

Shadowdark Solo 006

AUGMENTED IMAGINATION with Shadowdark SOLO

Continuing my step-by-step example of using the new Augmented Imagination framework for Solo or Co-op play, this time with Shadowdark and a party of three adventurers and playing a Pre-Written Scenario I haven't read at all yet.



All documents about Augmented Imagination, including the FREE Rules PDF and lots more Actual Play examples can be found from the <https://iGM4u.com> website, under the heading Augmented Imagination.

Augmented Dungeon-Crawling Procedure

1. Describe the Party's actions and intentions
2. Read some of the Area description
3. Distil the nature of the Area's Challenge
4. Play out the Scene
 - a. If it makes narrative sense, stick to the Always-On Initiative mechanism
 - b. Because I often take breaks, or spend time setting up the VTT scenes, I don't want to use the real-world 1-hour timer for Torches. Instead, I'll make a 1d6 roll at a critical point in every Scene to see if the Torch goes out.
 - c. If there's no reasonable way to determine Success/Failure, I'll try outlining some possible Outcomes and then making a Check
5. Check for an Immediate Additional Scene
 - a. Additional Scenes are **LIKELY** to be replaced with Random Encounters (I haven't read enough of the scenario to know if there are wandering monsters, but if there's a table, I'll use that)
6. As this is a perilous environment it will be 50/50 whether we can get a Short Rest and Unlikely we can get a Long Rest undisturbed. During a Rest (8 hrs + Rations in Shadowdark), I'll give myself the option of a Social or Knowledge Scene if I want one, but with the risk of rolling for Scene Focus and rolling for an Additional Scene afterwards. If **implausible** Social/Knowledge scene details arise, I'll swap them for Combat scenes!

Last Time...

- Our 2nd-level heroes – Kaylid the Desert Rider, Ferula the Witch/Priestess & Duthor the Thief killed the evil Priest of Set, Gazali. It appears he was visiting the Tomb regularly to sacrifice a prisoner. This time it was to be a woman called Furioth – a Cloth trader from Khemi.
- Furioth is demanding to be escorted home to Khemi (3-4 days North across the desert)
- The fledgling Romance between Kaylid & Felura advanced to 2/3 ❤️ ❤️
- Duthor woke up to find he's now got venomous serpent fangs instead of one of his fingernails because of a curse silver ring he stole from the Tombs. He has a chance each morning of scratching himself (DEX DC12), but it's a good replacement for his dissolved Scimitar as it acts like a poisoned dagger and does 1d4 (+1d6 Poison vs living targets if they fail a CON Check DC12). If scratching himself ever does 6 damage, his finger falls off and becomes a snake!

SCENE 01 – Breakfast and Loot

As this is not part of the pre-written adventure, I'll switch back to the basic Scene Process of Augmented Imagination. As they eat breakfast and argue with Furioth, they begin picking through Gazali's possessions. I **could** have decided to just roll for Gazali's loot between scenes, but I think I'd like a chance to unearth some more useful information and am willing to risk random Scenes to get it...

Step 1. Choose your preferred type of Scene

I'm going for KNOWLEDGE and will choose MAGIC if I get "Chosen Focus".

Step 2. Roll to see what you get

Scene Focus: <i>CHOSEN FOCUS (Choose or Roll Scene Details)</i>

Step 3. Roll for Scene Details

I get to choose...

MAGIC: You encounter/discover something or someone magical. Imagine what it could be. Make rolls on the Spark Tables for inspiration if necessary. Some kind of Skill check should be needed to understand/learn from/acquire/bypass the knowledge/power/item.
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What I was trying to get here was an understanding of what Gazali was doing here at the Tomb. I think he was coming to renew some long-standing bargain he has with the Black Pudding/Mummy. Perhaps by offering it a sacrifice, he gets to be able to summon it (anywhere) and maybe he's been using it to commit assassinations back in the City, killing his rivals in the Church of Set to climb his way towards becoming High Priest of Khemi (I'll say he was only the chief priest of the Mercantile Quarter and still needed another assassination to become High Priest).

Perhaps there is a Scroll setting out the Summoning and Pact Binding in the saddlebags of his Camel, but it will need deciphering.

On top of this informational Scroll I'll roll for Treasure three times on the 4-6 table on page 272 in the Shadowdark book.

- Golden anchor necklace (10 gp)
- *Ring of Feather Falling* (250 gp)
- Set of polished bone dice (25 gp)
- He also had...
 - the Serpent Staff (non magical 1d8 2-H spiked staff)
 - Plate mail Armour AC15 (I think I called it Chain before but gave him the benefit of a Shield by mistake when he was using a 2-H weapon, so I'm going to make it Plate Armour instead).
 - He had used Anoint spell to boost both the staff (+2 to hit and damage) and the armour (taking his AC to 17).

Camel & Saddle, Saddlebags, Camping equipment, 5 days rations & fodder left.

Step 4. Play out the Scene

I'll imagine some outcomes for Felura trying to read the Scroll INT (+1, Advantage for Cult Initiate Background)

- Nat 20 – Learn How to Summon & Control the Mummy (there is some way other than a human sacrifice)
- Extreme Success (by 5+) – Learn how to Summon the Mummy and hold it in place by Focus or make a human sacrifice to enslave it.
- Success – Learn what Gazali was doing here and can Summon the Mummy but not hold it in place or bind it.
- Fail – Learn that Gazali can Summon <SOMETHING MAGICAL> so you can take the risk to find out
- Extreme Fail – Learn nothing and waste so much time you have to check for a COMBAT Encounter (LIKELY)
- Nat 1 – as above but accidentally summon the Mummy and be Surprised for the first Round or at Disadvantage if it's a Save

INT (+1, Advantage) DC15 = 4 & 19. Extreme Success

Felura learns how to Summon the Mummy and hold it in place by Focus or make a human sacrifice to enslave it.

As she explains this to the others, Furioth leaps to her feet holding out her club. "Wait a goddam minute! You aren't sacrificing me!"

Felura tries to calm the woman down. "Don't worry! We already killed the thing yesterday. Even if we hadn't, nobody would even THINK of sacrificing you."

Zafirah give a snort and nods her head towards Duthor. "Maybe not you or your boy toy but look at THAT face and tell me he hasn't done worse!"

Duthor protests vigorously but the cat just licks at her paw and eyes him coolly.

The thief goes back to examining the ornate Plate Armour. "This is worth over 100 gold, but we would have to be very careful trying to sell it in Khemi, even with some unscrupulous dealers I know. Probably safer to bury it, with Gazali inside it, deep under the mountains. Even the Camel and tack might be recognised, probably ought to bury that too. I can probably get something for the necklace, ring and dice. I'll take the dice, not going to risk another silver ring after what happened with THIS one."

Kaylid, raised among camels, raises a hand. "We're not killing an innocent camel, any more than we would an innocent lady. It's not the camel's fault who it belonged to. We can let it go near the city and hopefully it will make its way back. They might think Gazali got himself thrown and disappeared into the sand."

Zafirah snorts derisively "Genius!" Jumping into Felura's lap. "I understand now what you see in this guy... what brains!"

Kaylid continues. "Do you want the necklace Felura? Or the ring".

Zafirah growls, "Watch it bozo. Bit soon for rings. Baby steps boy... baby steps."

Felura agrees to let Duthor take the necklace (sticking it in his saddlebags) to sell it but doesn't want to wear anything associated with that horrible priest.

Kaylid tries on the ring and finds it changes size to fit him. He hurriedly takes it off.

Duthor mutters, "Probably NOT cursed then. I should have noticed I couldn't get this one off. Must be magic though. You could try breathing underwater, walking across a lake or throwing yourself off something high? Or I could try to hit you and see if it protects you?"

Kaylid points out the faint carvings that look a bit like a feather and Felura suggests it might be a Ring of Feather Fall, probably a once-per-day item. He'd better test it out to be sure before leaping off any high cliffs.

"We can put Gazali into one of the empty coffins we found or maybe sink him in that well in the Tomb". She turns to Furioth. "I'm sorry. We can't go back to Khemi yet. We haven't made enough money to pay off Kaylid's Uncle. You can either follow us in or stay out here with the camels. I don't advise trying to steal one and make your way back alone, the mountains are home to monsters and desert is filled with bandits. We'll take you back with us, once we've found a bit more treasure."

Furioth is angry but agrees to follow them into the Tomb (now that Felura told her these mountains are full of monsters!).

Step 5: Check for an IMMEDIATE Additional Scene

Is there an ADDITIONAL Scene?:NO - You get some breathing space between scenes if you want/need it unless you think it is more appropriate for the narrative to continue immediately.

SCENE 02 – Back into the Tomb

I'm going to say Gazali's supplies included a few more Torches (3) so Furioth will light one at the rear and Duthor at the front.

They descend cautiously with Duthor checking in the same way as before so they get **two** checks for a Wandering Monster. I was going to say 1-in-6 crossing the first level and 2-in-6 for the second level but when I checked the Wandering Monster table on page 9, it looks like it only applies to the Lower Tomb. I'll make it two checks for Additional Scenes instead. [no & no] and I'll just re-start from the central area around that small pool.

The corpse of the Black Pudding/Mummy appears to have gone!!!

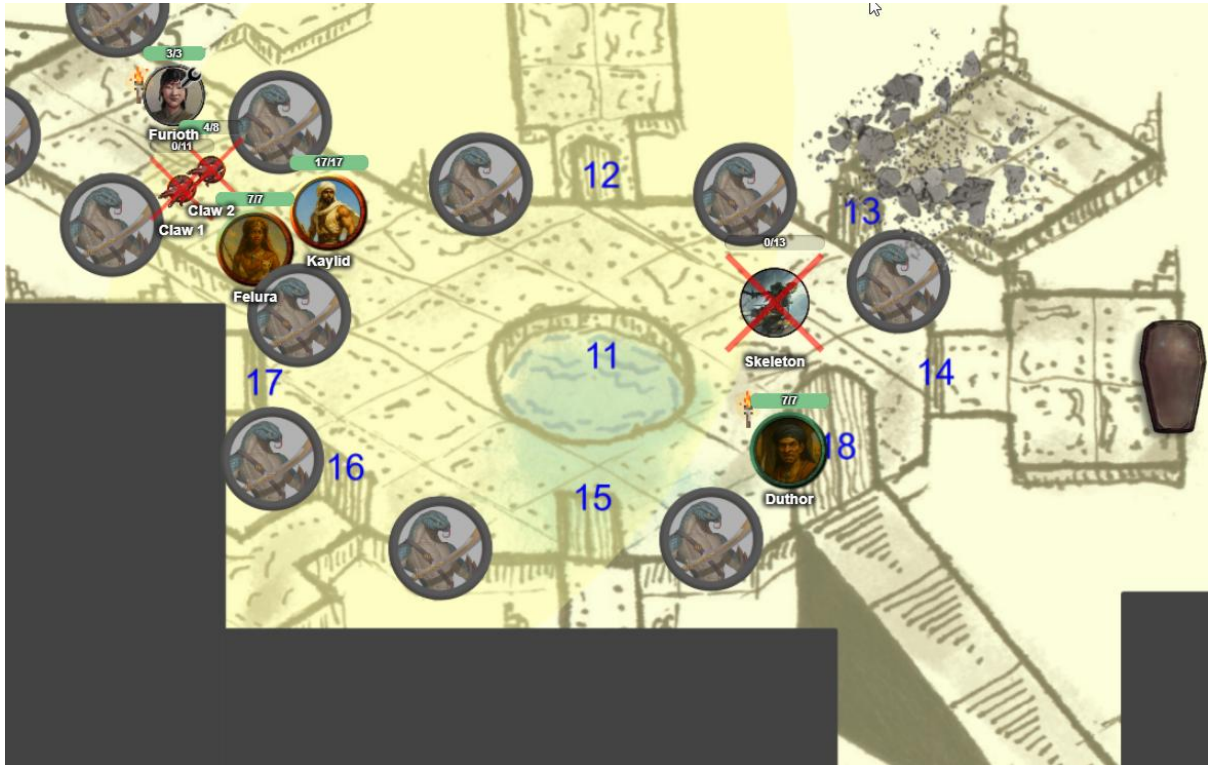
Felura says, "It could be anywhere, watching us, waiting to pounce! Maybe I should use this Summoning Ritual and then call it to somewhere we can kill it. Perhaps if we burn the body, it won't be able to respawn".

Kaylid's not keen to fight it again. "We might lose the remaining weapons we've got. Besides, we might get lucky and not bump into it again."

Zafirah opens her mouth to say something sarky, but just shakes her head and slinks from statue to statue.

Step 1. Describe the Party's actions and intentions

The next door appears to be larger (a double door) and is the one that leads straight on from the chamber. Duthor will do the usual things. Check for traps (floor and ceiling and wires). Listen at the door. Check if it's locked and pick the lock if necessary. If it pulls open, he'll attach a rope and Kaylid can pull it from the far side of the pool while the others hide among statues.



Step 2. Read some of the Area Description

18: STAIRS

This hallway is protected by a very ornate door, carved with images of snakes raining from the sky. Stairs descend downwards into darkness. A faint cold wind blows up the stairs.

The third stair from the top is slightly loose and has left very faint scratches on the walls. If any weight is put on it, the stairs tip to become a smooth stone ramp. Spikes deploy from the floor at the bottom of the ramp when the trap is activated. A PC sliding into the spikes takes d6 damage (Save for half). The trap resets in 5 rounds.

Lessons: check the floor. Traps can move you and not just harm you.

I think they will close the doors again and ignore the stairs for now. Kaylid suggests “Let’s finish off this level before we go any deeper”.

Zafirah mutters grudgingly, “maybe there’s some hope for the bozo yet!”.

Step 3. Distil the nature of the Area Challenge

Could Duthor spot the stair trap?

He'll try to figure it out with an INT Check.

- Nat 20 – spot scratches indicating the stairs turning into a ramp AND the trigger on step 3.
- Extreme Success (by 5+) – spot the scratches indicating a ramp trap
- Success – Gain Advantage on the save when the trap triggers as he knows something isn't right
- Fail – Learn nothing
- Extreme Fail – Learn nothing and waste so much time you have to check for a COMBAT Encounter from the Wandering Monsters of the Lower Level rushing up the stairwell (LIKELY)
- Nat 1 –step into the stairwell prodding the first few steps and accidentally trigger the trap.

Step 4. Play out the Scene

Duthor INT (+1, Advantage for Thievery) = **15** & 9 = Success.

He can tell something is funny about the stairs so would get Advantage if there's a Save later.

Step 5: Check for an IMMEDIATE Additional Scene

Is there an ADDITIONAL Scene?:NO - You get some breathing space between scenes if you want/need it unless you think it is more appropriate for the narrative to continue immediately.

Move on to the next chamber door (15).

SCENE 03 – Strange Scrolls

Step 1. Describe the Party's actions and intentions

Same caution and rope-pulling door open as usual. Place torch on the ground in front of door. Duthor hides behind nearest snake. Kaylid pulls rope. Felura and Furieth staying further back.

Step 2. Read some of the Area Description

15: PRIEST ROOM

*This room was used by the priests of the upper tomb. It contains three beds, some rotten shelves, and a silver-and emerald snake-god icon worth 20gp. The scrolls scattered around the room record the ravings of trapped mummies in a forgotten language. One of them contains the true name (Baltoplat) of the succubus in **32: SUMMONING ROOM**.*

Lessons: *valuables sometimes take unconventional forms. The ravings might be valuable if translated or sold to the credulous.*

Step 3. Distil the nature of the Area Challenge

There is no particular challenge here beyond finding the name "Baltoplat" on one of the scrolls. However, they will spend additional time and the usual bag and rope trick on the snake-god icon. Enough to get two checks for Additional Scenes. They get another XP for the icon 12/20XP.

Step 4. Play out the Scene

Felura will study the scrolls. Her interest in strange cults and arcane mysteries gives her Advantage.

INT (+1, Advantage for Cult Initiate) = 3 & **16. Success**

“Seems these mad priests were trying to summon a succubus called Baltoplat...who knows why! The rest is just insane ramblings.”

Step 5: Check for an IMMEDIATE Additional Scene

Check Twice.

Is there an ADDITIONAL Scene?:NO - You get some breathing space between scenes if you want/need it unless you think it is more appropriate for the narrative to continue immediately.

SCENE 04 – Disposal of the Body

Before I forget, they will go back to the surface and return carrying Gazali's body (in its heavy plate mail) and slide him into the central pool of black, oily water, taking care not to get splashed.

I don't think I actually read the rest of the description of this pool, but because it was the home of two diseased mummy claws and water is the same colour as the black acid monster, I wasn't intending to search it. Unknown to our heroes, there are treasures in there!

I'm going to add “Gazali rises as an AC15 Zombie” to the Wandering Monster tables too!

Step 1. Describe the Party's actions and intentions

They already explored 16 (Empty room) so move on to door 17 with the same over-elaborate precautions as before.

Step 2. Read some of the Area Description

17: CLAY WARRIORS ROOM

A group of eighteen clay statues of life-sized snake-men warriors, in three rows of six. Their swords are rusted to uselessness. Each statue is hollow, but contains nothing.

The statue in the far south corner of the room sits on the trap door 39: SECRET PASSAGE to 38: BASILISK HALL.

Lessons: some rooms look more threatening than they are. Look under statues for secret passages.

Step 3. Distil the nature of the Area Challenge

Challenge is whether they find the secret door or not. I skim read the whole description rather than stopping after the first paragraph, so I already know there is one. Based on Duthor's usual M.O. he would pull one over with the rope so it smashes to reveal it's hollow. Then maybe tap them all to listen for any difference. Then probably pull them all over one at a time and methodically search for loot.



Step 4. Play out the Scene

In a game with a GM, that described action would probably have the GM saying “you find a trap door”, but I’ll make it into a Check and give Advantage for Thievery. As it’s slow and noisy, I’ll go for THREE Additional Scene Checks.

Duthor INT (+1, Advantage for Thievery) = **11** & 10. Just fails.

Perhaps the accumulating rubble of broken pottery obscured the trapdoor!

Step 5: Check for an IMMEDIATE Additional Scene

Check Thrice

Is there an ADDITIONAL Scene?:NO - You get some breathing space between scenes if you want/need it unless you think it is more appropriate for the narrative to continue immediately.

Btw – these checks are all 1-in-6. I’ve just had a real run of luck with them recently.

I’m going to assume the two torches go out and they have to light two more. Felura has now lit her last one. Kaylid still has one spare and Furioth has now lit the last of Gazali’s. The only reason I’m not panicking yet is that Felura still has the Light spell for when they run out.

Nb. I’ve not been using the “3 torches to make a campfire” rule so far as they have been camping in areas with at least a few trees and bushes and the climate is dry enough that firewood has been easy to find. As the central pool seems to have “oily” water, I might even let them attempt to skim off some oil and manufacture their own torches with strips of cloth from the Tomb furnishings and wood from the bushes and trees. I figure that a torch is more about long-burning oil/wax-soaked material than simply firewood.

SCENE 05 – Down, Down, Deeper and Down!

Nowhere left to go other than down those dodgy-looking stairs (18).

Step 1. Describe the Party’s actions and intentions

As Duthor had been so suspicious about the stairs, it’s not unreasonable he’d prod ahead and have a rope tied around his waist as he advances in case of a pit trap, held by Kaylid.

Step 2. Read some of the Area Description

18: STAIRS

This hallway is protected by a very ornate door, carved with images of snakes raining from the sky. Stairs descend downwards into darkness. A faint cold wind blows up the stairs.

The third stair from the top is slightly loose and has left very faint scratches on the walls. If any weight is put on it, the stairs tip to become a smooth stone ramp. Spikes deploy from the floor at the bottom of the ramp when the trap is activated. A PC sliding into the spikes takes d6 damage (Save for half). The trap resets in 5 rounds.

Lessons: check the floor. Traps can move you and not just harm you.

Step 3. Distil the nature of the Area Challenge

By the time Duthor prods the third step, he's already in the stairwell. All the steps pivot with a low grinding noise, forming the ramp.

Step 4. Play out the Scene

Duthor DEX (+4, Advantage) DC15 = **17** & 4 Extreme Success.

He manages to keep his feet. Kaylid holds him on the rope and they watch as the pit opens at the base of the stairs, showing the spikes. As it is going to reset, there's gurgling of water in pipes from behind the walls and under the floor for less than a minute and then the stairs pivot again back to normal.

Step 5: Check for an IMMEDIATE Additional Scene

The noise of the trap seems like it should get an additional Encounter Check. ~~As there is a Wandering Monster Table for this new Level, I'll use that instead of more Additional Scene checking.~~

In case you don't already know about it, there are some useful tools including an Encounter Checker, at <https://shadowdarktools.com/tools>.

The perils of not reading ahead made me think that going down stairs would bring me immediately to Level 3 of the Dungeon, it doesn't. So I'll continue with checks for Additional Scenes instead and the only "Wandering Monsters" I can imagine for this level would be the Black Pudding/Mummy and the Zombie of Gazali or something coming in from outside and following us down.

Check Twice...

Is there an ADDITIONAL Scene?:NO - You get some breathing space between scenes if you want/need it unless you think it is more appropriate for the narrative to continue immediately.

SCENE 06 – Stone Cobra Guardian

Step 1. Describe the Party's actions and intentions

Duthor will peer around the large chamber, prodding the floor to see if the spiked pit opens up again. If nothing happens he'll call down Felura (still clinging to the rope as she goes and hops over the third step). Felura will use her illusion spell to send an illusory Kaylid across and through the archway on the far side to lure out any ambushers.

Step 2. Read some of the Area Description

19: STONE COBRA GUARDIAN ARENA

This is a large, arena-like room completely covered in shields from tribes conquered by the snake-men. Some of the shields are rotted through, but at least five are still in usable condition.

If laboriously scraped and disassembled, fragments of silver wire and gold leaf in the shields are worth 2gp total.

In the very centre of the room stands the **Stone Cobra Guardian** (pg. 16). It attacks on sight. It cannot fit up the stairs.

THE STONE COBRA GUARDIAN

Stats: As an ogre in heavy armor

Appearance: a stone cobra-headed knight clad in carved armour. It wields a huge, dented sword in one hand. Its other hand is empty when combat begins.

Wants: to protect the rest of the Tomb of the Serpent Kings and kill any interlopers

Armor: as plate, **Hit Dice:** 6, **Move:** normal, **Morale:** 12, **Damage:** see Attacks below

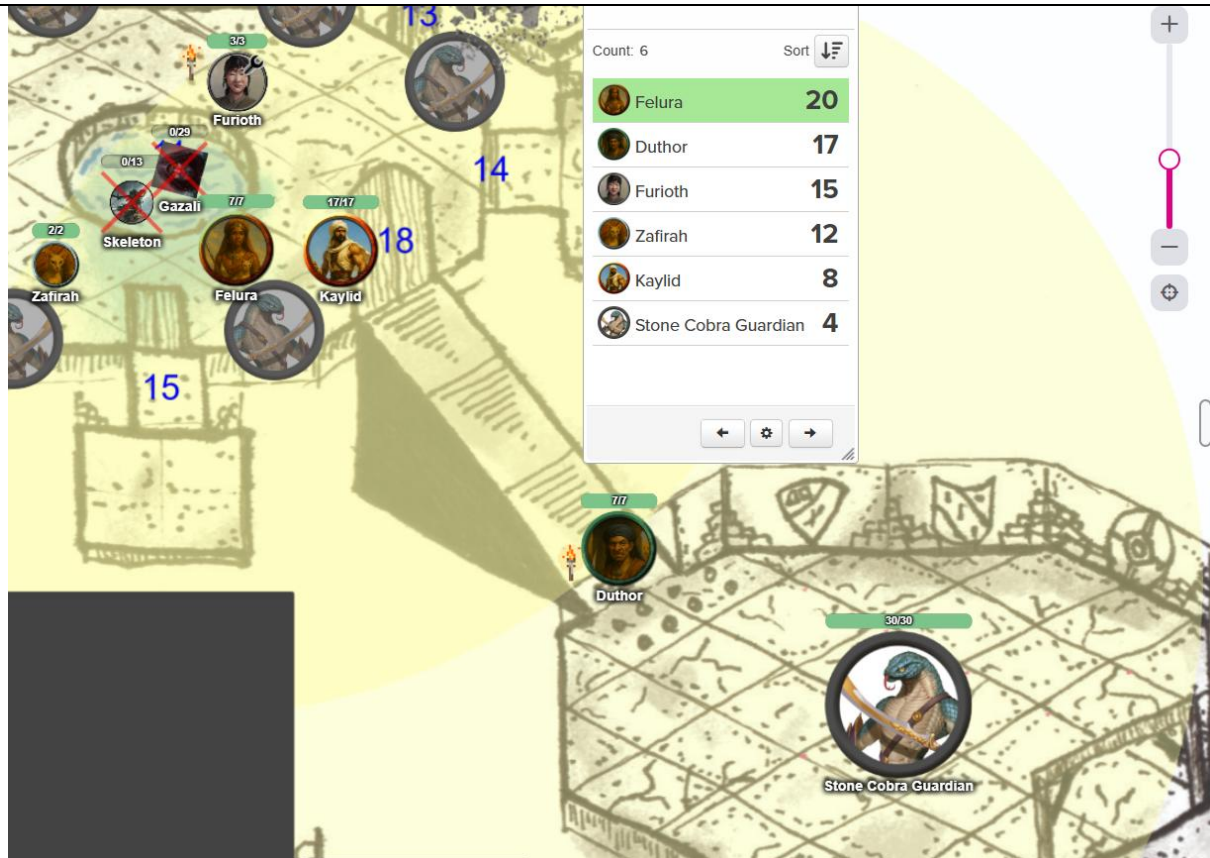
The Stone Cobra Guardian cannot fit up the **18: STAIRS**.

Attacks: Each round, the Stone Cobra Guardian can perform one of three attack patterns:

Shield Draw. The Guardian calls to a shield attached to the wall of the arena. The shield deals d6 damage (Save to Dodge negates) to any creatures between it and the Guardian. The Guardian holds the shield in its empty hand, granting it +1 Defense. The shield can be sundered as normal (reducing incoming damage by 1d12 and destroying the shield).

Leap and Slam. The Guardian leaps into the air and slams down 5'–20' away from its starting position. It will not land directly on creatures, but any adjacent creatures take 1d4 damage. Save negates. Creatures that take damage are knocked prone.

Twin Slash. The Guardian swipes at two targets with its sword. The targets must be on the same facing (front, left side, right side, or rear) and must be adjacent to the Guardian. The Guardian rolls a normal attack against both targets separately, dealing 1d8+Strength bonus damage on a hit.



Step 3. Distil the nature of the Area Challenge

As soon as Duthor reaches the bottom of the stairs, his light will illuminate the “statue” of the Giant Cobra Knight, so he would slow down and not enter the room or call down Felura.

Suddenly, the statue will leap to the bottom of the stairs using its Leap & Slam ability, hoping to knock him over and bring him sprawling downstairs into the chamber.

I’ll have Duthor make a WIS Check DC15 to avoid being surprised but give him Advantage for the cautious approach. If he does fall prone, Kaylid still has a rope on him so could pull him back up the stairs (with 1d6 damage!).

Step 4. Play out the Scene

Round 1 (Surprise!)

Duthor WIS (+0, Advantage) DC15 = 11 & 4 LUCK TOKEN REROLL = 8 & 3 = FAIL.

Duthor (and the others are taken by surprise).

The Cobra Guardian smashes down hard at the foot of the stairs.

Duthor DEX(+4) DC12 = 12. Just dodges.
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The nimble thief manages to keep his balance.

Round 2

1-in-6 chance the Torches go out = 2.

Felura will do nothing but is preparing to use her Illusion “Shadowdancer” to lure the thing into attacking again.

Duthor will scramble back up the stairs gathering-up the rope slack as he goes and stamp on step 3 (bracing himself with the rope to get Advantage).

Duthor DEX(+4) DC12 = 7 & 6. Felura will grant him her LUCK TOKEN reroll = 22 & 19. Success
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Narratively – she reaches over and steadies the rope having realised what the thief is trying to do.

With an Extreme Success, the Cobra Guardian is tipped into the spiked pit with no Save as the stairs switch to a ramp and the pit opens directly beneath it. **That’s worth 1XP each, 13/20XP.**

The Cobra takes 3 damage from the spikes (I roll 6d8, min 30 and get 34, so it’s on 31/34HP). They can tell at a glance this thing is TOUGH!

Furioth demands to know what the hell is going on!

Zafirah will hide behind the nearest statue.

Kaylid will pull Duthor out of the ramp/stairwell.

The Cobra Guardian will pull itself out of the pit and step back. It demonstrates it is too large to fit in the stairs or reach more than 10ft into the stairwell with its huge sword (only 5ft if it stays off the pit area).

The monster reaches out and a shield flies off the wall and snaps onto its left arm (increasing AC to 16).

Round 3

Felura will use the Shadowdancer Illusion to show the spike pit closing, accompanied by gurgling noises.

Felura Shadowdance +5 DC11 = 24

Duthor will gather up enough rope to only get part way down the ramp, far enough to tempt the thing in.

Kaylid, confused by what's going on, will just keep holding onto the rope!

The Cobra Guardian will rush forward again to strike at Duthor and fall into the pit again, its legs passing through the illusion. Sadly, it only takes 1 damage this time 30/34HP.

Round 4

Felura will try the Shadowdance illusion again, this time to show Duthor on the other side of the creature, in the room, to try and let Duthor use his Backstab feature.

Felura Shadowdance +5 DC11 = 7. Fail. They have no more Luck Tokens.
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The formula for Shadowdance becomes scrambled in her head until after a Rest.

Duthor will scamper back up to the top of the ramp, then use his sling.

Duthor Sling (+4) = 21 Hit. For 1 damage, 29/34HP.
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This is going to take FOREVER!

I'm going to step out of Combat Rounds for a bit while the heroes discuss an alternative plan.

Felura suggests summoning the Black Pudding/Mummy using the ritual from Gazali's notes. If she can summon it into the room below, perhaps the two monsters will fight each other.

If the pudding wins, they may be able to keep triggering the ramp and spike trap (they don't know the thing has a "climb" ability!) or hit it and back away as it seemed fairly slow, leading it to the edge of the pool and then setting light to the oil on top of the pool and trying to push it in. If the Cobra Guardian wins, perhaps it will have taken significant damage, and they can finish it off.

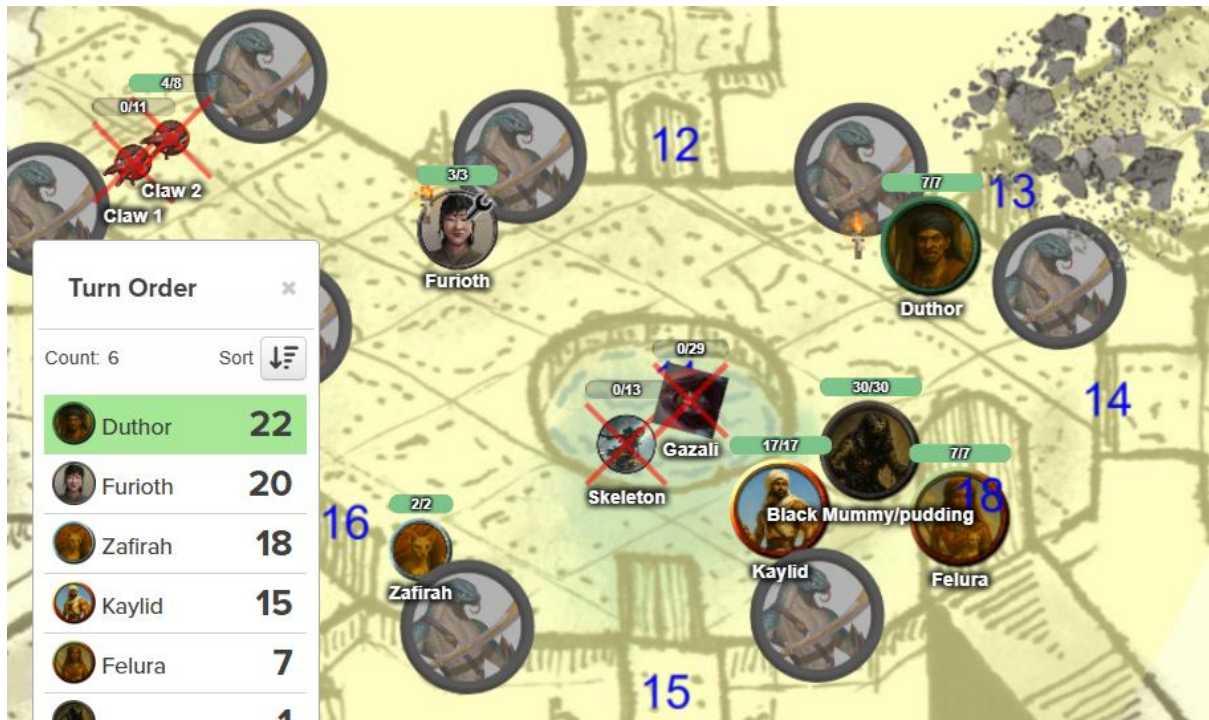
I'll say the Summoning will take a Casting Roll, like a Spell with DC15. I'll imagine a few outcomes and make it DANGEROUS

- Nat 20 – Summoned to the exact location and immediately hostile to the Guardian
- Extreme Success (by 5+) – Summoned where intended but not hostile unless attacked
- Success – Summoned but in a random spot (1d6 squares from the Caster anywhere from adjacent to down the stairs into the chamber)
- Fail – Not summoned, can't try again until after a Rest
- Extreme Fail – Summoned but adjacent to Caster, held in place for Focus
- Nat 1 – Summoned in same square as Caster (immediately damaging!).

As Felura lists some of the potential issues with the Ritual, Kaylid insists it's too dangerous. Duthor thinks it's the only way they are going to get past that stone monster and they don't have enough treasure yet to go back and face Faruk!

Felura RITUAL INT (+1, Advantage for Cult Initiate) DC15 = 3 & 4 EXTREME FAIL
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I'm going to say that the monster rises from the Pool behind them, stepping out next to Kaylid and Felura!



Round 1 (Black Pudding/Mummy)

Duthor was hidden behind a Snake Statue, so I'll let him attack with BACKSTAB using his new fingernail attack. There will still be the 1-in-6 chance the weapon gets dissolved for 1d6 damage and it won't grow back until after a Rest.

Duthor Fingernail (+4, Advantage for flanking with Kaylid) = **24** & 16 CRITICAL SUCCESS.

The "Poison" attack doesn't work on non-living opponents. However, the slash itself causes 8 damage and the BACKSTAB causes another $1d4 + 3d6 = 16$ damage. This creature only takes half damage from most physical attacks, so only takes 12, down to 18/30HP.

1-in-6 chance the weapon dissolves = 1

The acid burns away the fingernail doing 3 damage to Duthor, down to 4/7HP.

Duthor bravely (foolhardily!) stays in position to give Kaylid Advantage from Flanking!

Furioth backs away a few steps, feeling helpless and terrified.

Zafirah slinks away after her, muttering something about "I'll look after this one, when you've dealt with Big Black, just whistle!"

Kaylid skewers it with his Long spear.

Kaylid Long Spear (+4, Advantage) = **18** & 7 hits for 4, halved to 2 and down to 16/30HP.

Felurah will try to maintain Focus to hold the creature in place. I'd decided that this unique Ritual (which isn't one of her Witch spells) is being cast by Intelligence from her deciphering of the Priest's notes.

Felura INT (+1, Advantage due to Cult Initiate) DC15 = 4 & **7 FAIL**

She doesn't have a clue! She babbles a few mis-pronounced words and completely fails. She ducks around past the others to the far side of the Pool.

BLACK MUMMY/PUDDING

Humanoid BLACK PUDDING a black, mass of sludge in the vague shape of a mummified corpse.

AC 9, HP 30, ATK 2 tentacle +4 (1d6), **MV** near/2 (climb), **S** +2, **D** -1, **C** +3, **I** -4, **W** -3, **Ch** -4, **AL** C, **LV** 5

Rubbery. Takes half damage (round down min 1) from most physical attacks except for Fire and Lightning

Corrosive. Wood or metal or flesh that touches the ooze **has a 1-in-6 chance of taking 3d6 damage (dissolving) each round. This affects weapons that strike it, destroying them if they take damage.**

The Black Pudding/Mummy has enemies either side but MIGHT be inclined to follow its Summoner!

Will it ignore its Summoner for now?

Ask the Bones Likely: 8 (5,3,1) Yes But

Drawbacks: Something connected went badly at the same time

They hear a muffled sob from Furioth who seems to have fallen to her knees, her eyes have gone completely black and her hands are feebly tearing at her tunic, pulling it aside so it shows some strange sigils written in blood on her chest.

Felura gasps as she suddenly understands what the scrolls meant about "... the marked sacrifice surrenders...". I'm thinking that killing the "marked" sacrifice will restore the Mummy to full HP!

The Mummy moves away from Duthor and Kaylid, brushes past Felura and looms over the kneeling figure of Furioth (*it had to double move to reach her, so doesn't get an attack this round*).

Round 2

Duthor dashes across the chamber, kneels down to get a good angle of attack and whips out the Lightning Disk, trying to aim it at the Mummy.

The mechanism seems easy enough, touch the coin to the plate on the back of the disk. Whatever magical attack it is, comes out of the front of the disk.

Duthor INT (+1) vs DC9 to aim safely = 2 & 4

Oops. The power comes out as a Cone, hitting Furioth, the Mummy AND Felura for 4d6 Lightning!!!

The Mummy is in the centre of the blast and gets no Save, Furioth is paralysed and gets no Save but Felura can get a DEX DC12 to dive out of the way.

Felura DEX (+0) vs DC12 = 7. Fail.

4d6 = 14 Damage.

Furioth is fried (she's an NPC we haven't had time to get attached to, so no Death Timer).

Felura drops (dying) to the ground on zero HP.

The Mummy is reduced to 2/30HP **but is still moving!**

Zafirah will step over Felura's unconscious body and hiss and claw at the monster (giving it Disadvantage if it decides to hit Felura but with the 1-in-6 chance to be dissolved by acid!)

Kaylid will scream in horror and **CHARGE** at the monster.

Kaylid (+4) = **24 CRITICAL HIT. 19 damage DOUBLED for the CHARGE!**

I'm glad I hit, but just my luck to get a Critical now after all the failures that led up to this moment! I only needed to do 4 damage but got 38 instead!

The Monster is dead.

I roll a 1d4 Death Timer for Felura = 4 (-1 for CON) = 3 rounds.

Felura First Stabilize Check = 7.

Duthor Stabilize Check INT (+1) vs DC15 = **21 CRITICAL SUCCESS.**

Step 5: Check for an IMMEDIATE Additional Scene

Is there an ADDITIONAL Scene?: NO - You get some breathing space between scenes if you want/need it unless you think it is more appropriate for the narrative to continue immediately.

The way I'm reading the DEATH rules on page 89 of the Shadowdark Rulebook, Felura continues to roll every round, looking for Nat20 to wake up on 1HP, but as she's no longer DYING, it's just a matter of time.

Will they get a few minutes undisturbed?

Ask the Bones Likely: 5 (3,2,1) No

"What Now!!!" We'll find out what disturbs them next time.



Wrap Up

- Felura is still unconscious, having been zapped by Duthor's use of the Lightning Trap.
- I'll give Kaylid a Luck Token for the spectacular (if unnecessary) 38 damage.
- The Black Pudding/Mummy hasn't been set on fire yet as they are too focussed on looking after Felura and recriminations about what went wrong. The sacrifice HAS just been killed??? Gazali's corpse is in the nearby pool??? Perhaps the Cobra Guardian can squeeze up the stairs after all??? Perhaps a servant of Gazali is coming (I just noticed I rolled to determine he wasn't alone but then accidentally turned the "Servant" into a "Prisoner")???

If you are finding the story and the system interesting, or have any comments and suggestions, please let me know. Hopefully see you next time.