

Nov 13, 2024

And so it begins! The party awakens on metal examining tables in a large stone room. Sheets have been pulled over everyone, and the sheets, table, and mosaicked floor are all spattered with blood. Everyone remembers their childhood and early history, but memories get hazy quickly after that, and no one remembers their recent past nor how they came to be in the room.

A large table at the end of the room has formaldehyde and embalming equipment, and a large pile of everyone's equipment at the far end. There are other metal tables which appear to hold dead bodies of various races.

A skull floats in the air in front of the party, examining the party with its slate grey lidless eyes. As the party starts to stir, it says "Welcome to being alive, chief! How ya feeling?" in a cheerful, nasal voice. The skull explains its name is [Morte](#), it has no idea how the party got there (it only recently arrived), and that the party is in the Mortuary in the basement of the "[Dusters](#)" base in the city of Sigil.

Morte tells the party the Dusters take care of dead bodies in Sigil and don't appreciate "fleshies" getting into their business, so the party should shake a leg and make themselves scarce. A heavy iron gate leads out of the room, and the party hears occasional moans from beyond it.

Everyone puts on their gear, and [Six](#), a Dhampir Paladin, senses multiple undead, especially to the northeast of the room, and that Morte is undead. The gate squeaks loudly as the party opens it. Morte declines to join the party, explaining that he's waiting for someone.

The gate opens to a wide hallway that widens a bit to the east but before that has branches going north and south. The party picks the south hallway (Six only sensed one undead this way) which again ends in an iron gate. The party careful opens it as quietly as they can to a large oval room, and avoid disturbing a mortician elbow-deep into the chest of a large, patchwork humanoid creature twitching and writing on an oversized examining table.

After a moment of study, the party decides the humanoid isn't really conscious and in pain, so they sneak clockwise around the outside of the room and escape through another iron gate on the east side of the creepy room.

The door opens into a large, north-south hallway they're at the southern end of. A little ways to the north, there's a wide hallway going west (probably where the party was before) and a narrow hallway going east (with a very heavy iron door, currently open, and red and blue levers on the wall). The hallway also keeps going north.

The party heads to the narrow hallway, and [Sandro](#), the Turtle Monk/Rogue, scouts ahead followed by [Solara](#), the Goliath Light Cleric. The hallway stretches 50-60 feet before opening into another

north-south hallway. About halfway down, a zombie wearing a nametag ("Maurice") walks down the far hallway past the opening and looks at Sandro. It stops, backs up a few feet, and pulls a lever causing both doors to slam shut, then looks through at Sandro and Solara through a heavy glass plate in the door.

[Harvey](#), a Harengon Sorcerer, tries to (we'll be generous) re-open the doors by pulling down the red lever. Flame gouts into the narrow hallway from small slots along the top and bottom of the hallway. The party tries to pull up the blue lever once the flame starts, but both levers seem to now be locked in place. After a minute, the levers snap back into their original spots and the doors swing open. Small piles of ash mark where Sandro and Solara were, and the party seems an ashy broom and dustpan by the door.

The party, alarmed, heads north to a door at the end of the hallway. It opens into a very cold storage room, with multiple drawers along the walls. The party hears muffled banging and shouts from inside some of the drawers. The first is stuck but Harvey, Six, and [Fulton McCracken](#), Human (?) Dance Bard, working together manage to force it open. Inside is Fruth, a new Duster and mortuary employee (wearing a nametag and smock uniform), shivering badly. He fell asleep on the job during his first day on the job, was accidentally pronounced dead, and put into a storage unit for embalming. Fruth only vaguely remembers how to get out.

The next two drawers hold [Sandro Beta](#), a Turtle Monk (who looks almost, but not quite, exactly like the incinerated Turtle) and [Umbra](#), a Goliath Monk (who looks almost, but not quite, exactly like the Goliath cleric who just burned up). Neither has any memory of the party or how they came to be in storage drawers. They have the same early childhood memories of the prior versions of themselves, but their memories go just slightly farther and a crucial event turns out just slightly differently. They don't have any memories of their prior self, but they do have an odd feeling that the crucial event could have or maybe did turn out differently than they recall.

Accompanied by Fruth, the party heads back to the narrow hallway and starts heading down it. Maurice sees the party, notes Fruth, and keeps walking rather than going for a lever. Past the iron door, the hallway goes north and south, plus there's a door opposite the hallway.

Fruth and the party scout both hallways, carefully avoiding doors along the way, and find it forms a loop with a final hallway heading north. Harvey and Fulton, feeling curious, hang back and open the door across from the narrow hallway. Inside is a large rectangular room, dominated by an ornate desk covered with fancy stationary. The walls of the room are covered with bookshelves and cubby holes filled with bound scrolls, and the room itself is littered with crumpled sheets of paper. A human-sized cat's skull, with large gems in place of eyes and teeth, floats in front of the desk, idly chewing on a fountain pen. Ink stains the skull's gemstone teeth and jaw.

The skull sees Harvey come in and laments the torment of writer's block at some length. Harvey and the skull introduce themselves and chat a bit about how fickle the creative process can be. The skull's name is something long and complicated, and it claims to have been a famous bard in life.

It's trying to write the epitaph for a Doomguard (whatever that is) who drowned the day before in a local bathhouse and it's having a lot of trouble. Harvey tries to help, but the skull is underwhelmed by his suggestions, howls terrifyingly in frustration, and seems to be getting impatient. Fulton suggests composing a song in the Doomguard's honor, and the skull finds the idea helpful.

As the rest of the party returns to the room, looking for the missing pair, the skull notes its a little surprised to see Harvey up and about since he just died that morning. The endless scrolls along the walls are the death certificates for everyone who has died recently in this part of Sigil. The party gives their names to the skull and it guides everyone to their certificates (Sandro and Umbra have two).

Each certificate has some (accurate seeming) biographical information, date of death (today for everyone), and cause of death (left blank on most, but Sandro and Solara's second death of the day is listed as "Incineration"). The skull says it's peculiar for the cause of death to be blank (it hasn't gotten to these yet), but it does happen. The universe is infinite and unknowable in its vast complexity, but it's not perfect. It's seen mistakes happen. Things falling through the cracks. Glitches in the time-space continuum. But they're very rare, and it happening to multiple people at the same time is odd. Sandro and Solara's back-to-back deaths suggested the party members were suffering from such a glitch, and the universe didn't know what to do with them. It suspected that if party members were to die, the universe would spit out another version of them nearby before long.

Oh, well. Back to work for the skull. It advises avoiding the other Dusters and gives the party directions to the Mortuary's back door (just up some stairs from the final hallway).

The party pops out the door into a courtyard and takes in Sigil. Its rests on the inside of an open torus, like a bicycle wheel with no inner tube, around the top of an infinitely tall spire in the middle of the True Neutral alignment plane and literally at the center of the multiverse.

The torus is a few miles across and gravity pulls everyone "down", towards wherever the ground is closest to them. So if you look "up", you see the spire and then open air, and then the city on the inside of the other side of the ring. Sigil does not rotate around the spire, it just sits, and there is no sun or moon. The air itself provides ambient light which waxes and wanes over a 24 hour cycle.

While distracted by the sights, the party accidentally bumped into a passerby who belligerently yelled at the party. A bariaur (centaur, but half-goat/half-human) named [Parius](#) calmed things down and offered to guide the party around Sigil for a nominal fee of 3gp/day. The party agreed and paid her in advance.

As Parius told the party about Sigil's major sites and attractions, and showed them around, a sensate from the House of Sensation asked the party to help capture the emotion of Serenity. A new satyr street musician across the street was very nervous getting ready to play on their first day. The sensate asked the party to ease his nerves and the capture the result in a palm-sized flat "Sensory Stone".

Fulton guided the Satyr through his songs and gave him some helpful suggestions, easing their nerves. The emotion was successfully captured and the party gave the stone to the sensate. They gave Fulton an empty Sensory Stone in payment and suggested the party visit the [House of Sensation](#) sometime as they headed out.

The party, having little else to do, agreed and followed. The House of Sensation was a warm, spa-like place with a zillion Sensory Stones with various emotions. For 1gp, you could rent a small room and stone of your choice to experience the emotion. Party members picked various emotions and tried them out, and with each experience everyone had a tiny sliver of memory of experiencing that emotion in their prior life, albeit with no context.

Departing the House of Sensation, the party came across three philosophers in front of a crowd whether the gods had merit. One was a nihilist and argued nothing had meaning, one was an optimist and said that since demi-gods existed people should use gods as motivation to strive for the greatness within us all, and one was a realist and said that since gods could die they weren't eternal and since they had no place in Sigil (the [Lady of Pain](#), ruler of Sigil, barred gods and their direct minions from entering) they were unworthy of consideration. The party agreed with the optimist who said they should visit her organization's base (I forget what that was, but I'll note it later).

Leaving the philosophers, the party was accosted by three police officers wearing platemail and with electrified polearms. They demanded the party come with them for "violating the laws of the multiverse". Parius the bariaur screamed "I can't go back to jail" and fled. After an honestly halfhearted attempt to talk to police out of it, a fight broke out!

The polearms could restrain players and then steadily zap them with electricity while restrained, and the police were hard to hit. But a Sleep spell from Harvey knocked one out at the start, and after a bloody back and forth struggle. Six slung the unconscious cop over his shoulder and the party fled. As they started running down an alley, a pale tattooed elf wearing a black hood and leather armor got their attention and said "Come with me if you want to live... and find out what's going on."

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