

DDAL 09-20



WHERE DEVILS FEAR TO TREAD

An Avernus Rising Adventure

The commander's soul has been cast through the portal into the Death Dells. You must follow into the lair of Yeenoghu and rescue the commander before the Beast of Butchery devours him!

Part Two of the *Red Hunt* series of adventures.

A Four to Six-Hour Adventure for 17th through 20th Level Characters.

Optimized For: APL 18



CREDITS

Designer: Greg Marks

Editing: Travis Woodall, Greg Marks, Hannah Rose

D&D Adventurers League Guildmaster: Chris Lindsay

Art Director and Graphic Designer: Rich Lescouflair

Interior Art: provided by Wizards of the Coast

D&D Adventurers League Wizards Team: Adam Lee, Ari Levitch, Chris Lindsay, Mike Mearls

D&D Adventurers League Administrators: Alan Patrick, Amy Lynn Dzura, Travis Woodall, LaTia Jacquise, Ma'at Crook, Claire Hoffman, Greg Marks, Shawn Merwin, Will Doyle

Playtesters: Gary Affeldt, Richard Brown, David Krolnik, Ben Siekert, Phil Tobin

Special Thanks: Toni Winslow-Brill

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ADVENTURE PRIMER

This adventure is designed for **three to seven 17th- to 20th-level characters** and is optimized for **five characters with an average party level (APL) of 18**. Characters outside this level range cannot participate in this adventure.

This adventure occurs in the Death Dells, the 422nd layer of the Abyss, and in Avernus, the first layer of the Nine Hells.

BACKGROUND

In the company of **ILMATER'S** chosen, the young girl **DARA**, adventurers have been attempting to revive a lost company of **HELLRIDERS** known as the **BLOODY HOOVES** in order to ride to the defense of fallen Elturel. Dara and her champions have successfully recovered nearly all of them, but the company's leader, **COMMANDER ROTGER DE LA REUE**, was captured by one of Zariel's lieutenants, an ice devil called **GENERAL EVERBLEED**, only in turn to have both of them captured by minions of the demon lord **YEENOGHU**.

Recently rescued from Yeenoghu's goristro minion **RAZEK VOWBREAKER**, Everbleed told the party that the demons have tossed the commander's soul into the Death Dells. The Death Dells, also called the Seeping Woods, is a layer of the Abyss covered in barren hills, great ravines, blistering savannas, and sickly yellow forests. It serves as Yeenoghu's personal hunting grounds, where he plays cruel hunting games with mortals. Here the commander's soul wanders, lost and alone. If the characters are to rally the Bloody Hooves, they must rescue him before the Demon Lord finds him.

OVERVIEW

The adventure's story is spread over **three parts** and takes approximately **four hours** to play. The adventure begins with a **Call to Action** scene. It also contains two **optional bonus objectives**—each taking **an additional hour** to play.

- **Call to Action: Out of Hell.** The adventure begins as Dara and the character step through the portal into the Abyss.
- **Part 1: Soul of the Hunt.** The characters navigate the Death Dells as the oppressive nature of the place threatens to break their psyches and turn them all into violent, mindless killing machines. It is a race against time to locate the commander's soul as it moves from location to location, but as the party nears him, Yeenoghu also draws closer. Navigating the Death Dells to rescue the commander's soul before it is consumed by Yeenoghu is **Story Objective A**.
- **Part 2: Blood War!** Dara, the characters, and possibly Commander De La Reue return through the portal to Avernus and find that Zariel's forces are attacking the Abyssal beachhead, and an Abyssal army has grown to incredible proportions. The characters are dumped into the middle of the massive battle and must fight free. This encounter showcases the effects of all of the choices the characters have made since the beginning of season 9. This is **Story Objective B**.

- **Bonus Objective A: Belle of the Brawl.** While in the Death Dells, the party runs across another little girl: Elisande, the Chosen of Cyric. Newly freed from Malbolge, she is hunting for a way home but has been attracted to this place by its murderous nature. Elisande takes an instant dislike to weaker, more innocent Dara. The characters interact with the two Chosen and help them settle their differences without violence. This is found in **Appendix 1**.
- **Bonus Objective B: Demonic Duel.** The hordes of the Abyss have finally disrupted the balance and awakened Yaacrou the Beast, a massive feathered monstrosity whose power rivals that of a demon lord. It is breaking through the infernal lines, and Yeenoghu's hordes threaten to take Avernus and break through to Dis. If this happens, the balance of the Blood would change forever. Do the characters assist the powers of the Nine Hells by defeating the Yaacrou or suffer the possibility that the Nine Hells could fall? This is found in **Appendix 2**.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

This is the second part of the *Red Hunt*, a two-part storyline of adventures. This adventure picks up directly after the events of DDAL09-19 *Fang and Claw*. If the characters have recently played that adventure, they have just stepped through a portal from Avernus to the Death Dells. If your players are new to this campaign, use the following hooks:

Blood Debt. A warlock or other pact-bound character in the group is summoned by their patron and ordered to aid a priest of Ilmater at Mahadi's Wandering Emporium. If they refuse, their powers are stripped and their soul is forfeit.

Divine Calling. The gods themselves, especially those allied with Ilmater, have summoned the characters to aid Dara on the first layer of the Nine Hells, Avernus. After manifesting themselves in front of the group in their chosen forms, the gods open a portal to the Abyss and send the characters through.

Little Girl's Plea. Having played some adventures in season 9, the character is known to Dara who sends a mental plea to the character across the planes. She is in peril and desperately needs champions. If the character agrees, a *gate* opens and transports them directly to her.

SAVING DARА

Even though she is the Chosen of Ilmater, Dara is particularly fragile and the characters will need to do all they can to protect her. Temporary hit points, buff spells, and smart tactics will all be key. If she dies and the characters return her to life, her powers diminish, so just letting her die and bringing her back is a losing proposition. Every time Dara dies, she loses one of these abilities chosen randomly: her damage resistances, her condition immunities, her Magic Resistance trait, and her Innate Spellcasting trait. If she loses all four, she has lost all of her abilities as a Chosen and may no longer return Hellriders or angels to life.

In this adventure, if she has previously died four or more times, she loses the ability to track the commander's soul.

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.





CALL TO ACTION: OUT OF HELL

Estimated Duration: 10 minutes

This adventure begins with the characters having just arrived in the Abyss on the 422nd layer, known as the Death Dells or Yeenoghu's Realm. If you are continuing from DDAL09-19, assume that transporting to the Abyss in Dara's company had the same effect as a long rest.

From your vantage point in front of the planar gate atop a flat stone, you are faced with a massive sunbaked savanna stretching north to foreboding mountains, east to a sickly yellow forest, and west to a swampy shore and rust-colored sea. The grass near the gate is trampled from the passage of many hundreds of creatures.

The heat is oppressive, and the smell of meat rotting in the sun permeates the still air. The call of a carrion bird echoes across the dry grassland.

THE GATHERING GATE

The Gathering Gate, one of the few landmarks in Yeenoghu's Realm, is a massive circular portal made of crude stone. It can be controlled by the demon prince to connect to many different planes and is currently set to allow two-way transport between Avernus and the Death Dells. Only the demon prince can alter the destination of the portal or close it.

CREATURE INFORMATION

Dara looks at the characters expectantly and recaps what the party knows from their previous adventures before asking them how to find the commander.

- As the Chosen of Ilmater, Dara read from the *Book of Exalted Deeds* and was granted powers and a quest to raise fallen angels and paladins in Avernus.
- Originally when Elturel was pulled into the Nine Hells, she was convinced Ilmater gave her this holy mission to help the city, but now she believes she may have another purpose. Perhaps it is to stop the Abyss from disrupting the balance of the Bloodwar and taking over the Hells?
- With the help of adventurers, a merchant named Fai Chen, and the infamous Mahadi, Dara has successfully revived several slain angels and raised up a lost company of Hellriders called the Bloody Hooves. Unfortunately, the company's commander was not among them and they are in disarray.
- To make matters worse, demons took his soul and threw it into Yeenoghu's Realm as an offering for the demon prince to hunt. If they cannot find the wandering soul in time, she fears Yeenoghu will not only consume it but will enter into the Abyss with the last of his forces and attack the already weakened defenders of Avernus.
- If the demon prince himself takes the field, it is likely that other lords of the Abyss will as well.
- The commander's soul looks like a vaguely humanoid-shaped ball of light floating aimlessly. It is not aware of its surroundings and is not able to communicate. In this form, the commander is defenseless, and the party have to find him as quickly as possible.
- Locating the soul before the demon prince will be extremely difficult.

CALL TO ACTION

Dara entreats the characters to help her **rescue Commander De La Reue's soul** so she can breathe life back into it, and then they can return to the Bloody Hooves in Avernus.

PART 1: SOUL OF THE HUNT

Estimated Duration: 2 hours 30 minutes

The Death Dells are not a safe place. Every creature here hunts and is, in turn, hunted. The very land itself is brutal, and the Abyssal layer twists the mind toward bloodshed. In this place of trials, the characters must somehow track down the wandering soul of Commander Rotger De La Reue.

STORY OBJECTIVE A

The characters must navigate the Death Dells to **rescue the commander's soul** before it is devoured by the demon lord Yeenoghu.

SETTING INFORMATION

Yeenoghu's lair is a place of blood and death, populated by gnolls, hyenas, and ghouls. There are few structures or signs of civilization on his layer of the Abyss. The majority of the land is composed of savanna and ravines which extend to the "southern" horizon. The "north" is bound by the Screaming Peaks, the "west" by the Seeping Woods, and the "east" by a poisonous sea called the Curseallow.

The following features are present on this layer of the Abyss that the DM can use to add flavor to encounters:

Dangerous Environment: The environment itself is dangerous. It is oppressively hot with constant sun. Most water sources are tainted with poison or disease. Sharp stones and spiky plants tear at clothes and skin. Everything here wears on the body. For every two scenes completed, the characters must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or gain a level of exhaustion. Characters who are immune to poison, disease, thirst, or high temperatures gain advantage on the saving throw. One level of exhaustion is removed after a short rest, or all can be removed when the character completes a long rest in a cool place with ample clean water. Resting in the Death Dells results in a delaying encounter (see "On the Trail").

Madness. If a humanoid spends at least 1 hour in the Death Dells or sees the Beast of Butchery himself, that creature must succeed on a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw or descend into a madness determined by the **Madness of Yeenoghu** table. A creature that succeeds on this saving throw can't be affected for 24 hours unless it is in the presence of Yeenoghu himself. Dara is immune to this effect.

The Wages of Sin. Whenever characters must make a saving throw versus madness in Yeenoghu's realm, they make the saving throw with a -1 penalty for every three *soul coin* charges (rounded down) that the character has spent with anyone (such as Mahadi or Fai Chen) except Dara. Remember each whole *soul coin* has three charges.

MADNESS OF YEENOGHU

If a creature goes mad after an hour in the Death Dells or at the sight of the demon lord, roll on the **Madness of Yeenoghu** table to determine the nature of the madness, which is a character flaw that lasts until cured. See the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for more on madness.

Madness of Yeenoghu

Roll a d100 to determine the flaw the creature acquires until the madness is cured.

d100	Flaw
01–20	"I get caught up in the flow of anger and try to stoke others around me into forming an angry mob."
21–40	"The flesh of other intelligent creatures is delicious!"
41–60	"I rail against the laws and customs of civilization, attempting to return to a more primitive time."
61–80	"I hunger for the deaths of others and am constantly starting fights in the hope of seeing bloodshed."
81–00	"I keep trophies from the bodies I have slain, turning them into adornments."

Predation. Beasts in the Death Dells become unusually primal. Predators kill far more than what they need for food. Carcasses of prey are left to rot in an unnatural display of wasteful slaughter. Animals normally considered prey are immediately unsettled and hard to control. Mounts with an Intelligence score less than 3 require a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check to control them in the presence of a predator.

Spikes. Large iron spikes frequently grow out of the ground and stone surfaces in the Death Dells. Yeenoghu often impales the bodies of the slain on these spikes. Areas of spikes are difficult terrain. Any creature that enters an area affected by spikes must also succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or stop moving and take 7 (2d6) piercing damage. Any creature knocked prone makes this saving throw with disadvantage. Areas of spikes can be added to any of the encounters in the Death Dells at the DM's discretion.

TRACKING THE COMMANDER

The characters are trying to locate the commander's soul as quickly as possible, and doing so is very difficult. Here are a number of possible ways the characters might try and how they function in the Death Dells.

Augury, Commune, Contact Other Plane, and Divination. On his home layer, Yeenoghu blocks other powerful entities from giving information about the location of his prey.

Commune with Nature. In addition to the generally unnatural nature of the surrounding lands, the commander does not count as any of the subjects that the spell detects.

Dara, Divine Sense, and Detect Evil and Good. If Dara retains her abilities as a Chosen (see the Saving Dara side bar in the Adventure Primer), she or any character using one of these abilities can sense the ground that the commander has walked across as a slightly cleaner path, tainted with the commander's goodness. This gives the characters a path to follow. For Dara to sense the path the commander took, she must concentrate uninterrupted for 1 minute.

Locate Creature. This spell is unlikely to be useful as the characters are unlikely to be within 1,000 feet of Commander de la Reue until they can see him. If the characters are having a particularly hard time tracking him, you might allow them to use it to triangulate his position between this and Dara's sense.

Scrying. The commander is particularly difficult to scry upon. He attempts to resist the spell with advantage and has a +19 bonus to his saving throw. Even if he is found, the 10 feet of surrounding hellscape looks much like any place else in the Death Dells.

Tracking. The commander's trail can be followed with a successful DC 20 Wisdom (Survival) check. There is an odd cinnamon scent associated with the commander's soul, and those who have the ability to track by scent gain advantage to follow his trail.

Other Abilities. Other spells and abilities that might locate the commander do not work unless you deem that they are appropriate. If you are running short on time or if a solution is particularly creative, you may choose to allow the party to skip one encounter in the "On the Trail" section.

ON THE TRAIL

As the characters hunt for the commander, the parties have encounters that either advance or delay their search. If they advance three times before they are delayed three times, they manage to get to the commander's soul before it is devoured by Yeenoghu.

Presented here are three advancing (A) and three delaying (D) encounters. If the characters successfully have a way to track the commander's soul coming out of the gate, they begin with an advancing encounter of your choice. If the characters do not have a way to track the commander or fail in their attempt to track his soul, they begin with a delaying encounter of your choice. Each encounter then has a resolution that tells you whether to proceed with a delaying or advancing encounter, again of your choice. **Each encounter takes 1 hour.** If you are using **Bonus Objective A**, insert it after two encounters have occurred.

1A. PREDATORS

While cutting across the Dun Savanna, the party is spotted as they near a watering hole by a group of hunters sent out by Yeenoghu.

AREA INFORMATION

The area has the following features.

Dimensions and Terrain. The Dun Savanna is a wide-open plain of tall grass which provides advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks. Occasional patches of the grass grow particularly thick and sharp as razors.



Lighting. The blazing sun bakes the Dun Savanna with intense heat and blinding light.

Poisoned Pond. The watering hole, like most water sources in the Death Dells, is filled with disease. Any creature coming into contact with the water must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or contract **sight rot**. Unlike the normal disease whose effects are felt after the first day, the Death Dells accelerates the incubation, and an infected creature feels its effects after its first short or long rest.

Razorgrass. Whenever a creature moves, it has a 1 in 6 chance of crossing a 5-foot patch of razorgrass. When a creature moves through a razorgrass for the first time on a turn, the creature must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or take 8 (1d10 + 3) slashing damage. A creature can use its reaction as it moves to pick out a safe path by succeeding on a DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) or DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check. If successful, the creature notices any patches of razorgrass in its path.

DISEASE: SIGHT ROT

This painful infection causes bleeding from the eyes and eventually blinds the victim.

A beast or humanoid that drinks water tainted by sight rot must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or become infected. One day after infection, the creature's vision starts to become blurry. The creature takes a -1 penalty to attack rolls and ability checks that rely on sight. At the end of each long rest after the symptoms appear, the penalty worsens by 1. When it reaches -5, the victim is blinded until its sight is restored by magic such as *lesser restoration* or *heal*.

Sight rot can be cured using a rare flower called Eyebright, which grows in some swamps. In Yeenoghu's realm, it can only be found in the Seeping Woods (2D). Given an hour, a character who has proficiency with an herbalism kit can turn the flower into one dose of ointment. Applied to the eyes before a long rest, one dose of it prevents the disease from worsening after that rest. After three doses, the ointment cures the disease entirely.

CREATURE INFORMATION

The hunters are split between two groups. Two **shoosuvus** are sneaking through the tall grass and can be spotted by character with a passive Perception of 16 or better. Meanwhile two **gnoll fangs of Yeenoghu**, each riding a **roc**, are attempting to dive down on the characters out of the sun and are seen by characters with a passive Perception of 20 or better.

The hunters attack, intent on killing all of the characters until only one roc remains, at which point they remember their actual mission to scout for Yeenoghu and the remaining roc tries to flee.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak:** Remove a **gnoll fang of Yeenoghu** and a **shoosuva**.
- **Weak:** Remove a **gnoll fang of Yeenoghu**.
- **Strong:** Add a **roc**.
- **Very Strong:** Add a **gnoll fang of Yeenoghu**, a **roc**, and a **shoosuva**.

What Do They Want? As minions of Yeenoghu, they primarily want to slaughter the characters and devour their flesh. Secondly they are supposed to be helping their master search for a lost soul in the Death Dells, and if they remember through their bloodlust, tell him.

What Do They Know? Rip, rend, and tear. Somewhere there is prey to hunt and the characters look like it. They also know that Yeenoghu senses the taint of goodness in his realm. It's made him hungry and he is hunting it—a final hunt before joining his forces that have recently landed in Avernus. The bulk of their forces and those of other demon lords have already begun the attack.

PLAYING THE PILLARS

Here are some suggestions for this encounter:

Combat. The rocs and their riders prefer to fight in the air, with the rocs either carrying victims into the air with their talons to be dropped from 100+ feet or attacking with the reach of their beaks as they fly by and the riders strafe with javelins. The shoosuvus try to focus their attacks on a foe that is separated from the party to paralyze the foe and drag it away into the tall grass.

Exploration. The gnolls and shoosuvus recognize the poisoned water and razorgrass and try to use the terrain to their advantage when possible, attempting to trap characters between the dangerous terrain on one side and attacks from the other.

Social. While the hunters are not a significant threat to the characters, this fight offers to highlight the frenzied bloodlust that blazes in the hearts of Yeenoghu's followers as well as how the plane affects visitors. Yeenoghu's minions cannot be reasoned with; they seek only carnage.

DEVELOPMENT

If this was not the party's third advancing encounter, use these criteria to decide whether the characters advance to an advancing (A) or delaying (D) encounter.

Advancing. If the characters stop the scouting party from escaping to warn Yeenoghu, choose an advancing (A) encounter.

Delaying. If any of the scouting party escaped to warn Yeenoghu, choose a delaying (D) encounter.

2A. ESCAPED SLAVES

A group of five escaped slaves (**commoners**) are fleeing across the savanna and catch sight of the characters from 250 feet away.

AREA INFORMATION

The area has the following features.

Dimensions and Terrain. Dry grass grows to the waist of a Medium-sized creature, covering low rolling hills.

Lighting. The blazing sun bakes the Dun Savanna with intense heat and blinding light.

CREATURE INFORMATION

The escapees' response depends on the appearance of the party. If the characters appear monstrous or demonic, the slaves scream and run in the opposite direction. However, if the characters appear to be possible heroes, they excitedly come forward. The first to speak is a halfling female (**commoner**) named Odalle, originally a sailmaker from Luskan.

What Do They Want? All of the commoners were captured by cultists of Yeenoghu and cast into the Death Dells to serve as slaves and eventual prey for endless hunts. They are crazed with fear and desperate to escape the Abyss.

What Do They Know? They recently saw a glowing human in plate armor and can give directions where the soul was heading allowing the characters to cut time off the search, but they only trade the information for a way out. Also, they know that there were previously vast numbers of demons, gnolls, and undead gathering on the savanna, but they are gone now.

PLAYING THE PILLARS

Here are some suggestions for this encounter:

Combat. The slaves are not a match for the characters and run if attacked or confronted with any violence. They do not defend each other, but instead flee, leaving others to suffer.

Exploration. A successful DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) check notes that several of the slaves have leaves in their hair, and trees are not to be found in the savanna, suggesting they have come from the Seeping Woods to the west.

Social. The escaped slaves are panicked and not especially willing to negotiate. They want out now! Anyone who can grant that (such as by a *plane shift* spell) immediately gains their trust and all of the details they can remember about where in the Seeping Woods they saw the commander's soul and just how close Yeenoghu is to catching him. If necessary, they might be convinced to take the portal to Avernus with a successful DC 20 Charisma-based skill check if the characters lead them to it. However, taking the commoners to the portal takes time that the characters don't have, so unless the characters split up or use magic to transport the escapees, the shortcut doesn't help them. Of course, if they split up, they don't have all of their members for the next encounter.

It is possible that the characters might trick the commoners into relaying the information and then renege on the deal. In this case, they follow the characters hoping to find a way to freedom, and Dara does her best to care for the poor souls.

DEVELOPMENT

If this was not the party's third advancing encounter, use these criteria to decide whether the characters advance to an advancing (A) or delaying (D) encounter.

Advancing. If the characters negotiate for the location of the commander's soul, and the entire group doesn't have to travel back to the portal, choose an advancing (A) encounter.

Delaying. If the characters are not able to get the information and proceed without it, or if they get it but travel back to the portal, choose a delaying (D) encounter.

3A. WATERING HOLE

The trail leads toward an oasis of green on the savanna where the ruins of some structure pierce the greenery. The promise of shade and fresh water is tempting.

AREA INFORMATION

The area has the following features.

Dimensions and Terrain. A few tall bushes with many tiny leaves surround a lily-covered pond under the shade of acacia-like trees. Woody vines snake across the ruins. Greenery is more prevalent as the oasis is close to the Seeping Woods.

Lighting. The blazing sun of the Dun Savanna is blunted by the foliage, offering a refuge from the sun. On the pond or out from under the foliage, the sun is as merciless as always.

Interesting Insects. Insects are a common sight in the Abyss and especially in Yeenoghu's realm. A character with a passive Investigation of 15 or higher notices several dozen beetles feasting on some of the plants along a path through the oasis and nowhere else. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) check notes that the beetles should be carnivorous and have no interest in these plants. Closer inspection and a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check notices a few opalescent droplets on the leaves attracting the bugs. As the character watches, one of the beetles consumes a droplet and then rapidly begins to morph into a beautiful butterfly.

The droplets radiate magic and good. A successful DC 20 Intelligence (Religion) check suggests it might be residue from the commander's soul, suggesting a path to follow.

Pond. Clean-looking water fills the 20-foot-radius pond. Unfortunately, it is not safe. Any creature drinking the water must succeed on a DC 20 Constitution saving throw to avoid the effects. Those that fail feel fine for 1 minute, after which they take 10 (3d6) poison damage at the beginning of their turn as blood begins to ooze from every pore. Once characters have started taking damage, they may attempt another saving throw at the end of each round to shake off the effect. Characters with a passive Perception of 16 or higher notice bones, both animal and humanoid, in the mud. A **mantrap** lily (see "Creature Information") is floating in the center of the pond.

Ruins. Two ruined walls meet to form the corner of some long-destroyed stone building. Blocks of stone with well-weathered edges can be seen in the pond. Rude carvings deface what remains of the walls. What few words there are have been scrawled in Abyssal and praise the brutality of Yeenoghu and his brood. A character that succeeds on a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check notes that some of the more recent scrawl appears to be vaguely reminiscent of a map. It suggests an attempt to rapidly advance to the Styx and from there break through to Dis and the lower layers of the Nine Hells.

Searching the ruins notes that it is a frequent campsite. Characters that succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check find several tracks. Most are clearly from gnolls, but some are larger, and some are not humanoid. A character that succeeds on a DC 20 Wisdom (Survival) check notes the large, flame-scarred prints were caused by a balor, and the furrows are reminiscent of a large snake, probably several mariliths.

CREATURE INFORMATION

A **mantrap** water lily floats in the center of the pond, surround by dozens of normal lily pads. After the characters disturb the water, or when they have been in the oasis for at least three rounds, it releases its Attractive Pollen and waits for prey to come close enough to Engulf. When engulfing a creature, it pulls itself and its prey below the surface of the water, adding suffocation to its victim's challenges.

TREASURE

Characters searching the remains of the campsite find a few coins and a carved bone idol.

DEVELOPMENT

If this was not the party's third advancing encounter, use these criteria to decide whether the characters advance to an advancing (A) or delaying (D) encounter.

Advancing. If the characters find the commander's path, choose an advancing (A) encounter.

Delaying. If the characters do not find the commander's path, or if they stop to rest here, choose a delaying (D) encounter.

1D. DORESAIN'S DELEGATION

Doresain, the King of Ghouls, is a vassal of Yeenoghu and must occasionally offer tribute to his conqueror. His minions are coming out of a portal in the Screaming Peaks from the 421st layer of the Abyss, known as the White Kingdom.

AREA INFORMATION

The area has the following features.

Dimensions and Terrain. The area is filled with rocky hills, and the plentiful large boulders offer many places to hide. The ravine is roughly 30 feet wide.

Lighting. The sun does not extend into the deep delves between the rocky hills, making everything here clouded with shadow. The area is considered in dim light.

Boulders and Scree. The floor of the ravine is covered in loose scree, making footing in some areas treacherous. Several randomly placed, 15-foot-diameter patches of scree are difficult terrain. In addition, there are several boulders large enough to hide behind and gain cover.

Steep Walls. The walls of the ravine are very steep and require a DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check to climb. The wall on the west side is 50 feet high, while the east side is 20 feet high.

CREATURE INFORMATION

A **nightwalker**, two **maurezhi**, four **ghasts**, and eight **gnoll witherlings** are leading thirty **commoners** that are to be presented to Yeenoghu as tribute for his hunts. Seeing more mortals, the nightwalker sees the opportunity to add to their tribute and orders an immediate attack.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak:** Remove a **maurezhi** and four **witherlings**.
- **Weak:** Remove four **witherlings**.
- **Strong:** Add a **maurezhi**.
- **Very Strong:** Add a **maurezhi** and two **ghasts**.

What Do They Want? The undead and demons want only to kill or enslave mortals, complete their tasks, and then return to the White Kingdom so they can join the attack their demon prince has already begun on Avernus. The commoners want nothing more than to be returned to safety on the Prime. They beg the characters to aid them.

What Do They Know? They know nothing about the commander's missing soul, as the demons and undead have only just arrived. The commoners know nothing helpful.



PLAYING THE PILLARS

Here are some suggestions for this encounter:

Combat. During combat, the nightwalker tries to avoid being within 30 feet of the commoners so as to avoid killing them with its *annihilating aura*; however, if the characters stay at a distance, making combat difficult, it drags the commoners into its aura as bait and lets them die. It continues to do so until the characters approach to face it.

Exploration. Part of the 20-foot-high wall is unstable. A character who succeeds on a DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) check notices that it can be brought down. Characters with the Stonecunning trait may apply the benefit to this check. If 30 points of damage are done to the wall (including area-of-effect spells), a section crumbles into the ravine, filling a 30-foot-long by 15-foot-wide area with fallen rock. Creatures in the area suffer 33 (6d10) bludgeoning damage, and if they are Large or smaller, they are restrained, half buried in the rubble. Those that succeed on a DC 20 Dexterity saving throw take half damage and are not restrained. As an action, a creature can free itself with a successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check. Creatures can free another creature with a successful Strength (Athletics) check.

Social. The maurezhi use their Assume Form ability to hide among the commoners so they can pretend to be slaves in need of rescuing. They purposefully put themselves in dangerous positions to lure would-be heroes in close. Until they are discovered, they can use Raise Ghoul on the ghasts with impunity.

TREASURE

The witherlings are carrying a trunk on poles that is filled with coins and gems for Yeenoghu.

DEVELOPMENT

Use these criteria to decide whether the characters advance to an advancing (A) or delaying (D) encounter.

Advancing. If the characters bring the rescued commoners with them or if they leave them to their own devices, choose an advancing (A) encounter.

Delaying. If the characters travel back to the portal or otherwise spend time ferrying the commoners to safety, choose a delaying (D) encounter.

2D. DINNER PARTY

Under the shade of the yellow-leafed trees of the Seeping Woods, a few humans eke out a passable existence in a tiny settlement called Harsh. Harsh survives primarily by logging the forest and making offers of lumber to the occasional gnoll that ventures into the woods.

When the characters arrive, the villagers are laying out a midday meal on long planks balanced on logs.

AREA INFORMATION

The area has the following features.

Dimensions and Terrain. Harsh consists of five buildings: three domiciles, a smokehouse, and a building for the storing of tools and lumber. The village is surrounded by dozens of wooden carvings of ferocious beasts ranging in size from that of a cat to larger than a house. Some are clearly snarling gnolls, but several are fantastical beasts or more abstract symbols.

Lighting. The bright sun is muted under the yellow canopy of the Seeping Woods, making it well-lit but much more comfortable.

Food. The food is of average quality, but after months in the Nine Hells for most of Dara's companions, it likely seems delicious. Unfortunately, the "meat" is all that remains of few travelers, supplemented with a butchered hog to allay suspicion. Also, while none of the characters' meals are poisoned, the cups they are given to pour water, ale, or wine into have been coated with **oil of taggit poison**. After a few minutes, any character not immune to poison must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for 24 hours. A poisoned creature falls unconscious but wakes up if it takes damage.

Rest. The village is a "safe," suitable place to rest.

CREATURE INFORMATION

When they are seen, three villagers approach cautiously, clearly ready for trouble. If the characters are open to talking, Ligach (female human **warlock of the fiend**) introduces herself and two other villagers: Domelch and Uid (both male humans that use the statistics of a **frost giant everlasting one** but are Medium humanoids who speak Common). The other nine villagers (various ages/genders, human **berserkers**) stay back.

They invite the characters to rest and take a meal with them so they might talk over what the party is doing here.

What Do They Want? Ligach quickly sizes up the characters as adventurers and thus not a group the villagers of Harsh want to engage in direct combat. Instead she tries to encourage the party to stay and rest...so eventually once they have let their guard down the villagers might butcher them for their next meal.

What Do They Know? Life in Harsh is not as pastoral as it might seem, and the energies of the Death Dells have changed its inhabitants. The group have become cannibals. They actually know nothing about the commander, but Ligach implies that she has seen him and promises to tell them more if they treat her and the villagers well, starting with sharing a meal. Ligach tells a vague story about a lost soul heading through the Cursewallow, and also seeing the Beast of Butchery out on the hunt with his gnolls. She claims to know a shortcut, but of course, it's all lies.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak:** Remove one **frost giant everlasting one** and four **berserkers**.
- **Weak:** Remove four **berserkers**.
- **Strong:** Add four **berserkers**.
- **Very Strong:** Add one **frost giant everlasting one** and four **berserkers**.

PLAYING THE PILLARS

Here are some suggestions for this encounter:

Combat. The villagers do not want a fair fight. In fact, if the characters decide not to stay or don't succumb to the poison, they let them leave. Only if they can surprise the adventurers while they are at a disadvantage do they try to murder them. If they are attacked, the villagers become enraged and give themselves over to the murderous madness of the Death Dells. If forced to fight, Ligach makes liberal use of *banishment* to even the odds.

Exploration. Any character who can surreptitiously search the village with a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check will find signs of the villagers' despicable lifestyle. There are human bones piled around some of the larger wooden gnoll statues, like an offering. There is a partially butchered man in the smokehouse behind a deer carcass. Also, a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Medicine) check notes that several of the villagers have strange deformities and a trembling disorder suggestive of a cannibalistic diet.

Social. Domelch has a second head named Domeh sprouting from his chest that he keeps hidden under his shirt. Domeh disagrees with everything that Domelch says or does, and if the characters somehow manage to converse with Domeh, it takes very little to get the two of them arguing with each other and potentially giving clues that the villagers are cannibals.

DEVELOPMENT

Use these criteria to decide whether the characters advance to an advancing (A) or delaying (D) encounter.

Advancing. If the characters don't stay for a short rest or longer, they proceed to an advancing (A) encounter.

Delaying. If the characters stay for a meal or a rest, they proceed to a delaying (D) encounter.

3D. THE PRINCE OF TEETH

The 422nd layer of the Abyss has had many rulers, including Bechard the Obyrith Lord of Tempests who was betrayed by his lieutenant Thirthralleth to the Tanari that now rule the Abyss. In reward for his aid, the demons tied Thirthralleth to a boulder and have been slowly killing it for millennia.

Thirthralleth appears as a gargantuan mass of matted fur studded with great fanged maws, all of which spew incoherent noises.

AREA INFORMATION

The area has the following features.

Dimensions and Terrain. Thirthralleth's prison is a flat rock the size of a stable with chains thicker than a human embedded into it.

Lighting. The blazing sun bakes the Dun Savanna with intense heat and blinding light.

Chains. Eighteen chains are anchored to the four corners of the rock, threaded through Thirthralleth's mouths and intertwined with its hair. Each has a complicated lock that can be opened with a successful DC 30 Dexterity check with proficiency in Thieves' Tools. However, if the character is not able to hover above the rock or has less than a 20-foot reach, the character will need to stand on the rock to reach the locks. To do so safely requires a successful DC 25 Dexterity saving throw. Those that fail contact one of the **imprisoning runes**.

Imprisoning Runes. The rock to which Thirthralleth is chained is covered in Abyssal runes that glow with obvious power. A character that takes time to search the rock and makes a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check can find 1,001 runes. Touching any of the runes causes a creature to suffer 14 (4d6) force damage each round it is in contact with the rune.

A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check can determine that the runes are specifically designed to cage an Obyrith, the demons that once ruled the Abyss before the current Tanari. Each is the equivalent of a 9th-level spell and should all of them be dispelled, Thirthralleth could be freed.

CREATURE INFORMATION

Thirthralleth, the Obyrith Prince of Teeth, has long since ceased to be coherent. It now only whimpers and gibbers between gnashing its toothy maws at anything that comes near. Thirthralleth speaks no languages but makes frequent noises. Anyone attempting to contact it telepathically finds only terrifyingly incoherent thoughts and must succeed on a DC 20 Wisdom saving throw or fall unconscious for 10 minutes and gain a short-term madness. A character that manages to maintain their sanity can discern only two coherent thoughts: a murderous hatred for all living things and the desire to consume.

DEVELOPMENT

Use these criteria to decide whether the characters advance to an advancing (A) or delaying (D) encounter.

Advancing. If the characters do not allow themselves to become distracted by Thirthralleth's prison for more than a few minutes, proceed to an advancing (A) encounter.

Delaying. If the characters become distracted by Thirthralleth's prison for more than 10 minutes, proceed to a delaying (D) encounter.

CATCHING THE COMMANDER

Once the characters complete either three advancing (A) or three delaying (D) encounters, they successfully catch up to Commander Rotger De La Reue. Unfortunately, so has Yeenoghu and his horde. How long the demons have been here and the commander's fate depends on whether the characters completed three advancing (A) or three delaying (D) encounters first.

If the party completed three advancing (A) encounters first, the commander's soul has not yet been destroyed. They crest a low rise to see a glowing humanoid of soul stuff wandering confused, harried by the demons and gnolls as Yeenoghu strides forward to consume the soul. There is still a chance.

If the party completed three delaying (D) encounters first, the second wave is already present, and they arrive just as Yeenoghu tears the soul into two pieces and drinks from the larger piece. The demons howl with savage glee as the light of the soul fades away. The characters have failed.

AREA INFORMATION

The area has the following features.

Dimensions and Terrain. The characters begin on a low, grass-covered rise, with the commander's soul and Yeenoghu's pack 20 feet away at the bottom of the rise. There is a flat gulley 40 feet wide before another hill that prevents the characters from seeing oncoming waves, but their howls are easily heard.

Lighting. The blazing sun bakes the Dun Savanna with intense heat and blinding light.

Commander De La Reue. The commander's soul cannot be touched by mortals, but it can be herded by using an action to block the soul's path and direct it. A creature can use an action to change the soul's path. Force effects such as a *wall of force*, an unbarred *forcecage*, or an *Otiluke's resilient sphere* will block the soul's path, but no physical objects do. At the end of each round the commander's soul moves 1d6 × 5 feet in a random direction if it has not been herded. If it has been herded, it moves in the direction it was last herded.

Dara. If Dara can be brought adjacent to the commander's soul, she can begin the ritual to bring him back. Doing so takes three rounds. Once she begins, the soul ceases moving. Once she finishes, the commander is resurrected and becomes physical. If the party is doing fine, he is too confused upon his resurrection to be helpful and is still recovering until the fight is over. If the party needs help, he immediately grabs his sword and joins the fray.

CREATURE INFORMATION

Yeenoghu's demonic horde is not well organized, and each round a wave crests the opposite hill and joins the fight.

Wave One. When the characters arrive, a **gnoll fang of Yeenoghu**, two **gnoll pack lords**, and twelve **gnolls** have surrounded the commander and are attempting to herd his soul up the opposite hill, toward Yeenoghu.

Wave Two. Yeenoghu, the Beast of Butchery and demon prince, arrives. Note that seeing the demon prince requires a madness saving throw (see "Setting Information" in part 1).

Wave Three. A **flind** mounted on a **monstrous peryton** and four **gnoll archers** each under the effects of a *potion of flying* crest the hill. They target flying creatures first and those avoiding melee second.

Wave Four. Three **maurezhi** and six **ghosts** join the fray.

Wave Five. Crackfang and four **armanites** ride over the hill. Note that Crackfang's Aura of Hate benefits all of Yeenoghu's horde. Crackfang is riding one of the armanites.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak:** Remove four **gnolls** (wave one), two **archers** (wave three), one **maurezhi** (wave four), three **ghasts** (wave four), and two **armanites** (wave five). There is an additional round between each wave.
- **Weak:** Remove four **gnolls** (wave one), two **archers** (wave three), three **ghasts** (wave four), and one **armanite** (wave five).
- **Strong:** Add two **gnoll pack lords** (wave one), two **archers** (wave three), one **maurezhi** (wave four), and one **armanite** (wave five).
- **Very Strong:** Add two **gnoll pack lords** and one **marilith** (wave one), one **monstrous peryton** and two **archers** (wave three), one **maurezhi** and three **ghasts** (wave four), and two **armanites** (wave five).

TREASURE

Crackfang carries a *defender* (greatsword) and wears a crude necklace sporting a human skull encased in gold and gems.



PLAYING THE PILLARS

Here are some suggestions for this encounter:

Combat. Crackfang smites liberally and tries to kill as many characters as possible, reveling in the slaughter. He uses his Defender to increase his AC if it seems like the characters are easily hit. If the table is Strong or Very Strong, he has casts *aid* and *aura of purity* before arriving on the field. Yeenoghu stops at nothing to kill all of the characters and never flees.

Exploration. The gnolls try to harry the commander's soul toward Yeenoghu. If the commander has not already been herded by an ally, any gnoll within movement range who is not engaged in combat moves to the commander and direct it toward Yeenoghu. If Yeenoghu is adjacent to the commander's soul and not being attacked, on his turn he uses his action to consume the soul.

Social. While it's not likely that Yeenoghu's horde is up for conversation, this is a great opportunity to play up the savage rage the gnolls feel, and how it is only amplified by the presence of the demon prince.

DEATH OF A DEMON LORD

The death of Yeenoghu on his home plane is a thing that can change the order of the universe.

As the Gnoll Lord falls, the ground shakes. Yeenoghu's chest splits open and a cloud of flies bursts forth, momentarily blotting out the sun. The demon's still-beating heart begins to swell, growing well beyond the cavity that housed it. A wretched rotting stench rides the wind as the demons look hungrily at the receptacle of the demonic power.

Ask characters that are adjacent to Yeenoghu what they do. Before them lies the receptacle of all of Yeenoghu's power and the right to control the stuff of the Abyss. If any character moves to touch it, Dara, if she is alive, warns them not to touch it as it's evil! Any character that picks up the heart has the overwhelming urge to eat it. They get one more chance to throw away the pure evil, but if the character chooses not to, the character bites into the heart and as they consume it, the adventurer dissolves away, flowing into the ground. The character begins the slow, painful metamorphosis into a demon prince and the land responds. Have the player describe what their layer of the Abyss will look like as the land begins changing. The character gains the **Demon Prince** story award, permanently retiring them from play FOREVER. If Commander De La Reue is alive, the player may play him for the rest of the adventure. If not, they may play Dara (if she is alive).

Any character that possessed the story award **Lost Hope** from DDAL09-19 *Fang and Claw* loses that story award if the party kills Yeenoghu.

DEVELOPMENT

When the characters are ready to flee back through the portal into Avernus, proceed with Part 2.



PART 2: BLOODWAR!

Estimated Duration: 1 hour 20 minutes

Following the attempt to recover the commander's soul, the characters can return back through the portal and then the demonic mobile fortress known as the House of Gore (DDAL09-19 *Fang and Claw*). They exit atop the House at the Maw Gate: a 30-foot-tall archway that opens into the citadel interior normally blocked by a red-hot portcullis that currently stands open. From the balcony 200 feet in the air, the characters have an excellent view of the battlefield. The hordes of the Abyss are swarming the infernal lines in a terrifying battle.

Allow the characters a moment to take in the battle by attempting an Intelligence (History) check. Characters with an appropriate martial background feature, such as Military Rank from the soldier background, gain advantage on this check.

- **DC 0:** The characters are behind the demonic lines. From this vantage, it is clear the abyssal forces composed of demons, gnolls, and undead vastly outnumber the defenders of Avernus. The demonic forces carry many banners with the heraldry of different abyssal lords, but the triple-headed flail of Yeenoghu is the most common, followed by the rotted ghoulish skull of Doresain.
- **DC 5:** Far on the left flank there is a group of infernal hellfire engines atop some tall hills, obliterating any of the demons that move in their direction but otherwise not participating in the battle. A group of mounted humans in white seem to be surrounding them

protectively. Colorful pennants declare it as Mahadi's Wandering Emporium.

- **DC 10 (the characters DO NOT have the Ice Pact story award):** The demons are overwhelming the infernal lines. While the devils are putting forth a stout defense, it is not adapting well to the demons' constantly changing tactics.
- **DC 10 (the characters DO have the Ice Pact story award):** The demons are pressing the infernal lines, but they are holding for now. The devils have instituted a flexible, layered defense that is adept at adjusting for the demons' constantly changing tactics. You can pick out General Everbleed at the core of the infernal leadership.
- **DC 15:** It appears the demons' goal is the port on the river. If they take it, not only will they command the Styx, but they will have access to the armories of the Nine Hells in Dis. If they break through and destroy the foundry city, the diabolic forces will be greatly weakened.
- **DC 20:** Zariel herself is nowhere to be seen. Nothing could have kept her from defending Avernus, but the battle stretches beyond the horizon so it is likely that her attention is elsewhere—such as wherever Yeenoghu's vassal Doresain, the King of Ghouls, has taken the field—when it is sorely needed here. Given how trusted General Everbleed was in her court, it is likely she trusts him to defend this area.

STORY OBJECTIVE B

Survive, and change the course of the Bloodwar.

WHAT TO DO?

Dara's mission in Avernus has finally finished. She has no ideas how to proceed. The characters have several options now:

- **Return to Mahadi's Wandering Emporium:** This is where their allies are and probably a good source of information and reinforcement. If the party is accompanied by Commander De La Reue, he believes their first priority should be to link up with the rest of the Bloody Hooves at the emporium.
- **Attack the demons:** The party has the element of surprise, and if the demons break through, it could be a major defeat for the Nine Hells in the Blood War, which could lead to the demons spreading their chaos to other planes. This could happen before or after the characters visit the emporium
- **Attack the devils:** After all their time in the Nine Hells, some characters might be looking for a chance at payback. This could happen before or after the characters visit the emporium.
- **Do nothing or leave Avernus:** A bit anti-climactic, but Dara's mission is officially over as far as she knows. The commander, if present, is strongly against this. If the party chooses this route their adventure is over.

If you are using **Bonus Objective B**, it should be inserted after the characters visit the emporium (if they do) but before they attack the demons or devils.

MAHADI'S EMPORIUM

From the vantage of a nearby hilltop, Mahadi's Wandering Emporium and the party's other allies are gawking at the spectacle of the demonic invasion, unsure how best to proceed. The arrival of the characters is met with significant hope, which quickly turns to joy if they are in the company of the commander, or despair if they are not.

Mahadi quickly takes charge and calls a council to determine the best way to proceed. This scene is intended to be freeform, with many of the allies the characters have made over their time in Avernus present and looking to them for guidance while offering their suggestions and aid. If the characters did not ally with any of the NPCs listed here, feel free to remove them.

- **Commander de la Reue.** The commander has learned from the failure of the Hellriders' previous ride and realizes the Bloody Hooves cannot allow the balance of the Bloodwar to tip, even if it means aiding the Hells in repelling the demons. If he is present, at one point during the upcoming combats have the Hellriders perform an epic charge into the demon lines. Hopelessly outnumbered but screaming out to the gods of light, they willingly sacrifice themselves to do what is right. Draw one or a few enemies away from the characters as they move to confront the Bloody Hooves (DM's discretion as to the right amount for any given fight as needed by the characters).

- **Dara.** Dara isn't sure what to do but will happily side with whatever the characters decide. She uses whatever powers or spells she has remaining and can accept *soul coins* to grant boons as mentioned in **Appendix 7**.
- **Fai Chen.** Fai Chen believes the right thing is to assault the demons, but he doesn't have a good plan on how to do it. He can *identify* any items the characters have found so far. If they need a ride, his cart and Gary the mule stand ready to help. During the fighting, Fai Chen has a *scroll of disintegrate* which he can use to remove one *forcecage* or similar effect if the party is not able.
- **Gaarelmorian.** The dragon knows that fighting the demons is the right choice. Once during the battle, the characters can call down his breath weapon as an action, causing an icy blast in a 60-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 20 Constitution saving throw, taking 58 (13d8) cold damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.
- **Sir Gidor Honorsbright.** Sir Gidor is in favor of riding out and attacking the devils whom he blames for corrupting Zariel. If the commander is present, he defers to the commander instead. Sir Gidor has been studying the battle and can offer any of the information from the Intelligence (History) check at the beginning of part 2 that they characters failed to garner.
- **Glanring Ironbelly.** The dwarven paladin is devoted to protecting Dara. He believes that the characters should take some action but has no preference as long as something is done. He hopes to stick next to Dara on the same mount and use his reaction to intercept any attacks meant for her, automatically taking any damage she would have taken from that attack. He has 100 hit points.
- **Hadriel.** The celestial griffon is the commander's mount and is happy to be reunited. If the commander is not present, he will allow himself to be ridden by Glanring or Sir Gidor.
- **Horst Atheraice.** Horst believes the right thing to do is leave the Bloodwar to the Bloodwar and ride to Elturel's aid, ignoring what is right in front of them. If the commander is present, he defers to the commander instead. If needed, Horst is willing to use one of his slots to cast *heal* before the combat.
- **Mahadi.** Mahadi is strongly in favor of helping the forces of the Nine Hells to repel the demons. He points out how not only are the forces of the Nine Hells key to protecting the rest of planes from the Abyss, but the gods will not look kindly on those heroes who were in place to save all the known worlds but walked away. Mahadi can accept *soul coins* to grant boons as mentioned in **Appendix 7**. In addition, he can grant a long rest to any character who agrees with his request to aid the Hells and does not have the **No Exceptions!** story award. During the fight, describe his infernal war engines as laying down covering fire to clear the way for the characters if the party chooses to attack the demons.
- **Raskamedies.** The angel suggests a stealthy approach to eliminate key targets among the demons. Unfortunately, he doesn't want to be seen and break the agreement for celestials to stay out of the Bloodwar. He will stay back and protect the emporium. If the characters are not able to get a long rest from Mahadi, he can grant all of them a blessing that confers a short rest.

- **Verwyrr.** The angel strongly believes in a direct, violent approach to the demon problem. Unfortunately, he doesn't want to be seen and break the agreement for celestials to stay out of the Bloodwar. He will stay back and protect the emporium.
- **Zhalruban.** The unicorn believes in attacking either the devils or demons, but prefers to act as a mount for Dara if possible or Glanring Ironbelly if not. She can use her Healing Touch or Teleport to help as needed.

It is up to the characters to decide how to proceed, but it is clear the destiny of the planes hangs in the balance. They have minutes at most before they must act.

ATTACKING THE DEMONS

Attacking the demonic hordes might be enough to help Avernus stand against the Abyss and stop the demons from driving into the heart of the Nine Hells. This action is the only way to prevent one side from gaining a huge advantage in the Blood War and endangering all of the known universe.

Targets. Disrupting the demonic forces requires two strikes. First there is a group of gnoll commanders that are leading the gnolls, undead, and minor demons from above the fray. If those commanders are destroyed, the chaff will turn on each other and allow the devils to focus on more powerful demons. Second, the demonic leadership needs to be defeated to leave the armies of the Abyss in disarray.

The Wages of Sin. The fury of Yeenoghu's brood intensifies against those tainted by the evil of the Hells. They gain a +1 bonus to hit a character for every three *soul coin* charges (rounded down) that the character has spent with anyone (such as Mahadi or Fai Chen) except Dara. Remember each whole *soul coin* has three charges.

TARGET ONE: WAR GNOLLS!

There are four **gnoll pack lords** riding **rocs** above the battlefield and calling commands to the chaff and disposable hordes. They are staying 50 feet apart and 70 feet above the battlefield. There are also seven **evil mages** using *invisibility*, shadowing each of them (for a total of twenty-eight) from the ground.

Getting There. If the characters do not fly or teleport to the gnolls, they have no way to get to them but by fighting through the battle. Any character approaching the area without flying or teleportation suffers 40 – the character's AC slashing damage fighting their way there. You might add or subtract 5 to 15 points from the damage suffered based on the quality of the character's plan.

PLAYING THE PILLARS

Here are some suggestions for this encounter:

Combat. Each of the gnolls try to stay away from enemies using their mobility unless it becomes clear that distance is a disadvantage to them. If the characters attack one of the gnolls, the others come to its aid. Rather than roll for each creature or type of creature, it is recommended that you have each group act together. The gnoll uses its bow and the evil mages use *magic missile* cast at 2nd level (10 force damage each for a total of 70 force damage per pack) on the same target. They try to avoid obvious arcane casters who are likely to cast *shield*.

Exploration. There are clouds of smoke 100 feet above the battlefield. Flying characters and the mounted gnolls might use it to block line of sight.

Social. None of the demonic soldiers are willing to talk.





TARGET TWO: COMMAND

The leader of the Abyss's attack ride atop a massive platform of stone, carried by thousands of mortal slaves who lost their souls to the Abyss.

Getting There. To get to the platform, the characters might fly or teleport, or they must fight through the battle as in the Target One section.

Dimensions and Terrain. The demon commanders are around a stone block littered with maps on the 60-foot-square marble platform. At the corners of the platform are 15-foot, spike-covered chains spinning rapidly. Anyone within the area of the chains must succeed on a DC 20 Dexterity saving throw or suffer 27 (6d8) magical bludgeoning damage.

Occupants. A **balor** and two **mariliths** command the forces of the Abyss. The mariliths try to summon at the first opportunity.

Reinforcements. If the characters are having an easy time assaulting the infernal leaders, each round add a mix of five **ghasts**, **evil mages**, or **gnoll archers**. The reinforcements either focus on a single character or aid the attacks of their leaders.

PLAYING THE PILLARS

Here are some suggestions for this encounter:

Combat. The demons make sure to kill unconscious characters at the first opportunity.

Exploration. The stone block is covered with Abyssal runes which any creature can touch. Touching a rune as a bonus action targets the creature with *cure wounds* (cast as a 3rd-level spell), *fly*, or a *lightning bolt*. If the creature is a demon, it can control what spell targets them. If the creature is not a demon, it can control the effect with a successful DC 20 Intelligence (Arcana) check. This check is made with disadvantage if the creature cannot read Abyssal. On a failure, the spell effect is random.

Social. None of the demonic soldiers are willing to talk.

TREASURE

The balor has a pouch with a *rod of the pact keeper* +2, three *soul coins*, several gems, a *spell scroll of gate*, a *potion of flying*, and a *potion of longevity*.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak:** Remove one **marilith**.
- **Weak:** The **mariliths** have 30 less hp and do not try to summon until the second round.
- **Strong:** Add one **marilith**.
- **Very Strong:** Add one **marilith** and one **balor**.

ATTACKING THE DEVILS

Attacking the infernal lines will likely fully swing the battle in the favor of the Abyss, potentially allowing them to drive deep into the heart of the Nine Hells and forever changing the face of the Blood War and endangering all of the known universe. Very few of the party's allies agree with the choice of this path, and should they choose it, they will not aid the party. They walk this road alone.

Targets. Disrupting the infernal forces requires two strikes. First, there are four iron towers from which signals are coming to the devils. Those signal stations need to be cleared out. Second, the diabolical leadership needs to be defeated to leave the armies of the Hells in disarray.

The Wages of Sin. The taint of the Hells infects the characters and gives the devils power over them. Whenever a character must make a saving throw versus an ability or spell originating from a devil, the character makes the saving throw with a -1 penalty for every three *soul coin* charges (rounded down) that the character has spent with anyone (such as Mahadi or Fai Chen) except Dara. Remember each whole *soul coin* has three charges.

TARGET ONE: SIGNAL STATIONS

There are four iron towers spread across the infernal lines. Each is 50 feet from the next at the corners of a square, and the battle rages right below them. Every so often, a series of colored fireworks shoot off from one of the towers, giving directions to the devilish forces.

Getting There. The towers have no windows or doors; they are solid iron. The devils access them by flying. If the characters do not fly or teleport to them, they have no way to get to them but by fighting through the battle. Any character approaching a tower without flying or teleportation suffers 40 – the character's AC slashing damage fighting their way to the tower. You might add or subtract 5 to 15 points from the damage suffered based on the quality of the character's plan.

Climbing the 100-foot-tall iron tower requires a successful DC 20 Strength (Athletics) check.

Dimensions and Terrain. Each tower is 40 feet in diameter and placed 50 feet from the next tower. There are angled crenulations that offer cover from ranged attacks.

Occupants. Atop each tower is a **spined devil** and seven **evil mages**, all mortal diabolist followers of Zariel. The evil mages are all under the effects of *invisibility*. The spined devil is huddled under a crenellation with a torch and box of fireworks.

PLAYING THE PILLARS

Here are some suggestions for this encounter:

Combat. Each tower is in range of the occupants of the others. If the characters attack one of the towers, the others come to their aid. Rather than roll for each creature or type of creature, it is recommended that you have each tower act together. The spined devil uses its tail spines, and the evil mages use *magic missile* cast at 2nd level (10 force damage each for a total of 70 force damage per tower) on the same target. They try to avoid obvious arcane casters who are likely to cast *shield*.

Exploration. A fire effect can be used to detonate the crate of fireworks, causing 5 fire damage to all creatures on the roof of the tower.

Social. None of the infernal soldiers are willing to talk.

TARGET TWO: COMMAND

From a massive iron boat tied to a pier jutting into the Styx, the command staff of this part of the battlefield direct the Infernal armies.

Getting There. To get to the docks, the characters might fly or teleport, fight through the battle, or somehow navigate the Styx. Unless immune to the river's effects (such as being carried by a water elemental summoned by the special *bowl of commanding water elementals* from DDAL09-07 *Diabolical Dive*, a creature that touches water from the Styx is targeted by a *feblemind* spell (save DC 20) and must repeat the saving throw whenever it starts its turn in the river, until it fails the save.

Dimensions and Terrain. The devil commanders are around a table littered with maps on the deck of an iron ship. Ample boxes, sails, and piles of rope provide cover or complicate the battlefield.

Occupants. A **red abishai** and two **ice devils** command the forces of the Nine Hells. If General Everbleed was not slain in DDAL09-19, he is one of the ice devils. If attacked,

they ruthlessly do everything in their power to eradicate the threat permanently. The ice devils try to summon at the first opportunity.

Reinforcements. If the characters are having an easy time assaulting the infernal leaders, each round add a mix of five **spined devils**, **evil mages**, or tiefling **berserkers**. The reinforcements either focus on a single character or aid the attacks of their leaders.

TREASURE

One of the ice devils has a pouch with a *rod of the pact keeper* +2, three *soul coins*, several gems, a *spell scroll of gate*, a *potion of flying*, and a *potion of longevity*.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak:** Remove one **ice devil**.
- **Weak:** The **ice devils** have 30 less hp.
- **Strong:** Add one **ice devil**.
- **Very Strong:** Add one **ice devil** and one **abishai**.



WRAP-UP

Refer to either of the following depending upon the characters' chosen path.

ATTACK THE DEMONS

As the last of the demons falls, the legions of the Hells rally and push forward. The hordes of the Abyss break amid confusion and are driven forth. Several legions of devils begin to surround you, the beleaguered champions of light: the Chosen Dara, a handful of Hellriders, Fai Chen, and you.

Readying for the next battle, the paragons of good know it will be their last. Then a silence falls across you and you are wrapped in a warm light. All of your hurts and aches are gone. You know you are safe and loved. Dara begins to float above you and in a flash all of you are transported from Avernus to Baldur's Gate. You are filled with a sense of fulfillment and achievement.

In the days that follow, Dara is not seen again, but you know wherever she is, her painful labors have ended.

These characters receive the **Thanks of Ilmater** story award.

ATTACK THE DEVILS

As the final leaders of Avernus fall, the demonic hordes surge onto the docks and from there into Dis via the Styx. The forces of the Abyss have gained the upper hand in the Blood War. It may take years, but it is likely that from here demons will spread across the planes slaughtering and destroying all in their path. Soon all of reality will be blood and pain, and you helped it happen. You are the harbingers of the last doom.

These characters receive the **Tipping the Balance** story award.

REWARDS

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

CHARACTER REWARDS

The characters earn the following rewards:

ADVANCEMENT

Upon successfully **completing** this adventure, each character gains a level. At their discretion, they may choose to decline advancement. Remind your players that the amount of gold that their characters can earn per level is limited; declining advancement means that they may reach a point where they earn no 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	20 gp	80 gp
2	30 gp	240 gp
3	200 gp	1,600 gp
4	750 gp	6,000 gp

MAGIC ITEM(S)

If found during the adventure, the characters can keep the following magic items; these items are described in **Appendix 5**:

- *Defender (greatsword)*
- *Rod of the pact keeper +2*
- *Spell scroll (gate)*
- *Potion of flying*
- *Potion of longevity*
- *Soul coins (3)*

STORY AWARDS

If earned during the adventure, the characters receive the following story awards; these items are described in **Appendix 6**:

- **Birth of a Demon Prince**
- **Enemy of Elisande**
- **Thanks of Ilmater**
- **Tipping the Balance**

DUNGEON MASTER REWARDS

For running this adventure, one of your characters gains a level. That character receives gold based on their tier prior to advancement:

Tier	GP Earned
1	80 gp
2	240 gp
3	1,600 gp
4	6,000 gp

You may also complete DM Quests for running this adventure. See the *Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide* for more information.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

The following NPCs feature prominently in this adventure:

Dara (DAH-ra). Dara is a ten-year-old human girl, wise beyond her years, who was raised by priests of Ilmater in Amn. She found and read from the *Book of Exalted Deeds*—which bestowed upon her great wisdom and the powers of a full-fledged cleric of Ilmater.

- **What They Want.** Dara is on a holy mission into Avernus to find the souls of lost angels and mortal Hellriders who accompanied Zariel during her decent into the Nine Hells.
- **Wise Beyond Her Years.** Dara is single-minded about accomplishing her mission and often sounds much more knowledgeable and mature than her years would suggest.

Fai Chen (FIE CHEN). A Shou man, apparently in his late thirties, Fai is well-known for his strange travelling caravan, where he barter and sells magical items and rarities. He only trades magic items for magic items but accepts coin for consumables and appreciates the value of a *soul coin* (which is a magic item). He is always accompanied by his mule, Gary, and a blue faerie dragon, Drandel dew.

- **What They Want.** Fai Chen is keen to sell his wares to the Bloody Hooves before they depart for Elturel.
- **Mysterious and Resourceful.** Fai Chen always seems to know more than he's telling but never offers to share his knowledge. However, he's willing to lend a hand to those who need it, particularly for an underdog.

Elisande (EL-eh-Sahnd). Chosen of the god Cyric, Elisande is a fourteen-year-old orphan human girl and troublemaker from a disturbing, isolated island village in the Stormy Bay. Her years of malnourishment make her smaller than other children her age, and she is frequently mistaken for a younger age. She is fascinated with outsiders still, despite several years of wandering beyond her village. She has few morals and, due to her upbringing, no true concept of right or wrong. If she wants something, it should be hers. Elisande was encountered in several previous adventures, always managing to be wherever major events took place. Elisande has previously been encountered in several season 1, 2, 3, and 7 adventures. She refers to those not from her island as Outsides. She had recently been trapped in the Hells by the night hag Tal'Kandelagrag and escaped to wander the planes with the help of adventurers.

- **What They Want.** Elisande is all id. She wants to experience and is easily distracted. She especially likes goats.
- **You Aren't Real.** Elisande has trouble accepting that the feelings or desires of others have value or meaning. She's not malicious; she just doesn't realize others matter.

Gaaelmorian (GARE uhl MORE ee uhn) A silver dragon who followed his love into Avernus when a devil claimed her soul.

- **What They Want.** Gaaelmorian is currently blinded by his desire to be reunited with his love. His desire has made him cautious, desperately afraid to do anything to displease Yxygirizeeg and risk losing Xyrianalassa forever.
- **Short Sighted.** Gaaelmorian's desire is making him quick to abandon what is right, foolish, and perhaps not as perceptive as he otherwise would be.

Sir Gidor Honorsbright (gi-DOOR). Uneasy with the responsibilities of command suddenly thrust upon him, Gidor is nevertheless dedicated to ensuring that he does all that he can to keep his subordinates safe.

- **What They Want.** Sir Gidor wants nothing more than to keep the Bloody Hooves safe. He tries to stay strong for his troops, but he struggles to remain determined.
- **Honor and Loyalty.** Sir Gidor was once loyal to Zariel but, knowing what Zariel has become, seeks a new cause to which to pledge his sword.

Glanring Ironbelly (GLAN ring). Glanring is a Hellrider who came to Weatherstone seeking a way to help Zariel (before her fall). He physically resembles his sister Kelda. He is a natural leader; he expects people to listen when he speaks and to follow his orders.

- **What He Wants.** Glanring wants to serve Zariel—or at least who she used to be, even if it means destroying her to redeem her legacy.
- **Listen to Me.** Glanring ever seeks to be in charge of a given situation—even if he knows that someone else is better suited.

Horst Atheraice (HORST). The High Priest of Torm and leader of the clerics of the Bloody Hooves.

- **What They Want.** He believes that the needs of Elturel outweigh the retrieval of the soul of the regiment's commander.
- **Pragmatic.** Horst believes the fight against evil and injustice is greater than any one person.

Mahadi (muh HAH dee). Appearing as a brown-skinned Turmish merchant lord, Mahadi is a rakshasa in service to Asmodeus. He is completely dedicated to, and open about, his policy of neutrality with customers.

- **What They Want.** Mahadi serves his master by collecting information on customers. And he certainly collects plenty of souls and debts for himself while doing so. He very much wants Dara's pure and god-touched soul as a prize.
- **A Charismatic Host.** Mahadi is more than willing to act as a negotiator and broker for all sorts of creatures in Avernus. His adherence to rules makes him a smart choice and endears him to those he spies on for Asmodeus.



Raskamedies (RASS kuh mee dees). This celestial deva looks like a squat human with ivory skin, with the exception that his head resembles that of an owl.

- **What They Want.** Nervous and a little hesitant, Raskamedies is a wise advisor and strategist. His only goal is to protect Dara.
- **Awkwardly Scholastic.** While much more reserved than Verwyyr, Raskamedies is able to see things in the varying shades of gray that exist beyond Verwyyr's black-and-white worldview. He is clumsy in social situations and loath to be put in the spotlight.

Commander Rotger de la Reue (Roat-gar day la Roo).

The commander is a devout believer in the duty of good to spread light throughout the planes. He is the commander of the Bloody Hooves, and his word was only second to the angel Zariel.

- **What They Want.** The Commander seeks to take an active role in doing good and will gladly lead the Bloody Hooves back into the struggle. Better they should die heroes than flee home as cowards.
- **Charismatic Leader.** The commander's faith is strong as iron and, he is the kind of person a soldier would follow to the Nine Hells—literally.

Verwyyr (VER weer). This celestial deva looks like a tall human with deep brown skin, with the exception that his head resembles that of a great hound.

- **What They Want.** Impatient and a little rash, Verwyyr would love kill every fiend in Avernus, but his main goal is to protect Dara.
- **Jovially Menacing.** Verwyyr suffers no evil in his presence. However, he is otherwise pleasant-natured and quick with a joke.

Zhalruban (ZALL roo bann). This pious and good-hearted unicorn served her mistress, Shalrel, who fought at the behest of Zariel before she fell. Zhalruban has reluctantly embraced her captivity and sought to make Bloodroot Grove as dreadful as possible to dissuade anyone from discovering her failure.

- **What They Want.** Part of Zhalruban wants the chance to be at the vanguard of the armies of good once more, but she is weighed down by her desire to hide her failure and protect her fallen mistress.
- **Undisclosed Desires.** After a century and a half spent imprisoned in and corrupted by Bloodroot Grove, a small part of Zhalruban has come to enjoy the dominion and power she holds over the corrupted forest.

CREATURE STATISTICS

The following creatures appear in this adventure.

ARCHER

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 16 (studded leather armor)

Hit Points 75 (10d8 + 30)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)

Skills Acrobatics +6, Perception +5

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Archer's Eye. As a bonus action, the archer can add 1d10 to its next attack or damage roll with a longbow or shortbow.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The archer makes two attacks with its longbow.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage.

Longbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, ranged 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage.

STAT BLOCK MODIFICATIONS

The archers has the following modifications:

- The archers are chaotic evil gnolls who speak Abyssal and Gnoll.

ARMANITE

Large fiend (demon), chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 84 (8d10 + 40)

Speed 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+5)	18 (+4)	21 (+5)	8 (-1)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)

Damage Resistances cold, fire, lightning

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Abyssal, Telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

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

Magic Weapons. The armanite's weapon attacks are magical.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The armanite makes three attacks: one with its hooves, one with its claws, and one with its serrated tail.

Hooves. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d4 + 5) bludgeoning damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d4 + 5) slashing damage

Serrated Tail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (2d10 + 5) slashing damage

Lightning Lance (Recharge 5-6). The armanite looses a bolt of lightning in a line 60 feet long and 10 feet wide. Each creature in the line must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 27 (6d8) lightning damage on a failed save or half as much damage on a successful one.

BALOR (SUMMONER VARIANT)

Huge fiend (demon), chaotic evil

Armor Class 19 (natural armor)
Hit Points 262 (21d12 + 126)
Speed 40 ft., fly 80 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
26 (+8)	15 (+2)	22 (+6)	20 (+5)	16 (+3)	22 (+6)

Saving Throws Str + 14, Con +12, Wis +9, Cha +12

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

Damage Immunities fire, poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Abyssal, Telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 19 (22,000 XP)

Death Throes. When the balor dies, it explodes, and each creature within 30 feet of it must make a DC Dexterity saving throw, taking 70 (20D6) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. The explosion ignites flammable objects in the area that aren't being worn or carried, and it destroys the balor's weapons.

Fire Aura. At the start of each of the balor's turns, each creature within 5 feet of it takes 10 (3d6) fire damage, and flammable objects in the aura that aren't being worn or carried ignite. A creature that touches the balor or hits it with a melee attack while within 5 feet of it takes 10 (3d6) fire damage.

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

Magic Weapons. The balor's weapon attacks are magical.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The balor makes two attacks: one with its longsword and one with its whip.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +14 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 21 (3d8 + 8) slashing damage plus 13 (3d8) lightning damage. If the balor scores a critical hit, it rolls damage dice three times, instead of twice.

Whip. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +14 to hit, reach 30 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d6 + 8) slashing damage plus 10 (3d6) fire damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 20 Strength saving throw or be pulled up to 25 feet towards the balor.

Teleport. The balor magically teleports, along with any equipment it is wearing or carrying, up to 120 feet to an unoccupied space it can see.

Summon Demon (1/Day) The demon chooses what to summon and attempts a magical summoning.

A balor has a 50 percent chance of summoning 1d8 vrock, 1d6 hezrous, 1d4 glabrezus, 1d3 nalfeshnees, 1d2 mariliths, or one goristro.

A summoned demon appears in an unoccupied space within 60 feet of its summoner, acts as if an ally of its summoner, and can't summon other demons. It remains for 1 minute, until it or its summoner dies, or until its summoner dismisses it as an action.

BERSERKER

Medium humanoid (any race), any chaotic alignment

Armor Class 13 (hide armor)
Hit Points 67 (9d8 + 27)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)	9 (-1)	11 (+0)	9 (-1)

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Reckless. At the start of its turn, the berserker can gain advantage on all melee weapon attack rolls during that turn, but attack rolls against it have advantage until the start of its next turn.

ACTIONS

Greataxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d12 + 3) slashing damage.

COMMONER

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 10
Hit Points 4 (1d8)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 0 (10 XP)

ACTION

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

CRACKFANG

Medium humanoid (gnoll), chaotic evil

Armor Class 13 (leather armor)

Hit Points 136 (16d8 + 64)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Str +7, Con +7, Wis +6, Cha +7

Damage Resistances necrotic, psychic

Damage Immunities poison

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

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Abyssal, Common, Gnoll

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Aura of Hate. While Crackfang isn't incapacitated, he and all allied gnolls, fiends, and undead within 30 feet of him deal 4 extra damage whenever they hit with a melee weapon attack (already factored into Crackfang's attacks). This extra damage is of the same type as the weapon's damage type.

Defender. Each turn Crackfang may choose decrease his bonus to hit and damage with his longsword by +1, +2, or +3 to increase his AC by the same amount.

Divine Smite. When Crackfang hits with a melee weapon attack, he can expend one 1st-level spell slot to deal an extra 9 (2d8) necrotic damage to the target, in addition to the weapon's damage. The extra damage increases 1d8 for each spell level higher than 1st.

Rampage. When Crackfang reduces a creature to 0 hit points with a melee attack on its turn, the gnoll can take a bonus action to move up to half its speed and make a bite attack.

Regeneration. Crackfang regains 10 hit points at the start of his turn. If he takes fire or radiant damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of his next turn. His body is destroyed only if he starts its turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

Spell Casting. Crackfang is a 16th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 15). Crackfang has the following paladin spells prepared:

1st level (4 slots): *command*, *detect magic*, *divine favor*, *thunderous smite*

2nd level (3 slots): *aid*, *branding smite*, *magic weapon*

3rd level (3 slots): *blinding smite*, *dispel magic*, *remove curse*

4th level (2 slots): *aura of purity*, *staggering smite*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Crackfang makes two fist attacks or two attacks with his longsword.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or take 7 (2d6) poison damage.

Fist. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature against which Crackfang has sworn vengeance, the target takes an extra 14 (4d6) bludgeoning damage. Instead of dealing damage, Crackfang can grapple the target (escape DC 14) provided the target is Large or smaller.

Magic Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (2d8 + 7) slashing damage or 18 (2d10 + 7) slashing damage if used with two hands and an extra 14 (4d6) fire damage.

Vengeful Glare. Crackfang targets one creature it can see within 30 feet of it and against which it has sworn vengeance. The target must make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw. On a failure, the target is paralyzed until he deals damage to it, or until the end of his next turn. When the paralysis ends, the target is frightened of Crackfang for 1 minute. The frightened target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turn, with disadvantage if it can see Crackfang, ending the frightened condition on itself on a success.

EVIL MAGE

Medium humanoid, lawful evil

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 22 (5d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)

Saving Throws Int +5, Wis +3

Skills Arcana +5, History +5

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages Common, Draconic, Dwarvish, Elvish

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Spellcasting. The mage is a 4th-level spellcaster that uses Intelligence as its spellcasting ability (spell save DC 13; +5 to hit with spell attacks). The mage knows the following spells from the wizard's spell list:

Cantrips (at will): *light*, *mage hand*, *shocking grasp*

1st level (4 slots): *charm person*, *magic missile*

2nd level (3 slots): *hold person*, *misty step*

ACTIONS

Quarterstaff. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +1 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d8 - 1) bludgeoning damage.

STAT BLOCK MODIFICATIONS

The evil mage has the following modifications:

- They are tieflings that speak Abyssal and Infernal instead of Dwarvish and Elvish.
- They are resistant to fire damage.

FLIND

Medium humanoid (gnoll), chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (chain mail)
Hit Points 127 (15d8 + 60)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	10 (+0)	19 (+4)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Con +8, Wis +5
Skills Intimidation +5, Perception +5
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15
Languages Abyssal, Gnoll
Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Aura of Blood Thirst. If the flind isn't incapacitated, any creature with the Rampage trait can make a bite attack as a bonus action while within 10 feet of the flind.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The flind makes three attacks: one with each of its different flail attacks or three with its longbow.

Flail of Madness. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d10 + 5) bludgeoning damage, and the target must make a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the target must make a melee attack against a random target within its reach on its next turn. If it has no targets within its reach even after moving, it loses its action on that turn.

Flail of Pain. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d10 + 5) bludgeoning damage plus 22 (4d10) psychic damage.

Flail of Paralysis. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d10 + 5) bludgeoning damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed until the end of its next turn.

Longbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d8) piercing damage.

FROST GIANT EVERLASTING ONE

Huge giant (frost giant), chaotic evil

Armor Class 13 (patchwork armor)
Hit Points 189 (14d12 + 98)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
25 (+7)	9 (-1)	24 (+7)	9 (-1)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Str +11, Con +11, Wis +4
Skills Athletics +11, Perception +4
Damage Immunities cold
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14
Languages Giant
Challenge 12 (8,400 XP)

Extra Heads. The giant has a 25 percent chance of having more than one head. If it has more than one, it has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks and on saving throws against being blinded, charmed, deafened, frightened, stunned, or knocked unconscious.

Regeneration. The giant regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn. If the giant takes acid or fire damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of its next turn. The giant dies only if it starts its turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

Vaprak's Rage (Recharges after a short or long rest). As a bonus action, the giant can enter a rage at the start of its turn. The rage lasts for 1 minute or until the giant is incapacitate. While raging, the giant against the following benefits:

- The giant has advantage on Strength checks and Strength saving throws.
- When it makes a melee weapon attack, the giant gains a +4 bonus to the damage roll.
- The giant has resistance to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The giant makes two attacks with its greataxe.

Greataxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 26 (3d12 + 7) slashing damage, or 30 (3d12 + 11) slashing damage when raging.

Rock. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, range 60/240 ft., one target. *Hit:* 29 (4d10 + 7) bludgeoning damage.

STAT BLOCK MODIFICATIONS

The frost giant everlasting ones have the following modifications:

- They are Medium sized humanoids (human).
- They speak Common instead of Giant.

GHAST

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 36 (8d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	17 (+3)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)

Damage Resistances necrotic

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Stench. Any creature that starts its turn within 5 feet of the ghost must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the start of its next turn. On a successful saving throw, the creature is immune to the ghost's Stench for 24 hours.

Turning Defiance. The ghost and any ghouls within 30 feet of it have advantage on saving throws against effects that turn undead.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 12 (2d8 + 3) piercing damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage. If the target is a creature other than an undead, it must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

GNOLL

Medium humanoid (gnoll), chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (hide armor, shield)

Hit Points 22 (5d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	6 (-2)	10 (+0)	7 (-2)

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Gnoll

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Rampage. When the gnoll reduces a creature to 0 hit points with a melee attack on its turn, the gnoll can take a bonus action to move up to half its speed and make a bite attack.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

Spear. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage, or 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

Longbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage.

GNOLL FANG OF YEENOGHU

Medium fiend (gnoll), chaotic evil

Armor Class 14 (hide armor)

Hit Points 65 (10d8 + 20)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	15 (+2)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)

Saving Throws Con +4, Wis +2, Cha +3

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Abyssal, Gnoll

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Rampage. When the gnoll reduces a creature to 0 hit points with a melee attack on its turn, the gnoll can take a bonus action to move up to half its speed and make a bite attack.

ACTIONS

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

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or take 7 (2d6) poison damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage.

STAT BLOCK MODIFICATIONS

This Gnoll Fang of Yeenoghu has the following modifications:

- **Multiattack.** The gnoll makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its claws, or three attacks with its javelins.
- **Javelins.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

GNOLL PACK LORD

Medium humanoid (gnoll), chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (chain shirt)

Hit Points 49 (9d8 + 9)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	8 (-1)	11 (+0)	9 (-1)

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Gnoll

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Rampage. When the gnoll reduces a creature to 0 hit points with a melee attack on its turn, the gnoll can take a bonus action to move up to half its speed and make a bite attack.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The gnoll makes two attacks, either with its glaive or its longbow and uses its Incite Rampage if it can.

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

Glaive. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d10 + 3) slashing damage.

Longbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage.

Incite Rampage (Recharge 5-6). One creature the gnoll can see within 30 feet of it can use its reaction to make a melee attack if it can hear the gnoll and has the Rampage trait.

GNOLL WITHERLING

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	8 (-1)	12 (+1)	5 (-3)	5 (-3)	5 (-3)

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 7

Languages Gnoll understands but can't speak

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Rampage. When the witherling reduces a creature to 0 hit points with a melee attack on its turn, it can take a bonus action to move up to half its speed and make a bite attack.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The witherling makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its club, or two with its club.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

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

REACTIONS

Vengeful Strike. In response to a gnoll being reduced to 0 hit points within 30 feet of the witherling, the witherling makes a melee attack.

ICE DEVIL (SUMMONER VARIANT)

Large fiend (devil), lawful evil

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 180 (19d10 + 76)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+5)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	18 (+4)	15 (+2)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Dex +7, Con +9, Wis +7, Cha +9

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities cold, fire, poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Abyssal, Telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 14 (11,500 XP)

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

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The devil makes three attacks: one with its bite, one with its claws, and one with its tail, or two attacks: one with its spear and one with its tail.

Ice Spear. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8 + 5) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) cold damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, or for 1 minute, its speed is reduced by 10 feet; it can take either an action or a bonus action on each of its turns, not both; and it can't take reactions. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6 + 5) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) cold damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d4 + 5) slashing damage plus 10 (3d6) cold damage.

Tail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6 + 5) bludgeoning damage plus 10 (3d6) cold damage.

Wall of Ice (Recharge 6). The devil magically forms an opaque wall of ice on a solid surface it can see within 60 feet of it. The wall is 1 foot thick and up to 30 feet long and 10 feet high, or it's a hemispherical dome up to 20 feet in diameter.

When the wall appears, each creature in its space is pushed out of it by the shortest route. The creature chooses which side of the wall to end up on, unless the creature is incapacitated. The creature then makes a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw, taking 35 (10d6) cold damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

The wall lasts for 1 minute or until the devil is incapacitated or dies. The wall can be damaged and breached; each 10 foot-section has AC 5, 30 hit points, vulnerability to fire damage, and immunity to acid, cold, necrotic, poison, and psychic damage. If a section is destroyed, it leaves behind a sheet of frigid air in the space the wall occupied. Whenever a creature finishes moving through the frigid air on a turn, willingly or otherwise, the creature must make a DC 17 Constitution saving throw, taking 17 (5d6) cold damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. The frigid air dissipates when the rest of the wall vanishes.

Summon Devil (1/Day) The devil chooses what to summon and attempts a magical summoning. An ice devil has a 60 percent chance of summoning one ice devil.

A summoned devil appears in an unoccupied space within 60 feet of its summoner, acts as if an ally of its summoner, and can't summon other devils. It remains for 1 minute, until it or its summoner dies, or until its summoner dismisses it as an action.

MARILITH (SUMMONER VARIANT)

Large fiend (demon), chaotic evil

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 189 (18d10 + 90)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	20 (+5)	20 (+5)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	20 (+5)

Saving Throws Str +9, Con +10, Wis +8, Cha +10

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

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Abyssal, Telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 16 (15,000 XP)

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

Magic Weapons. The marilith's weapon attacks are magical.

Reactive. The marilith can take one reaction on every turn in combat.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The marilith makes seven attacks: six with its longsword and one with its tail.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) slashing damage.

Tail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 15 (2d10 + 4) bludgeoning damage. If the target is Medium or smaller, it is grappled (escape DC 19). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, the marilith can't make tail attacks against other targets.

Teleport. The marilith magically teleports, along with any equipment it is wearing or carrying, up to 120 feet to an unoccupied space it can see.

Summon Demon (1/Day) The demon chooses what to summon and attempts a magical summoning. A marilith has a 50 percent chance of summoning 1d8 vrocks, 1d6 hezrous, 1d4 glabrezus, 1d3 nalfeshnees, 1d2 mariliths, or one goristro. A summoned demon appears in an unoccupied space within 60 feet of its summoner, acts as if an ally of its summoner, and can't summon other demons. It remains for 1 minute, until it or its summoner dies, or until its summoner dismisses it as an action.

REACTIONS

Parry. The marilith adds 5 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, the marilith must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

MANTRAP

Large plant, unaligned

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 45 (7d10 + 10)

Speed 5 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	1 (-5)	10 (+0)	2 (-4)

Condition Immunities blinded, deafened, exhaustion, prone

Senses tremorsense 30 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages --

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Attractive Pollen (1/Day). When the mantrap detects any creatures nearby, it can use its reaction to release pollen out to a radius of 30 feet. Any beast or humanoid within the area must succeed on a DC 11 Wisdom saving throw or be forced to use all its movement on its turn to get as close to the mantrap as possible. An affected target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

False Appearance. While the mantrap remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from an ordinary tropical plant.

ACTIONS

Engulf. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one medium or smaller creature. *Hit:* The target is trapped inside the mantrap's leafy jaws. While trapped in this way, the target is blinded and restrained, has total cover from attacks and other effects outside the mantrap, and takes 14 (4d6) acid damage at the start of each of the target's turns. If the mantrap dies, the creature inside it is no longer restrained by it. A mantrap can engulf only one creature at a time.

MAUREZHI

Medium fiend (demon), chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 88 (16d8 + 16)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)

Skills Deception +5

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

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Abyssal, Elvish, Telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Assume Form. The maurezhi can assume the appearance of any medium humanoid it has eaten. It remains in this form for 1d6 days, during which time the form gradually decays until, when the effect ends, the form sloughs from the demon's body.

Magic Resistance. The maurezhi makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its claws.

ACTIONS

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

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d10 + 3) piercing damage. If the target is humanoid, its Charisma score is reduced by 1d4. This reduction lasts until the target finishes a short or long rest. The target dies if this reduces its Charisma to 0. It rises 24 hours later as a ghoul, unless it has been revived or its corpse has been destroyed.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d8 + 3) slashing damage. If the target is a creature other than an undead, it must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Raise Ghoul (Recharge 5-6). The maurezhi targets one dead ghoul or ghastr it can see within 30 feet of it. The target is revived with all its hit points.

MONSTROUS PERYTON

Large monstrosity, chaotic evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 144 (17d10 + 51)

Speed 20 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	9 (-1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Str +8, Dex +6, Wis +6

Skills Perception +6

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages understands Common and Elvish but can't speak.

Challenge 11 (7,200 XP)

Flyby. The peryton doesn't provoke opportunity attacks when it flies out of an enemy's reach.

Keen Sight and Smell. The peryton has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight or smell.

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The peryton makes two attacks: one with its gore and one with its talons.

Gore. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 12 (2d6 + 5) piercing damage.

Talons. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 16 (2d10 + 5) slashing damage.

Warp Shadow. The peryton chooses up to three creatures within 60 feet of it that it can see. Each creature must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or become cursed. While cursed, whenever the creature makes an attack roll, an ability check, or a saving throw, it must roll d4 and subtract that number from the roll. A cursed creature can repeat this saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself with a success. A creature that succeed on this saving throw is immune to this peryton's Warp Shadow for 24 hours.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The peryton 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 peryton regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

- **Detect.** The peryton makes a Wisdom (Perception) check.
- **Talons Attack.** The peryton makes one attack with its talons.
- **Dive Attack (Costs 2 Actions).** The peryton moves up to its speed toward one target of its choosing. It then makes a gore attack that deals an extra 9 (2d8) piercing damage on a hit.

NIGHTWALKER

Huge undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 297 (22d12 + 154)

Speed 40 ft., fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	19 (+4)	24 (+7)	6 (-2)	9 (-1)	8 (-1)

Saving Throws Con +13

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 120 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages --

Challenge 20 (25,000 XP)

Annihilating Aura. Any creature that starts its turn within 30 feet of the nightwalker must succeed on a DC 21 Constitution saving throw or take 14 (4d6) necrotic damage and grants the nightwalker advantage on attack rolls against it until the start of the creature's next turn. Undead are immune to this aura.

Life Eater. A creature reduced to 0 hit points from damage dealt by the nightwalker dies and can't be revived by any means short of a *wish* spell.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The nightwalker uses *Enerivating Focus* twice or uses *Enerivating Focus* and *Finger of Doom*, if available.

Enerivating Focus. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. Hit: 28 (5d8 + 6) necrotic damage. The target must succeed on a DC 21 Constitution saving throw or its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the necrotic damage taken. This reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest.

Finger of Doom (Recharge 6). The nightwalker points at one creature it can see within 300 feet of it. The target must succeed on a DC 21 Wisdom saving throw or take 26 (4d12) necrotic damage and become frightened until the end of the nightwalker's next turn. While frightened in this way, the creature is also paralyzed. If a target's saving throw is successful, the target is immune to the nightwalker's *Finger of Doom* for the next 24 hours.

RED ABISHAI

Medium fiend (devil), lawful evil

Armor Class 22 (natural armor)

Hit Points 225 (30d8 + 120)

Speed 30 ft., fly 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	16 (+3)	19 (+4)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	19 (+4)

Saving Throws Str +12, Con +10, Wis +8

Skills Intimidation +10, Perception +8

Damage Resistances cold; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't silvered.

Damage Immunities fire, poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 18

Languages Draconic, Infernal Telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 19 (22,000 XP)

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

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

Magic Weapons. The abishai's weapon attacks are magical.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The abishai can use its Frightful Presence. It also makes three attacks: one with its Morningstar, one with its claw, and one with its bite.

Morningstar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d10 + 6) slashing damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (2d10 + 6) slashing damage.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 22 (3d10 + 6) piercing damage plus 38 (7d10) fire damage.

Frightful Presence. Each creature of the abishai's choice that is within 120 feet and aware of it must succeed on a DC 18 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened of it for 1 minute. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a creature's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the creature is immune to the abishai's Frightful Presence for the next 24 hours.

Incite Fanaticism. The abishai chooses up to four of its allies within 60 feet of it that it can see. For 1 minute, each of those allies makes attack rolls with advantage and can't be frightened.

Power of the Dragon Queen. The abishai targets one dragon it can see within 120 feet of it. The dragon must make a DC 18 Charisma saving throw. A chromatic dragon makes this save disadvantage. On a successful save, the target is immune to the abishai's Power of the Dragon Queen for 1 hour. On a failed save, the target is charmed by the abishai for 1 hour. While charmed in this way, the target regards the abishai as a trusted friend to be heeded and protected. This effect ends if the abishai or its companions deal damage to the target.

ROC

Gargantuan monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 248 (16d20 + 80)

Speed 20 ft., fly 120 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
28 (+9)	10 (+0)	20 (+5)	3 (-4)	10 (+0)	9 (-1)

Saving Throws Dex +4, Con +9, Wis +4, Cha +3

Skills Perception +4

Senses passive Perception 14

Languages —

Challenge 11 (7,200 XP)

Keen Sight. The roc has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The roc makes two attacks: one with its beak and one with its talons.

Beak. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 27 (4d8 + 9) piercing damage.

Talons. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 23 (4d6 + 9) slashing damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 19). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the roc can't use its talons on another target.

SHOOSUVA

Large fiend (demon), chaotic evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 110 (13d10 + 39)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	13 (+1)	17 (+3)	7 (-2)	14 (+2)	9 (-1)

Saving Throws Dex +4, Con +6, Wis +5

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

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Abyssal, Gnoll, Telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Rampage. When it reduces a creature to 0 hit points with a melee attack on its turn, the shoosuva can take a bonus action to move up to half its speed and make a bite attack.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The shoosuva makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its tail stinger.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 15 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) piercing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned. While poisoned, the target is also paralyzed. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

SPINED DEVIL

Small fiend (devil), lawful evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 22 (5d6 + 5)

Speed 20 ft., fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10(+0)	15(+2)	12(+1)	11(+0)	14(+2)	8(-1)

Damage Resistances cold; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't silvered

Damage Immunities fire, poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Infernal, telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

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

Flyby. The devil doesn't provoke an opportunity attack when it flies out of an enemy's reach.

Limited Spines. The devil has twelve tail spines. Used spines regrow by the time the devil finishes a long rest.

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The devil makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its fork or two with its tail spines.

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (2d4) slashing damage.

Fork. Melee Weapon Attack: +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 3 (1d6) piercing damage.

Tail Spine. Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, range 20/80 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage plus 3 (1d6) fire damage.

YAACROU THE BEAST

Large fiend (demon), chaotic evil

Armor Class 21 (natural armor)

Hit Points 243 (18d10 + 144)

Speed 50 ft., fly 150 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
26 (+8)	22 (+6)	26 (+8)	25 (+7)	25 (+7)	30 (+10)

Saving Throws Int +14, Wis + 14, Cha +17

Skills Deception + 17, Intimidation + 17, Perception + 14

Damage Resistances cold, fire, lightning; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from non-magical attacks.

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, poisoned

Senses truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 24

Languages All, Telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 21 (33,000 XP)

Demonic Weapons. Yaacrou's weapon attacks are magical. When Yaacrou hits with any weapon, the weapon deals an extra 6d8 necrotic damage (included in the attack).

Innate Spellcasting. Yaacrou's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 25). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *detect evil and good, invisibility*

3/day each: *blade barrier, dispel evil and good, forcecage*

1/day each: *commune, control weather*

Magic Resistance. Yaacrou has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Yaacrou makes two attacks with its claws or steel feathers.

Claws: Melee Weapon Attack: +15 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. Hit: 22 (4d6 + 8) slashing damage plus 27 (6d8) necrotic damage.

Steel Feathers: Ranged Weapon Attack: +13 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one creature. Hit: 15 (2d8 + 6) piercing damage plus 27 (6d8) necrotic damage. If the target is a creature that has 100 hit points or fewer, it must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or die.

Feather Storm: Yaacrou releases a swirling mass of feathers to hover magically in an unoccupied space within 5 feet of it. If Yaacrou can see the feathers, Yaacrou can mentally command them as a bonus action to fly up to 50 feet and either make one attack against a target or return to Yaacrou. If the feathers are targeted by any effect, Yaacrou is considered to be holding it. The feathers fall if Yaacrou dies.

Healing Touch (4/day): The Yaacrou touches another creature or itself. The target magically regains 40 (8d8 + 4) hit points and is freed from any curse, disease, poison, blindness, or deafness.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Yaacrou 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. Yaacrou regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

- **Teleport.** Yaacrou magically teleports, along with any equipment it is wearing or carrying, up to 120 feet to an unoccupied space it can see.
- **Searing Burst (Costs 2 Actions).** The Yaacrou emits a magical, chaotic energy. Each creature of its choice in a 10-foot radius must make a DC 23 Dexterity saving throw, taking 14 (4d6) fire damage plus 14 (4d6) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.
- **Summon Shoosuva.** After being injured on another creature's turn, Yaacrou summons a shoosuva from the ichor seeping from the wound.

YEENOGHU

Huge fiend (demon), chaotic evil

Armor Class 20 (natural armor)

Hit Points 333 (23d12 + 184)

Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
29 (+9)	16 (+3)	26 (+8)	16 (+3)	24 (+7)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Dex +10, Con +15, Wis + 14

Skills Intimidation + 9, Perception + 14

Damage Resistances cold, fire, lightning

Damage Immunities poison, bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks.

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, poisoned

Senses truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 24

Languages All, Telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 24 (62,000 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. Yeenoghu's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks). He can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *detect magic*, *spiritual weapon* (8th-level spell, 4d8 +2 force damage on a hit, appears as a flail)

3/day each: *dispel magic*, *fear*, *invisibility*

1/day each: *teleport*

Legendary Resistance (3/day). If Yeenoghu fails a saving throw, he can choose to succeed instead.

Magic Resistance. Yeenoghu has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Magic Weapons. Yeenoghu's weapon attacks are magical.

Rampage. When Yeenoghu reduces a creature to 0 hit points with a melee attack on its turn, Yeenoghu can take a bonus action to move up to half its speed and make a bite attack.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Yeenoghu makes three flail attacks. If an attack hits, he can cause it to create an additional effect of his choice or at random (each effect can be used only once per multiattack):

1. The attack deals an extra 13 (2d12) bludgeoning damage.
2. The target must succeed on a DC 17 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed until the start of Yeenoghu's next turn.
3. The target must succeed on a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw or be affected by the *confusion* spell until the start of Yeenoghu's next turn.

Flail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +16 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target.

Hit: 15 (1d12 + 9) bludgeoning damage.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +16 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:*

14 (1d10 + 9) piercing damage.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Yeenoghu 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. Yeenoghu regains spent legendary actions at the start of his turn.

- **Charge.** Yeenoghu moves up to his speed.
- **Swat Away.** Yeenoghu makes a flail attack. If the attack hits, the target must succeed on a DC 24 Strength saving throw or be pushed 15 feet in a straight line away from Yeenoghu. If the saving throw fails by 5 or more, the target falls prone.

- **Savage (Costs 2 Actions).** Yeenoghu makes a bite attack against each creature within 10 feet of him.

LAIR ACTIONS

On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), Yeenoghu can take a lair action to cause one of the following effects; he can't use the same effect two rounds in a row.

- Yeenoghu causes an iron spike—5 feet tall and 1 inch in diameter—to burst from the ground at a point he can see within 100 feet of him. Any creature in the space where the spike emerges must make a DC 24 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, the creature takes 27 (6d8) piercing damage and is restrained by being impaled on the spike. A creature can use an action to remove itself (or a creature it can reach) from the spike, ending the restrained condition.
- Each **gnoll** or **hyena** that Yeenoghu can see can use its reaction to move up to its speed.
- Until the next initiative count 20, all **gnolls** and **hyenas** within the lair are enraged, causing them to have advantage on melee weapon attack rolls and causing attack rolls to have advantage against them.

WARLOCK OF THE FIEND

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)

Hit Points 78 (12d8 + 24)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Wis +4, Cha +7

Skills Arcana +4, Deception +7, Persuasion +7, Religion +4

Damage Resistances slashing damage from nonmagical attacks not made with silvered weapons

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages any two languages (usually Abyssal or Infernal)

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

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

At will: *alter self*, *false life*, *levitate (self only)*, *mage armor (self only)*, *silent image*

Spellcasting. The warlock is a 17th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). It regains expended spell slots when it finishes a short or long rest. It knows the following warlock spells:

Cantrips (at will): *eldritch blast*, *fire bolt*, *friends*, *mage hand*, *minor illusion*, *prestidigitation*, *shocking grasp*

1 st-5th level (4 5th-level slots): *banishment*, *burning hands*, *flame strike*, *hellish rebuke*, *magic circle*, *scorching ray*, *scrying*, *stinking cloud*, *suggestion*, *wall of fire*

Dark One's Own Luck (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest).

When the warlock makes an ability check or saving throw, it can add a d10 to the roll. It can do this after the roll is made but before any of the roll's effects occur.

ACTIONS

Mace. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage plus 10 (3d6) fire damage.

APPENDIX 1: BELLE OF THE BRAWL (BONUS OBJECTIVE A)

Estimated Duration: 60 minutes

After the characters complete two scenes in Part 1, you may choose to insert this additional encounter.

Wandering the landscape, you spot a thin, young girl, hair wild and face smeared with mud. Two knives are slipped into a rope belt tied over her ragged dress. Seeing you, she pads over with bare feet. “Greets Outsides. You loss and gone toos.”

Elisande recently acquired a very large Chultan goat (events of DDAL07-18 *Turn Back the Endless Night*) and wandered into the Hells. While there, she was tricked, lost her goat, and was trapped in Malbolge by the Night Hag Tal’Kandelagrag before eventually escaping to wander the planes with the help of adventurers (DDAL00-11 *Pipyap’s Guide to All of the Nine Hells*). Not really having a way to get home, she has wandered from the Hells into the Abyss.

Characters who have never met Elisande but succeed on a DC 15 Intelligence (History) check have heard of her. She frequently appears at moments of great import, and some say she is one of the Chosen. Those that have met her likely know that she is the Chosen of Cyric, the Black Sun, and she is quite deadly when provoked.

BONUS OBJECTIVE A

Convince Elisande not to murder Dara.

GIRLS WILL BE GIRLS

While Elisande is happy to see the characters, the moment she notices Dara, she takes an instant dislike to the younger girl. She has begun to succumb to the taint of the Death Dells, and her vicious side is becoming even less controllable. She encourages the characters to abandon Dara and travel with her instead. If they mention their quest, she even offers to help, if Dara is left behind.

For her part, Dara is confused by the older girl, who is no bigger than herself and much less educated. She bears Elisande no ill will and at first tries to be friends before giving up in the face of hostility.

It is clear by Elisande’s violent personality that she has succumbed to the Madness of Yeenoghu and is likely to escalate from insults to violence against Dara if she does not get her way or is not convinced otherwise. As the Chosen of Cyric, Elisande offers bullying threats and lies while Dara, the Chosen of Ilmater, quietly endures.

DEFUSING THE SITUATION

It falls to the characters to find a way to defuse the situation without an escalation. While Dara is fairly weak, Elisande is more than the equal of any one character. The



characters must successfully achieve three successes on a DC 20 Charisma (Persuasion) check before achieving three failures. Dara is no help. The DM is encouraged to roleplay the interactions rather than just allow a few dice rolls.

Things Elisande Likes: Elisande responds positively to any of the following, and good ideas involving these should receive advantage to their check. A character with a passive Insight of 15 or higher can tell that these areas of persuasion are working when tried (before rolling).

- Encouraging her to direct her violence by killing lots and lots of difficult prey, like demons.
- Telling the truth to her. She always knows when you lie.
- Appealing to their past friendship.
- Suggesting that Dara, like the characters, are part of her pack or tribe and so she should protect her. When others try to harm Dara, it is a sign of them trying to show dominance over Elisande.
- Giving Elisande a gift, especially if it’s a goat or goat related.

Things Elisande Hates: Elisande responds negatively to any of the following, and ideas involving these should receive disadvantage to their check. A character with a passive Insight of 15 or higher can tell that these areas of persuasion are not working well when tried (before rolling).

- Praising her or using flattery in a way not described in her “likes” list.
- Telling her that she should protect the weak, be gentle, or otherwise look out for Dara for any selfless reason.
- Attempting to use Deception. She always knows when you lie.
- Attempting to use Intimidation. Her affinity for murder is further heightened by threats due to the taint of Yeenoghu.
- Telling her to do good or do the right thing with no expectation of reward or entertainment.



SUCCESSES AND FAILURES

Each time a character makes an attempt to sway Elisande, her mood changes as follows:

- **One Success:** Elisande calms and begins to listen to the characters.
- **Two Successes:** Elisande shyly looks away, not feeling guilty, but hoping to please the characters.
- **Three Successes:** Elisande agrees to either go away or accompany the characters on their mission, based on the argument the characters were making.
- **One Failure:** Elisande begins fingering one of her knives and eyeing Dara with ill-disguised hatred.
- **Two Failures:** Elisande pushes Dara to the ground to show how weak Dara is.
- **Three Failures:** Elisande quickly strikes Dara for 35 points of damage, potentially killing her. If Dara does not die and the characters do not attack Elisande, she walks away from them in disgust.

ATTACKING ELISANDE?!

It is possible that some character may try to subdue Elisande. Doing so is foolhardy, but sometimes Tymora rewards fools. Assume Elisande resists any spell as if she used *Legendary Resistance*, and any attack only wounds her. Once attacked, she responds to the character that attacked her. She steps out of the offending character's shadow, surprising them, and attacks them before teleporting away as a bonus action. Dara is saved, but the offending character earns the **Enemy of Elisande** story award.

ELISANDE'S SURPRISE

Multiattack. Elisande makes four attacks with her daggers, one of which may be a *Death Attack*. Elisande's weapon attacks score critical hits on a roll of 19 or 20.

Dragonbone Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +16 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d4 + 6) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) acid damage. If Elisande has advantage on the attack roll or if one of her allies is adjacent to her target and not incapacitated, the attack deals an additional 21 (6d6) piercing damage.

Death Attack (1/Turn). When Elisande attacks and hits a creature that is surprised, it must succeed on a DC 20 Constitution saving throw or take double damage from her attack.

BRINGING ELISANDE

If the characters convince Elisande to accompany them, she does so, serving as a capable scout that is nearly impossible to spot. In combat, the DM should use her only as necessary and never take the spotlight away from the players. She might kill a minion and then easily become distracted mutilating the body, or she could run off to steal something shiny. She is not good at following plans. If the characters are in over their heads, she might perform a *Multiattack* on a significant threat. If they are doing well, she might only kill a few gnolls. The DM should use her in part 2 with appropriate discretion.

APPENDIX 2: DEMONIC DUEL (BONUS OBJECTIVE B)

Estimated Duration: 60 minutes

As the characters are moving through the battlefield, they witness the power of the abyssal armies. Yaacrou the Beast is tearing through the infernal lines in search of worthy foes.

The creature is a true horror. A gale stirs from its thousand-feathered wings. Dozens of spiked, insectile spears impale foes, feeding the devilish corpses into a gargantuan maw at its fur-covered center. Its shape constantly shifts and warps to create a new nightmare. It is clear that the devils have no answer for this horror and their lines are quickly being decimated. Soon their center will crumble, and with it any hope to repel the demons.

A sibilant voice whispers across the battlefield, “Who dare faces Yaacrou?” The same throat then screams deeper than a volcano, “Who would duel the Beast? I challenge you!”

The demon, of course, hopes to lure out those foolish enough to fight it in single combat. It has no intention of fighting fair, but should anyone present themselves, in a hundred different voices it orders the other demons to make room for the hero's death. Of course, any sense of fair play will be revealed as a lie quickly enough.

BONUS OBJECTIVE B

Defeat Yaacrou the Beast.

A DISHONORABLE DUEL

Yaacrou the Beast is pushing across the battlefield, with two **shoosuva** demons harrying those who try to escape the Beast's slaughter. Yaacrou, speaking in many different voices, calls for foes to face it in single combat. The characters are welcome to simply attack the demon, but if one of them steps forward as champion, it makes a show of an honorable duel. The shoosuvus move near a different character and growl, but they do not attack while Yaacrou moves to face off with the champion of the Hells. Unfortunately, it is a ruse—as soon as given an advantageous opportunity, the demons betray their word and attack the party.

Ice Pact Story Award. If the characters possess the **Ice Pact** story award from DDAL09-19 *Fang and Claw* and have allied with General Everbleed, the General and a second **ice devil** arrive to witness the duel, expecting treachery. When the demons betray the party, the devils engage one of the shoosuvus and eventually defeat it for the party. They may provide additional aid at the DM's discretion.

Savior of My Enemy's Enemy Story Award. If the characters have the **Savior of My Enemy's Enemy** story award from DDAL09-07 *The Diabolical Dive* where they rescued a group of drow from infernal captivity, a **yochlol** demon in the form of a drow woman approaches one of the characters, appearing out of the haze of battle. She warns the character that the duel is a trap, but the drow

of Plagueshield Point remember their debt. She offers the characters the blessing of Lolth (as *bless* that lasts for the duration of this encounter) and a vial of enchanted unicorn's blood, enough for one weapon. When applied to a weapon, for the next 5 minutes, demons hit by the weapon take an additional 6d6 radiant damage. The effect wears off before the next combat.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak:** *Summon shoosuva* takes 3 legendary actions.
- **Weak:** *Summon shoosuva* takes 2 legendary actions.
- **Strong:** Yaacrou can use *Healing Touch* as a legendary action.
- **Very Strong:** Yaacrou can cast a spell or use *Healing Touch* as a legendary action.

PLAYING THE PILLARS

Here are some suggestions for this encounter:

Combat. If not immediately attacked, Yaacrou always summons a *Feather Storm* before the combat starts. Yaacrou makes an effort to damage other characters with its *Searing Burst* or by sending its shoosuvus to attack them.

Exploration. A crowd of demons quickly gathers to watch the duel. The characters might try to use the crowd to gain cover or concealment.

Social. Yaacrou is a creature of chaos and slaughter. It taunts its intended victims constantly.



APPENDIX 3: DARA

DARA, CHOSEN OF ILMATER

Medium humanoid (human), lawful good

Armor Class 11

Hit Points 20 (3d8 + 6)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)

Damage Resistances radiant; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened

Skills Medicine +4, Religion +2

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Celestial, Common

Magic Resistance. Dara has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Innate Spellcasting. Dara's spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 13). Dara can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

1/day: *aid, commune, healing word, lesser restoration*

1/week: *true resurrection*

Spellcasting. Dara is a 2nd-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks).

Dara has the following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *light, sacred flame, thaumaturgy*

1st level (3 slots): *bless, cure wounds, sanctuary*

ACTIONS

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

APPENDIX 4: COMMANDER DE LA REUE

COMMANDER ROTGER DE LA REUE

Medium humanoid (human), lawful good

Armor Class 17 (breastplate, shield)

Hit Points 120 (16d8 + 48)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	13 (+1)	17 (+3)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	19 (+4)

Saving Throws Wis +6, Cha +7

Skills Athletics +5, Medicine +6, Persuasion +7

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages Common

Divine Health. Commander de la Reue is immune to disease.

Lay on Hands. Commander de la Reue has a pool of healing power that can restore up to 40 hit points. As an action, he can touch a creature and restore a number of hit points to that creature, up to the maximum amount remaining in the pool. Alternatively, he can expend 5 hit points from the pool to cure the target of one disease or neutralize one poison affecting it.

Magic Resistance Aura. While holding his sword, Commander de la Reue creates an aura in a 10-foot radius around him. While this aura is active, Commander de la Reue and all creatures friendly to him in the aura have advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Commander de la Reue makes two melee weapon attacks.

Magic longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 + 5) slashing damage, or 10 (1d10 + 5) slashing damage when used with two hands. If the target is a fiend or an undead, it takes an extra 11 (2d10) radiant damage.

Command Ally. Commander de la Reue targets one ally it can see within 30 feet of it. If the target can see and hear him, both Commander de la Reue and the target can make one weapon attack as a reaction and gain advantage on the attack roll.

Sense Alignment. Commander de la Reue chooses one creature he can see within 60 feet of him and determines its alignment, as long as the creature isn't hidden from divination magic by a spell or other magical effect.

APPENDIX 5: CHARACTER REWARDS

If found during the adventure, the characters can keep the following magic items:

DEATHSHIELD (DEFENDER)

Weapon (greatsword), legendary (requires attunement)
You gain a +3 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon.

The first time you attack with the sword on each of your turns, you can transfer some or all of the sword's bonus to your Armor Class, instead of using the bonus on any attacks that turn. For example, you could reduce the bonus to your attack and damage rolls to +1 and gain a +2 bonus to AC. The adjusted bonuses remain in effect until the start of your next turn, although you must hold the sword to gain a bonus to AC from it. This item is found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

This defender is a greatsword and is made out of crude black iron. Inscribed upon the blade in Abyssal is the name *Deathshield*.

ROD OF THE PACT KEEPER +2

Rod, rare (requires attunement by a warlock)
While holding this rod, you gain a +2 bonus to spell attack rolls and to the saving throw DCs of your warlock spells.

In addition, you can regain one warlock spell slot as an action while holding the rod. You can't use this property again until you finish a long rest. This item is found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

This rod has an opal carved like a clawed fist clutching a skull at its tip. The haft is covered in the names of angels, written backwards in Infernal.

POTION OF FLYING

Potion, very rare
When you drink this potion, you gain a flying speed equal to your walking speed for 1 hour and can hover. If you're in the air when the potion wears off, you fall unless you have some other means of staying aloft. This potion's clear liquid floats at the top of its container and has cloudy white impurities drifting in it. This item is found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

POTION OF LONGEVITY

Potion, very rare
When you drink this potion, your physical age is reduced by 1d6 + 6 years, to a minimum of 13 years. Each time you subsequently drink a *potion of longevity*, there is a 10 percent cumulative chance that you instead age by 1d6 + 6 years. Suspended in this amber liquid are a scorpion's tail, an adder's fang, a dead spider, and a tiny heart that, against all reason, is still beating. The ingredients vanish when the potion is opened. This item is found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

SOUL COIN

Wondrous item, uncommon

Soul coins are about 5 inches across and about an inch thick, minted from infernal iron. Each coin weighs one-third of a pound and is inscribed with Infernal writing and a spell that magically binds a single soul to the coin. Because each *soul coin* has a unique soul trapped within it, each has a story. A creature might have been imprisoned as a result of defaulting on a deal, while another might be the victim of a night hag's curse.

Carrying Soul Coins. To hold a *soul coin* is to feel the soul bound within it, overcome with rage or fraught with despair. An evil creature can carry as many *soul coins* as it wishes (up to its maximum weight allowance). A non-evil creature can carry a number of *soul coins* equal to or less than its Constitution modifier without penalty. A non-evil creature carrying a number of *soul coins* greater than its Constitution modifier has disadvantage on its attack rolls, ability checks, and saving throws.

Using a Soul Coin. A *soul coin* has 3 charges. A creature carrying the coin can use its action to expend 1 charge from a *soul coin* and do one of the following:

Drain Life. You siphon away some of the soul's essence and gain 1d10 temporary hit points.

Query. You telepathically ask the soul a question and receive a brief telepathic response, which you can understand. The soul knows only what it knew in life, but it must answer you truthfully and to the best of its ability. The answer is no more than a sentence or two and might be cryptic.

Freeing a Soul. Casting a spell that removes a curse on a *soul coin* frees the soul trapped within it, as does expending all of the coin's charges. The coin itself rusts from within and is destroyed once the soul is released. A soul can also be freed by destroying the coin that contains it. A *soul coin* has AC 19, 1 hit point for each charge it has remaining, and immunity to all damage except that which is dealt by a hellfire weapon or an infernal war machine's furnace. Freeing a soul from a *soul coin* is considered a good act, even if the soul belongs to an evil creature.

SPELL SCROLL (GATE)

Scroll, legendary

A *spell scroll* bears the words of a single spell, written in a mystical cipher. If the spell is on your class's spell list, you can read the scroll and cast its spell without providing any material components. Otherwise, the scroll is unintelligible. Casting the spell by reading the scroll requires the spell's normal casting time. Once the spell is cast, the words on the scroll fade, and it crumbles to dust. If the casting is interrupted, the scroll is not lost.

If the spell is on your class's spell list but of a higher level than you can normally cast, you must make an ability check using your spellcasting ability to determine whether you cast it successfully. The DC equals 19. On a failed check, the spell disappears from the scroll with no other effect. This item is found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

This scroll is inscribed with the spell *gate*.

APPENDIX 6: STORY AWARDS

The characters may earn the following story awards during the adventure:

BIRTH OF A DEMON PRINCE

Against all advice and sanity, you have consumed the essence of the Demon Prince Yeenoghu on his home plane: the 422nd layer of the Abyss. Raw chaos and incarnate evil flows through your body, warping it into the monster that your nightmares feared might dwell within. As you change, the layer responds to suit your whims, twisting with newfound corruption. You are forever retired from D&D Adventurers League play and you cannot be returned by any means. This character's story has ended for you, but your friends have gained a powerful new enemy who knows them all too well.

ENEMY OF ELISANDE

You have attempted to solve a problem with Elisande by using violence against her. The Chosen of Cyric will not forget.

THANKS OF ILMATER

You have worked the will of the gods of light to maintain the balance of the Blood War. If you are 20th level (or upon achieving 20th level) you may select the *boon of immortality* or the *boon of planar travel* from the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. If you select the *boon of planar travel*, it takes you to the Brightwater: the realm of Ilmater and Sune in the Seven Heavens of Celestia.

TIPPING THE BALANCE

You have drastically altered the balance of the Blood War, potentially bringing about the end of reality. All devils bare you a grudge and you make all Charisma checks against fiends at disadvantage. In addition, they no longer answer your call. All spells or abilities that summon a devil automatically fail.

APPENDIX 7: SPENDING SOUL COINS

In season 9 adventures, characters have begun to collect *soul coins*. This infernal currency made from evil souls has a value to some fiends. Beyond the magical abilities that can be activated by spending 1 of the 3 charges each coin has, characters of tier 2 or higher have the opportunity to spend these coins in Avernus. In addition to specific opportunities that present themselves in adventures, two individuals are willing to accept these coins.

- Mahadi, master of the Wandering Emporium, is willing to barter goods and services for them.
- Dara, Chosen of Ilmater, seeks to destroy them and free the trapped souls within.

The following table lists what Mahadi and Dara are willing to give you based on the number of charges on a coin that you trade to them. All spellcasting services may be acquired at the beginning or end of an adventure, or during the adventure if the NPC is present.

- **Limits Are Limits.** Bonus gold from Mahadi is subject to the maximum gold for your level.
- **A Stain Upon Your Soul.** Redeeming *soul coins* with Mahadi or Fai Chen requires that you note the number of *Soul Coin Charges Used* on your character's logsheet. You do not need to track charges spent with Dara.

Charges	Mahadi	Dara
1	Free spellcasting service from ALDMG (100 gp or less)	Free spellcasting service from ALDMG (40 gp or less)
1		<i>Aid</i> cast on targets you designate
3	Free spellcasting service from ALDMG (1,000 gp or less)	Free spellcasting service from ALDMG (100 gp or less)
3	<i>Heroes' feast</i>	<i>Potion of greater healing</i>
3	100 gp	
3	Gain a level	
6	Free spellcasting service from ALDMG (3,000 gp or less)	Free spellcasting service from ALDMG (1,000 gp or less)
6	Yugoloth charm (as <i>summon greater demon</i> , but you get a merrenoloth)	Gain a level
9		<i>Conjure celestial</i> charm (you get a pegasus)
9	500 gp	<i>Commune</i>
27	5,000 gp	<i>True resurrection</i>

APPENDIX 8: 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?

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NEW TO THE ANNUAL STORYLINE?

<http://dndadventurersleague.org/storyline-seasons/descent-into-avernus/>

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 Perception score, and anything the adventures specifies as notable (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 level, magic items, gold and downtime days. These are updated at the conclusion of the session. The adventure information and your information are 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	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