

PART 3: REGRETS

Estimated Duration: 1 hour 10 minutes

Once the characters have convinced at least one of the alternate Mordenkainens to help them, they can activate the portal to leave the memory palace. To do so, however, they will need to fight or bargain their way past Mordenkainen's old foes.

STORY OBJECTIVE C

Activating the portal and leaving the memory palace is **Story Objective C**.

M7. THE SPRAWLING HALL

These twisting dungeon corridors at times open into walkways over a seemingly infinite void. Stairs reconfigure themselves as the characters approach, leading them to a doorway into an almost spherical stone approximately 30 feet in diameter; this is the "trap" that Mordenkainen spoke of. The doors behind them back to the already visited areas seem cut into nothingness, framed by the same emptiness all around them. Far below them, the characters can see more walkways, stairs, and doors.

AREA INFORMATION

The area has the following features.

Dimensions and Terrain. The area consists of constantly shifting 5 foot wide walkways through empty space.

Lighting. An eerie dim light with no apparent source fills this area.

Sounds. The characters hear a constant grating of stone as the walkways and staircases rearrange themselves.

Distant Doors. The far off doorways are meant to be unreachable and exist only for atmosphere. If the characters get to them via flight, teleportation, or some other method, you can simply have them lead back to one of the other listed rooms in the Memory Palace, or make up your own!

M8. THE TRAP

This room has nine sides, including the entrance. In each of the other walls is a small recessed chamber, five of which are sealed by a layer of iridescent crystal. An observer can see that a humanoid figure is contained behind each crystal, though their features remain shadowy from a distance.

The imprisoned figures are Mordenkainen's fears and regrets come to life, dark caricatures of some of the greatest foes he faced in the past. Though they all contain some of the personality and power of their material forebears, they are all filtered through the lens of Mordenkainen's perception. Thankfully, as mental constructs, they also lack the full powers of their counterparts, though they are still formidable. While they are imprisoned, they can speak to the characters and even cast spells, but they can't cast a spell or take an action that would deal damage or induce a status effect in any of the characters. Still, they seem to hold some power over the

fabric of the Memory Palace, and are responsible for creating the shadowy adversaries who plagued the gith party and possibly also the characters.

AREA INFORMATION

The area has the following features.

Dimensions and Terrain. The nonagon shaped room is about 40 feet in diameter and the vaulted ceiling is 25 feet high. The dark grey stone in this room matches that in areas M2 and M7.

Lighting. Each of the inhabited crystalline prisons sheds bright light for 5 feet, and the rest of the room is dimly lit.

Sounds. Even when they are not conversing with any of the imprisoned shades, the characters can hear faint whispers of these captives that seem to form in their own minds.

Runes. Glowing runes are carved all along the rooms perimeter just out of reach. They are in Draconic and repeat the same phrase over and over: "The only escape is through the trap. Free one to flee."

EARLY ACCESS

There is nothing stopping the characters from entering this room in Part 2. If they do so, they will be unable to free any of the imprisoned figures, but they can converse with them. These figures will encourage the characters to find Mordenkainen to free them, and can explain that the alternate Mordenkainens have become real enough to do the job. If the characters decide to linger here, or taunt one of the imprisoned figures, they can summon a pair of **wraiths** in the center of the chamber to attack the party.

If the characters enter this room without one of the alternate Mordenkainens, they can speak to the imprisoned figures, but cannot free them. Once they enter with one or more Mordenkainens, read the following:

As this "Mordenkainen" steps towards the center of the chamber, the crystalline prisons glow with unearthly light. A cacophony of voices speak up all at once, speaking of "power," "conquest," "order," and "revenge," but finally settle on one phrase that they speak in unison: "release me. Release ME!"

An alternate Mordenkainen will instinctively know that they can will one of these cages open, but defer to the characters as to which one. If asked for their opinions, Colonel 'Kainen chooses Bilarro because he would like to best the most competent looking fighter, though he feels Iuz might also do. Master Morden shows interest in the lich Vecna, wishing to learn more about a creature that bested death itself. Mordy will refuse to choose and suggest they have another drink in the tavern first. The characters can also parley with any of the imprisoned figures before making their choice, and some of them might even be convinced to let the characters pass peacefully. Otherwise, the characters will need to defeat

their combatants before a Mordenkainen can open the portal back to Sigil.

MULTIPLE MORDENKAINENS?

It is possible for the characters to recruit two or three alternate Mordenkainens to join their cause instead of just one. In this case, you can describe that multiple crystal chambers open once the battle begins, leading to a chaotic free for all as the cabal of villains attack the Mordenkainens and perhaps even each other! To avoid running a combat of primarily NPCs, you can make it clear to the players that they can focus on one or two of the villains while the Mordenkainens handle the rest.

Even a single Mordenkainen fighting alongside the characters can decisively tip the battle in their favor. You can deal with this by having any Mordenkainens stay back and leave battle to the characters, which has the added benefit of keeping the spotlight on the players. If the characters want a Mordenkainen to actively participate, treat the party as one level stronger than they are, potentially adding an extra **shadow demon** or other adversary to the mix.

OPTION 1: BILARRO AND RARY

Releasing either of these figures will cause the other to be released as well.

Bilarro is an opportunist: he may pretend to acquiesce to the characters, but this is a deception. At the soonest opportunity, he will attempt to attack a Mordenkainen. He uses the **doomguard rot blade** stat block.

BILARRO

LE human (he/him) doomguard rot blade

An alternate universe evil twin of Mordenkainen's friend Lord Robilar, Bilarro allied with the wizard Rary in a plot to assassinate Mordenkainen and his Circle of Eight at the culmination of the Greyhawk Wars. He is middle aged with long black hair and a beard. He is fully armored and sports many scars from past battles.

What They Want. He wants power more than anything else, and believes that serving at the right hand of a powerful mage like Rary is the most direct route to it.

Affable Deceiver. He is quite jovial and gregarious, but this is also a mask for his duplicitous cunning.

Rary was once a compatriot of Mordenkainen, a member of the Circle of Eight sworn to protect the balance on his native Oerth. However, Rary slowly descended into evil and betrayed the circle in a bid for power, killing some of its members in the process. A diviner of great skill, Rary will use his *detect thoughts* spell on any characters who converse with him in order to perceive their true motives. He also has *Rary's telepathic bond* active with his ally, Bilarro, before any battle with them begins.

He had planned to rule over all of the Flanaess, but Rary had to console himself with carving out a small kingdom in Oerth's Bright Desert after his coup attempt failed. Rary still believes that what he did was right, and he thinks that he alone is fit to rule the continent; anyone who gets in his way is in the wrong and deserves their fate. He believes that Mordenkainen's philosophy of maintaining balance is wrong, and he believes that Mordenkainen's actions in pursuing said philosophy were responsible for causing the suffering of the Greyhawk Wars. As a mental construct of Mordenkainen, he also paradoxically recognizes his own madness to an extent. He blames this insanity on Mordenkainen because Mordenkainen blames it on himself.

Diplomacy with Rary. In conversing with Rary, characters who succeed on a DC 17 Wisdom (Insight) or Intelligence (Investigation) check will understand this figure Rary's true desires. Tell the players one of these for each successful check, up to three.

- He wants Mordenkainen to admit that Rary was right, if not in everything, then at least to abandon the policy of neutrality.
- He wants Mordenkainen to admit that he himself was wrong, and that his actions led to suffering.
- He wants Mordenkainen to admit that he, personally, played a part in Rary's transformation via exposure to Demogorgon's sigil.

The players may also figure these out for themselves through conversation, in which case they are free to tell Mordenkainen of them. The characters can try to convince one of the Mordenkainens to admit these things to Rary with a successful DC 20 Charisma (Persuasion) check for each, gaining advantage on the role if they succeeded on the previous related Insight or Investigation check.

Multiple characters can attempt each check, but three failures prevent future success to convince Mordenkainen on that point. The characters can also ask Mordenkainen to lie to Rary about any of the points; have a character make a DC 20 Charisma (Deception) check to represent how well they were able to coach Mordenkainen in being convincing for each point he lies about.

If a Mordenkainen makes at least two of the admissions that Rary desired, the distinguished diviner will begin to weep and embrace Mordenkainen, apologizing for his own part in the whole mess. He will let the characters pass through the portal back to Sigil without a fight. If Mordenkainen believes in him, he reasons, he will try to be a just steward of the memory palace, and that will be his purpose going forward. He will even give the characters his spellbook, saying he won't need it anymore, along with a *ruby of the war mage* and a spell scroll (see *Treasure*, below). Bilarro will not attack without Rary to back him up, and will start acting more like a genuine Robilar.

If Mordenkainen doesn't admit to at least two of the points above, or if he fails to lie convincingly about any of them, then Rary will become enraged and attack, mentally instructing Bilarro to attack as well to take them by surprise. Both fight to the death. Rary drops his spellbook when defeated, along with a *ruby of the war mage* and a spell scroll (see *Treasure*, below).

Rary uses the **diviner wizard** stat block.

RARY OF KET, AKA RARY THE TRAITOR

NE human (he/him) diviner wizard

A former member of Mordenkainen's Circle of Eight, Rary came to renounce Mordenkainen's philosophy of the balance and attempted to seize power for himself. Mordenkainen believes his turn to evil may have been caused by exposure to Demogorgon's sigil which Mordenkainen was studying. Long, scraggly white hair frames his timeworn face.

What They Want. He wants to be recognized as the hero he believes himself to be. Short of that, he wants Mordenkainen to be seen as the villain he is in Rary's eyes.

Fanatical Schemer. A medium of great skill, Rary is always one step ahead of his foes; his words are measured and delivered with the force of prophecy.