

D&D

ADVENTURERS LEAGUE

HORDES OF THAR:

THE BLOODY CRESCENT



Adventurers



Anonymous

1 HOUR ADVENTURE WITH TIER 2 CHARACTERS
Optimized for APL 8 | By: Lance Tan & Smimo

CC-EPI01-02



Hordes of Thar: The Bloody Crescent

An Adventurers Anonymous Manila Adventure



Melvaunt's guards are found dead in the barracks, the mark of an orcish murder god splattered on their walls. While the assassins are elusive, the Emerald Enclave has found a way to track them to their shadowy hold in the form of a strange hermit. Will the adventurers bring light to the situation or be lost in the dark?

A Four-Hour Adventure for Tier 2 Characters. Optimized for APL 8| by Lance Tan and Smimo

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Adventure Primer

This adventure is designed for **three to seven 5 10-level characters** and is optimized for **five characters with an average party level (APL) of 8**. Characters outside this level range cannot participate in this adventure.

This adventure occurs in the outskirts of Melvaunt.

***Author's Note:** Due to the nature of this module's mechanics concerning vision, it is highly recommended but not required that it be played with a mat to represent the adventurers.

Furthermore, this adventure was designed to challenge your players to use their wits and ingenuity to solve the problems and defeat their foes with the environment stacked against them.

BACKGROUND

Thar is an inhospitable wasteland ravaged by various humanoid tribes who are constantly at war with one another. Most prominent of these are the powerful and savage orcish tribes that fight tooth and nail for whatever scarce resources are available to them. As though by the design of the orcish gods themselves, the birth rate of orcs has increased exponentially over the past few generations, causing a rapid increase in the most prominent tribes and the addition of various new tribes.

Three months ago, the two largest orcish tribes, the Howling Thunders led by Brogug the Stormlord and the Wyvern Breakers led by Thork Fleshrender engaged each other in the largest turf war seen in the past few decades. Their war spanned several battles over hundreds of miles stretching from the River Thent to the edge of the Highfells. After several bloody encounters, Brogug towered victoriously over the broken corpse of Thork. With their leader dead, Brogug was able to subjugate the rest of the Wyvern Breakers under his banner.

Brogug swore to unite the various orcish tribes and go on a vicious warpath in the lands beyond Thar.

Once upon a time, the wretched and ugly orc known as Gnott made a pact with a hag, trading his loyalty for beauty. The hag granted him his wish, turning him into a vampire. Though beautiful beyond compare, Gnott was unable to see his own reflection.

Cursing her name, **Gnott** set out to join Warchief Brogug's growing force, serving as his avatar of Shargaas. After establishing his home base in the shadowy demiplane of Gehenna, the vain chieftain orchestrates assassinations on Melvaunt's guardsmen with impunity.

Overview

The adventure's story is spread over **four parts** and takes approximately **4 hours** to play. The adventure begins with a Call to Action scene. If you're planning to play the entire adventure at once, you only need to introduce the Call to Action once. However, if you plan to play them over several sessions, you'll want to revisit the **Call to Action** each time you play.

Part 1: TITA MALAS (Call to Action). Khorgol of the Emerald Enclave sends the adventurers to meet with his ally, Tita Malas. The party is sent over to a small hovel in the outskirts of Melvaunt where she was last seen. Tita Malas briefs the adventurers on the last known location of the orcish chieftain, Gnott. She provides the party with a lantern of fey light, which will allow them to navigate a lair veiled in magical darkness.

Part 2: THE NIGHT BELOW. The adventurers are sent into a network of caves which slowly intertwines with a pocket dimension steeped in magical darkness. With only the Lantern of Fey Light to shed light for them, they must navigate the temple's many shadowy foes and deadly traps.

Part 3. THE PRICE OF BEAUTY. Upon reaching the lowest layer of the temple, the adventurers enter the orc chieftain's lair in the depths of the Night Below to find that he is far more than a simple chieftain.

Part 4. CONCLUSION. Tita Malas thanks the adventurers for slaying the warlord Gnott, breaking the Bloodmoon Tribe's leadership and involvement in the larger orc horde. Only time will tell how the adventurers' actions steer the fate of the battles to come.

Adventure Hooks

Faction Requests. The threat to Melvaunt is quite dire and the various factions have been issued a call to arms. All able bodied adventurers are promised a reward for dealing with the one responsible for butchering the city guardsmen.

Emerald Enclave. Members of the Enclave are to serve at the behest of a Master of the Wild. The Enclave believes that the orcs of Thar have become quite active as of late, and that the nearby city of Melvaunt might bear the brunt of any plans that come of it.

Citizen of Melvaunt. The City of Melvaunt is under lockdown due to the death of one its sergeants. The leadership of the city have sounded a call to arms from all able bodied citizens who are also competent adventurers.

White Hand of Death. If the adventurers played the first part of this adventure, CCC EPI01-01: The White Hand of Death, then they find themselves embroiled in Melvaunt's plight as it struggles to contain the chaos following the plague.

Adventure Flowchart

This section provides a basic understanding of not only the flow of the adventure, but also the outline of the different paths that your players may take in reaching their stated objective.



Part 1: Tita Malas

Estimated Duration: 20 minutes

A. The Balete Tree

Over the past few tendays, word has spread throughout the Moonsea Region of the deaths of several of Melvaunt's finest. Many of these were members of the City Watch who were found murdered in their houses.

A call to arms has been sounded by the Emerald Enclave to investigate these killings. Evidence has emerged linking these murders to the recent outbreak of the White Rot, a disease that would have culled the population of the City of Swords had it not been for the efforts of brave adventurers.

Those who answer the call are asked to find Tita Malas, who lives in a Balete Tree due southwest in the outskirts of Melvaunt. Sitting on top of a hill is a distinctly beautiful grove. Streaks of daylight shine through the tree's many vines whose shade creates a beautiful kaleidoscopic pattern.

Sitting just beneath the tree is a young woman who bears a savage regality about her. Alongside her is a brawny half-orc with a stag antlered helm. She greets the adventurers with a curt nod. "I am Tita Malas, and this is my colleague, Khorgol. What can we humble servants of nature do for you?"

Area Information

Light. The sun is shining in the summer sky. Not a cloud in sight.

Sounds. The sounds of birds singing and the wind blowing through the trees grace this serene grove.

Call to Action

A call to arms has been sounded by the Emerald Enclave to aid Melvaunt against a series of gruesome murders by Orcish assassins of the Bloodmoon Tribe.

The adventurers are invited to sit with them under the Balete Tree to share in some tea. Tita Malas invites them to introduce themselves. Once pleasantries have been exchanged, she and Khorgol move on to filling the adventurers in on the matter at hand.

What Tita Malas knows:

- Tita Malas presents herself as a kind and warm soul, offering to aid the adventurers in their quest to bring the orcs to justice.
- Using her druidic magic, she is able to create a means for them to strike at the heart of the Chieftain's lair.
- The Chieftain's lair is located in the fourth layer of Gehenna, Krangath. It is a cave with frigid cold temperatures and is **completely engulfed in magical darkness.**
- When asked how she has any history with the Chieftain, she says that she and he are bound by 'old wounds,' implying that they have faced off before. Tita Malas lies about being ambushed by the orc Chieftain, Gnott the Harbinger, stating that she was the sole survivor of her group of Autumnreavers (this is a rank in the Emerald Enclave). Swearing to lay her friends to rest, she was biding her time until the evil orc would show himself once again.

What Khorgol knows:

- At the scene of every murder is the symbol of Shaargas, the orcish god of murder, a crescent moon intersected by a grimacing skull. Khorgol finds it strange though, for Shaargas' servants usually act with more discretion.
- The latest victim's name is Sergeant Conner of the Melvaunt's City Watch. He has served for many years, and is no slouch in a fight. Other deaths were

Privates, killed either while on patrol or in their own beds. All of them died from vicious stab wounds to their necks.

- Khorgol had been there during the outbreak of the White Rot and discovered that a tribe of orcs had been poisoning a major well in Melvaunt's town square. Among the Enclave, he finds himself responsible for investigating the matter regarding his fellow Orcbloods running amok in the Moonsea Region.
- With the help of Tita Malas, he found that these assassins of the Bloodmoon Tribe were using strange shadow magic to move to and from the plane of Gehenna.
- If asked why he doesn't come along, he says that there is another matter he must attend to regarding rumors in the nearby Cormanthor Forest.

Roleplaying Tita Malas

Tita Malas is a member of the Emerald Enclave with a dark secret. She is actually a hag who delights in playing tricks in the form of twisted favors. The adventurers are not supposed to know she is a hag at this point. In terms of appearance, she is a young tan-skinned woman with brown eyes and black hair. Tita Malas presents herself with a feigned serenity and a soft countenance that belies her sadistic and evil nature. Those who doubt her words may find that something is slightly off via an Insight Check (DC 25).

She has Nystul's Magic Aura cast on her to hide her fiendish nature. Those who check find that she seems to be a regular human.

Roleplaying Khorgol Ul-Gorgosh

The half-orc Khorgol is a high ranking member of the Emerald Enclave who wears a black wolf pelt. He stands roughly over six feet tall with a strong build. Raised in the Savage North by his now extinct orcish tribe, he

turned to the life of adventuring before starting a tribe of his own. His primary goal is to maintain the power equilibrium in Thar. He has a gruff no nonsense attitude, wearing a scowl most of the time. The objective is of utmost importance, and he is not afraid of knocking heads to get things done.

Once the adventurers are ready to proceed, Tita Malas reaches into a ray of sunlight that has kissed the grove's floor and grounds it into a dense sphere. She then breathes into it before placing it into a green lantern that glows a dim ephemeral green magical light.

The Lantern of Feylight is presented to the party. It is the only one of its kind, and she warns them not to lose it. Should they need to restore its light, they may use some of their energy to light it up again (see Lantern of Feylight section below).

Tita Malas then knocks against the Balet Tree three times. At first, nothing happens. Before any of the adventurers question her actions however, the tree reveals a winding staircase into the dark underbelly of the tree. The adventurers descend into The Night Below.

The Lantern of Feylight

Barring the party having the means to create a light source that bypasses magical darkness, the Lantern of Feylight will be their only means of seeing their surroundings. The lantern sheds a 20ft of dim light in all directions.

The lantern is with the adventurers only for the duration of the module, it loses its magical properties and returns to being a regular lantern.

The lantern has 30HP. If it drops to 0HP, the light goes out. Player characters may spend their hit dice to restore 10hp per hit die.

Part 2: The Night Below

Estimated Duration: 160 minutes

Setting Information

This section describes any features that are common throughout a location, below. Exceptions should be conveyed under an Area Information entry in specific areas.

Ceilings. The cavern is 40ft high.

Light. There is no light in this place. The DM must note that the entirety of the cavern is covered in **magical darkness**.

Sound. The cavern is filled with an eerie silence.

Weather. The cavern is cold, a bitter cold that seeps into the blood.

Krangath, The Fourth Layer of Gehenna

The Darkness of Gehenna

As mentioned in the Setting Information section, the rest of the adventure will take place in complete and total magical darkness. This darkness suppress any light from magical items and magical spells to 20 feet dim light.

The darkness holds some dangers however, as entering it without a light source allows a Shadow Assassin (or a Shadow if the adventure is set to Very Weak or Weak) to take root unto a characters shadow. They register as undead, and defend themselves when attacked, but are otherwise undetectable until they spring up to kill the adventurers in the final battle. Note that Shadow Assassin (or Shadow) creatures will only latch unto adventurers at the Offal Pit or beyond.

Chilling Cold

When the characters reach the cavern, each must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or suffer one level of exhaustion. Characters who fail this saving throw by 5 or more suffer two levels of exhaustion. These levels of exhaustion can only be removed by taking a long rest in a warm, dry environment. Characters wearing clothing appropriate to extreme cold weather or those who are otherwise resistant to cold damage make this check with advantage.

Volcanic Remains

The temperature is far below freezing that the acid rain has long since frozen into ice. If a character lights a torch or casts a spell that emits heat, the ice underneath them creates an acidic puddle. Characters who step on the puddle will have their footgear melted, and those stepping on the puddle with their bare feet will need to succeed a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or take 2d6 acid damage, half on save.

A. The Mirror Puzzle

This section describes any features that are common throughout a location, below. Exceptions should be conveyed under an Area Information entry in specific areas.

Ceilings. The cavern is a dome, 60ft high, 60ft radius.

Sound. The cavern is filled with an eerie silence.

Temperature. The cavern is cold, a bitter cold that seeps into the blood.

From what little light could be gleamed, the adventurers see familiar faces walking toward them. Their reflections stare back in equal bewilderment.

A large mirror is lodged unto the wall at the end of the path, looming over the cavern. However, it does not take long for the mirror to reveal its eccentricity. Passed a certain point, the path seems to differ, leading further down into the lair.

The Mirror of Shaargas

The 30ft by 30ft mirror barring the way is a magical door devised by Shaargas to prevent those who refuse to walk into shadow from entering. Those who attempt to walk through bump into their mirror images.

Any attack or damage done to the mirror images deals damage to the original. Any *area of effect* damages all those reflected in the mirror.

Reward players who come up with creative ways to bypass the door. The usual ways to bypass the door that we could think of are:

- ❖ Covering the mirror from the Lantern of Feylight's glow, thus not creating a mirror image to bump into
- ❖ Turning a character invisible.

Important notes about the mirror:

- ❖ The ideal solution is to cover the Lantern of Feylight from the mirror while keeping the adventurers in the light.
- ❖ Teleporting through the mirror does not work in bypassing the mirror
- ❖ The mirror cannot be broken or damaged. It is immune to all kinds of damage and cannot be detached from the dungeon
- ❖ Ethereal characters still create a reflection and thus cannot pass through

P1. The First Cave Painting

Just around the bend in the hallway beyond the mirror is a crude cave painting depicting a wretched looking orc like humanoid with pale white skin, looking at its own reflection in a pool. A tree with a dense crown of leaves looms over him. The face of the orc is scratched off.

B. The Offal Pit

Map for this location is to be found in **Appendix 3a**.

The descent into the Chieftain's lair underneath the Balete tree is precarious. Jagged rock formations are illuminated by the Lantern of Feylight, a beacon in the dark. Bloody red moons mark the cave walls in various stages of the lunar cycle. The words "*I am beautiful. I am not*" and "**DAMN THAT WOMAN**" also mark the walls. Mirror shards are scattered all over the floor, seemingly broken in a violent fashion.

A fetid stench wafts through the air. The smell of refuse and decay overpower any other scent in the room. Shining some light into the room reveals a refuse pit.

There is an unsettling silence that places grim emphasis on each foot step. A soft breeze from behind caresses the rocky walls forming a whisper that breaks into a bleak howl. There is nothing in the distance beyond the light of the lantern. Only darkness.

The party enters a winding cavern which mercifully opens into a straight pathway.

The walls are marked with dried blood depicting gruesome acts of savagery, murder, and assassinations done by gnarled and twisted looking orcs. With a **Passive Perception of 10**, adventurers notice that the floor and walls are caked in a thin but hardy layer of ice. With a **Passive Perception of 15**, adventurers notice that a strange gas seems to be trapped inside the ice.

Have the players roll Perception checks to sense any foreboding movement.

a. Ambush Point

Have the players roll **Perception** checks to sense any foreboding movement once they reach this point in the map. Those who roll 15 or higher are not surprised by the ambush.

ADJUSTING THIS ENCOUNTER

Very Strong: 8 Red Fangs of Shaargas and 8 Giant Bats; 2 Ropers

Strong: 6 Red Fangs of Shaargas, 6 Giant Bats; 2 Ropers

Average: 5 Red Fangs of Shaargas, 5 Giant Bats; 2 Ropers

Weak: 4 Red Fangs of Shaargas, 4 Giant Bats, 1 Roper

Very Weak: 3 Red Fangs of Shaargas, 3 Giant Bats, 1 Roper

The ropers will only attack players within the light of the lantern

b. Spike Traps

Spike Traps are set at points marked 'b'. Those who step on these spaces trigger spike traps that shoot out sharpened bone bits from the cave paintings.

Those with a passive perception of 15 (assuming they have a means to illuminate the magical darkness) detect small and crude trap mechanisms. These traps may be disarmed with the use of DC 12 thieves tools skill check.

Those standing on a spike trap must make a DC 15 Dexterity Saving Throw or take 4d4 piercing damage, taking only half on a successful save. Additionally, those who fail the save must make a DC 15 Constitution Saving Throw or be poisoned for an hour.

The Darkness of Gehenna

As mentioned in the Setting Information section, the rest of the adventure will take place in complete and total magical darkness.

P2. The Second Cave Painting

At the northern edge of the room is another crude painting. The scene depicts a radiant butterfly winged woman bursting from the tree catching the pale orc by surprise. Both faces were violently scratched off.

C. The Wandering Gnome

An arcanaloth named Leah Megillah wanders this cavern in search for oddities and new tales.

The path opens up to a room that smells of stale salted meat and soot. With what illumination the Lantern of Feylight provides, pots and crates filled with various insects, fish, and fruits litter the edges of the room.

A small hooded figure sits down with her legs crossed in the center of the room, roasting a dead bat on a spit. Fifteen charred orc corpses could be found lining the room, their skin singed off. She looks up at the party, her honey-brown eyes magnified by a pair of thick spectacles. By her side is an iron flask which seems shoddy and damaged.

Cocking her head sideways, she can be heard muttering while tinkering with broken mirror shards, "Curious."

The gnome immediately turns to meet the party, as though their presence was a regular occurrence. "You must be adventurers! Come now, join me for a tale. Show me something I have never seen."

An arcanaloth named **Leah Megillah** wanders this cavern in search for oddities and new tales. The orc corpses that littered the room were her would be assailants, burned to death for their audacity.

She is disguised as a forest gnome using the *Alter Self* spell. Those who attempt to discern her true nature by magical means find nothing as she also applied *Nystul's Magic Aura* to make her appear as a non-magical forest gnome.

Those with a **passive perception of 16** or higher will find the words “Property of Shin” carved onto the iron flask. If the party asks about the flask, she will not disclose the source, saying it belonged to an old travelling companion of hers. The truth is that Shin was a high level wizard who used the iron flask to capture her and take her on many fantastical adventures. Though she is glad to be free, she does not bear ill will toward her former master.

Leah is a curious creature, providing more questions than answers in simple conversation. When asked what she is doing there, she simply says she is travelling around in search of knowledge.

Gehenna is a dangerous place, and she offers to watch over them as they rest if they can complete her challenges.

The party may elect up to two members per challenge. Encourage players who have not yet taken on challenges to have a turn, with Leah expressing curiosity toward the quieter members of the adventuring group.

CHALLENGE OF MATHEMATICS

Leah offers the party a riddle. This riddle was created to be misleading and is preferable read fast and only ONCE. Warn the party to listen very carefully.

Leah’s Riddle:

You are driving a caravan with four people that starts at Waterdeep and is going north to Bryn Shander. On the way, the caravan stopped by Nightstone, 2 people enter, and 3 people leave. Next, it stops by Goldenfields, 6 people enter, 4 people leave. Then, it stops at Shadowtop Cathedral, where 7 people leave and 6 people enter. Finally, the caravan stops at Bryn Shander where 8 people leave and 9 people enter.

Question: How old is the driver?

Answer: The answer is the age of the party member who answers, as it is established in the beginning of the dialogue that

Instead of asking them for their age, ask them why they chose that number. If they can’t answer it, then they probably have it wrong.

CHALLENGE OF STRATEGY

Leah challenges the adventurers to a game of Interplanar Hexadecagonal Multilinear Four Dimensional Chess. It’s basically a game of dots and boxes, the rules of which are found in **Appendix 3b**.

CHALLENGE OF SONG

The adventurers are asked to sing a song she has never heard or a song she knows in a way she’s never heard it sung before.

The party needs to make a **Performance check**. It is important to note what languages they are using to sing the song. If asked, Leah admits she can speak and understand all languages but is mostly fluent with Common, Dwarven, Infernal, Gnomish, and Elvish.

If the adventurers sing a song in *Common, Dwarven, Infernal, Gnomish, or Elvish*, the DC is 20.

If the adventurers sing in languages **other** than *Common, Dwarven, Infernal, Gnomish, or Elven*, the DC is reduced to 14.

If the player sings an actual song, the check is made with advantage. If the player sings a song the DM is familiar with but in a different genre as the original song, grant the entire party inspiration.

*Adventurers caught attempting to cheat in this challenge (i.e. singing for other party mates) lose their voice until they get treated to a Greater Restoration.

Completing two out of the three challenges merits the party a long rest under the protection of Leah. Completing 1 out of the three challenges

merits only a short rest. Completing none of them causes Leah to grow bored of them, making her leave.

When the party's long rest is over, Leah is gone, leaving a note to thank them for the short time they spent together before teleporting away.

Roleplaying Leah

Leah is an arcanaloth in disguise. She was imprisoned in an Iron Flask but was able to escape when her captor was distracted in a particularly difficult fight. With her new found freedom, she travels the world and interacts with anyone she finds interesting. At the moment, she takes the form of her former master, a forest gnome.

Attacking Leah

Attempting to attack Leah causes her to teleport away, preferring to run instead of risking capture. She joins Gnot in the final battle against the party as revenge, appearing in round 2. This will likely make the fight quite difficult for some parties, and it is important that Leah attempts to dissuade the party from using violence.

P3. The Third Cave Painting

At the eastern section of the room is another crude painting. The scene shows the orc kneeling before radiant fairy woman whose hands are raised up at the great tree. Both faces were violently scratched off.

D. Altar to Shaargas

A large jagged stone stands in the center of a large room like a dagger jutting through the backside of a corpse. Dry bloodstains cake the rock in various shades of red and a crude carving of a crescent moon with a skull rests at its center. The rest of the room is empty, save for a passage to the west.

Characters who succeed on a **DC 14 Religion check** (those of orcish descent make this check with advantage) realize that the bloodstained rock is an altar to Shaargas. Captives are often

sacrificed to the altar by bashing their skulls against the blunt tip of the rock.

A **DC 14 Medicine check** shows that bloodstains are of different shades of deep red, implying that they are from different sources.

Characters who succeed on a **DC 13 Perception check** will find bits of scattered bones on the floor. Further inspection reveals that they are actually skull fragments, supposedly from victims whose heads have been bashed against the blunt tip of the rock.

The Secret Door:

The secret door to the eastern hallway cannot be opened by any means, as the magic that protects it can only be broken by shattering the coffin in the room accessed by the western hallway.

P4. The Fourth Cave Painting

At the southern face of the room is another crude painting. Green energy emanating from the winged woman transforms the weak and sickly orc's body into one of herculean physique. Though their faces are scratched off, a triumphant smile is left on the woman's face.

E. The Scythes of Darkness

The path twists ahead like the gnarled claw of a great beast. After a lengthy walk, the party finds itself in the midst of a grotesque chamber. Three dead pale-skinned orcs with their faces clawed off are pinned against the walls by large iron stakes.

Huge, beautifully crafted Jade Statues stand at the three edges of the room, posed in bombastic ways to highlight the perfection of their physique. The only imperfection though, is that the upper part of their faces were clawed off, leaving only their mouths which have both fangs and tusks.

The room's centerpiece is a black stone coffin with iron chains holding it aloft. It shakes violently, rattling the chains.

Two blades sliding off each other could be heard in the darkness behind the party, with increasing ferocity and speed.

Please see **Appendix 3b** for a map of this room.

Have the party roll initiative as soon as they enter the room. The Bloody Crescent Scythes trap is activated

The Bloody Crescent Scythes

Trigger. This trap activates as soon as a player enters the room. A magic portal opens at both ends of the hallway. The southern portal disgorges two enormous bloody scythes. When the scythes reaches the end of the hallway they will enter a small portal which will propel the scythes back the same way it came.

Initiative. The trap acts on initiative count 10 (but see Speed Kills for trap progression).

The Bloody Crescent Scythes (Initiative 10). The trap's active element are two bloody scythes that almost fills the 10-foot wide hallway and rolls to the other end of the hallway on its turn. Each creature in the scythe's path must make a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 22 (4d10) magical slashing damage. On a successful save, a creature takes half as much damage. Objects that block the scythes, such as a conjured wall, take maximum damage from the impact.

Speed Kills. The scythes gain speed each round of combat. After its turn, increase the scythes' damage by 11 (2d10). While its damage is 55 (10d10) or greater, it acts on initiative count 20 and 10.

What do they see? When the trap is revealed, it is seen to be a couple of whirling interlocking scythes that swirl inward of each other accelerating at an alarming rate.

Countermeasures:

The trap can be neutralized either by stopping the scythe or preventing it from teleporting.

Stop the Scythes. Stopping the scythes is the easiest way to disrupt the trap. A wall of force can do so

easily, as can any object placed in its path that has enough hit points to absorb damage from the scythes without being destroyed.

Disrupt the Portals. Either portal can be neutralized with three successful DC 17 Intelligence (Arcana) checks, but the process of analyzing a portal to disrupt it takes time. Faint runes on the statues are involved in the functioning of the portals. A creature must first use an action to examine a set of runes, then use a subsequent action to attempt to vandalize the runes. Each successful check reduces the scythe's damage by 11 (2d10), as the disrupted sphere loses speed moving through the failing portal. Alternatively, a rune can be disabled with successfully casting Dispel Magic (DC 19). Disabling the three runes will destroy the portal. Once the portal is destroyed, the scythes will slam into the southern wall and comes to a halt.

ADJUSTING THIS ENCOUNTER

Very Strong: One **Stone Golem**, One **Sacred Statue**, and One **Eidolon** (Hidden in the coffin) will immediately use the **Sacred Animation** feature on one of the Vampire statues

Strong: One **Jade Vampire Statues**, One **Stone Golem**

Average: Two **Jade Vampire Statues** (No Legendary Actions)

Weak: One **Jade Vampire Statue**

Very Weak: One **Jade Vampire Statue** (No Legendary Actions)

Blood Crescent Scythes

Very Weak: No Speed Kills. Set Dexterity Saving throw to DC 15

Weak: No Speed Kills

Very Strong: Damage already at maximum, 2nd initiative already in play, and damage becomes non magical.

Strategy:

Stone Golem: The stone golem will use its slow ability on its first turn. On succeeding turn it will grapple players and drag them to the scythe's path.

Eidolon: When the sacred statues are destroyed, it will attempt to use its Divine Dread and position itself where the player can only run towards the scythe's path.

The coffin violently rattles because it contains a spring trap scythe! The trap may be detected via a **DC 15 Investigation or Perception check**. A **DC 15 Thieves Tools check** could disable the trap.

Opening the coffin activates the trap, wherein all within 10ft of the coffin have to make a **DC 15 Dexterity Saving Throw** or take 4d6 magical slashing damage or half on save.

Inside the coffin they find a bloody rune. A **DC 12 Arcana** will reveal that this is a blood rune depicting a contract between an orc and a hag, exchanging one's loyalty for beauty.

P5. The Marble Pact

Inside the coffin is another scene carved in black marble. The now muscular orc looks down at the pool but no reflection appears in the water. The woman's wings turn into that of a bat's as her legs melt away from her body. A cruel grin stretches past the confines of her face. Both faces are scratched off.

PART 3: The Price of Beauty

Estimated Duration: 45 minutes

The cavern turns impossibly dark, as though there is no world outside of what is shined by the Lantern of Feylight.

Red eyes penetrate the darkness. "So. She has sent you to kill me. Her insult was not enough it seems." the figure says with a low growl.

A beautiful man emerges from the shadows, his skin pale and white. Lavish satin black hair crowns his head, curving to match his broad shoulders. Tiny curved tusks adorn his lower lip and sharp fangs leer down from his upper lip. The pained expression of his elegant face turns to rage when he eyes the party. He reaches into the darkness, drawing from it a scythe that looks to be made out of pure shadow.

"I am tired of her games. Your bodies will be offered to Shaargas. That wench will get her due."

At this point the battle against the warchief begins.

There are environmental points to take note of when running this encounter

There are several notable environmental factors to take into account:

The Mirrors

The mirrors in the room reflect a light that is 80ft long and 15 ft wide in the direction of the mirror across from it in the room. This only reflects light from the Lantern of Feylight.

The Blade of Shaargas!

During his turn, Gnott may trigger the Bloody Crescent Trap at will by swinging his scythe in a wide arc. This sends a deadly executioner's pendulum fashioned as a red crescent moon down on those

standing in the kill zone of the trap (diagonal from one corner of the room to the other).

Those caught in the trap have to make a **DC 17 Dexterity Saving Throw**, or take **4d10 magical slashing damage**, only taking half on a success.

Note that Gnott has to decide on which way the Blade of Shaargas swings, either **southwest to northeast** or **northwest to southeast**.

See **Appendix 3a** for the map of this room.

ADJUSTING THIS ENCOUNTER

Very Weak: One **Vampire** (Remove all his Legendary Actions), replace all **Shadow Assassins** with **Shadows**.

Weak: One vampires (One Legendary Action per combat round), replace all **Shadow Assassins** with **Shadows**.

Average: One **Vampire**, three **Red Fangs of Shaargas**, three **Giant Bats**

Strong: Add one **Sacred Statue**, one **Eidolon**. Increase the **Blade of Shargaas** damage to 5d10 instead of 4d10. **Vampire** gains the **Cunning Action** and **Hand of Shargaas** ability (See Red Fangs of Shargaas statblock).

Very Strong: Replace **Vampire** with one **Vampire spellcaster** (See Variants: Vampire Warrior and Spellcasters). Add two **Sacred Statue**, two **Eidolon**, two **Red Fangs of Shaargas**, and two **Giant Bats**. Increase the **Blade of Shargaas** damage to 6d10 instead of 4d10. **Vampire** gains the **Cunning Action** and **Hand of Shargaas** ability (See Red Fangs of Shargaas statblock).

MAKING ENEMIES ALONG THE WAY

❖ If the party had any **Shadow Assassins** latch unto them for entering the darkness, they emerge during this fight.

❖ If the party attacked Leah, she aids Gnott and his minions before teleporting away. She uses the stats of an **Arcanaloth**.

GNOTT THE HARBINGER:

Gnott uses the stats of a **Vampire** but with the following changes:

-Gnott can see in Magical Darkness.

-He is armed with the **Harbinger**, a magical weapon of warning shaped like a scythe (uses a glaive's stats). The vampire gains the following attack option:

Harbinger. Melee Weapon Attack: +9 to hit, reach 10ft., one creature. Hit 9 (1d10 + 4) slashing damage.

He uses the 10ft reach of the weapon to hit the prettiest (or highest charisma target). Alternatively, if he has the chance to, he will use his Unarmed Strike to grapple a target and bring them into the darkness beyond the Feylight.

Roleplaying Gnott

Gnott is the vain orcish vampire who leads the Bloody Crescent Tribe. He offered his services to a hag in exchange for beauty. Though the fey creature indeed gave him beauty, it came in the form of vampirism, and he has no way to see his own reflection. His extreme insecurity does not allow him to believe others when they say he is indeed beautiful, and he does not trust illusions to reflect it. Now he has nothing but scorn in his black empty heart.

In battle he bemoans his curse, loudly proclaiming his own troubles while taunting the adventurers for being lesser beings.

P6. Final Piece of the Puzzle

At the south end of the room, a single carving stands out amidst the many blood moons splattered along the walls. Gnott can be seen roaring, his hands outstretched in anger. The winged woman is now replaced by a grotesque creature whose upper body separates itself from its bottom half, her head thrown back in laughter. The once beautiful tree has rotted away as winter came to cull its vibrance.

CONCLUSION

Estimated Duration: 15 minutes

With the death of Gnott, the party backtracks to the surface where they are met by the ever serene, Tita Malas under the Balete tree which seems to have lost all its vines. Light snowfall graces those who stand underneath the tree despite the hot summer sky.

“You have done well. Another threat to the waking world has been vanquished,” Tita Malas begins, “The children of Gruumsh have been dealt a deep wound. Yet, that is not the end.”

Tita Malas greets the party with a warm smile, thanking them for vanquishing the vampiric orc warchief.

She gives the adventurers their gold reward (max gold for a Tier 2 4 hour adventure), thanking them for a job well done. In addition, Tita Malas offers to give them a parting gift (See THE MARK OF SEASONS Story Award in the Rewards section below).

Those with a passive insight score of 18 or higher will notice an almost sadistic glee in her reception of the news.

Should she be confronted about the truth behind her pact with Gnott, she will revert to her true form, a disgusting and putrid hag. Her torso detaches itself from her lower body, she sprouts a pair of batlike wings, which stretches out for about a foot.

If the party moves to attack her, she simply laughs before teleporting back into the Shadowfell, promising them that this will not be their last meeting.

REWARDS

At the **end of the session**, the characters receive rewards based upon their accomplishments.

Player Rewards

The characters can earn the following rewards:

Advancement

Advancement Upon completing this adventure, each character gains a level. At their discretion, they may choose to decline advancement. Remind those that express an interest in this that they have a limit to how much gold they can earn per level; declining advancement means that they may reach a point where they earn no gold.

Gold

Gold Award each character gold for each hour of the session. Adventures typically features cues for this, but you can add it where you see fit. The maximum gold that you can award a character per hour is determined by their tier, as follows:

Tier	Hourly Gp Award	Gp Limit per Level
1	20gp	80gp
2	30gp	240gp
3	200gp	1,600gp
4	750gp	6,000gp

Magic Item Unlock

If found during the adventure, the characters can keep the following magic items; these items are described in Appendix 4.

◆**The Harbinger (Weapon of Warning - Glaive)**

Story Award

The characters unlock the following downtime activity for **completing the adventure**:

SILENCING THE SHADOWS:

Defeating Gnott stops the servants of Shaargas from joining the main orc horde. No doubt this would have some effect on future adventures involving the battle to come.

THE MARK OF SEASONS:

As thanks for killing Gnott, Tita Malas offers adventurers a tattoo that can tell the seasons. Adventurers who choose to accept gain a tattoo (characters can decide where on their body) of a balet tree that changes its appearance to match the current season (spring, summer, autumn, or winter) of the area they are in. Bearing this mark may have some bearing on future adventures.

Dungeon Master Rewards

For running this adventure, you gain a DM Reward. This reward can be redeemed for levels, magic items, and other season-themed things. See the Adventurers League DM Rewards document for more info.

Appendix 1: Dramatis Personae

The following NPCs and locations feature prominently in this adventure.

- **Gnott Bloodmoon (Naught Bludmoon).** Gnott is the vain orcish vampire who leads the Bloody Crescent Tribe. He offered his services to a hag in exchange for beauty. Though the fey creature indeed gave him beauty, it came in the form of vampirism, and he has no way to see his own reflection. His extreme insecurity does not allow him to believe others when they say he is indeed beautiful, and he does not trust illusions to reflect it. Now, he has nothing but scorn in his black empty heart.

Personality: Vain to a fault and only finds validation in beauty and style.

Ideal: To perfect the art of the kill and become more beautiful.

Bond: His vengeance against Tita Malas for cursing him is his deepest desire.

Flaw: Vain to a fault. Insipid and spiteful.

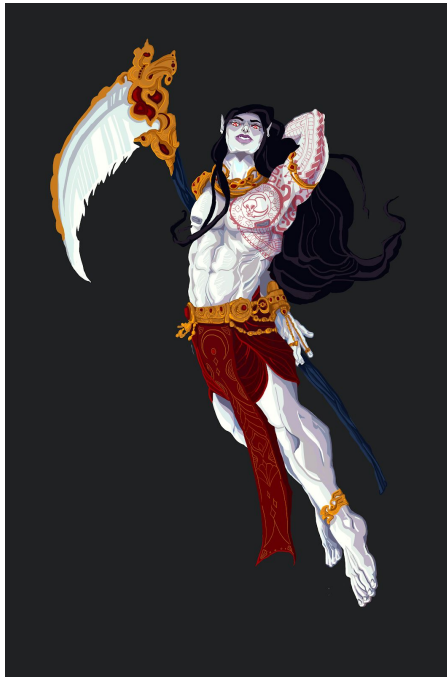


Image of Gnott Bloodmoon above

- **Khorgol Ul-Gorgosh (Korgol Ul Gorgosh).** The half-orc Khorgol is a Maser of the Wild of the Emerald Enclave who wears a black wolf pelt. He stands roughly over six feet with a strong build. Raised in the Savage North by his now extinct orcish tribe, he turned to the life of adventuring before starting a tribe of his own. His primary goal is to maintain the power equilibrium in Thar. He has a gruff no nonsense attitude, wearing a scowl most of the time. The objective is of utmost importance, and he is not afraid of knocking heads to get things done.

Personality: Puts little stock in wealth. It cannot help in a fight.

Ideal: Tyranny must be opposed! Freedom is most important!

Bond: Is loyal to orc kind and is invested in their place in the world.

Flaw: Prone to using violence to solve his problems.

- **Leah Megillah.** Leah is an arcanaloth in disguise. She was imprisoned in an Iron Flask but was able to escape when her captor was distracted in a particularly difficult fight. With her new found freedom, she travels the world and interacts with anyone she finds interesting. At the moment, she takes the form of her former master, a forest gnome.

Personality: Matter of fact and curious, Leah is bored of reality and seeks only to expand her already considerable pool of knowledge.

Ideal: Growing the pool of aggregate knowledge is the highest ideal.

Bond: Those who entertain her are adorable and must be protected!

Flaw: Leah is ruthless in her pursuit of knowledge being extremely curious.

- **Melvaunt.** A city that sits on the northern coast of the Moonsea, adjacent to Thar. It was a city of smithing and mercantile services, serving as the port of entry to many travelers coming to the region. The city itself is cold and gray, with a mist that rose from the Moonsea seeming to cover it entirely.

- **The Night Below.** This is an immense cavern system below the lowest layer of Gehenna, Krangath. It was said these caverns extended forever, and were all pitch black. It is home to the

- evil orcish god of murder and darkness, Shaargas, and his most devout follower
- **Tita Malas.** Tita Malas is a member of the Emerald Enclave with a dark secret. She is actually a hag who delights in playing tricks in the form of twisted favors. In terms of appearance, she is a young tan skinned woman with brown eyes and black hair. Tita Malas presents herself with a feigned serenity and a soft countenance that belies her sadistic and evil nature.

Personality: She finds nothing more fulfilling than tricking others into ironic pacts.

Ideal: Nothing is sacred and she wants everyone to see that.

Bond: Her word is her bond.

Flaw: She fixates on deals without considering the consequences of angering her victims.

Appendix 2: Creature Statistics

Arcanaloth

Medium fiend (yugoloth) neutral evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 104 (16d8 +32)

Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	20 (+5)	16 (+3)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Dex +5, Int +9, Wis +7, Cha +7

Skills Arcana +13, Deception +9, Insight +9, Perception +7

Damage Resistances cold, fire, lightning; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities acid, poison

Condition Immunities charmed, poisoned

Senses truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 17

Languages all, telepathy 120ft.

Challenge 12 (8,400 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. *The arcanaloth's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 15). The arcanaloth can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:*

At will: *alter self, darkness, heat metal, invisibility (self only), magic missile*

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

Magic Weapons. *The arcanaloth's weapon attacks are magical.*

Spellcasting. *The arcanaloth is a 16th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks). The arcanaloth has the following wizard spells prepared:*

Cantrips (at will): fire bolt, mage hand, minor illusion, prestidigitation

1st level (4 slots): detect magic, identify, shield, Tenser's floating disk

2nd level (3 slots): detect thoughts, mirror image, phantasmal force, suggestion

3rd level (3 slots): counterspell, fear, fireball

4th level (3 slots): banishment, dimension door

5th level (2 slots): contact other plane, hold monster

6th level (1 slot): chain lightning

7th level (1 slot): finger of death

8th level (1 slot): mind blank

Actions

Claws. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 8 (2d4 + 3) slashing damage. The target must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw, taking 10 (3d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Teleport. The arcanaloth magically teleports, along with any equipment it is wearing or carrying, up to 60 feet to an unoccupied space it can see.

Eidolon

Medium Undead

Armor Class 9

Hit Points 63 (18d8-18)

Speed 0 ft., fly 40 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
7 (-2)	8 (-1)	9 (-1)	14 (+2)	19 (+4)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Wis +8

Skills Perception +8

Damage Resistances acid, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities cold, necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained

Senses Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 18

Languages the languages it knew in life

Challenge 12 (8,400 XP)

Incorporeal Movement. The eidolon can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object other than a sacred statue.

Sacred Animation (Recharge 5–6). When the eidolon moves into a space occupied by a sacred statue, the eidolon can disappear, causing the statue to become a creature under the eidolon's control. The eidolon uses the sacred statue's statistics in place of its own.

Turn Resistance. The eidolon has advantage on saving throws against any effect that turns undead.

Actions

Divine Dread. Each creature within 60 feet of the eidolon that can see it must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute. While frightened in this way, the creature must take the Dash action and move away from the eidolon by the safest available route at the start of each of its turns, unless there is nowhere for it to move, in which case the creature also becomes stunned until it can move again. A frightened target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a target's saving throw is

successful or the effect ends for it, the target is immune to any eidolon's Divine Dread for the next 24 hours.

Giant Bat

Large beast, unaligned

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 22 (3d10 + 6)

Speed 10 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	2 (-4)	12 (+1)	6 (-2)

Skills Perception +3

Senses Blindsight 60 ft., Passive Perception 11

Languages understands Common but can't speak

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Echolocation. The bat can't use its blindsight while deafened.

Keen Hearing. The bat has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing.

Actions

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

Orc Red Fang of Shaargas

Medium humanoid (orc), chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (Studded Leather)

Hit Points 52 (8d8 + 16)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Intimidation +1, Perception +2, Stealth +5

Senses Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 12

Languages Common, Orc

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Cunning Action. On each of its turns, the orc can use a bonus action to take the Dash, Disengage, or Hide action.

Hand of Shargaas. The orc deals 2 extra dice of damage when it hits a target with a weapon attack (included in its attacks).

Shargaas's Sight. Magical darkness doesn't impede the orc's darkvision.

Slayer. In the first round of a combat, the orc has advantage on attack rolls against any creature that hasn't taken a turn yet. If the orc hits a creature that round who was surprised, the hit is automatically a critical hit.

Actions

Multiattack. The orc makes two scimitar or dart attacks.

Scimitar. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 13 (3d6 + 3) slashing damage.

Dart. Ranged Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, range 20/60 ft., one target. Hit: 10 (3d4 + 3) piercing damage.

Veil of Shargaas (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest).

The orc casts darkness without any components. Wisdom is its spellcasting ability.

Roper

Large monstrosity, neutral evil

Armor Class 20 (Natural Armor)

Hit Points 93 (11d10 + 33)

Speed 10 ft., climb 10 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	8 (-1)	17 (+3)	7 (-2)	16 (+3)	6 (-2)

Skills Perception +6, Stealth +5

Senses Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 16

Languages --

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

False Appearance. While the roper remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a normal cave formation, such as a stalagmite.

Grasping Tendrils. The roper can have up to six tendrils at a time. Each tendril can be attacked (AC 20; 10 hit points; immunity to poison and psychic damage).

Destroying a tendril deals no damage to the roper, which can extrude a replacement tendril on its next turn. A tendril can also be broken if a creature takes an action and succeeds on a DC 15 Strength check against it.

Spider Climb. The roper can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

Actions

Multiattack. The roper makes four attacks with its tendrils, uses Reel, and makes one attack with its bite.

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 22 (4d8 + 4) piercing damage.

Tendril. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 50 ft., one creature. Hit: The target is grappled (escape DC 15). Until the grapple ends, the target is restrained and has disadvantage on Strength checks and Strength saving throws, and the roper can't use the same tendril on another target.

Reel. The roper pulls each creature grappled by it up to 25 feet straight toward it.

Sacred Statue

Large construct, as the eidolon's alignment

Armor Class 19 (natural armor)

Hit Points 95 (10d10 + 40)

Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	8 (-1)	19 (+4)	14 (+2)	19 (+4)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Wis +8

Skills Perception +8

Damage Resistances acid, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities cold, necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned

Senses Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 14

Languages the languages it knew in life

False Appearance. While the statue remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a normal statue.

Ghostly Inhabitant. The eidolon that enters the sacred statue remains inside it until the statue drops to 0 hit points, the eidolon uses a bonus action to move out of the statue, or the eidolon is turned or forced out by an effect such as the dispel evil and good spell. When the eidolon leaves the statue, it appears in an unoccupied space within 5 feet of the statue.

Inert. When not inhabited by an Eidolon, the statue is an object.

Actions

Multiattack. The statue makes two slam attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 43 (6d12 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

Rock. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, range 60/240 ft., one target. *Hit:* 37 (6d10 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

Shadow

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 16 (3d8 + 3)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	19 (+4)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)

Skills Stealth +4

Damage Vulnerabilities Radiant

Damage Resistances acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities Necrotic, Poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained

Senses Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 10

Languages —

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Amorphous. *The assassin can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.*

Shadow Stealth. *While in dim light or darkness, the assassin can take the Hide action as a bonus action.*

Sunlight Weakness. *While in sunlight, the assassin has disadvantage on attack rolls, ability checks, and saving throws.*

Actions

Multiattack. The assassin makes two Shadow Blade attacks.

Strength Drain. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) necrotic damage, and the target's Strength score is reduced by 1d4. The target dies if this reduces its Strength to 0. Otherwise, the reduction lasts until the target finishes a short or long rest.

If a non-evil humanoid dies from this attack, a new shadow rises from the corpse 1d4 hours later.

Shadow Assassin

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 78 (12d8 + 24)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	19 (+4)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws DEX +8, INT +5

Skills Perception +9, Stealth +12

Damage Vulnerabilities Radiant

Damage Resistances Acid, Cold, Fire, Lightning, Thunder; Bludgeoning, Piercing, and Slashing from Nonmagical Attacks

Damage Immunities Necrotic, Poison

Condition Immunities Exhaustion, Frightened, Grappled, Paralyzed,

Petrified, Poisoned, Prone, Restrained

Senses Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 19

Languages understands the languages it knew in life but can't speak

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Amorphous. *The assassin can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.*

Shadow Stealth. *While in dim light or darkness, the assassin can take the Hide action as a bonus action.*

Sunlight Weakness. *While in sunlight, the assassin has disadvantage on attack rolls, ability checks, and saving throws.*

Actions

Multiattack. The assassin makes two Shadow Blade attacks.

Shadow Blade. Melee Weapon Attack: +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) necrotic damage. Unless the target is immune to necrotic damage, the target's Strength score is reduced by 1d4 each time it is hit by this attack. The target dies if its Strength is reduced to 0. The reduction lasts until the target finishes a short or long rest.

Vampire

Medium undead (shapechanger), lawful evil

Armor Class 16 (Natural Armor)

Hit Points 144 (17d8 + 68)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	18 (+4)	18 (+4)	17 (+3)	15 (+2)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws DEX +9, WIS +7, CHA +9

Skills Perception +7, Stealth +9

Damage Resistances Necrotic; Bludgeoning, Piercing, and Slashing from Nonmagical Attacks

Senses Darkvision 120 ft., Passive Perception 17

Languages the languages it knew in life

Challenge 13 (10,000 XP)

Shapechanger. *If the vampire isn't in sunlight or running water, it can use its action to polymorph into a Tiny bat or a Medium cloud of mist, or back into its true form.*

While in bat form, the vampire can't speak, its walking speed is 5 feet, and it has a flying speed of 30 feet. Its statistics, other than its size and speed, are unchanged. Anything it is wearing transforms with it, but nothing it is carrying does. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

While in mist form, the vampire can't take any actions, speak, or manipulate objects. It is weightless, has a flying speed of 20 feet, can hover, and can enter a hostile creature's space and stop there. In addition, if air can pass through a space, the mist can do so without squeezing, and it can't pass through water. It has advantage on Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution saving throws, and it is immune to all nonmagical damage, except the damage it takes from sunlight.

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). *If the vampire fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.*

Misty Escape. *When it drops to 0 hit points outside its resting place, the vampire transforms into a cloud of mist (as in the Shapechanger trait) instead of falling unconscious, provided that it isn't in sunlight or running water. If it can't transform, it is destroyed.*

While it has 0 hit points in mist form, it can't revert to its vampire form, and it must reach its resting place within 2 hours or be destroyed. Once in its resting

place, it reverts to its vampire form. It is then paralyzed until it regains at least 1 hit point. After spending 1 hour in its resting place with 0 hit points, it regains 1 hit point.

Regeneration. The vampire regains 20 hit points at the start of its turn if it has at least 1 hit point and isn't in sunlight or running water. If the vampire takes radiant damage or damage from holy water, this trait doesn't function at the start of the vampire's next turn.

Spider Climb. The vampire can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

Vampire Weaknesses. The vampire has the following flaws:

Forbiddance. The vampire can't enter a residence without an invitation from one of the occupants.

Harmed by Running Water. The vampire takes 20 acid damage if it ends its turn in running water.

Stake to the Heart. If a piercing weapon made of wood is driven into the vampire's heart while the vampire is incapacitated in its resting place, the vampire is paralyzed until the stake is removed.

Sunlight Hypersensitivity. The vampire takes 20 radiant damage when it starts its turn in sunlight. While in sunlight, it has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks.

Actions

Multiattack. (Vampire Form Only). The vampire makes two attacks, only one of which can be a bite attack.

Unarmed Strike (Vampire Form Only). Melee Weapon Attack: +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 8 (1d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage. Instead of dealing damage, the vampire can grapple the target (escape DC 18).

Bite. (Bat or Vampire Form Only). Melee Weapon Attack: +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one willing creature, or a creature that is grappled by the vampire, incapacitated, or restrained. Hit: 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) necrotic damage. The target's hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the necrotic damage taken, and the vampire regains hit points equal to that amount. The reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0. A humanoid slain in this way and then buried in the

ground rises the following night as a vampire spawn under the vampire's control.

Charm. The vampire targets one humanoid it can see within 30 feet of it. If the target can see the vampire, the target must succeed on a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw against this magic or be charmed by the vampire. The charmed target regards the vampire as a trusted friend to be heeded and protected. Although the target isn't under the vampire's control, it takes the vampire's requests or actions in the most favorable way it can, and it is a willing target for the vampire's bite attack.

Each time the vampire or the vampire's companions do anything harmful to the target, it can repeat the saving throw, ending the effect on itself on a success. Otherwise, the effect lasts 24 hours or until the vampire is destroyed, is on a different plane of existence than the target, or takes a bonus action to end the effect.

Children of the Night (1/Day). The vampire magically calls 2d4 swarms of bats or rats (swarm of bats, swarm of rats), provided that the sun isn't up. While outdoors, the vampire can call 3d6 wolves (wolf) instead. The called creatures arrive in 1d4 rounds, acting as allies of the vampire and obeying its spoken commands. The beasts remain for 1 hour, until the vampire dies, or until the vampire dismisses them as a bonus action.

Legendary Actions

The vampire can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The vampire regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Move. The vampire moves up to its speed without provoking opportunity attacks.

Unarmed Strike. The vampire makes one unarmed strike.

Bite.(Costs 2 Actions). The vampire makes one bite attack.

Variants: Vampire Warriors and Spellcasters

Some vampires have martial training and battlefield experience. A **warrior vampire** wearing plate armor (AC 18) and wielding a greatsword has a challenge rating of 15 (13,000 XP) and the following additional action options:

Multiattack. The vampire makes two greatsword attacks.

Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit* 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage

Some vampires are practitioners of the arcane arts. A **spellcaster vampire** spellcaster has a challenge rating of 15 (13,000 XP) and the following trait:

Spellcasting. The vampire is a 9th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks). The vampire has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrip (at will): *mage hand, prestidigitation, ray of frost*

1st level (4 slots): *comprehend languages, fog of cloud, shield*

2nd level (3 slots): *detect thoughts, gust of wind, mirror image*

3rd level (3 slots): *animate dead, bestow curse, nondetection*

4th level (3 slots): *blight, greater invisibility*

5th level (1 slot): *dominate person*

Vampiric Jade Statue

Large construct

Armor Class 14 (Natural Armor)

Hit Points 114 (12d10 + 48)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	6 (-2)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

Damage Vulnerabilities Force

Damage Immunities Lightning, Poison

Condition Immunities Charmed, Exhaustion, Frightened, Paralyzed, Petrified, Poisoned

Senses Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 10

Languages understands the languages of its creator but can't speak

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Immutable Form. *The statue is immune to any spell or effect that would alter its form.*

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). *If the statue fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.*

Actions

Multiattack. The statue makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, that creature becomes cursed by the statue. The curse lasts for 10 minutes. While the creature is cursed, the statue has advantage on all attacks against it.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage.

Legendary Actions

The statue can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The statue regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

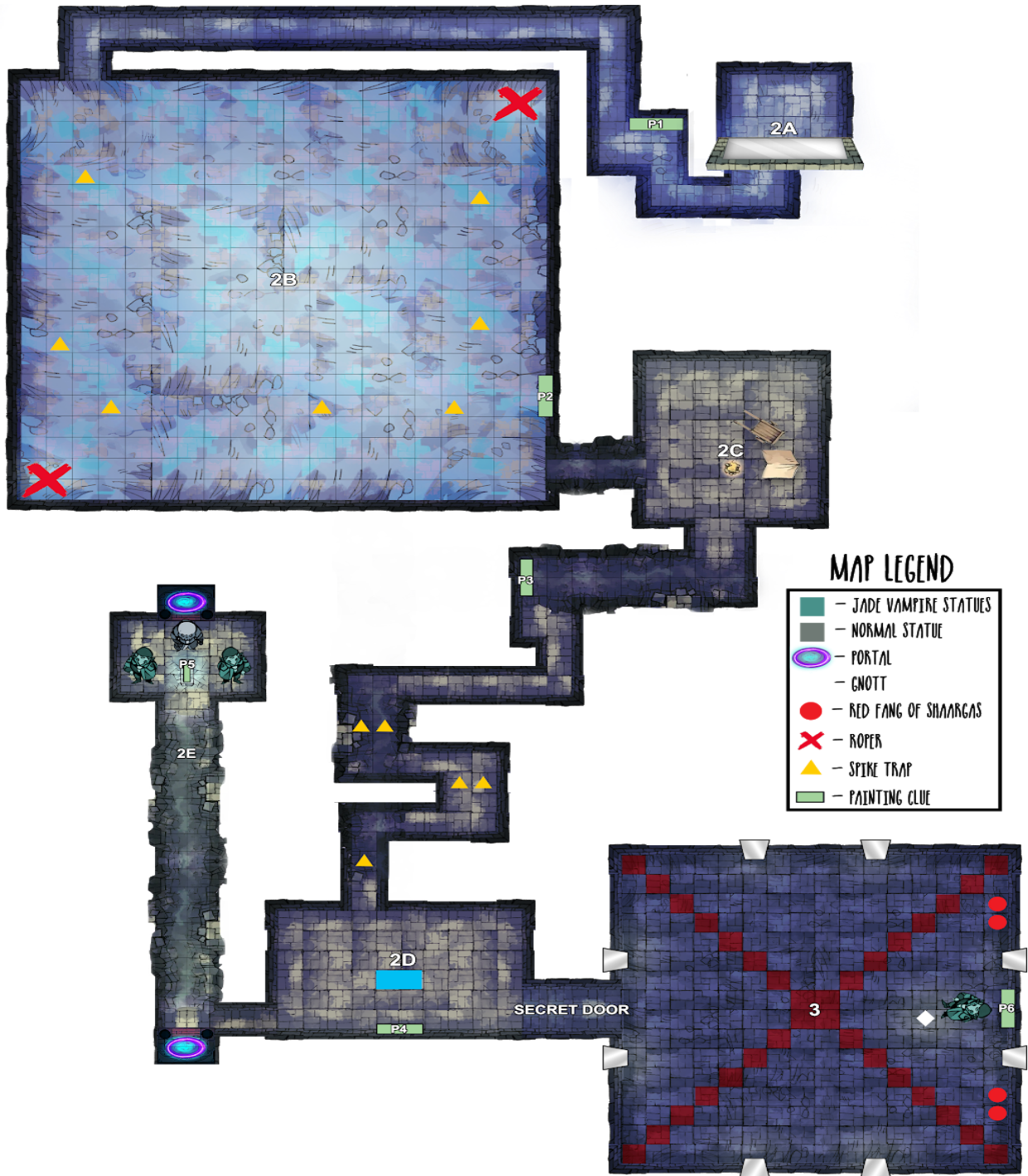
Bite. The statue makes one bite attack.

Blood Reaper. All creatures currently cursed by the statue and within 20 feet of it take 5 necrotic damage.

Move. The statue moves up to its speed without provoking opportunity attacks.

Appendix 3: Maps, Player Handouts, Etc.

Appendix 3a *(Each Square is 5ft)



Appendix 3b

Deltohedron

Interplanar Octagonal

Bipyramid 4-D

Wizard's Chess

1. Create a grid of dots at least 4 dots wide and four dots long
2. Determine who gets to go first by roll off.
3. Each turn, draw one horizontal or vertical line to connect two dots.
4. Drawing the fourth wall of a box grants you a score.
5. The player who scores a box must take an extra turn
6. Count each players boxes once the whole board is covered

Appendix 4: Story

Award

MAGIC ITEM UNLOCK:

The Harbinger

(Weapon of Warning - Glaive)

The Harbinger is a massive scythe was forged from the darkest shadows from the plane of Gehenna, home of the orcish god Shaargas. The material is light, and does not cast its own shadow. However, the item gives its user an uncanny ability for shadows to warn the user of impending danger.

This magic weapon (glaive) warns you of danger.

While the weapon is on your person, you have advantage on initiative rolls. In addition, you and any of your companions within 30 feet of you can't be surprised, except when incapacitated by something other than nonmagical sleep. The weapon magically awakens you and your companions within range if any of you are sleeping naturally when combat begins

Appendix 5: Dungeon Master Tips

To DM an adventure, you **must** have 3 to 7 players—each with their own character within the adventure’s level range (see Adventure Primer). Characters playing in a **hardcover** adventure may continue to play to but if they play a different hardcover adventure, they **can’t return** to the first if outside its level range.

New to D&D Adventurers League?

<http://dnd.wizards.com/playevents/organized-play>

New to the Annual Storyline?

<http://dndadventurersleague.org/storyline-seasons/waterdeep-adventures/>

Preparing the Adventure

Before you start play, consider the following:

- Read through the adventure, taking notes of anything you’d like to highlight or remind yourself of while running the adventure, such as a way you’d like to portray an NPC or a tactic you’d like to use in a combat. Familiar yourself with the adventure’s appendices and handouts.
- Gather any resources you’d like to use to aid you in running this adventure--such as notecards, a DM screen, miniatures, and battlemaps.
- Ask the players to provide you with relevant character information, such as name, race, class, and level; passive Wisdom (Perception), and anything specified as notable by the adventure (such as backgrounds, traits, flaws, etc.)

Players can play an adventure they previously played as a Player or Dungeon Master but may only play it once with a given character. Ensure each player has their character’s adventure logsheet (if not, get one from the organizer) with their starting values for advancement and treasure checkpoints, downtime days, and renown. These are updated at the conclusion of the session. The adventure information and your information is added at the end of the adventure session—whether the completed the adventure or not.

Each player is responsible for maintaining an accurate logsheet. If you have time, you can do a

quick scan of a player’s character sheet to ensure that nothing looks out of order. If you see magic items of very high rarities or strange arrays of ability scores, you can ask players to provide documentation for the irregularities. If they cannot, feel free to restrict item use or ask them to use a standard ability score array.

Point players to the D&D Adventurers League Players Guide for reference. If players wish to spend downtime days and it’s the beginning of an adventure or episode, they can declare their activity and spend the days now, or they can do so at the end of the adventure or episode. Players should select their characters’ spells and other daily options prior to the start of the adventure, unless the adventure specifies otherwise. Feel free to reread the adventure description to help give players hints about what they might face.

Adjusting This Adventure

To determine whether you should consider adjusting the adventure, add up the total levels of all the characters and divide the result by the number of characters (rounding .5 or greater up; .4 or less down). This is the group’s average party level (APL). To approximate the **party strength** for the adventure, consult the table below.

Determining Party Strength

Party Composition	Party	Strength
3-4 characters, APL less than		Very weak
3-4 characters, APL equivalent		Weak
3-4 characters, APL greater than		Average
5 characters, APL less than		Weak
5 characters, APL equivalent		Average
5 characters, APL greater than		Strong
6-7 characters, APL less than		Average
6-7 characters, APL equivalent		Strong
6-7 characters, APL greater than		Very strong