



CRAGOS THE GODSLAYER

A standalone encounter for five adventurers

By Corwin Riddle

7 Difficulty
7 Complexity

Cragos the Godslayer is a standalone encounter designed for five 10th to 12th-level adventurers. The people of Coltaris is under attack by an elder dragon named Colytariaz, who has sent her champion, Cragos the Godslayer, to disable the city's magical defenses. The players must fight off Cragos and reset the city's shield in a multi-phase solo encounter.

BACKGROUND

The city of Coltaris is a mysterious place. Resting between snowy mountain peaks and serving as home to a seclusive culture of elves, the city has a reputation for a strange and pervasive form of lightning magic. Present throughout the whole city as a low, crackling hum and faint, blue glow, this lightning magic serves as a power source for lights, carriages, heaters, and many other everyday devices; there are few homes or shops not powered by this magical essence; it has been the standard for living in Coltaris for over a century, and most of the residents have little or no idea as to the source of its power—which may be for the best.

Buried deep below the city of Coltaris, an elder blue dragon of the same name lies dormant, suspended in stasis and held hostage by the city's residents. Weak and near death, the dragon Coltaris had returned to its cave to finish out its last few hours, when a group of elves, searching for some relief from a passing blizzard, stumbled upon the dying dragon and panicked. Long familiar with magic, the elves managed to subdue Coltaris in his frail state, harnessing the dragon's essence and discovering its power. Now, held in place by advanced rituals and magical runes, the dragon is helpless, its essence ever-so-slowly being drained to power the city above through the residents' twisted lightning magic.

However, their actions did not go unnoticed. A younger dragon of the same bloodline, Colytariaz, has learned the fate of Coltaris and come to end the perversion of her clan. Showering the city with relentless attacks, halting only long enough to gather more minions and regain her strength, Colytariaz refuses to end her assault on the people of Coltaris until the elder dragon is released. To stop her attacks, the sor-

cerers of Coltaris have erected an enormous dome of magical energy, attuned from the essence of the elder dragon Coltaris and capable of affecting any dragons of the same bloodline. This magical field covers the entire city, repelling the attacks and magic of Colytariaz and preventing her from entering the city and massacring the people inside.

Determined to breach the city's perimeter, Colytariaz has summoned the help of a notorious mercenary, Cragos the Godslayer, a bluespawn dragonkin with a love for causing havoc and pain. Promising Cragos her entire stash of treasure if he can bring down the city's shield and grant her entry, Colytariaz has marked the people of Coltaris for death—and Cragos shall carry out her wish.

GETTING THE PLAYERS INVOLVED

Cragos the Godslayer is a standalone encounter, but can easily be turned into a full adventure. The PCs can stumble upon Coltaris during the attack, be sent to assist in the city's defense, or even be tracking a strange surge of dragonkin in the area. The hooks included will guide the players into and through the encounter.

GETTING STARTED

Read this when the players first see the city of Coltaris:

A magical dome covers the city of Coltaris, flickering and crackling with loud pops as it fades and reappears, erratically. Suddenly, a shadow looms overhead, thrown by an enormous, blue dragon, which folds its wings and dives, attempting to penetrate the dome. With a deafening burst of electricity, the dragon is repelled, and resumes circling the city, spewing lightning bolts at the shield in defiance.

Read this as the players near the city:

A small section of the field fades for a moment, allowing you and your cart to pass through. The city's buildings are clearly damaged, their ivory stones littering the cobbled streets; the residents run back and forth, looking for cover from the destruction. The city itself seems to have some sort of unified power source; the street lamps and houses all have an enduring, faint bluish light source.

Above, you can see many of the dragon's blasts break through the shield as the dome weakens. With each attack, the lamps and lights flicker for a split-second, some going out completely. A tall and slender elf sees you, and waves you over, excited and exasperated.

HOOK 1: RESTORE THE SHIELD

The elf introduces himself as Tolvis, and urges you to follow him as he explains the situation:

"Thank Bahamut, more fighters. We've sustained considerable losses, my friends, considerable losses indeed—and it's just begun, if the dampening field fails, there will be nothing stopping Colytariaz from coming down here herself to finish us off. There's no time to waste, you'll have plenty of gold when we're safe—just get the field back up to full power before it's too late!"

Tolvis wants the players to follow him into a tunnel leading below the city, where the dampening field controllers are. Once there, he will need the players to assist him in getting the field back up to full power.

Quest XP: 1,200 XP for getting the field up to full power.

SPECIAL FEATURES

PORTAL LAPSE

Cragos has a power called *Portal Lapse*, which is triggered twice during the encounter and ends the current phase.

During the effect:

- Cragos is invulnerable and cannot be damaged or hit by any attack or effect.
- Cragos does not deal aura damage.
- Four portals open at the spots where the Bluespawn Protector are marked on the map.
- If a Bluespawn Protector is killed and the portal it came from is still active, another protector emerges from the portal at the end of the following round.
- When an arcane dampener is turned **On**, the portal closest to it disappears.
- *Portal Lapse* ends when all four arcane dampeners have been turned from **Disabled** to **On**. Advance to the next phase of the encounter.

ARCANE DAMPENERS

The arcane dampeners are magical stones covered in runes, floating and turning around a crystal set in the center. These dampeners can be activated to weaken Cragos and to temporarily protect against damage.

The arcane dampeners have three states:

Disabled:

- The dampeners are disabled at the beginning of the encounter and immediately after Cragos uses *Portal Lapse*.
- The crystal has been knocked out of sync, and the dampener cannot be activated for a shield. During this time, Cragos does not take any penalty to defense.

On:

- The crystal can be turned on by using a minor action (within melee reach) to make a skill check to recalibrate the crystal inside:
 - Arcana (DC 18):** You focus the arcane energy within the crystal to steady the dampener, reactivating it.
 - Athletics or Endurance (DC 18):** You use your strength to hold the crystal steady until it recalibrates.
 - Thievery or Streetwise (DC 18):** You use your agility to manipulate the crystal into its proper position.
- Cragos takes a -1 penalty to all defenses for each dampener that has been turned on.

Activated:

- Once a crystal has been turned on, it can be activated with a free action (within melee reach).
- Activating a dampener creates a burst 3 zone. Any player within this zone gains **Resist 10** to lightning damage.
- At the start of the turn of the player who activated the dampener, the zone decreases by 1.
- When the zone reaches 0, the dampener is no longer activated and returns to the **On** state, and cannot be activated for two rounds.
- If all four dampeners are activated at the same time (as long as they have at least the burst 1 zone active), all lightning damage is negated for as long as the dampeners are **all** active. (*This will not be possible every turn, as a dampener only lasts 3 rounds and cannot be reactivated for another 2 rounds*).

It can be tricky to keep track of which state each dampener is in, which player activated it, and what the zone should be, so try this simple trick:

- Use a piece of paper with a square drawn on it, with 4 circles, one in each corner of the square (representing the room and the 4 dampeners).
- A **Disabled** dampener is represented by a blank circle.

- When a dampener is turned on, place anything on the circle to indicate it has changed to the **On** state.
- When a player activates a dampener, have that player place their **1d4** on the circle of the dampener they activated, with the die showing the size of the zone (3, 2, 1).
- You can keep track of who activated which dampener by seeing whose dice is on each dampener.

AREA: THE DAMPENING CHAMBER

Read this when the PCs reach the dampening chamber:

Tolvis pulls open a large door, revealing the dampening chamber. A glowing circle of runes rotates on the stone floor, surrounded by four strange and glowing obelisks made of broken stones, slowly turning as they float a few feet above the floor. A low hum fills the room as you enter, emanating from the glowing obelisks.

“Just as I thought,” Tolvis says, running to the circle and producing a small crystal from his robes. “One of the blasts has disabled the dampeners, the crystals inside have been knocked out of position. I’ll stay here and begin the ritual to reset the field; get to those dampeners and reactivate them. We’ll need all four up and working if this is going to work. Don’t worry, I’ll talk you through it.”

Perception (DC 14): Several columns line the outside of the room, and seem to be slightly unstable, broken and cracking as small pieces fall to the ground.

Arcana (DC 14): The arcane dampeners work together to emit a strong, anti-magical aura, weakening a particular type of magic within its range. These seem to be resistant towards lightning.

SETUP

4 Bluespawn Protectors (P)
1 Cragos, the Godslayer (C)

Cragos does not appear until all four of the disabled arcane dampeners have been turned to **On**. He appears in the center of the room on the rune.

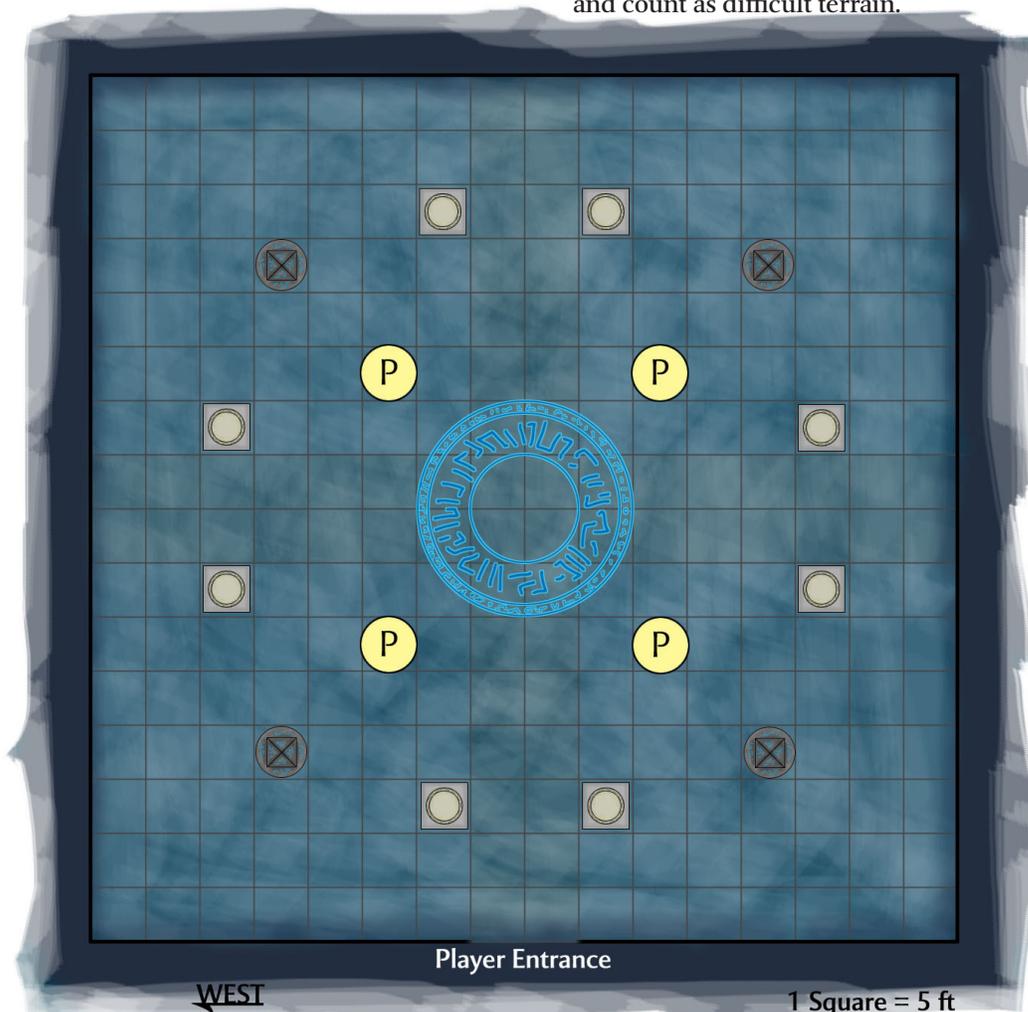
FEATURES OF THE AREA

Height: The ceiling is 60’ high.

Illumination: The room is well lit.

Arcane Dampeners: Marked as gray magical stones, see **Special Features** for details.

Columns: Marked as white columns. These are 10’ tall and block line of sight. Cragos can knock these over with any attack or a minor action, causing them to take up two squares and count as difficult terrain.



FLAVOR TEXT

Read the following flavor text for abilities and powers if you prefer not to explicitly explain what is happening:

When all four disabled dampeners are turned back On after Cragos appears or after *Portal Lapse*:

The lightning shield surrounding Cragos breaks apart and disappears, rendering Cragos vulnerable to attacks once more.

When a dampener is activated:

The dampener hums and glows, creating a small shield that deflects the nearby lightning.

When all four dampeners have been activated:

Cragos shrinks in stature, and the lightning crackling throughout the room fizzles and disappears. “No matter,” he says, “you’re only delaying the inevitable.”

To describe *Shock Aura* (phase 1), read:

Surrounding Cragos is a continuous field of spider webbing lightning, shocking you and spreading out to nearby allies.

When Cragos uses *Lightning Storm*, read:

Cragos hurls a ball of lightning at the ground, which erupts into energy, crackling as bolts of lightning course over the ground.

When Cragos uses *Electrify*, read:

A whip of lightning shoots across the battlefield, closing around you and dragging you close to Cragos.

When Cragos uses *Portal Lapse*, read:

Cragos strikes the ground, knocking you all back. The dampener crystals are dislodged, allowing several small portals to open, which release more of the lesser dragonspawn. Cragos surrounds himself in a magical shield, laughing. “Finish off these insects,” he yells.

CRAGOS IN COMBAT

Cragos is an extremely competent and clever warrior, and will always move out of flanking position and target the weakest player, knowing the advantage of knocking an opponent out of the battle early on. Cragos is well aware of the effect of the dampeners, and will do his best to avoid the shields and attack players that will take full lightning damage from his attacks.

Bluespawn Protector Medium natural beast (dragonkin)	Level 9 Minion XP 0
HP 10 AC 24, Fortitude 24, Reflex 24, Will 25 Speed 5	Initiative +9 Perception +16 Darkvision
STANDARD ACTIONS	
⚔ Bite ♦ At-Will	
Attack: +14 vs AC Hit: 1d6 + 4 lightning damage.	

USING THE ENCOUNTER

Cragos is a solo mob with 3 phases, each with a special attack and different abilities. At 400 and 200 hit points, *Portal Lapse* triggers and when all four dampeners have been turned back On, the next phase begins.

BEFORE CRAGOS APPEARS

Cragos does not appear until after the dampeners have been turned On and the players defeat a few weak dragonspawn (this is basically a tiny tutorial for how the dampeners work).

Read the following when Tolvis explains the dampeners to the players:

“Once a dampener has been activated, you can engage the crystal within to release a small, temporary dampening zone. It’s doesn’t last long, but it should diminish the enemy’s magic while nearby.”

“One of you is magically inclined, yes? Have your friends hold the dampening crystals in place, and stabilize the arcane charge—one of the blasts must have knocked them off balance!”

Read the following when the players have turned all four dampeners to On:

“Good work!” Tolvis shouts. “Now give me a minute to reset the field; it’ll only be down for an instant, but we’ll be completely defenseless for a few moments. Colytariaz will have enough time to open a portal or two before it’s back to full power. Watch my back!”

Several small portals open up around Tolvis, and small, blue dragonspawn emerge. “Don’t worry,” Tolvis shouts, controlling the field, “we’re almost there, just a few more seconds. Keep them away from me, we’re so close!” The dampeners begin to pulse and shake as the ritual comes to an end.

When all of the dragonspawn have been defeated, read:

Suddenly, an enormous portal opens in the middle of the room. A giant dragonspawn steps through, adorned with a glowing sword and a shield that looks to be the skull of an elder beast of the underdark. Surrounding him is a field of lightning, crackling as bolts escape. He stomps the ground with his feet, and all four dampeners slowly grind to a halt as their crystals fall out of place.

“I knew that Colytariaz would stop at nothing,” says Tolvis, as the dragonspawn advances. “But she must have grown desperate indeed to trust you. Be on your guard—behold, Cragos, the godslayer.”

The dragonspawn chuckles, drawing its sword. “Not today,” it says. “Today, I am the city-slayer, and Coltaris is my quarry.” He steps forward and grabs Tolvis, holding him high with his talons. Cragos wrenches a small crystal from Tolvis’s hands, and tosses it in his mouth, swallowing it.

“No! The crystal! Get it back and get the shield to full strength!” Tolvis gasps, gesturing to the remaining four dampeners. “His match is

beyond any of you—the dampeners—it’s the only way to suppress his full power!”

Cragos crushes Tolvis, tossing his lifeless body aside. “Insects. Pathetic little mortals. Savor your last few seconds—I know I will.”

HOOK 2: SLAY THE GODSLAYER

Tolvis has been murdered! The crystal needed to finish the dampening field’s ritual now lies in the stomach of Cragos the Godslayer. There’s only one way to get it back.

Quest XP: 1,200 XP for killing Cragos the Godslayer.

Cragos, the Godslayer Huge natural humanoid (reptile)	Level 12 Solo Brute XP 3,500
HP 600; Bloodied 200 AC 30, Fortitude 28, Reflex 28, Will 29 Resist 20 lightning, 20 thunder Speed 8 Saving Throws +2 Action Points 2	Initiative 25, 15 Perception +17 Low-light vision
TRAITS	
Instability Many of Cragos’s powers use X as a number for range and auras. This X begins as 1, and increases cumulatively by 1 when Cragos reaches 500, 400, 300, 200, and 100 hit points.	
Godslayer’s Haste Cragos takes two turns each round, always on initiatives 25 and 15.	
Indomitable Cragos can save against stun, daze, dominated, and weakened at the beginning and ends of his turn, and gains a +5 bonus to the saving throws.	
STANDARD ACTIONS	
⊕ Greatsword (lightning, weapon) ◆ At-Will Attack: Reach 3; +17 vs AC Hit: 2d6 + 10 damage plus 1d8 lightning damage.	
✱ Lightning Storm (lightning) ◆ Encounter (recharges at 400 and 200) Attack: Area burst 3 within 10; +16 vs. Reflex Hit: 1d8 + 10 lightning damage. Any ally within X squares takes 5 lightning damage. Effect: The burst creates a zone that lasts until the end of the encounter. Players starting their turn within the zone take 5 lightning damage. Any ally within X squares of a player taking damage from the zone takes 5 lightning damage.	
☞ Lightning Shear (lightning) ◆ At-Will <i>Special:</i> Cragos will only use this attack while his magic shield is up. Attack: Ranged 10/20; two targets; +16 vs. Reflex Hit: 2d6 lightning damage and an ongoing 5 lightning damage (save ends), one ally within X squares takes 5 lightning damage.	
MINOR ACTIONS	
Electrify <i>Special:</i> This attack does not provoke opportunity attacks. Attack: Ranged 10/20; +17 vs. Fortitude Hit: 1d6 lightning damage and the target is pulled X squares.	
TRIGGERED ACTIONS	
Portal Lapse (when reaching 400 and 200 hit points) Effect: Four portals open up around Cragos, summoning in lesser dragonspawn to fight for him. While this happens, Cragos is protected by a magical shield, and is invulnerable to attacks until the dampeners are reset, which begins the next phase. While protected by the shield, Cragos can only use <i>Lightning Shear</i> and <i>Electrify</i> . See Special Features .	
Skills Athletics +17, Endurance +16 Str 23 (+12) Dex 14 (+7) Wis 17 (+6) Con 20 (+11) Int 5 (+1) Cha 11 (+4) Alignment shield, sword Languages Draconic, common	

PHASE ONE

When Cragos appears, he stomps the ground, knocking the crystals out of sync and setting all four dampeners to **Disabled**. Cragos also has the following aura for phase one:

TRAITS

⚡ **Shock Aura** ◆ **Aura X**

Players starting their turn within the aura take 5 lightning damage. Any ally within X squares of a player hit by the aura takes 5 lightning damage.

PHASE TWO

When phase two begins, read:

“Come to me, insects!” says Cragos, breaking his shield as lightning lassos out, pulling you closer. The lightning waves surrounding Cragos expand, turning into a torrent of electricity behind you. “There is no escape!”

Cragos has the following aura and attack for phase two:

STANDARD ACTIONS

⚡ **Awesome Blow** (lightning, weapon) ◆ **At-Will**

Effect: Cragos makes a greatsword attack. If it hits, it makes the following secondary attack against that target.

Attack: +16 vs. Fortitude.

Hit: The target is pushed 1d6 squares.

TRAITS

⚡ **Lightning Ring Aura** ◆ **Aura 4** (begins 3 squares out)

Players entering or starting their turn in the aura take 10 lightning damage. Any ally within X squares of a player hit by the aura takes 5 lightning damage. This aura does not start at Cragos, but begins 3 squares away from him and moves with him.

PHASE THREE

When phase two begins, read:

“Enough!” roars Cragos, shaking off your attacks. “Coltaris will fall—your actions will be no more than a distant memory of a forgotten city!” He throws his shield down, lowering his defenses. His sword explodes into a torrent of electricity as a wave of lightning sweeps across the room. “You cannot contain my power!”

Cragos makes the following attack when phase three begins, and gains the following attack. For this entire phase, Cragos takes a -2 penalty to all defenses, and deals 5 additional lightning damage with each attack.

TRIGGERED ACTIONS

Fury of the Godslayer (when at 200 hit points)

Effect: Cragos loses all negative status effects, takes a -2 penalty to all defenses, gains a +2 bonus to all attacks, and a +5 bonus to all non-ongoing damage. This lasts until the end of the encounter. In addition, perform the following attack:

Attack: Close Burst 10; +17 vs. Reflex (includes bonus)

Hit: 10 lightning damage.

Effect: Targets in the burst are pushed 5 squares.

STANDARD ACTIONS

⚡ **Immortal Strike** (lightning, weapon) ◆ **At-Will**

Attack: Reach 3; +19 vs. AC (includes bonus)

Hit: 2d6 + 15 damage plus 2d8 lightning damage (includes bonus) and slide the target X squares. The target cannot gain temporary hit points until the end of its next turn.

CONCLUSION

When Cragos is defeated, he falls to a knee and dies, saying: *“No, it cannot be! Mortality has even been but a passing whisper from my blade... Colytariaz... keep your payment. I take my leave of this world.”* Once he’s dead, the players can get the crystal back and perform a small ritual or skill challenge to get the field back to full strength. Also found on Cragos is two level 13 magical item.

If you have not yet revealed the secret of the city and the purpose of Colytariaz and her attacks, allow the players to investigate and discover the following information:

- Godslayers routinely work for money and treasure, and have a special hatred for bahamut.
- It’s not normal for a dragon to give up their treasure, even in payment. The dragon would have to want something very important.
- A resident knows the name “Coltaris” is rumored to have come from an elder dragon of the same name, most dragons of the same bloodline will have similar names (Coltaris, Colytariaz).
- The magical field shouldn’t be able to keep out a dragon unless it was attuned specifically to that dragon’s bloodline, which is very difficult to do (getting the blood and performing the ritual).
- Inside the cave, far below, is a burial chamber containing the body of Coltaris, an elder dragon. The body is being kept intact through magic, using the dragon’s essence as fuel for their city’s shield and magical items.
- Colytariaz has been trying to reclaim the body of her kin, Coltaris, and offered her entire treasure to Cragos to destroy the field and let her enter the city to take the body of Coltaris.

ADJUSTMENTS

If you like this encounter but aren’t sure how to fit it into your campaign, here is some advice:

We have too few or too many players:

For 4 players, subtract reduce Cragos’ hit points to 500, and have the phases change at 350 and 200. For 6 players, add an additional dampener to the map, and increase Cragos’ hit points to 800, with phases two and three taking place at 500 and 200.

We aren’t the right level:

Cragos is based off the Bluespawm Godslayer, found in the **Monster Builder**. Simply adjust the damage and hit points, and add in the special abilities.

It’s too easy:

If the fight is too easy and the players have figured out the dampeners and negated a lot of damage, consider having them randomly turn off, or shorten the duration of the initial activation from 3 to 2, or reduce the lightning resistance from 10 to 5.

It’s too hard:

If the players are having trouble with Cragos, then they probably have not yet figured out how to work the dampeners and the effect that comes with all four being activated. Make sure to hint to your players (through Tolvis) that the dampeners are the key to victory, and even have him explicitly state that having all four On and Activated will shield the entire chamber (if he’s already dead, then let the players make an Arcana, Perception, or History check to determine the purpose of the devices and their full effect).

The players can’t hit Cragos:

Every dampener that is On (doesn’t have to be Activated) lowers all of Cragos’ defenses by 1, and since they have to be on for the phases to advance, Cragos should almost always be at a -4 penalty.

It’s too complicated:

I tried to organize this adventure so that all of Cragos’ stats and phases are on one particular page. Just follow the phases down the page, and remember that each phase has a couple of different abilities. The actual Cragos stat block only has powers that he can use during every phase, so you can always make use of the powers there, though try to use the new at-will for his basic attack (Awesome Blow for phase two, and Immortal Strike for phase three).

Aside from that, the only tricky part is keeping track of the dampeners; who activated which, how long it’s been down, and what # its currently at, but there is a detailed explanation for using 1d4’s to figure this out, and it works great.

They already know the story and don’t want to help:

Fool! You’re not supposed to let them know what’s going on until they’ve already gotten in too deep! I’d run the encounter as a frantic, “hurry hurry hurry, let’s go” kind of adventure, so they think time is of the essence and don’t have the downtime to consider every angle. It’s also worth not revealing the story of Coltaris until after Cragos has been defeated and the shield has been brought back up—the Background section is for you, the DM, not your players; they shouldn’t know the details until you tell them.

I’m not sure where to go from here:

There are a few obvious options for continuing the adventure:

- The players seek to liberate the dragon Coltaris from the city.
- The players sympathize with the city and seek to destroy Colytariaz before she finally manages to breach the city.
- Cragos could survive and become a nemesis to the party with a special grudge for their having defeated him in combat.
- The players could find out the truth about Coltaris and the city, and the elves try to kill them to hide their terrible secret.

This encounter blows:

This is an encounter I ran for my group, and I wasn’t sure if it was too complicated to put on the site, but wanted to try something new. It might take a little while, but I believe it all comes together nicely and the explanations are adequate. As always, I appreciate any input or feedback. Thanks!

