Encounter Level 19 (12,000 XP)

Setup
The entrance to Moghadam’s vault is guarded by the Devourer—the original green stone devil’s face that destroyed intruders in the original adventure. The mad archwraith has reshaped this trap’s power to make it deadlier.

In this encounter, the characters face eldritch simulacrum versions of themselves. To make this work, you’ll need to use the rules on page 186 of the Dungeon Master’s Guide to create nonplayer characters who match the characters in terms of race and class. Choose powers based on those that the characters themselves use most frequently. (If this feels like too much preparation, choose humanoid monsters of the appropriate size and with similar proclivities, and then swap out a few powers and alter their appearance to match.)

Into the Vault
Characters can make a DC 15 Athletics check to descend into the secret pit in the Pluton planar crossover site within the Abandoned Tomb (location 8).

When the characters can see into the pit, read:
The floor of the pit appears indistinct, but a rough gauge of the distance suggests that you descend only 30 feet or so through shadow. The familiar lurch of a planar crossover hits halfway down—you are in the world again, but the darkness here feels no less oppressive. At the bottom of the pit, a 5-foot-wide twisting passage leads east and down. The passage runs about 300 feet before reaching location 1.

As the characters approach the end of the passage, read:
Ahead, an archway opens up into a chamber more than 50 feet long. Twisted stone columns support the roof, and their misshapen forms making them seem almost alive.

When the characters can see the eastern end of the chamber, read:
At the far end of this entrance hall, a familiar image looms: the Devourer. The green face is set into a fractured mass of rock, as if it had been torn whole from another location and fused to these walls. It has been marred with black scorched marks and rough-carved glyphs.

Perception Check
DC 22: Scar marks across both of the Devourer’s eyes partially conceal two keyholes in the shape of a closed fist and a sword.

Moghadam tore the Devourer from location 3 in the Abandoned Tomb and set it here—a symbol of his enmity for his former master. The defaced Devourer physically and magically blocks the only access deeper into the Vault of Betrayal. (The archwraith is immune to the wards here, and he can phase through the Devourer to reach his lair.)

The glyphs carved into the ancient stone face are in the Barazhad script.

Intelligence Check (for a character who can read the Barazhad script)
DC 22: The glyphs crudely carved into the stone face repeat the same phrase, over and over: “My Master, Dread Devourer, Die Forevermore…”

One Way In
The characters must use the keys obtained in Encounters T2 and T3 to enter Moghadam’s vault. The archwraith’s powerful wards make the Devourer impervious to damage, and prevent attempts to phase or teleport through it. Fitting the keys to the face’s eyes disables those wards, making it possible to destroy the Devourer and gain entry to the corridor beyond. Fitting the keys also activates a trap, forcing those who seek Moghadam to fight against themselves.

Tactics
The eldritch simulacra should be played to take maximum advantage of the characters’ powers. They are mindless constructs that do not coordinate their tactics (though they can flank with each other).
The mouth of the Devourer flares with an infernal light.

Trap: Taken from the Abandoned Tomb above, the visage of the Devourer has been set here and enchanted with powerful wards that are both a trap and a means of gaining access to Moghadam’s sanctum.

Perception
The characters cannot learn anything about this trap by using Perception.

Additional Skill: Arcana
♦ DC 27: A character recognizes that the Devourer’s mouth is a well of arcane energy that is set to lash out at any creatures that approach it.
Initiative: +2

Trigger
When both keys are fitted to the Devourer’s eyes, the trap rolls initiative and attacks.

Attack ♦ Necrotic
Standard Action Close burst 5
Target: Each creature in burst
Hit: 3d8 necrotic damage, and the target is dominated (save ends). While the target is dominated, it makes at-will attacks against its allies.

Aftereffect: A hazy eldritch simulacrum of the target appears in a square adjacent to it. The duplicate is functionally identical to the target, possessing all its weapons and gear. A simulacrum is immune to the effect of the Devourer. A simulacrum and its gear are destroyed when it is reduced to 0 hit points.

An eldritch simulacrum rolls initiative when it appears, entering combat in the following round. The Devourer can create more than one simulacrum of the same character, but can’t create more than four simulacra in total.

Countermeasures
♦ As an immediate interrupt, a character in the burst can make a DC 27 Acrobatics check to leap or climb onto the Devourer. A character doing so is subject to an extra attack by the trap (an immediate reaction), but that character gains a +2 bonus to Thievery checks and Arcana checks while he or she remains on the Devourer.
♦ The characters can engage in a skill challenge to disable the trap: DC 22 Arcana or Thievery; complexity 2 (requires 6 successes before 3 failures); success safely disables the trap; failure disables the trap but causes an explosion of arcane essence: close burst 10; on a hit, 4d10 damage, and the target loses a healing surge.
♦ A character can make a DC 22 Athletics check or Acrobatics check to leap or climb onto the Devourer. A character doing so is subject to an extra attack by the trap (an immediate reaction), but that character gains a +2 bonus to Thievery checks and Arcana checks while he or she remains on the Devourer.
♦ The characters must attack the Devourer to destroy it. The great stone face has Fortitude 33, other defenses 29, and 300 hit points. If the Devourer is destroyed before being disabled, it makes one last attack with a +5 bonus to the attack roll. If the trap is disabled first, the Devourer can be destroyed without causing it to make this final attack.
♦ Once the trap is disabled, the characters can make a DC 28 Athletics check to move the Devourer aside and reveal the opening beyond. (The stone image is large enough for up to four characters to provide aid on this check.)

Experience
The XP total given for the encounter assumes that a party of five 19th-level characters fights four 19th-level eldritch simulacra before successfully shutting down the trap. Adjust the XP depending on the party’s level and how many duplicates are created.

Any active eldritch simulacra are destroyed if the Devourer is destroyed (not merely disabled). Award half XP for any simulacra defeated in this way.

The Black Stairs
Once the characters have destroyed or moved the stone face, read:

Beyond the Devourer, an iron portcullis fills an arched portal. On the other side of this barrier are a landing and a flight of black granite stairs leading down into dead silence.

The portcullis’s bars are spaced too narrowly for a Small creature to squeeze through them. A character can make a DC 28 Athletics check to raise the portcullis, and up to two other characters can aid the character making the check.

Powerful warding magic protects the portcullis. Each character who makes an unsuccessful attempt to raise it, or who assists another character on an unsuccessful check, is subject to an attack: +24 vs. Will; on a hit, the target loses a healing surge.

Features of the Area
Illumination: Darkness.
Ceiling: The ceiling is 30 feet high.

Columns: These twisted black columns reflect the light in ways that make them appear to move. With a DC 14 passive Perception check, a character “sees” a nearby column shift as if about to topple. A DC 22 Perception check (a minor action) shows the effect to be an optical illusion. A column is blocking terrain and provides cover. A character can climb a column with a DC 24 Athletics check.

Defaced Devourer: This great green devil’s face once lured an untold number of adventurers to their deaths in the original Tomb of Horrors. Moghadam has placed it here in the hope of adding more victims to its tally. The defaced Devourer is a trap that blocks the entrance to Moghadam’s vault. See “One Way In” and the statistics block for details.