are not motivated to enter the city except for matters of extreme distress. They rarely pay much attention to it and more often than not, the guards posted here are either new recruits or serving some form of penalty themselves. On rare occasions the commanding officers of the Purple Dragon Knights arrange for champions or senior enlisted knights to travel into Wheloon and run the guards through training activities and exercises.

Unbeknownst to the knights, something sinister plots behind the walls. Amidst the residents, a mind flayer has been slowly building its powerbase and seeks to commit an unfathomable atrocity upon Faerûn.

Location and NPC Summary

The following elements are featured in this adventure:

Wheloon. This city in southern Cormyr was once a peaceful farming community and trading post, but just before 1400 DR the king of Cormyr ordered the city to be physically and magically sealed. The crown had discovered that many residents were worshipers of Shar and feared that the city had become a hub for Netherese spies. Nearly 100 years later, there are nearly 3000 residents and the streets are ruled by gangs.

Ossten Delaire (OSS-ten dell-AIR). Ossten Delaire is a human sergeant in the Purple Dragon Knights and serves as the commanding officer for the garrison at Wheloon. Ossten was forced to leave his husband in Suzail when he was assigned to the closed garrison at Wheloon. Courteous but coarse in his mannerisms, Ossten simply wishes to prove his worth here so that he can return to the capital city.

Grundar Gristlespit (GRUHN-daar GRIS-sell-SPIT). Grundar is a duergar metalsmith that now resides in Wheloon. Despite the fact that he's only been in the city a few weeks, he has already assembled his own gang, known as the Screamers. He was planted by agents of the mind flayers in a dual quest to sow discord and chaos in a controlled environment, and to work to bring the aberrant horrors to the surface in a safe environment.

Adventure Options

The adventure can be experienced in a number of manners:

Fast play/ new players. This option *requires the use of the provided pregen characters*. The characters begin play inside Wheloon and must figure out how to escape and clear their names. This option should take two to four hours.

Down the Rabbit Hole. This option *precludes the use of the provided pregen characters*. The characters have been contracted by the Purple Dragon Knights to enter Wheloon and give the streets their once-weekly, cursory patrol. The DM will need to adjust and weave the four scripted encounters into their explorations as the opportunities present themselves.

I Live Here Now. The characters may already live in Wheloon or may choose to remain in the city after the core events of this adventure have been resolved. If this is the case, feel free to create additional adventures using the city guide included in this bundle. While not ideal for a structured play experience, this can lead to some awesome games over the weeks and months to come!

Story Beat: Dwarves, Duergar, and Mind Flayers

As discussed in *Mordenkainen's Tome of Foes*, the dwarves and duergar were once one and the same. That book provides a lot of detail, but in short: several dwarven clans parted ways and pursued the path to power that was offered by the mind flayers; these clans were enslaved by the mind flayers and had their minds and bodies irrevocably changed; later, these dwarves – now called the duergar – staged a revolt and earned their freedom from their mind flayer masters. Even so, a few clans remain in thrall to the aberrant horrors.

This adventure requires the DM to be mindful of these relationships and works best when the animosity between the dwarves and duergar is highlighted and massaged into the narrative. Although the mind flayer influence isn't fully realized until the final scene, there are a few hints beforehand that can serve to build these story points into the beginning of an ongoing narrative should your players choose to pursue it!

Adventure Hooks

Use the adventure options above to determine what kind of game you plan to run. If needed, consider one or more of the following story hooks:

Backstage Disaster. If using the provided pregen characters, the intended adventure hook is that they wake in an unfamiliar space and have jarring holes in their memory. The last thing they each remember is performing in Suzail and taking part in a huge party. See the section entitled **Quick Start. Perhaps We've Partied Too Hard...**

Prisoners Already. The characters have offended the crown of Cormyr or have been found guilty of crimes against the nation and have been thrown into the prison city of Wheloon. *This option is troublesome and requires the lost memories to be removed from the story; however, it can still provide a fun experience if the DM is adept at modifying storylines on the fly.*

Looking for Work. Adventurers still have bills to pay, and between adventures they may take up short-term mercenary work. In this case, the Purple Dragon Knights have posted a lucrative opportunity for enterprising individuals that aren't averse to entering the prison city and performing routine tasks. *This option represents the most work for the DM, as it requires a significant number of adjustments to the content.*

DM's Note!

As the characters participate in events inside the city of Wheloon, you may notice that that there are no gold rewards. This is intentional. The city has sworn off the use of standard currencies and works on a bartering system instead. Only in specific areas are coins even accepted in trade for goods or services; these areas are denoted in the adventure text.





Quick Start: Perhaps We've Partied Too Hard...

This option requires the use of the included pregenerated characters.

Guiding the Characters

If you are using this section to run the game, feel free to guide the characters through the narrative. Help them understand their character sheets, reward creativity (be sure to read up on the inspiration rules!) and encourage everyone to remain involved in the story!

If some of the players are bringing their own characters and one or more of the pregenerated characters are still being used, consider using this section to start the pregens and the next section to start the remaining characters. They'll cross paths soon enough!

Coming to our Senses

The characters awake to find themselves on cots in a sparsely furnished room. Their heads are pounding and with a quick glance around, they can see through the cracked window that the morning sun has just broken the horizon. A door stands slightly ajar nearby.

The characters already know each other, as indicated on their character sheets. They are free to discuss as much or as little of that information as they like.

The characters may spend some time trying to recall exactly what brought them to this place. In truth, the last thing they recall is performing at a seedy tavern in Suzail, the capital city of Cormyr. The drinks were plentiful and the food abundant, and the characters find it difficult to piece together full details as the night progressed.

Character Spotlight: Everyone

After a few minutes of pondering, the characters recall that a tiny person kept handing them drinks that were increasingly potent.

This prompts Thaeldrun to remember that the masked person never spoke but smelled faintly of salted chestnuts and raw meat.

Garriden recalls that the tiny person spoke with a strange accent that used a lot of long 's' sounds like a snake's hiss.

Bharnum identifies everyone's gear, including weapons, as being stashed in two small chests in the room. Included is a list of charges against them, including:

- Public intoxication
- Jaywalking
- Worship of Shar
- Promotion of anti-Cormyrean activities
- Refusing to pay for services rendered

After flailing his arms for a few moments in a panicked pat down inspection, Bhailee finds that everyone has a new small scar behind their ear. The scar is purple-blue and about half an inch across.

When they're ready to move on, they may leave the room and explore the city. Provide some or all of the information, as roleplaying or time allows:

- ***It looks peaceful.*** The characters are in Wheloon, a city in southern Cormyr. There's a general air of unease but in general the city is peaceful – even though law enforcement appears to have no presence here, which is because...
- ***It's a prison.*** Any character that is proficient in History recalls that Wheloon is the prison for most Cormyrian criminals. Sure, the high-powered offenders get placed somewhere else but anyone that's not a powerful adventurer is likely to be tossed here if (or until) they're proven guilty.
- ***It's busy.*** Despite – or perhaps because of - the air of unease, Wheloon is a busy place. Thousands of people live here, and they're all eager to tell you just why they can't leave.

So How Do We... ?

The characters should have some time to interact with the city and some of its residents. Procuring a map is not difficult, as several are plastered on the walls of shops and on city fixtures.

The characters should have one of these scripted encounters every 20 minutes or so, as they help to fill in some of each character's background details and memories. Additionally, whenever a character rolls a 1 or a 20 on a d20, that character recalls one of their missing memories. They should have recalled one of the missing memories before they enter Indiglow Metalworks.

It's more of a Suggestion, Really

This adventure expects both the players and the Dungeon Master to be comfortable role playing and making decisions on the fly. If the Dungeon Master does not take time to guide the characters and make appropriate hints, this adventure may go on for a significant amount of time. If that's good with everyone involved, awesome, explore to your heart's content! Otherwise, the following points can be used (with a little modification) to give the characters a sense of completion without a lot of time invested.

If you decide to modify these encounters, feel free to grant the magic items and other described benefits to your characters as you deem appropriate.

Bhailee's Memories

Memory	Description
1	The stage crew at the tavern in Suzail were all duergar.
2	Every time you turned around, your drinks were refilled.
3	You remember seeing one of your allies shivering and shaking as a duergar jammed a large needle just behind their ear.
4	You recall a muffled conversation in which two duergar voices talk about "forging those memories into more blades".

Bharnum's Memories

Memory	Description
1	The stage crew at the tavern in Suzail all had curious scars behind their ears.
2	Your drinks in Suzail were free, and extremely strong.
3	You recall a pinch and a sharp pain behind your ear, and the phantom image of an evil-looking duergar clouds your mind.
4	You recall a muffled conversation in which two duergar voices talk about how "it's happening right below their very noses. The Knights won't know what hit them!"

Garriden's Memories

Memory	Description
1	The stage crew at the tavern in Suzail kept referring to "Screamers", as if in reference to a group or another band.
2	Your drinks in Suzail had a slightly bitter taste. By the time you realized that they were poisoned, you were already falling unconscious.
3	You recall seeing a duergar pull a glowing substance out of your ally's head through a small hole behind their ear. This substance was placed into a vial and wrapped in cloth.
4	You recall a muffled conversation in which two duergar voices talk about how "Gristlespit is in thrall to that thing but I'm not going to tell him that – he killed the last of us that did!"

Thaeldrun's Memories

Memory	Description
1	The stage crew at the tavern in Suzail kept referring to their boss as "Gristlespit".
2	Every time you took a drink, the stage crew would snicker and laugh.
3	You recall seeing a duergar drink a glowing substance from a vial and can plainly hear him say "These memories are delicious. Gristlespit was right, these are the right people."
4	You recall a muffled conversation in which two duergar voices talk about how "these ones will do nicely. Hand me the extractions; I have blades to make. Dump them in the city, eat them, I don't care."

Animal Magnetism!

As the characters leave the shack that they woke up in, they are immediately accosted by two human **thugs** and a shaggy **mastiff**. The humans want to take whatever they can from the characters. Before initiative is rolled they demand tribute. If the characters succeed on a DC 14 Charisma (Persuasion) check, the thugs can be bribed and will require at least 3 gp worth of gifts each before walking away. Offering 5 gp or more worth of gifts to each of them grants advantage on this check.

Character Spotlight: Bharnum

If this encounter ends peacefully, the mastiff whines and pulls against her leash. It snaps free and she runs to BA's side. She's terribly hungry, but for some reason she is keen to remain by Bharnum's side.

Alternately, Bharnum can attempt to make a DC 14 Charisma (Animal Handling) check during combat with the thugs. If successful, the mastiff breaks loose from the thugs and joins Bharnum's side. Exception roleplaying or offering treats grants advantage on this check.

If Bharnum ends this encounter with the mastiff at his side, he regains some memories and becomes a level 2 bard. Be sure to share the mastiff's stat block!

Yeah, I'm Gonna Need You To…

As the characters explore their second point of interest in Wheloon they are approached by a cloaked halfling. This halfling introduces herself as Gimble (N halfling female **commoner**) and confides to Thaeldrun that she too has made a deal with unknowable powers. She has no interest in speaking with anyone but Thaeldrun but is unafraid to share her knowledge so long as she can speak directly to the warlock. She is rushed and clearly worried, but has the following to impart:

- "That fat miscreant of a duergar wanted your memories, but those are mine. He just don't know!" With this, Gimble tugs a previously-undiscovered ring from the mats in Thaeldrun's beard and slides it on the dwarf's finger.
- "Wheloon is a place of strangers, but it's no place *for* strangers. Get friendly!"
- "The Screamers are worse than you've heard. They're in your brain, rockhead. They live there. THEY'RE ALREADY THERE!"

After Gimble shares his three bits and reclaims the ring, he scurries away. The characters can attempt to catch up, but he melts into the crowd as if he never really existed at all. With exceptional roleplay or skill checks, they find that the halfling's cloak has been discarded, and a lingering scent of sulfur is in the air.

Treasure

Once the runes stop crawling around (See the Character Spotlight: Thaeldrun sidebar below) Thaeldrun recognizes the spellbook as an *enduring spellbook*.

Character Spotlight: Thaeldrun

After Gimble leaves the characters, Thaeldrun can feel his connection to his magic strengthening. The unmistakable childish giggle of an imp rolls around his brain as new arcane powers are unlocked. Thaeldrun regains some memories and is now a level 2 wizard, and 'imp' is added to his list of potential familiars when casting *find familiar.*

Normally a wizard would choose new spells during the level up process, but these are already indicated on the pregen's character sheet. Infernal runes flare on the pages and become the familiar spidery crawl of arcane sigils shortly thereafter across the pages of the spellbook.

I Know a Girl

This event can take place at any time during their exploration.

As the characters become more familiar with the residents of Wheloon, a dirty dwarven woman (N dwarf female **commoner**) approaches them. In a high-pitched lilting voice she asks if any of them need "goods, services, or just a guide".

If the characters attempt to brush past her or ignore her, she will attempt to pick their pockets as they walk by. Any character with a passive Perception of 16 or higher will detect her attempt.

- "The Screamers have been working with agents throughout Cormyr. They need more test subjects."
- "The Screamers draw the memories and experience from those that are drawn here. Yank that stuff right out. I hear that they eat it. Or smelt it. Reports vary pretty wildly."
- She is saddened that Bhailee does not remember their time together in Suzail. She weaves a complex tale of how they were a two-person band, and that every show they hosted featured dozens of costume changes for each of them. A Wisdom (Insight) check at DC 14 confirms that she is telling the truth, though Bailee has no memory of it. (This is because the Screamers have pulled this memory from his head)

Just before she is out of sight, she looks wistfully over one shoulder and yells "Check your pockets!"

Treasure

With this said, Bailee detects a lump in one of his vest pockets. Near a seam and sewn into the lining is a gleaming mithril harmonica – an *instrument of illusions* – engraved with the following phrase:

Shandira & Bailee
Suzail, 1492 DR





Character Spotlight: Bhailee

The halfling has gone by many names in her life and is a master of disguise. Bailee recognizes her immediately and knows that her name is Shandira Archfall; pass a note to Bailee with this information. If Shandira is called by name her eyes go wide and she feigns surprise, saying "Well, well, well. Let's get comfortable somewhere shall we?"

At the end of this encounter and the discovery of the *instrument of illusions*, Bhailee regains one memory and becomes a level 2 bard.

Plans Within Plans

This should be the last planned event. This must take place in a location that could feasibly hold two statues and passers-by; while an outside location is tempting, Redbeard Rental, Storage, and Shipping is ideal for this encounter.

Any character may attempt a Wisdom (Insight) check at DC 12. Those that succeed can feel that someone is watching them. Knowing this, the characters can attempt a DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check; succeeding means that they notice the two **duergar hammerers** as they begin to stride forward, intent on attacking! Each hammerer has a duergar trapped within its chest cavity, and once the hammerers are defeated the duergar can be interrogated, but they die to their wounds and the terrible magic of the hammerer at the end of the next round. Healing, magical or otherwise, does not prevent this – the physical stress is just too great.

If questioned, or if provoked during combat, the duergar know the following (only spoken in Undercommon):

- "Your extracted memories have already been forged!"
- "Grundar Gristlespit is ETERNAL! HE LIVES IN OUR MINDS!"
- "I AM FOREVER, SOLID AND STONE!"

Treasure

One of the duergar has a *mystery key* on a cord around his neck. The head of the key sports the emblem of a bellows on one side and tongs on the other. This emblem matches the carving on the stone near Rathool's Pond (area 25 in the Locations section).

The next social encounter or two that the characters have should include references to how some citizens of Wheloon have noted that the Screamers just seem to disappear into thin air around **Rathool's Pond**.

Character spotlight: Garriden

By this time Garriden (and likely the others as well) has begun putting together that the Screamers are responsible for the dwarves being brought to Wheloon. After the hammerers are defeated, Garriden receives a flash of insight: a hazy memory of a duergar process that extracts memories and reforges them into potent weapons that cause psychic damage.

With this knowledge granted and the *mystery key* in hand, Garriden regains one memory and becomes a level 2 rogue.



Locations: Highlights of the Lowlife

Estimated Duration: 60-120 minutes

Escaping Wheloon

The War Mages of Cormyr, along with the Purple Dragon Knights, have constructed walls around the city. The physical wall that surrounds the city is only ten feet tall and is built of standard stone and mortar, but the magical wall that extends above and below it is far sturdier. Once someone is branded a criminal in Cormyr and they have been committed to Wheloon, there is no escape. The magical wall is treated as a *wall of force*, and it forms a barrier that completely encloses the city – it even cuts through the stone and soil below.

The War Mages can provide charms to those that are approved to travel in and out of the city. These charms are generally bestowed to mercenaries that have passed their background checks, and the War Mages can remotely disable the charm if sufficient need is discovered and the mercenaries need to be trapped in the city.

In short, there is no escape and no shortage of residents that are eager to leave. But they're all innocent – they'll tell you!.

The General Area

As the characters explore the area, two things become immediately apparent: first, that the wall of force effect is a modified spell and blocks sound as well as teleportation effects from passing through; and second, that a ten-foot-tall brick wall surrounds the city itself inside the magical bubble. The buildings outside of the city, both inside and outside of the magical barrier, are abandoned.

As they explore the city, they should quickly become aware of the presence of the Screamers. These psychic miscreants are led by a morbidly obese blacksmith named Grundar Gristlespit; this horrific beast of a duergar only walks the streets at night and is rumored to cause the eyes of his enemies to explode if they view him directly. Nobody knows where his shop is – or at least, they're not talking about it. Anyone that has one of the scars is generally considered to be a member of the gang or already dead.

- **Population.** roughly 4,000
- **Inhabitants.** Humans (90%); dwarves (all kinds; 5%); halflings (all kinds; 3%); other races combined (2%)
- **Economy.** Poor to lower middle class with a rich 1% due to organized crime. The city does not use standard currencies except for a small number of businesses, and instead uses a service bartering system in exchange for goods and services like room and board.

The city is self-governing and has worked for the last several decades to eliminate the need for any type of mayor or burgomeister; it's a mostly-peaceful anarchy that the residents of Wheloon have now. The Dragon Knights and War Wizards occasionally bring deliveries into the city, but this is the only contact with the outside world for people that live here.

Street Life

For every location that the characters visit in Wheloon, determine a random result from the following table. Re-roll previously discovered results if necessary or use them to drive home certain facts about this place!

Encounters, Observations, and Rumors

d20	Result
1	One character regains a memory.
2	An acolyte of Hoar preaches a doom-filled sermon on a street corner. "Retribution is divine!"
3	One human cult fanatic of Shar and two human cultists accost the characters, demanding that they submit to their dark goddess. They won't take no for an answer.
4	Three human thugs confront the party and demand tribute of 5 gp. They can be negotiated down to 3 gp, but the characters only have one attempt before the thugs attack. They all have the mark of the Screamers.
5	A nearby building is completely boarded up. Warnings that read "Contaminated!" have been painted on the outside. Inside, two duergar are speaking in Dwarvish about "the four fresh deliveries" and "how much fun they'll be".
6	A dwarven beggar holds a sign that says "Will drink for gold"
7	A halfling with one hand and three fingers runs up to you. "I can count to five, lemme show you!"
8	A well-dressed dwarven woman walks briskly down the street. They refuse to make eye contact with anyone, and her thickly-muscled dwarf veteran bodyguard shoves away anyone that would slow their pace. She has no time for social niceties but offers this: "You're not meant for this place. Convince the Knights to release you before you truly become one of... them."
9	Three children are seen playing in the street. They scatter when a wagon rumbles by.
10	Two of the characters regain one memory each.
11	A signpost lies on the ground. On it is a sign with an arrow pointing to "House of Midnight" with Shar's holy symbol.
12	Two human young adults are chatting animatedly about "The Beast"; apparently one of the taverns has a gigantic dwarf chained in the basement and offers weekly blood sport events.
13	A slim-framed human boy is thrown out the front door of a house. As he stands, an elderly woman throws a very full chamber pot at him from the upstairs window while yelling "And stay out!"
14	Dirty broadsheets, obviously exposed for some time, flutter in the breeze. One of the headlines reads "Crime Still High; Cormyr Cares Not"
15	Three of the characters regain one memory each.
16	A young human child is panhandling for money. If the characters give her 1 gp or more, she tells them that she saw a group of evil dark-skinned dwarves (duergar) dropping the characters in the shack they woke up in. They laughed as they walked away and spoke of how they were going to bring Cormyr to ruin.
17	A second-story window is thrown open as a chamber pot is violently thrown into the street. The characters must each succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or else be poisoned for one minute due to the horrific smell.
18	A distraught young man is chugging what passes for dwarven spirits in Wheloon. He is consumed by grief for the actions that brought him here – he stole the day's earnings from a merchant in Suzail. The young man has been sentenced to this place for life and will never see his family again.
19	Roll twice on this table, ignoring any result of 19.
20	Each character regains one memory.

Where are We Going?

Procuring a map isn't difficult, as they are often found attached to sign posts, nailed to walls, or crumpled and discarded in the street. Nearly all of them are crudely made and include an advertisement of some form. Use these flyers to create a trail the characters to follow!

1. The Wyvern Watch Inn

Situated at the western end of the ferry that brings the convicted into Wheloon, the Wyvern Watch Inn serves as the receiving house for all new residents. A pair of human brothers named **Eyvan** and **Brahl Standlesmith** (LN human male **thugs**) work and live here; while they are not officially Purple Dragon Knights, they are something more than squires. They are assisted by a War Wizard named **Haelie** (N half-elf female Guild of Masons **mage**) who declines to provide a last name and sneers whenever anyone asks too many questions – especially about why she smells like pine trees and tends to leave small piles of potting soil where ever she goes; on a DC 18 Charisma (Persuasion) check she will share that "it was a horrible chaos sorcery accident".

If the characters desire it, they can procure temporary lodgings here for 1 sp per person per night.

2. Route of the Ferry

A rope hovers some fifteen feet above the surface of the water. The Purple Dragon Knights use this rope to haul their ferry across the river for both patrols as well as deliveries of prisoners and goods. The flat barge is typically moored on the east side, well away from the city.

3. The Wyvernflow River

The Wyvernflow River flows from the heart of the kingdom of Cormyr, south past Wheloon and into the western edge of the Sea of Fallen Stars. It is outside the wall and cannot be accessed by the residents of the city.

4. Oldstone Hall

The Guild of Masons have taken Oldstone Hall as their core lodgings. Oldstone Hall used to be the center of government for Wheloon, but with the Guild in charge of the building it has slowly become a testament to extravagance. Gilded carvings can be seen on the exterior and intricate carvings dance around the stonework; all of this is in sharp contrast to the generally-rundown appearance of the remainder of the city.

The Guild of Masons rarely bothers to post guards, as the thick stone doors and wrought-iron bars in the windows are an effective enough deterrent for would-be intruders. Nobody gets in without being invited and delivered a key by an existing member. The contents of the Hall are not explored here, but you can improvise and use it to expand this adventure as you see fit.

5. Lord Sarp's Paddock

The identity of Lord Sarp has been lost to the decades (though it is widely believed that Lord Sarp was an extremely successful businessman and noble), but the residents have turned this paddock into a pasture for mules, horses, and donkeys. There are less than a dozen of the creatures remaining, but their presence serves as entertainment for the children that call Wheloon home.

6. Sendever's Stables

The halfling **Sendever** family was in Wheloon when it was sealed on the orders of the king of Cormyr and they continued to rear horses as they had for generations. Now that the city has been sealed for many decades, the number of horses is dwindling as their breeding options have become more and more limited. The few remaining animals are stabled here and released each morning into the paddock (area **5. Lord Sarp's Paddock**). Depending upon the time of day and the needs of the story, anywhere from one to ten halfling **commoners** can be located here.

7. Haldos the Butcher

This all-meat restaurant has long been a favorite of the residents of Wheloon. Over the years their clientele has treated it as a safe meeting space where even violently opposed residents and gang leaders can enjoy a brief respite from the daily nature of their incarceration and activities. Some rumors claim that Haldos brokered this peace by means of a permanent *calm emotions* spell though other, darker rumors exist as well. Haldos has been dead for nearly 50 years, but his name is still on the establishment out of respect.

Due to the inherently peaceful nature of the place, any Charisma (Persuasion) checks that the characters make here have advantage and Charisma (Deception or Intimidation) have disadvantage. If the characters have not already experienced the **I Know a Girl** scripted encounter, this is an ideal place for it to occur.

8. Redbeard Rental, Storage, and Shipping

Redbeard (N dwarf male Guild of Masons **veteran**) specializes in moving materials around the city without asking too many questions (often none, if the money is good). He has a small workforce of 15 other dwarves and humans and relies on a halfling woman named **Matilde Bustleblossom** (LE halfling female **cultist of Shar**) to operate the front desk, plan the day's deliveries, and so on. As he was born in the city, some of the Purple Dragon Knights have taken him as a sort-of ally, and while they can't release him they occasionally find ways to slip him some extra coin; most commonly this means that they deliver medicine, food, clothing, and other necessary goods from the outside world to Redbeard's warehouses for later delivery.

This place is an ideal location for the **Plans Within Plans** scripted encounter.

What does Redbeard know? If the characters engage Redbeard on the topic of the Screamers, he attempts to remain professional and coy. If the characters succeed on a DC 14 Charisma (Intimidation or Persuasion) check, he admits that:

- He sometimes moves large boxes around the city for them, and describes the most recent as being the boxes that brought the characters into Wheloon
- The boxes show up on the ferry, and he swears that he knows nothing further about their operations.
- He finds them too chaotic and troublesome to deal with regularly

9. Mill

The mill has a water wheel and grinds nearly all the wheat for the residents of Wheloon. Some darker rumors persist inside the city that the mill's employees can be convinced to grind other things if the money is right.

10. Cormyeran Coins Coster

Once upon a time this building was a tax hall and temple dedicated to Waukeen, but now it is in disrepair. The Purple Dragon Knights use it as a meeting space and nothing else.

11. Falconstar Wayshipping

This warehouse once served as a busy shipping facility and was responsible for many of the larger shipments up and down the Wyvernflow River, but now the dock is almost entirely unused. Once a month the Purple Dragon Knights and War Wizards receive a shipment of food and goods that is intended to be split between them and the residents of Wheloon as-needed, but that is the only traffic known to come here.

12. The Lantern Inn

The Purple Dragon Knights stationed at Wheloon use this large inn as their base of operations. The commanding officer is a broad-shouldered, mustachioed man known as Sergeant Ossten Delaire; his soldiers commend him for his service and dedication but quietly wish that he wasn't so stiff and stuck on protocol.

The inn does take in the occasional traveler or merchant that happens to be passing through, and the soldiers don't hesitate to pay for the room if the visitor can regale them with tales of the outside world or leave behind some of their more exotic goods.

13. Hanno's Herbs & Medicines

Nobody knows who (or what) Hanno is, but the two women that own and operate this apothecary are named **Soleil Brightly** and **Jaleen Baneir** (they are secretly **green hags** that are waiting in human disguises for... something; they don't recall exactly what anymore). Soleil is white-haired and in her middle years, with a firm, no-nonsense personality, while Jaleen is dusky-skinned and appears to be in her early 30s. Jaleen always has a hint of a smirk on her face and adores interacting with her customers. Both women have horrible, greenish teeth.

The shop contains medicine kits, various plants and herbs, and offers classes on how to create holistic poultices once per month. Most of their customers are drawn from the number of Cormyrian soldiers that are stationed here, but travelers are welcome as well.

14. The Silvery Sembian Snail

When the Silvery Sembian Snail was first built it was a tavern of near-legendary repute. Sadly, this business crumbled when the king had the walls erected around Wheloon long ago. Despite sitting empty for several decades, an enterprising merchant named **Daelon Sparrowsong** (N human male **bandit captain**, retired) purchased the space and renovated it. It now serves as the primary stopover for visiting merchants and can support up to a half-dozen stalls for those that wish to stay here for a tenday (by contract, of course).

Daelon sold his business to Fai Chen Enterprises a few years ago and has agreed to stay on in a supervisory capacity. Whether or not the fabled Shou merchant is present is entirely up to Tymora's capricious will.

15. "Hawkmasster"

Several weather-worn wooden signs stand around this open field, all sporting the same gray-black script that reads: "Hawkmasster". The residents of Wheloon don't know what exactly this place was before the city was sealed up, but any character that is proficient in Nature, possesses the Nature domain, or has levels in either druid or ranger automatically identifies that this area used to be used for falconry.

All of the tall posts have scratch marks that indicate that birds of prey once perched here, and even to this day the occasional skeleton of a smaller animal can be turned up in the dirt. Sadly, those birds are no longer able to enter the area surrounding Wheloon, so this place is unlikely to be used again for that purpose.

16. The Scarlet Sheaf (Tavern)

The Scarlet Sheaf is a tavern of ill repute, even among the residents of this city. It's said that anything that



someone desires can be had here, for a price. The gangs of Wheloon do not conduct official business here.

Once a week the tavern hosts a fighting competition, where everyone is welcome to come so long as their coin is good. The Guild of Masons is quite proud of their sponsored champion, a slathering beast of a dwarf nicknamed "The Beast" (N dwarf **champion**, AC 16 leather armor, wielding a greatclub) in reference to his guttural sounds and tendency to dismember his foes. All combats are one-on-one and to the death. Rumor is that the Beast was assaulted by Screamers and left for dead and is now driven by pure rage.

If the characters witness his ferocity they should get a clear impression that entering combat with him is not a wise decision. Should one of the characters manage to eke out a victory, they are celebrated throughout Wheloon as a powerful fighter and, at the DM's discretion, may be the target of adulation, adoration, and daylight assaults by other fighters seeking to make a name for themselves. Interfering with the fights in any way will earn the interloper and the fighter a severe and immediate penalty, up to and potentially including death.

17. Smithy

The blacksmith shop has been abandoned for some time. Signs have been plastered on the walls that read "Shuttered by order of Gristlespit". The roof has begun to sag in, and the floor has collapsed. Nothing usable remains, and the interior has been smashed beyond repair – including the anvils and forge.

18. Temple to Chauntea

Chauntea is one of the deities of nature and is sometimes known as "The Earthmother". This temple serves as an open-air market for the residents of Wheloon and even though no clergy or priests are ever viewed, Chauntea's faithful – or just those that feel like paying their respects – are always welcome to come and stay in peace. Any food that is stolen from this place immediately rots, and if it was already eaten the creature becomes ill (as if poisoned) for 1d4 days; there is no saving throw for this effect.

19. Tinker's Hardware

A no-nonsense dwarf woman runs this store. She calls herself **Tinker** (N dwarf female **acolyte of Moradin**) "because of good fortune when tinkering and inventing things", and if the characters ask she confesses that she is in Wheloon because one of her inventions blew up when it was operated by a nobleman in Suzail – "but those claims about it being a bomb were totally fabricated".

Any mundane gear from the *Player's Handbook* can be found here, provided that the listed price is 20 gp or less. She does not stock weapons or armor and refuses to purchase such things as that is considered illegal trade in the city.

What Does Tinker Know? If the characters engage Tinker on the topic of the Screamers, she shares:

- that Moradin tells her that they're bad news
- she sometimes has very visceral nightmares about duergar and tentacles
- she adds that Redbeard may be in league with them

20. Rathool's Pond

This large pond is a peaceful zone in Wheloon. The occasional child may be seen playing, often with a parent or older sibling nearby. A huge stone stands in the field a short distance to the east of the water; upon it is an old weather-worn carving of tongs, like what a blacksmith would use. Most residents neither know nor care what it represents, though a few around the city have their suspicions. Nobody outside of the Screamers knows that it is part of the mechanism that reveals Indiglow Metalworks, nor that it can only be opened with a *mystery key* (this specific key is carried by the **Duergar Hammerers** in area **8. Redbeard Rental, Storage, and Shipping**).

21. Shrine to Silvanus

A huge gnarled oak tree stands sentinel here. Deep sigils denoting Silvanus' name in multiple humanoid languages can be seen in the bark. The War Wizards of Cormyr tend the shrine but none of them truly worship Silvanus.

22. The Watch House (Barracks, Armory, Jail)

The Purple Dragon Knights do not maintain any formal presence in the city, so the presence of a barracks and jail may seem curious at first. A little asking around reveals that this building can be used by the residents for their own citizen's arrests and so forth, and while the Knights do not suggest this course of action they don't prevent it from happening.

The Guild of Masons maintains a watch on the building and will generally provide watch services for those that are willing to pay their price. **High Mason Arenson** (LE dwarf male **knight**) can be found here along with a group of 2-3 dwarf **scouts** and 1 dwarf **spy**.

23. Shrine to Shar

Long ago a shrine dedicated to Mystra stood here. Those holy symbols have been removed and replaced with the slightly-above-crude symbols of Shar which now reside there. Although the worship of Shar is banned in Cormyr – indeed, it is why many of the residents are now in Wheloon at all! – six **cultists** and a dangerously unhinged **priest** of Shar visit every night when the moon is at its peak.

Indiglow Metalworks

Estimated Duration: 30 minutes

This section should only be run after the city has been explored so the characters have recovered all of their missing memories.

Discovery and Access

Once the characters have discovered that Indiglow Metalworks is located near Rathool's Pond, they can travel there. The stone in the field near the Pond only reveals the Metalworks if the *mystery key* (likely held by Garriden) is laid upon it. Without the key, the extraplanar space where the smithy resides is simply inaccessible.

Environs

Indiglow Metalworks has long been closed, and its exterior signage has been removed in days long past. The boards holding the door shut are easy enough to pry apart, granting the characters easy access should they desire it. The windows are completely and snugly sealed.

Sights. Once inside, it is apparent that this place is used regularly. All the metalsmithing equipment has been removed, and the interior walls have been reinforced to be three times thicker than normal. The only thing of note here is an open trap door and stairs leading down to the basement. Many humanoid tracks can be seen in the dust and dirt on the floor.

Smells. An acidic, briny smell lingers in the air. There is a strong scent of superheated metal coming from the basement.

Sounds. The unmistakable sounds of a bellows and crackling forge can be heard in the basement, along with the sounds of a hammer striking soft metal.

Light. Firelight from the forge dances wildly.



Mindforge

The western wall is a glowering dwarven face carved into the stone, and its mouth is open to reveal the forge inside the face. The mouth can be opened and closed using controls on the outside of the construction. The fire inside the face burns blue and white with wispy sparks of purple crackling off every few seconds. This flame is clearly magical in nature, and a DC 12 Arcana check, *identify* spell, or similar action reveals that the flame is sustained by psychic energy.

When the characters first arrive, **Grundar** is here hammering away on a wicked-looking purple metal dagger – the same that the characters may have seen elsewhere in the city! The duergar is willing to speak with the characters for a few moments, but as soon as they insult him, the Screamers, or make even the lightest of threats he screams incoherently and attacks. He cannot be surprised in this place, and when reduced to 0 hit points his skull splits open as an **intellect devourer** emerges, intent on destroying any remaining characters though it will attempt to enter the first viable host.

Non-magical equipment that is placed in the forge melts or ignites at the end of the turn that it is placed. Magical equipment is similarly destroyed after 1 minute. Any creature that ends their turn in the flames takes 14 (4d6) fire damage and 14 (4d6) psychic damage; a DC 20 Constitution saving throw reduces this damage by half. Creatures that attempt this saving throw automatically fail if they are wearing any metal objects.

Treasure

Gristlespit's *Mind-Poison Dagger* can be taken by the characters.

Conclusion

Once the characters have defeated Grundar and his minions, the forge begins to flare and sputter ominously – one minute later, it explodes causing 55 (10d10) fire damage to any creature left in the building. When this happens, the rest of the Screamers throughout Wheloon simply keel over – Grundar was the host through which the mind flayers were controlling their victims via telepathy. The Purple Dragon Knights enter the city within an hour of the end of the combat, having been alerted by the explosion of the Metalworks. The metals and previously forged equipment cannot be repaired but provides enough evidence to exonerate them once it is all investigated by the War Wizards.

But I Don't Wanna Leave

Nothing is forcing the characters to leave. It's possible that they would like to explore the city a bit more, or that they have an interest in getting involved in the gang politics. While outside the scope of the adventure, please use the provided text and city guide to build more material for your players. There is no limit to what stories can be told from here!.

Personae Dramatis: The Gangs of Wheloon

While it's true that some characters may express a desire to join a gang, the groups indicated here should be portrayed as vile and repugnant. Their details are shown here so that you can develop a deeper understanding of how Wheloon operates, and if a character should go "off book" in their pursuit of such information and allegiance, you are well within your rights to tell them that such a thing is not very heroic – and may well lead to an extended stay in the city!

Each gang has an indicated leader, a desired goal, one or more allied group, and one or more opposing group. This information is presented in a minimal state so that you can adjust as your games and groups require. This information could even be used as a foundation for a series of urban adventures as your characters infiltrate and assume control of one or more groups! Feel free to add additional groups as you see fit; with more than 4,000 residents, there's a lot of opportunity for growth.

Street "Cred"

It is important to note that the gangs here are known to the Purple Dragon Knights and War Mages of Cormyr. As they're all stuck inside the city and behind the walls, the Cormyrians aren't generally concerned with them – but if the characters become too entangled in the operations of these groups, they run the risk of not being allowed to leave the city. The gangs are quite protective of their members and often mark their agents for easy identification.

Guild of Masons

The Guild of Masons work hard to keep the buildings of Wheloon in good repair, but they do this through extortion of the residents and charging a "protection" fee of the business owners. They are not entirely reviled in the city, but their economy-crushing habits haven't exactly won them many favors.

Leader. High Mason Arenson
Goals. Protection, as we define it. Rebuild Wheloon!
Allies. Purple Dragon Knights (peripherally)
Foes. Screamers

The Screamers

Every member of the Screamers bears at least a minor level of psychic talent. Some say that it's natural and they're drawn together, though others whisper that a darker force grants these abilities for reasons known only to itself.

The Screamers follow some chaotic purpose known only to them. They make no allies and though the entirety of Wheloon is opposed to them, they manage to stay away from outright conflict simply due to their terrifying reputation: word on the street is that they devour the brains and eyes of those that cross their paths. It's said that they gain new knowledge and powers through this method.

Leader. Grundar Gristlespit
Goals. complete subjugation of the population of Wheloon
Allies. none
Foes. non-Screamers



Appendix A. Monster & Item Statistics

This appendix provides statistics for monsters and items that do not appear in the *Monster Manual*

Duergar Hammerer

Medium construct, lawful evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)
Hit Points 33 (6d8 + 6)
Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	7 (-2)	12 (+1)	5 (-3)	5 (-3)	5 (-3)

Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 7
Languages understands Dwarvish but can't speak
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Engine of Pain. Once per turn, a creature that attacks the hammerer can target the duergar trapped in it. The attacker has disadvantage on the attack roll. On a hit, the attack deals an extra 5 (1d10) damage to the hammerer, and the hammerer can respond by using its Multiattack with its reaction.

Siege Monster. The hammerer deals double damage to objects and structures.

Actions

Multiattack. The hammerer makes two attacks: one with its claw and one with its hammer.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

Hammer. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage

Grundar Gristlespit, Duergar Mind Master

Medium humanoid (dwarf), lawful evil

Armor Class 14 (leather armor)
Hit Points 39 (6d8 + 12
Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	17 (+3)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Wis +2
Skills Perception +2, Stealth +5
Damage Resistances poison
Senses darkvision 120 ft., truesight 30 ft., passive Perception 12
Languages Dwarvish, Undercommon
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Duergar Resilience. On each of its turns, the thief can use a bonus action to take the Dash, Disengage, or Hide action.

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in sunlight, the duergar has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Actions

Multiattack. The duergar makes two melee attacks. It can replace one of those attacks with a use of Mind Mastery.

Mind-Poison Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage and 10 (3d6) psychic damage, or 1 piercing damage and 14 (4d6) psychic damage while reduced.

Invisibility (Recharge 4 - 6). The duergar makes two melee attacks. It can replace one of those attacks with a use of Mind Mastery.

Mind Mastery. The duergar targets one creature it can see within 60 feet of it. The target must succeed on a DC 12 Intelligence saving throw, or the duergar causes it to use its reaction either to make one weapon attack against another creature the duergar can see or to move up to 10 feet in a direction of the duergar's choice. Creatures that can't be charmed are immune to this effect.

Reduce (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). For 1 minute, the duergar magically decrease in size, along with anything it is wearing or carrying. While reduced, the duergar is Tiny, reduces its weapon damage to 1, and makes attacks, checks, and saving throws with disadvantage if they use Strength. It gains a +5 to all Dexterity (Stealth) checks and a +5 bonus to its AC. It can also take a bonus action on each of its turns to take the Hide action.

A Dangerous Passenger

Grundar is no longer himself. When he is reduced to 0 hit points his skull splits open with a sickening wet crunching noise and an intellect devourer emerges. This creature is an emissary of the mind flayers and desires little more than the destruction of the characters, though it will attempt to take possession of the first suitable host that it can.

Because of this, Grundar has the following adjustments to his stat block:

- He is immune to psychic damage, and cannot be charmed or stunned
- He is wielding a magic dagger (see Mind-Poison Dagger, below).
- These changes are only in effect while Grundar is alive, and they are not applied to the intellect devourer.

New Magic Item

This magic item is unique to this adventure.

Mind-Poison Dagger

weapon (dagger), rare

The metal of this dagger possesses a wavy pattern of blue, white, and black. You can use your action to cause the blade to exude a pale nimbus of light. This nimbus remains for 1 minute or until an attack using this weapon hits a creature. That creature must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or else take 2d10 psychic damage and be poisoned for one minute as feelings of extreme pain and misery race through the creature's mind. This is a fear and charm effect. The dagger can't be used this way again until the next dawn.

Appendix B. DM's Map of Wheloon



Appendix C. Player's Map of Wheloon



Appendix D. Map: Indiglow Metalworks



Appendix E. Poster Handout

