

# THE PERILOUS PACT

A 4-6 HOUR STANDALONE ADVENTURE



A poor man makes a deal for power and wealth in the world's greatest roleplaying game.

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# INTRODUCTION

Greetings! Welcome to Waterdeep, where you will uncover a story of deceit. A struggle for power leads a poor man to make a deal with a devil who seeks to unleash hell into the heart of Waterdeep itself.

This adventure is designed for **a party of three to six 3rd to 5th level characters**, and is optimised for four 4th level characters. Characters beyond this level range will not find the encounters challenging and would require work in order to update the encounters to be relevant.

## ADJUSTING THIS ADVENTURE

Throughout the adventure there are recommendations for increasing certain challenges in order to create a more difficult adventure for experienced adventurers, or those groups where parties are higher than the recommended level. If you are running a party with more players than the recommended group size, it would also be advisable to increase the size of most encounters throughout the adventure in order to present a more enjoyable challenge.

It is beneficial to plan these adjustments out before running the game. Throughout the adventure there will be sidebar recommendations provided to adjust the difficulty of certain encounters. If there is no sidebar then it is **not recommended** to adjust this particular encounter.

To know if you should consider adjusting the difficulty of this mission, please consult the table below. To calculate your average party level, first sum up the level of all characters in the party before dividing by the number of characters (rounding .5 or greater up; .4 or less down).

Average Party Level	Number of Adventurers	Mission Difficulty
3	3	Very Hard
3	4-5	Hard
3	6+	Easy
4	3-5	Recommended
4	6+	Easy
5	3-4	Recommended
5	5+	Easy

## BEFORE PLAY AT THE TABLE

Before you run this adventure, consider the following:

- Read through the adventure thoroughly, taking notes of aspects you think will interest your players or that you would like to expand on during the game. This could be tactics you would like for the NPCs to take during a combat, to social encounters you would like to expand on. Appendix A contains information on a variety of additional NPCs that you can use to flesh out any encounters that appeal to you as the DM.
- Pull together everything you will need to run the game. A notepad and pen is the main weapon of any DM and should be in easy reach, along with dice, battlemats and any miniatures you wish to use.
- Ask the players to provide you with relevant character information, such as name, race, class, languages spoken level and passive Wisdom (Perception). Also ask for any other pertinent information that you think will help you in the campaign.

## PLAYING THE DUNGEON MASTER

The role of the DM is the most important at the table. Your aim is to allow the players to have fun, and tell the story where they can be the heroes.

In order to do this, consider the following:

**You are in control.** This adventure is a baseline, a guide. As the DM you can add, adapt, adopt and amend as you see fit in order to offer the best experience for your players.

Push your players to the edge. All parties are different. Some are tactically acute with experienced players whereas others are full of new players who all want to charge in swinging. Whatever way your players go, make sure you challenge them, but with the opportunity to succeed. Every single player should have an opportunity to shine during the game.

**Help when you need to.** Sometimes, especially in longer sessions, player's can miss clues or struggle to catch on to something. Let the players struggle but before it gets frustrating offer a hint or clue, this can be in game as an assisting NPC to not remove immersion into the world. If the game starts moving too slow it is a sign you need to step in.

**Estimated Duration.** The estimated durations in this campaign are set for groups that stick to the story. If you are in a home setting and have nothing to rush, there is no reason why this campaign cannot take place over 2, or even 3 sessions, with sidequests and challenges filling the world.

**Have Fun.** This is for you as well as the players, make sure you enjoy it. But remember, your aim is not to 'win'

## ADVENTURE PRIMER

This section provides the adventures background, a list of prominent NPCs, an overview of the adventure in play, and a hook that you can use to introduce your party to the action.

### ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Not fulfilled with his lot in life, a foolish man by the name of Thod Nestlemucker has found an easy way to gain power, money and stature. He made a deal with an imp named Dreznaz who will gift Thod with everything he needs to gain access to the upper echelons of society in Waterdeep. All Thod will need to do in return is enact one favour to the imp. A favour that is about to be asked.

Thod, now going by the name of Brendan Burbridge, has ensconced himself into the noble hierarchy and announced his proposal to the beautiful heiress of the Dunstable fortune. Having fulfilled his side of the deal, Dreznaz is going to ask Thod to murder an elderly half-elf scholar by the name of Dorchraes Idontar.

Dorchraes has spent years studying Devils and the Nine Hells. During his study a portal to Avernus was opened which Dorchraes has blocked and is close to permanently sealing. If Dreznaz can construct the demise of Dorchraes before this happens the portal will be opened, allowing Zariel to send forth the devils to bring suffering and desolation to the Forgotten Realms.

### DEVILS

Devils are the definition of evil and tyranny. They exist to rule and conquer all mortal life, spreading the rule of the archdevils and forwarding their vile plans. Coming in all shapes and sizes, devils are an oppressive foe. Whilst some are strong and powerful, others are quick of tongue, using any encounter with a mortal being as an opportunity to turn them to their favour and further their cause.

### AVERNUS

The first layer of Hell is ruled over by the Archdevil Zariel. Avernus is a barren wasteland, which extends all the way to the cosmos with the sky being clear of stars, instead full of a choking smoke and glowing charred red.

Avernus is home to a variety of Devils, from Erinyes and Spined Devils to the more common Imps. During the Blood War, Avernus was home to countless battles and to this day the detritus from these can be found collected on the banks of the River Styx.

### MAJOR PLAYERS

This story focuses on the plight of Thod/ Brendan as the party discover what has brought him to this point and how to prevent what his actions have put in to motion. Whilst other minor characters may make an appearance throughout the campaign the most important characters are detailed below:

**Thod Nestlemucker/ Brendan Burbridge:** Thod was a poor man. With a hunched back, balding head and missing most his teeth the cobblers son had always wanted to escape the peasant life. One day upon reading a book in his deceased grandmothers belongings he found a way to unlock everything he had ever wanted. Reading the incantations on the page he summoned forth an imp from Avernus, first layer of hell.

The imp, Dreznaz, promised that he could allow Thod access to the elite of Waterdeep. All he would need would be one favour in the future, to be carried out immediately and without question. Thod agreed and so began his transformation. Taking the name Brendan Burbridge the imp provided the man with a new, visage. Standing 6ft. Tall and with striking blue eyes and blonde hair, Brendan now made heads turn as he walked down the street. Dreznaz made sure Brendan had all the wealth he would need to rise the social ranks, and dressed in fine attire he swiftly made a name for himself amongst the nobility. Within three months he was engaged to a beautiful girl by the name of Seraphina Dunstable, heiress to Favien Dunstable's milling fortune, and he was tipped a future leader of the Merchants Guild.

**Dreznaz:** An imp with a quick mouth and quicker mind, Dreznaz has set about this entire turn of events in order to best serve Zariel and open a door from Avernus to Waterdeep. He planted a tome with a fake incantation to summon him in Thod's home, knowing the simple man would not be able to resist. Upon being read out Dreznaz dropped his invisibility and played the part of summoned devil, manipulating Thod with ease.

With his Ruby coloured skin, dark leathery wings, and scorpion-like tail Dreznaz relies on his appearance to quell the mortal beings he encounters. If any act aggressively he is very cowardly and will flee quickly, trying to barter his way out of any dangerous situation

**Dorchraes Idontar:** A powerful half-elf mage in his time, Dorchraes has spent his life investigating and writing in depth tomes about the history, environment and denizens of Avernus. Feeling confident in his power, one fateful day Dorchraes opened a temporary portal to Avernus in his workshop. The portal failed to close as planned, since that day Dorchraes has spent every bit of his power to keep the portal sealed whilst researching a way to permanently close it.

### ADVENTURE OVERVIEW

To begin the adventure, the party will be approached by the father of Brendan's fiancée who is perturbed by the appearance of this mysterious stranger who has stolen his daughters heart.

**Part 1** - The adventurers will need to gain access to a ball where they can meet Brendan. During this encounter, Brendan will leave and they will have the opportunity to listen in on him speaking with Dreznaz - this is an opportunity for them to learn some clues relating to his history. If the party pursue Dreznaz he will escape and force them into an unwelcome encounter.

**Part 2** - The opportunity for further investigation from the leads they have, the party will learn what has happened between Brendan & Dreznaz, Brendan's true identity and the plan ahead.

**Part 3** - The party will need to stop Brendan from carrying out his mission, and then face off against Dreznaz and his devilish associates.

## ADVENTURE HOOK

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The adventurer's will be approached at an inn or similar location by a well dressed elderly noble being flanked by two bodyguards, it is obviously a person of notable importance. He introduces himself as Favien Dunstable. Favien is dressed in extremely expensive clothing that would have been fashionable twenty years ago in the city and speaks with more pauses than would reasonably be expected even for a man of ill health. His bodyguards are both Goliaths who tower over him,

He has come to you because he is concerned by the man who has recently become engaged to his daughter, Seraphina, and has heard of your recent exploits. The young man arrived in Waterdeep merely three months ago and has become toast of the town and made a big ruckus amongst the nobility. Young, handsome and wealthy he claims to have arrived from Baldur's Gate, but the nobles contacts in the city have never heard of him and he has avoided all questions of his past. The man's name is Brendan Burbridge and Favien would like you to investigate him, and if he is not as seems then drive him from Waterdeep to save his daughter from whatever fate would beset her.

He will reward the party appropriately and offer up to 500 gold, starting lower and negotiating up for their services. After agreeing the fee he will inform the party that Brendan and Seraphina will be attending a ball at Lord and Lady Ballinger's residence this evening, it is invite only but he is sure a party of their talents could easily gain access, one way or another.

## ADAPTING THE LOCATION

Although the setting for this campaign is Waterdeep, it is more than possible to run this campaign in its entirety in a different location in the forgotten realms, or in your own homebrew world.

The locations visited such as Lord and Lady Ballinger's Estate can be replaced with places that your adventurers know and love, or used as they are presented in this adventure, adding to world.

## PART 1 - THE BALLINGER'S BALL

*Estimated Duration: 1hr - 90 minutes*

Knowing that Brendan and Seraphina will be present at Lord & Lady Ballinger's Estate this evening, the party will need to find a way to secure access and speak with Brendan.

The Ballinger estate is located in the Castle Ward on the Street of Silver. It is a splendid estate obviously masterfully constructed several decades ago at the least.

There are two different approaches they can take to do this, either one is viable.

### OPTION ONE - WALK THROUGH THE FRONT DOOR

The party may attempt to obtain a legitimate invite to the ball. To do this they could seek to purchase, extort or intimidate a invite from someone already on the list.

The following items should be considered if this route is taken by the party:

- Do the names on the invite require amending? These are the elite of Waterdeep and will be recognisable
- Their attire should match that of the nobles
- If the invites are stolen, what would happen when the genuine owners arrive?

There are several locations around the estate where stealing an invite would be possible, bars, inns and carriage houses are all possible options.

After this the characters may be challenged at the door as they are not recognised. All weapons will need to be handed over, small weapons may be smuggled in but larger items will be confiscated and returned after the ball.

### OPTION TWO - INFILTRATION

The ball, whilst having security on the front door is relatively simple to infiltrate, mostly as it is not expected that anyone of great skill would try to break in.

There are two obvious points of entry the party could attempt that they can discover when they evaluate the options. These are:

- Upstairs windows located at the side of the house (15m off of the ground);
- Over the garden fence (8m high), and through the gardens to the rear entrance;

When doing this the party should be confronted by a series of three challenges from the below:

- A patrol of two Estate Guards - these can be avoided by scouting or stealth.
- A physical challenge of either a locked window or a high wall to scale.
- An onlooker should spot them and the party will be required to resolve the situation, either by bribery, persuasion or intimidation.

After either entering through the window or over the wall, once they are safely in the estates ground the party is approached by a set of guards who will inform them that no weaponry is allowed and that they will need to hand it in at the entrance. A party member may attempt to smuggle in a small weapon, but larger items will be confiscated and returned after the ball.

### THE BALLROOM

As you enter the ballroom you are awestruck that such glamour and excess could exist in a city such as Waterdeep. Where beggars sit penniless on every street corner and families starve every day as there is not enough food to go around.

Yet here there is gluttony and extravagance as is rarely seen, with a banquet fit for several kings and enough waiting staff that no drink will go untopped.

Despite this you immediately see Brendan. He is stood front and central of the elite of the city, all in rapturous admiration as he reels off another fantastical tale. Tall, blonde, attractive and well dressed you can see how he has attracted the attentions of all the ladies in town, and several of the men too. By his side is a slight girl with raven coloured hair and a radiant smile that beams as she wraps her arms around Brendan, this must be Seraphina.

Upon entering the ball the party will be accosted by multiple members of the gentry, including Lord & Lady Ballinger who will quiz the party about their who they are and why they are here, though as the nobles all want to appear in the know this will be easy to do.

The party are able to approach Brendan and Seraphina. Seraphina is under the effects of a powerful Charm spell and will be very doting and swooning unnecessarily over Brendan. Brendan himself will be overly polite and complimentary to the party, but will however try to avoid any difficult questions regarding his past. He will disclose the below:

- He comes from Baldur's Gate, and is the son of a powerful merchant (lie)
- His has always been wealthy, and can't imagine any other way of life (lie)
- He loves Seraphina dearly (true)
- He plans to take a seat at the head of the Merchants Guild (true)

The party will be able to make a DC15 Wisdom (insight) check to tell the lies from the truth. If pushed on any of the lies Brendan will attempt to part ways from the group.

If the party quiz any other members of the nobility about Brendan, they will receive very positive reviews. He has made an outstanding impression since his arrival in Waterdeep. A large amount of bachelorettes

in attendance are extremely jealous of Seraphina as Brendan is very in demand love interest.

## A COST UNFOLDS

After separating from the party Brendan will leave the party and head outside to the walled gardens. If the party follows him they will notice that he is speaking with someone. If they are trying not to be noticed and as such there are plenty of places where they can be overheard from.

The party will hear a voice they do not know, high pitched and raspy with a manic alertness:

“Now listen to me ‘Brendan’, you shall do as I say or you shall find your soul vanquished into the 9th layer of hell where Zariel himself will ensure an eternity of torture and despair. We have a DEAL. I took you from the dirt when you were a filth addled no-one called Thod, living on the Docks in a rat infested room over your dying cobblers. I gave you everything you could ever want, money, influence, love and power, and now it is time for you to pay your dues. Do what I ask or you will regret it for the rest of time.

You will forfeit your very soul and spend an eternity in Avernus. Buzzards will peck at your eyes, whilst scorpions sting you over and over. Spiders and insects will crawl all over you, entering every orifice, biting and scratching you until the pain is unbearable - and then they will keep going.

Do you understand THOD, this is not a bargain, this is not a request. You will do this for me NOW. You will keep your end of the deal and then you can go back to being Brendan. You have until the strike of Twelve Bells to complete this task or you will have failed me. Now go!”

The creature speaking is Dreznaz, upon completing his monologue he will cast invisibility causing him to disappear in the blink of an eye. He will depart the area rapidly.

If the party approach Brendan they will find him extremely flustered and he will attempt to flee the group. If the party attempt to stop him from doing so this should not be a struggle. When questioned Brendan will offer the following information up.

- Yes, his real name is Thod Nestlemucker
- He made a deal with a creature named Dreznaz in order to grant him a better life
- Dreznaz has just tasked him with murdering a Scholar by midnight this evening, he knows not his name but knows where to find him. He will not tell the party the location but will ask them for help to escape this deal.

If the party press him further and attempt to force more information out of Brendan then the following is also

available on completion of a DC20 Charisma (intimidation) or (persuasion) check, depending on the route taken:

- The scholar has sealed a portal to Avernus that Dreznaz wants to open.
- Dreznaz is an imp who is normally accompanied by a larger devil with a snakelike growths protruding from it's face that appear to move on their own. (This is a bearded devil, the party may recognise this if a character has knowledge or has encountered one before.)

Brendan will appear apologetic and ask the party to help him in his predicament. He will lead the party inside where he will call the guards and flee!

## ROLEPLAYING BRENDAN/ THOD

Capturing the nature of Brendan is crucial to getting the characters onto his side, despite what his intended actions are.

Brendan is torn up inside, he wants to do the right thing but knows that if he doesn't carry out Dreznaz instructions that he will be tortured for eternity and he will never see Seraphina again. Some key points to consider are:

- Brendan is a good person who made a mistake
- He truly loves Seraphina
- He does not understand the later effects his actions will have on people outside him and Seraphina.

As well as this, Brendan has been magically imbued with Charisma, looks and influence, consider:

- He makes people feel good about themselves, and will use just the right amount of flattery
- Brendan is used to everyone loving him so will speak to the party as though they are already close friends
- In a tight spot he will attempt to use money and promises to get his way





## PART 2 - BRENDAN FLEES

*Estimated Duration: 1 hour - 90 minutes*

As Brendan calls the guards the party will find themselves struggling to follow him as the crowds at the party will hinder them whilst allowing for his escape.

Following this, they then will find themselves in a tough encounter, made all the more challenging by the fact some of their weapons may still be at the ballroom.

### PLANNED ESCAPE

Brendan rushes out of the ballroom leaving the party in his stead. As the party are currently weaponless they can either:

- Pursue without collecting their weapons
- Collect their weapons then try and follow
- Split the party, one doing each task
- Leave him

Each of these options will result in the party running down an alleyway where they will be set upon by a number of Gargoyles. Brendan will have escaped and they can no longer pursue him

### OPTION ONE - IMMEDIATE PURSUIT

The party will fight their way through the crowds and pursue Brendan through the streets, this will be a relatively easy task as they can see him.

When they about to catch him up they will be set upon by a singular Gargoyle that Dreznaz has been animating.

The gargoyle will fight to the death and occasionally use 'Debris' to change the layout of the fight (see below).

### OPTION TWO - COLLECT WEAPONS

The party will need to try and follow Brendan's path. They will be able to do this by tracking him, or by

#### DEBRIS

Due to the nature of this fight, being an open area with a low number of tough enemies to make the fight more dynamic, the Gargoyles can use the Debris ability detailed below, in lieu of making an attack. This will allow for a changing battlefield as well as the Gargoyle to move slightly unpredictably. Add the below ability to the Gargoyles stat block:

**Debris (recharge 5-6):** The Gargoyle flies upwards, remaining airborne for this round (40ft). It throws D4 pieces of detritus at the party, each targeting a separate player. A player who is targeted suffers D4 damage. Add a piece of detritus to the board for each hit, it is difficult terrain.

asking citizens who he has passed.

Due to the delay in time Dreznaz will have been able to summon a second gargoyle to the fight, one will have the debris ability (see ability below).

### OPTION THREE - SPLIT PARTY

If the party decide to split up with some gathering the weapons and some following then follow option one above, with the following exceptions:

- After 3 rounds the remainder of the party arrives
- After 1 additional round a second Gargoyle flies down from the rooftops, this should act on a separate initiative step to the first,

### FURTHER QUESTIONING

With Brendan having escaped and the party needing to find him they must use the leads they have so far in order to track him down. The following pieces of information are available to find at the following locations.



## THOD'S HOUSE

Above the Cobblers, Nestlemuckers Sole, on Belnimbra's Street in the Dock Ward sits the place Brendan called home when he still answered to Thod. The Cobblers is boarded up and simple to gain entry to.

Squalid, decrepid and thoroughly miserable, the house above the Cobblers shop where Thod grew up shows the worst of the cities poverty. The walls are covered in thick, grimy green mould that throws spores into the room, sticking deep in your throats. What furniture that is present in the room is makeshift and been mended twenty times over. Filth covers every surface in the room, you feel the need to bathe having taken just a few steps inside.

The following information is available to find in this residence:

- The tome Dreznaz planted to trick Thod (see Appendix C - Handouts). This shows that Dreznaz had planned this from the start and Thod is simply a tool. It will reveal that the portal is in the Idontar workshop. The first handout (fig. 1) is illegible and should be passed to the party, it is written in Elvish and will require translation (fig. 2)
- A list of copious bills owed by the cobbler, and a

## MOVING THE CLUES

Players can be surprising in their actions, but some of the clues located at Brendan's residence and Nestlemucker's Sole are crucial in allowing the play to continue. As such if the players are investigating elsewhere it is possible that they find these, for example:

- Seraphina remains at the ball if they return there, or is at her Father's residence.
- The Tome is found amongst a cache of Brendan's belongings.

ledger showing they were losing money is hidden in a secret drawer in the oak bureau DC15 Intelligence (investigation) check

- Thod's childhood diary with a list of his dreams, which are to be rich, to marry a beautiful girl and to live a quiet life. This will be found on a successful DC15 Wisdom (perception) check in a pile of hay used for a bed in the corner

## BRENDAN'S HOUSE

Brendan now lives in a fine house in the North Ward district. Embarrassed that Brendan abandoned her at the ball they will find Seraphina crying in the parlour, she will allow them to enter when they arrive.

Opulence and excess is proudly on show in Brendan's sizeable townhouse. The parlour is richly decorated in lavish tapestries with dark wood furniture finely accented with gleaming golden ornaments. Seraphina holds back her tears as she walks slowly to a high backed chair and takes a seat, raising a full goblet of wine to her lips. Her eyes full of sorrow and panic, being separated from Brendan for even this short a time is obviously causing her distress.

Seraphina will have been crying but will still only speak of Brendan in an unnaturally positive light and will not admit they he could ever have done, or be planning to do anything that is not for good. This is the effect of the charm spell. Seraphina will when questioned let on that she believes she has known Brendan for years and that they are finally to marry, she believes he has been in Waterdeep this entire time. A dispel magic spell will remove this charm feature, if used Seraphina will turn against Brendan - saying he is a Sorcerer and his Imp familiar did this to her.

Seraphina will let on during discussions that Brendan said he was heading to do some work in the **Castle Ward**.

## LOCATING THE SCHOLAR

When the party have the knowledge that they are looking for **Idontar** (from the note) in the **Castle Ward** (from Seraphina) this will allow them to locate Dorchraes. This information should be easily available from any person living in the Castle Ward who knows Dorchraes Idontar is, he is extremely well known in the area as being an eccentric scholar with a large workshop based in the university.

## PART 3 - DORCHRAES WORKSHOP

*Estimated Duration: 45 minutes - 1 hour*

The party will arrive at Dorchraes's workshop located near the university, in the Castle Ward, just behind Brendan. Here they will have to protect Dorchraes whilst he closes the portal to the ninth layer of hell permanently.

### THE BARRIER FROM GOOD AND EVIL

With the time approaching midnight the party arrive just in time to see Brendan entering the workshop. On a successful DC10 Wisdom (perception) check the party will see a knife glimmering in his belt.

Brendan walks up to the door, opens it and walks straight in, unhindered - leaving the door open behind him.

When the party approach the opening they are met by a large stone door frame engraved with an elven poem of a battle between angels and demons. The open door is heavy oak and carved with images of the blood wars. Any Good or Evil aligned characters are unable to enter, though any neutrally aligned character is free to enter. If the neutral member passes through they can disable the magical mechanism by pulling a lever inside the door. The lever is then stuck until an incantation is uttered by Dorchraes.

If a good aligned character attempts to enter then read the following text:

As you attempt to walk through the door frame a golden glow flashes across the opening and you are stopped violently in your path. Memories from your life sweep over you in an moment. Every instance of you helping someone in need or performing an altruistic act floods your heart. You feel honorable, brave and proud - but you can pass no further.

If a evil aligned character attempts to enter then read the following text:

As you go to step through the door frame you are thrust backwards. The opening flashes a deep, blood red and an audible crackle wrecks through the air around you. You feel violent moments from your life stream into your consciousness. The scream of every tortured victim on your watch rings through your ears and the face of every murdered soul passes your eyes. But for you this is nothing new, a sense of accomplishment lies where a normal person would feel despair.

In order to pass through the door the party will need to find a neutrally aligned person to enter first, disabling the trap or find a way to disable it at a distance.

The lever inside is located on the far wall, about 15 feet away from the players, and about 3 feet off the ground. Some options the players have, but not an exhaustive list, are:

- Lasso over the lever with some rope and pulling it down
- Sending a neutrally aligned animal companion/ familiar to pull the lever
- Use Mage Hand to pull the lever

Once the lever is pulled the party will be unable to restore it to it's original position, a DC10 Intelligence (arcana) check will show that this is because a specific protection spell is required when doing this in order to set the barrier up.

### ENTER THE WORKSHOP

At the top of the stairs the party are stunned for a second at the scene that stands before them.

You enter the study to see Brendan standing over a gaunt old half elven man. Brendan is weeping as he holds a blade shining in the light over his head, ready to stab down. The man is silent, lay on the floor below Brendan with a cold acceptance in his eyes.

The room is illuminated in a bold red as light emanates from a stone sculpture at the back of the room. A rippling liquid wraps over an opening, lapping back and forth relentlessly. The pushing out towards the centre of the room but stopping after a few inches as though some kind of barrier is blocking it from moving any closer.

The party will have the opportunity to speak Brendan down from murdering Dorchraes. The scholar will then inform the party that he is seconds away from closing the portal. Upon announcing this Dreznaz will appear having followed the party, previously the barrier prevented him from entering but the party having been lowered by the party.

Dreznaz will command his entourage to attack immediately. The below make up the Devil contingent:

- Dreznaz
- A single Bearded Devil
- 6 Lemures

During the fight Dreznaz will stay back and begin the fight by using his Wand of Sanctuary and will try and avoid being targeted using a combination of invisibility, shapeshifting and moving away. Whilst doing this he will command his Devils to kill Dorchraes.

The Lemures and Bearded Devil will attempt to move towards Dorchraes, the Lemures unrelentingly whilst the Bearded Devil will stop to attack enemies in his path, fighting his way through.

Whilst this is occurring, Dorchraes will spend his actions attempting to complete his ritual on the portal. Closing the portal requires Dorchraes requires 3 successful DC25 Intelligence (arcana) checks, he has a +10 bonus to this. Upon completion the portal will be completed and the devils will turn their attention to defeating those who foiled them.

If the Bearded Devil & Lemures are defeated then Dreznaz will attempt to bargain for his life. He will offer to free Brendan from his deal if the party will let him go, he will also offer the party his wand of sanctuary to sweeten the deal. If they accept this is the 'Cursed Rod of Sanctuary', if they accuse him of it being cursed he will remove the curse before handing it over meaning the party will gain 'Rod of Sanctuary'.

## INCREASING THE DIFFICULTY

There are several options to alter the difficulty of this encounter:

- Add in an additional Bearded Devil;
- Increase/ Lower the number of lemures;

**Portal Disruption!** The portal can be unstable and can be used to lower or increase the difficulty also

- To lower the difficulty, each time Dorchraes makes a successful ritual check the Portal blasts with energy dealing D6 damage to all demons.
- To increase the difficulty, each time Dorchraes makes a failed ritual check all non-devil characters (excluding Dorchraes) within 30ft. of the portal are hit with energy pulling through from Avernus and suffer D6 damage (DC15 Dexterity saving throw for half).



- A. Portal & Idontar Dorchraes
- B. Bearded Devil
- C. Dreznaz
- D. Lemure

## RESOLUTION: DEALING WITH THOD

Dreznaz upon fleeing will lift all his magics upon Brendan once again returning him to being plain old Thod.

Having seen the crime Thod had intended to carry out the party are free to enact their own punishment or hand him over to the authorities.

### EXPERIENCE (XP: 870 EA.)

Total up all combat experience earned for defeated foes, and divide by the number of characters present in the combat. For non-combat experience, the rewards are listed per character.

Name of Foe	XP Per Foe
Bearded Devil	700
Dreznaz	200
Lemure	10
Gargoyle	450
Part 1: Gaining Entry	200
Part 2: Gathering Information	200

If you are instead choosing to use a Milestone XP system, the end of this encounter should represent a significant part of a level.

## TREASURE

Returning to Favien the party will be rewarded as previously agreed. He will thank them graciously for their efforts.

Favien represents a good opportunity to extend this one shot, offering the party more work in and around the city.

### CURSED WAND OF SANCTUARY

*Wand, rare (requires attunement)*

This wand has 3 charges. While holding it, you can expend 1 charge as an action to cast the sanctuary spell from it (save DC 10). The wand regains 1d3 expended charges daily at dawn.

**Curse.** When used for the first time this item latches onto the caster cursing them. You have disadvantage on all Wisdom saving throws. It is never wise to make deals with the devil.

You may not give this weapon away, however you may make a deal with someone where this is payment on your side, you cannot let the other party know of this. This may not sell this item traditionally. You can break the curse in the usual ways.

### WAND OF SANCTUARY

*Wand, rare (requires attunement)*

This wand has 3 charges. While holding it, you can expend 1 charge as an action to cast the sanctuary spell from it (save DC 10). The wand regains 1d3 expended charges daily at dawn.

## APPENDIX A: CHARACTERS

Main Characters:

Name	Location	Description
Brendan Burbridge	Various	Standing 6ft. tall and with striking blue eyes and blonde hair. Wearing an opulent evening suit and not a hair out of place. Speaks with a deep strong voice.
Dorchraes Idontar	Dorchraes Study	Pale, bald and obviously very ill. Dorchraes has thick glasses on a sharp ridged nose and the air of a headmaster.
Favien Dunstable	Inn	Favien is dressed in extremely expensive clothing that would have been fashionable twenty years ago in the city and speaks with more pauses than would reasonably be expected even for a man of ill health
Lady Eliza Ballinger	Ballinger Estate	Wearing a tight green dress, Lady Ballinger has a crazed laugh and can be heard all over the estate when she gets excited talking.
Lord Rupert Ballinger	Ballinger Estate	With a fine evening suit, the silver haired Lord Ballinger is a polite and charming host.
Seraphina Dunstable	Various	Petite raven haired human female, 21 years of age. Very attractive, well spoken and polite. Has a large heart necklace than seems overly gaudy for her modest taupe dress.
Thod	Dorchraes Study	Has a hunched back, balding head and missing most his teeth. Smells musty with old ripped and torn clothes.

Spare NPCs (for use throughout the adventure):

Name	Gender/ Race	Age	Description
Keenwolf	Male Goliath	40	Tribal tattoos over his face
Jake Dralleigh	Human Male	22	Stuck up nose and pointy features
Gimen Sparkspinner	Female Gnome	140	Wears a bright green dress and shining jewelry
Elton Snowdon	Male Human	60	A red nose and dark bagged eyes
Elbert Netley	Male Human	18	Smells of alcohol and pipe smoke
Abbie Bunce	Female Human	25	Pretty with a tattoo of a flower on her lower arm
Mya Godwin	Female Human	42	Tall and strongly built wearing work clothes
Odia Blankhead	Female Dwarf	201	Carries a large bag that jingles as she walks
Brisso Redguard	Female Dwarf	111	Has the symbol of Helm displayed prominently

## APPENDIX B: CREATURE STATISTICS

### BEARDED DEVIL

Medium fiend (devil), lawful evil

**Armor Class** 13 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 52 (8d8+16)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	15 (+2)	15 (+2)	9 (-1)	11 (+0)	11 (+0)

**Saving Throws** Str +5, Con +4, Wis +2

**Damage Resistances** cold; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks not made with silvered weapons

**Damage Immunities** fire, poison

**Condition Immunities** poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 10

**Languages** Infernal, telepathy 120 ft.

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

**Devil's Sight.** Magical darkness doesn't impede the devil's darkvision.

**Magic Resistance.** The devil has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

**Steadfast.** The devil can't be frightened while it can see an allied creature within 30 feet of it.

#### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The devil makes two attacks: one with its beard and one with its glaive.

**Beard.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 minute. While poisoned in this way, the target can't regain hit points. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

**Glaive.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 8 (1d10 + 3) slashing damage. If the target is a creature other than an undead or a construct, it must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or lose 5 (1d10) hit points at the start of each of its turns due to an infernal wound. Each time the devil hits the wounded target with this attack, the damage dealt by the wound increases by 5 (1d10). Any creature can take an action to stanch the wound with a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Medicine) check. The wound also closes if the target receives magical healing.

### DREZNAZ

Tiny fiend (devil, shapechanger), lawful evil

**Armor Class** 13

**Hit Points** 10 (3d4+3)

**Speed** 20 ft., fly 40ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	17 (+3)	13 (+1)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)

**Skills** Deception +4, Insight +3, Persuasion +4, Stealth +5  
**Damage Resistances** cold; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks not made with silvered weapons

**Damage Immunities** fire, poison

**Condition Immunities** poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 11

**Languages** Infernal, Common

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP)

**Shapechanger.** The imp can use its action to polymorph into a beast form that resembles a rat (speed 20 ft.), a raven (20 ft., fly 60 ft.), or a spider (20 ft., climb 20 ft.), or back into its true form. Its statistics are the same in each form, except for the speed changes noted. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

**Devil's Sight.** Magical darkness doesn't impede the imp's darkvision.

**Magic Resistance.** The imp has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

#### ACTIONS

**Sting (Bite in Beast Form).** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 11 Constitution saving throw, taking 10 (3d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

**Invisibility.** The imp magically turns invisible until it attacks or until its concentration ends (as if concentrating on a spell). Any equipment the imp wears or carries is invisible with it.

### DORCHRAES IDONTAR

Medium humanoid (half elf), neutral good

**Armor Class** 10

**Hit Points** 18 (3d8+3)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
7 (-2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	6 (-2)	12 (+1)

**Skills** Arcana +10

**Languages** Abyssal, Common, Draconic, Elvish, Infernal, Primordial

**Challenge** 1/8 (25 XP)

#### ACTIONS

**Unarmed.** *Melee Attack:* -2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d4-2) bludgeoning damage

## GARGOYLE

Medium elemental, chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 58 (7d8+21)

**Speed** 30 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)	6 (-2)	10 (+0)	7 (-2)

**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks not made with adamantite weapons

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** exhaustion, petrified, poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

**Languages** Terran

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

**False Appearance.** While the gargoyle remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from an inanimate statue.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The gargoyle makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its claws.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) slashing damage.

## ESTATE GUARD

Medium humanoid, lawful good

**Armor Class** 16 (chain shirt, shield)

**Hit Points** 11 (2d8+2)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)

**Skills** Perception +2

**Senses** passive Perception 12

**Languages** Common

**Challenge** 1/8 (25 XP)

**Raise the Alarm.** If attacked the Estate Guard will attempt to call for help. The Estate Guard will spend their bonus action to sound the alarm, resulting in a 50% chance for another Estate Guard to appear at the beginning of the next round.

### ACTIONS

**Spear.** *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft. or ranged 20/60ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d6+1) piercing damage, or 5 (1d8+1) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

## LEMURE

Medium fiend (devil), lawful evil

**Armor Class** 7

**Hit Points** 13 (3D8)

**Speed** 15 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	5 (-3)	11 (+0)	1 (-5)	11 (+0)	3 (-4)

**Damage Resistances** cold

**Damage Immunities** fire, poison

**Condition Immunities** charmed, frightened, poisoned Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 10

**Languages** understands Infernal but can't speak

**Challenge** 0 (10 XP)

**Devil's Sight.** Magical darkness doesn't impede the lemure's darkvision.

**Hellish Rejuvenation.** A lemure that dies in the Nine Hells comes back to life with all its hit points in 1d10 days unless it is killed by a good-aligned creature with a bless spell cast on that creature or its remains are sprinkled with holy water.

### ACTIONS

**Fist.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 2 (1d4) bludgeoning damage.

## THOD/ BRENDAN

Medium humanoid (human), neutral

**Armor Class** 12

**Hit Points** 11 (2d8+2)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	6 (-2)	16 (+3)

**Skills** Persuasion +5, Performance +5

**Languages** Common

**Challenge** 1/8 (25 XP)

### ACTIONS

**Dagger.** *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d4+2) piercing damage



APPENDIX C: HANDOUTS

ORCIS NFOCIC IONIB 15 3LIEBOS DRFE OFCS FDN OAIN CISO  
ALLFFS E3 IENBO CIORCEECIRD SFFLAL E3 OCICR DCINOCINI  
COCI ALLSFF ERDA 15TFF NTSYNEONE NDA 3ILVEEE TFFTA  
CIORRFE CINCIOBOTSIBO F EDLVI OT OCICR N3DOLIC

LLTETI DO C3IO OAINFE COCI RFE REIDCIFN TFFSI OT SLL E  
CICRORLFS TNO

SELVRFAC AFFIT OCICR LPEFF ECI ILCAL CIFNI NCRTE TO  
FFET OIFATYRD SDCSTC DFN NOEF FITE RT3LOF OT CIFERN

V5

T57C CRTET SFFCI TTNNAIICFON FND I FASLFFL 3E IAINN

DRFSRDS

FIG. 1. Illegible Translation of the relevant entry in the Tome

YOUR YOUNG MIND IS SIMPLE, DEAR BOY,  
AND NOW YOU SHALL BE MINE. YOUR  
GREED SHALL BE YOUR UNDOING.

YOU SHALL READ THIS NONSENSE AND BE-  
LIEVE THAT YOU ARE SUMMONING A DEVIL  
TO YOUR BIDDING. LITTLE DO YOU KNOW  
YOU ARE READING THIS TO SELL YOURSELF  
INTO  
SLAVERY!

WITH YOUR HELP WE WILL GAIN ENTRY TO  
THE IDONTAR STUDY AND OPEN THE PORTAL  
TO AVERNUS.

JUST UTTER THIS "INCANTATION" AND I SHALL  
BE WAITING.

DREZNAZ

FIG.2. Elvish Translation of the entry in the Tome