



ADVENTURERS
LEAGUE

THE FEAR OF FIENDS

PART 6 OF THE TENETS OF BANE SERIES



CCC-WWC-06

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THE FEAR OF FIENDS

THE SIXTH ADVENTURE IN THE TENETS OF BANE SERIES



A Two-Hour to Four Hour Adventure for 5th-10th Level Characters

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The attempted destruction of three platinum discs, called the Tenets of Bane, has gone awry, releasing the souls of their former owners back into the world of the living. Priestess Malana Homwell once again calls for aid from the Moonsea's factions to track down and eliminate these vile Banites, who call themselves the Servants of Strife. Can you get to Sax Magnus and stop her before she summons a ravaging horde?

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ABOUT WINTER WAR

The Tenets of Bane adventures were written exclusively for the Winter War gaming convention. For over four decades, Winter War has been providing a place for tabletop gaming enthusiasts to come together to express their passion in a no-frills and no distractions atmosphere. Independently managed for over thirty five years, it has strived to preserve and promote the very essence of the gaming community: the games.

Located in Champaign-Urbana, IL, Winter War provides a relaxed gaming atmosphere with an almost limitless variety of gaming to be had and friends to be made. The convention is also dedicated to the promotion of gaming in the younger generation, offering a wide variety of kid-friendly gaming and family oriented events.

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FORGOTTEN REALMS DEITIES

The Tenets of Bane adventures mainly feature two deities: Bane and Torm. These gods have a long and storied history in the Forgotten Realms, and you can learn more about them in supplements such as the *Sword Coast Adventurer's Guide*, *Faiths and Pantheons*, and *The Avatar Trilogy* of novels.

The following sidebars provide basic information about each god and detail how loyalty to each might impact the adventure.

LOYALTY TO BANE

Bane is the evil and malevolent deity of fear, hatred, and tyranny. He prefers to plot and scheme and rarely acts in a direct manner. Bane furthers his nefarious agenda by utilizing a network of priests, worshippers, and other agents. He seeks to control all of Faerûn, and he works toward this goal ceaselessly. Bane's symbol is an upright black hand with thumb and fingers together. You can learn more about him in the *Sword Coast Adventurer's Guide*.

While Bane is wholly evil, not all who follow him hold the same darkness within their hearts. He represents power, ambition, and control. Many of his worshippers pray to him for strength, and he is said to favor the bold. Because of this, one or more characters playing the adventure might worship or serve Bane, and their devotion to him has the potential to put them at direct odds with the story's plot.

If you find a Bane loyalist amongst the characters, pull the player aside before the adventure begins and make them aware that the required actions of the adventure run in opposition to the will of Bane. If they wish, the character may still play the adventure, and doing so imposes no mechanical or story disadvantages. Alternatively, they can select another character for the adventure that does not worship Bane, providing they have one that meets the level requirements.

If a player opts to play a character loyal to Bane, make sure they know that this is still a cooperative adventure, and working against the other characters is not allowed. Any player who chooses this option must decide for themselves why their character is choosing to act against the will of their deity.

LOYALTY TO TORM

Torm is the god of duty and loyalty. Those who face danger for the greater good often worship him and seek to emulate his values. Because of his beliefs, many goodly paladins and clerics are found among his faithful. Those who worship Torm believe that spiritual deliverance is achievable by service. They struggle to accomplish his edicts by going out into the world as an active force for good. They seek to correct injustices and help those in need. Torm's symbol is a right-hand gauntlet held upright with its palm forward. You can learn more about him in the *Sword Coast Adventurer's Guide*.

FROM MOUNTAIN HALLS TO FORESTS DEEP,
I WILL NOT LET YOU BE.
I AM DEATH, AND YOU ARE MINE;
YOU WILL RETURN TO ME.

-DEATH



ADVENTURE PRIMER

The Servants of Strife will stop at nothing to force the world to kneel before Black Lord.

—Malana Homwell

BACKGROUND

In 1357 DR, three of Bane's devout followers attempted to establish a slave trade in the city of Thentia. These individuals were known as the **SERVANTS OF STRIFE**. Each one possessed a platinum disc depicting a painted black hand outlined in red on one side, and a single word signifying an edict of Bane on its opposite. The words: fear, hatred, and tyranny, each embodied a facet of Bane's teachings. Together, the discs were called the **TENETS OF BANE**.

In 1358 DR, a trio of Thentia's powerful archmages defeated the Servants of Strife and divided the Tenets of Bane between themselves for study. They quickly discovered the discs were divine in nature and beyond their complete understanding. Moreover, each disc seemed to radiate an aura that intensified emotions related to the word it bore. Simply having the items near proved to be unsettling, and when they could find no way to destroy them, the archmages chose to hide them away.

Each archmage hid one of the Tenets of Bane in a remote location of the Moonsea, safeguarding it with magic. They documented their studies of the discs in a shared text and presented it to Sureene Aumratha, the high priestess of the House of the Moon (a temple dedicated to Selûne in Thentia), for care.

Over time, the House of the Moon's wealth waxed and waned. Many of the temple's items were sold or stolen, and the text detailing the Tenets of Bane made its way into the collection of an aged Thentian scholar, where it remained until his passing.

Several months ago, **MALANA HOMWELL**, a cleric of Torm, acquired the text. Malana oversees the **HELPING HAND**, a temple dedicated to the Hand of Righteousness (Torm) that lies midway between Melvaunt and Thentia on the Sword Trail. After obtaining the text, Malana hired adventurers to retrieve the Tenets of Bane.

Once she had all three discs in her possession, she made plans to transport them to Elturgard, where they could be destroyed by the high clerics of Torm that reside in the city of Elturel. However, before she could depart Melvaunt, she was abducted by Banite worshipers who sought the discs for themselves. With the help of brave adventures, she was rescued, and the Tenets of Bane were safely recovered and taken back to the Helping Hand temple.

Instead of trying again to transport the discs to Elturel, Malana used her family connections in Elturgard to bolster the defenses of her temple. She then asked for aid from **ONTHARR FRUME**, a paladin of the Order of the Gauntlet, in bringing three high clerics of Torm to the Helping Hand.

Several days ago, the high clerics attempted a divine ritual to destroy the discs, but it ended in catastrophe. As the priests offered powerful prayers to Torm, the magic of the discs weakened, releasing the souls of their original owners, the Servants of Strife, which had been trapped within each disc when they perished over a century earlier.

The malignant souls easily overcame the shocked clerics and possessed their bodies. A battle ensued, but the newly-returned Servants of Strife managed to escape into the surrounding countryside.

The Servants of Strife knew they would be hunted, so they made the decision to part ways and spend time rebuilding their power before they rejoined forces to impose Bane's will upon the Moonsea.

THE TENETS OF BANE

Three of Bane's devout followers originally carried the Tenets of Bane. Collectively, these individuals were known as the Servants of Strife. The wizard, Sax Magnus, magically created each of the three discs. Upon their completion, they were bathed in the blood of the assassin, Cyran Steel, and blessed by the blackguard, Mace Dred. This process somehow bound the discs to the souls of each Servant of Strife, but since the exact nature of the joining is both arcane and divine, it is unknown to all but their original owners.

Each disc is specifically linked to its respective owner. If the individual perishes while the disc is on or near their person, their soul is instantaneously drawn into the item, where it remains until released. If another Servant of Strife speaks the phrase, *The Black Lord releases thee*, the soul departs the disc and enters prime material plane in spectral form. In this form, it is immune to all damage and spell effects, regardless of the origin (magical, divine, or other). The soul remains in spectral form until it finds a living creature of its choosing to possess, which it can do so without a chance of failure.

When the spectral entity enters a living creature, it completely suppresses the soul of its host and dominates its physical body. While the host's soul remains, it is isolated and retains no memories of the actions of its physical form.

Once a Servant of Strife possess a creature, it is impossible to remove its malignant soul without killing the host body. If the host perishes while the Tenet of Bane is near, the soul is drawn back into the disc, otherwise it dissipates and is gone forever. Because of this, the Servants of Strife always keep their discs safe and close.

Note. The details above are provided for informational and story purposes. They are not essential to the mechanics of the adventure.

EPISODES

This adventure is spread over five parts that takes approximately two hours to four hours to play. These episodes are initially introduced by a Call to Action Episode.

If you're planning to play the entire adventure at once, you only need to introduce the Call to Action once. However, if you plan to play them over several sessions, you'll want to revisit it each time you play.

Episode 1: The Helping Hand. (Call to Action)

A meeting at the Helping Hand sets the challenge of saving Alithana Shieldheart from Sax Magnus.

Episode 2: High or Low? To enter the Melted Tower, the characters must make their way west of Glister, along the foothills of the Galena Mountains. A lone survivor may have helpful information.

Episode 3: Facing your Fears. Having made their way into the Melted Tower, they must confront Sax Magnus and her demonic minions.

Episode 4: Conclusion. The characters return to the Helping Hand and deliver the high cleric, Alithana Shieldheart, to Malana Homwell.

BONUS OBJECTIVES

This adventure also includes two, 1-hour bonus objectives that the characters can pursue if they have additional time to do so. These bonus objectives are found in this adventure's appendices, as follows:

- **Bonus Objective A: Virtue or Greed? (Appendix 2)** The characters have the opportunity to enter the Abyss and save the souls used to bind the demons to Sax Magnus' service.
- **Bonus Objective B: Resettlement. (Appendix 3)** The party has the option of working to resettle the humanoid survivors.

EPISODE SEQUENCE

Depending on your time constraints, and play style and environment, this adventure will take approximately two hours to play.

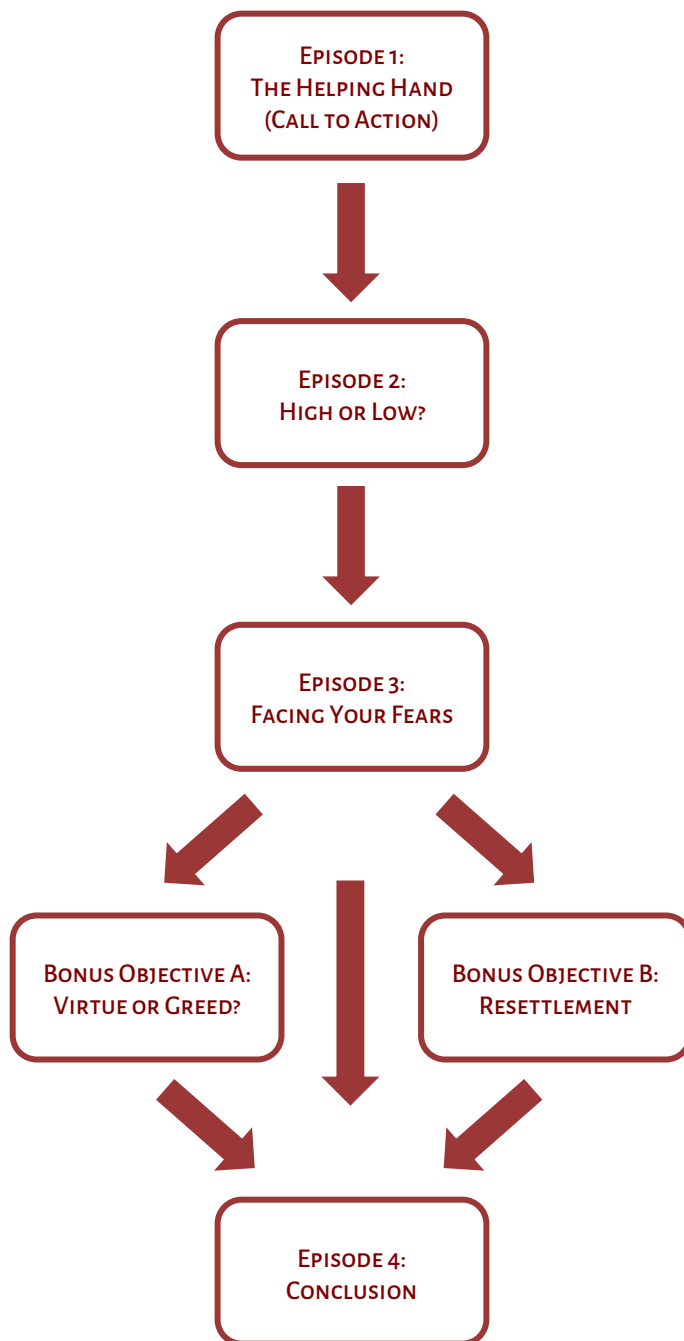
HOW WILL YOU PLAY?

The duration of your session depends on how much of this adventure you utilize. At the very least, your session will last approximately 2 hours.

Main Story Objective. To complete the adventure's main objective, the characters participate in Episodes 1 through 4.

Bonus Objectives. You can extend this adventure by one or two hours by including opportunities for the characters to pursue the bonus objectives. Both **Bonus Objective A** and **Bonus Objective B** can be included after completing **Episode 3**.

ADVENTURE FLOWCHART



EPISODE 1: THE HELPING HAND

Expected Duration: 15 minutes

Either seeking adventure on their own, or by the direction of their factions, the characters arrive at the Helping Hand, a temple to Torm built from the ruins of an old roadhouse. Here, Priestess Malana Homwell and her acolytes offer respite to weary travelers and spread the word of Torm. However, with the recent attempted destruction of the Tenets of Bane, the temple now looks more like a small fortress, with mercenaries patrolling the area to keep a watchful eye on anyone who approaches.

ABOUT THE HELPING HAND

The two-story stone temple to Torm is simple and austere in comparison to many of those dedicated to the Hand of Righteousness. When Malana arrived in the Moonsea many decades ago, it was little more than a burnt-out shell, but over time, the structure has seen several expansions. It now includes separate wings for travelers and its permanent clergy, gardens for raising vegetables, and three large barns that serve as a dairy for a sizeable herd of milking goats.

The Helping Hand augments the income it generates from lodging by making cheeses seasoned with herbs, which the temple sells in Melvaunt and Thentia. Many of its specialty products are prized by the nobility of both cities and command a steep price. This success has enabled the temple to prosper and expand over the years.

Temple Services. As long as the characters agree to assist Malana, they may request one spell per day of 100 gp or less from the Spellcasting Services table *Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide* for free. The only cost paid for the spell is the base price for the consumed material components, if any.

The characters need only mention Malana's name or their faction affiliation to be allowed access to the temple. Once inside, the Helping Hand's acolytes escort them promptly to a meeting room with a large oaken table, where a bald, burly man with a full red beard dressed in armor, an attractive woman missing her right arm, and a dark-haired elf dressed in blue robes await them.

When the party enters, those gathered rise from their seats to greet the characters. Malana thanks them for coming so quickly and introduces her companions before asking the characters to sit.

If the characters have already met Malana in a previous adventure, you can forego introductions and skip to the **Call to Action** below.

DM tip. The accompanying sidebar contains additional information about each of the individuals present. If you are running the adventure in a 2-hour timeslot, it is best to limit the amount of roleplaying in this part of the adventure.

ROLEPLAYING MALANA HOMWELL

A native of Elturgard, Malana comes from a long line of paladins and clerics dedicated to the worship of Torm.

She typically dresses in clean white robes and a pale-blue shawl bearing the upraised hand of Torm. She keeps the right sleeve of her garment rolled and pinned at her elbow, making her missing appendage easily apparent. Light streaks of grey grace her lustrous blond hair, and her bright blue eyes convey both intelligence and authority.

When she was 18 years old, Malana left her homeland to preach Torm's word throughout the Sword Coast. She was young and full of pride in her deity, and she traveled with a party of adventurers for nearly a year before her piousness caused rifts among the group.

Malana fell in battle while dealing with an ankheg infestation north of Baldur's Gate, losing her arm to one of the creature's powerful pincers. Only the quick actions of her allies saved her life. She returned home to Elturel intent upon reclaiming her missing appendage, but ultimately, no healing could replace her missing limb.

Knowing she had failed her god, she returned to the farmland where she had lost her arm and worked as a simple farmhand for nearly three years. During that time, she came to understand the aspects of Torm that she had cast aside.

With respect, kindness, and humility in her heart, she traveled to the Moonsea, a land rife with Bane's worship, to serve as a counterpoint to his teachings of ambition and strife. Since that time, her flock and her temple have grown.

ROLEPLAYING ONTHARR FRUME

Ontharr Frume is a good-natured paladin of Torm, the god of heroics and bravery. He is a man of action who loves jokes and pranks, a stiff drink, and a friendly scuffle.

He typically wears a light-blue tabard bearing the gauntleted hand of Torm over his armor.

While Ontharr is a member of the Order of the Gauntlet, he is not only at the Helping Hand on his faction's behalf. He is assisting Malana because their families have been friends for generations, and because he is secretly quite fond of her.

ROLEPLAYING RYLAN ELENTAUR

A high elf of noble birth, Rylan's family acquired the collective works of the archmage Rililar Shadow-water after his death. The wizard has spent the better part of his life studying Rililar's journals, and in doing so, he found entries pertaining to the Tenets of Bane.

While not a Harper, Rylan claims a loose affiliation with the organization, and when Malana's latest call for assistance went out, he learned of it through his Harper affiliates. The opportunity to lend his knowledge to locate the possessed high clerics of Torm resonated strongly with Rylan, and he left for the Helping Hand the very same day.

CALL TO ACTION

Whether the characters arrive at the temple at the behest of their factions or for their own reasons, Malana is pleased to have capable adventurers to aid her. If a character participated in any of the earlier adventures in the Tenets of Bane series, she offers her thanks for their previous assistance and is pleased to see they have returned. If a character has the **Inspired by Torm** story award from the previous adventures, Malana speaks primarily to them, confident her words will be taken with the utmost urgency.

She tells the party that nearly a month ago she acquired three palm-sized platinum discs called the Tenets of Bane. Each disc had a word (fear, hatred, or tyranny) on one side and a painted black hand on the other. Three devout worshippers of Bane, known as the Servants of Strife, once carried the discs. They were defeated decades ago by a trio of Thentian wizards, who took the items to study.

The wizards discovered the discs were divine in nature, but they were unable to determine their true purpose. Having the items near was disconcerting, as they seemed to amplify the emotions that each disc represented.

In an effort to rid the Moonsea of the discs, Malana attempted to transport the items to her homeland of Elturgard, which is now the shining center of Torm's faith. She was confident the high clerics there could find a way to destroy them, thus eliminating at least a small portion of Bane's influence in the world.

Before she could depart Melvaunt, she was abducted by Banite worshipers, who sought the discs for themselves. With the help of brave adventures, she was rescued, and the Tenets of Bane were recovered.

Instead of trying again to transport the discs to Elturel, Malana used her family connections in Elturgard to bolster the defenses of her temple. She then asked for aid from **ONTHARR FRUME** in bringing three high clerics of Torm to the Moonsea.

Several days ago, the high clerics attempted a divine ritual to destroy the discs, but it ended in catastrophe. As the priests offered powerful prayers to Torm, the protective magic of the discs weakened, unknowingly releasing the souls of their original owners, the Servants of Strife, which had been

trapped within each disc when they perished over a century earlier.

The malignant souls easily overcame the shocked clerics and possessed their bodies. A battle ensued, but the newly returned Servants of Strife managed to escape into the surrounding countryside.

RYLAN ELENDAUR, a Thentian wizard with loose ties to the Harpers heard of the situation and arrived two days ago to provide assistance. He has been using scrying spells to locate the missing clerics. He believes he has found one of them in the foothills of the Galena Mountains, several days west of Glister.

From Rylan's scrying, it appears the possessed high cleric, **ALITHANA SHIELDHEART**, has taken refuge in a bizarre tower, looking like an alien melted candle, not found in any records of the region.

Malana needs the characters to travel into the mountains, rescue the high cleric, and, if possible, retrieve the missing Tenet of Bane. Her attempt at driving (with turn undead) the Servants of Strife from the high clerics during the previous battle failed, so subduing Alithana may be necessary.

Malana can provide the characters with a map to the area and loan them horses to speed their journey to Glister, but she doesn't know how useful the animals will be in the rolling, rocky foothills beyond. As it is early morning, she suggests they leave immediately.

She is willing to pay the characters a fair reward for their service, and if any character in the party has the **Inspired by Torm** story award, Malana gives them a *potion of greater healing* from the temple's supplies before they depart.

KEY POINTS

The bullets below exist to provide a quick summary for Dungeon Masters who might be required to run the adventure with little or no time to properly prepare.

- Priestess Malana Homwell needs the characters to rescue a half-orc high cleric of Torm named **Alithana Shieldheart** from a tower in the foothills of the Galena Mountains.
- The cleric has been possessed by the soul of a deceased Banite radical.
- Since she is possessed, the characters may need to subdue the cleric.
- Malana can provide the characters with a map to the area and loan them horses for their journey to the foothills.



WEST GALENA MTS.

GLISTER

THE MELTED TOWER

THAR

GLISTER ROAD

HULBURG

PHILAN

MELVAUNT

THE HELPING HAND

THEENTIA

THE MOONSEA

ELMENTREE

ELMWOC

CORMANTHOR

RIVER DUATHAMPER

RIVER LIS

EPISODE 2: HIGH OR LOW?

Expected Duration: 45 minutes

To reach the western foothills of the Galena Mountains the characters must travel the Sword Trail west to Melvaunt then take the Glistar road north through Thar to Glistar. Though the Glistar road is infamous for being infested by humanoid raiding parties, the passage of the Tenets has either drawn those forces elsewhere, or they've fled the area.

MELVAUNT AND GLISTER

The Fear of the Fiends overlooks the party's visit to the cities of Melvaunt and Glistar in favor of keeping the action moving. If you are not running the adventure in a fixed timeslot, feel free to allow the players time in Melvaunt to explore. For more information about the city, see CCC-BMG CORE-1 or the CORE-3 series on dmsguild.com. If the party has not played CCC-WWC-07 yet, they should be hurried through Glistar by being made to feel unwelcome due to the tensions in town.

SCENE A: RAVAGED RAIDERS

The party encounters no resistance during the journey from the Helping Hand to Glistar. They find the fortified town of Glistar tense and unwelcoming, and its residents without knowledge of the tower described by Rylan, prompting them to ride westward with little delay.

After several days of riding the characters begin to see the tracks of a variety of humanoids, mostly heading west or south. Cresting a barren hill, the stench of death rising up from the valley below becomes unmistakable, and they find their trail littered with the mauled bodies of dozens of gnolls. While surveying the carnage, they are hailed by an urbane, but gravelly voice from a mound of corpses. *"Please do not be alarmed. I take it you are here to do something about this terrible situation?"*

Looking towards the boulders the characters can see two monstrous arms held up in a gesture of peace. This is the ghost of the sage, **Carella Falconsflight** (female **ghost**), who was murdered by Sax in the Melted Tower.

ROLEPLAYING CARELLA FALCONSFLIGHT

In life, Carella was a human sage who pursued ancient architectural mysteries. As a ghost, her recollection of life is hazy. She is focused on getting revenge for her treacherous murder by Sax and on freeing her old friend Alithana. She despises the demon she possesses and wishes to see it destroyed.

Carella had been studying the tower when Sax arrived, having expected her old friend **Alithantha Shieldheart** to arrive in response to her *sending*. Tragically, Carella was no match for the treachery of Sax posing as her friend. Finding herself risen as a ghost, she possessed a demon to mask her presence while observing Sax's army building process.

While hiding in the demon, Carella has learned a variety of facts about the situation. She is willing to reveal the following to the party:

- Carella had only just started studying the tower after years of pursuing obscure old legends about an ancient tower never found on any map. She is certain that it has a multi-planar existence and has not intersected this world for millennia. She dug up a rune covered obelisk and performed the ritual inscribed on it to pull it into partial alignment with Toril. Only after entering it did she discover that the tower is in both this world and the Abyss, at which point she called upon her old friend Alithana for help.
- Sax Magnus entered the tower the next day (in the body of Alithana) and killed her. Then Sax began sacrificing humanoids to bring demons across and used the Tenet to bind them under her control.
- Demons surround the tower within a poisonous fog, and groups are often sent out to capture more humanoids. Captives are flown into the tower, where they are sacrificed to bind more demons.
- Sax is in the base of the tower, tending to the portal and binding demons.
- If the party has access to flight, one possible approach to the tower would be from above. However, there is generally at least one troop of demons at the top of the tower at any given moment. Furthermore, there are patrols of flying demons (vrock are the most visible members), which would have to be evaded. A stealthy approach from high above, perhaps using *feather fall* at the last second, is likely to be the only way to make that work. (See **Scene C: Higher Ground** if the characters choose this path.)
- The second approach is from below. The remains of the sacrificed creatures are pitched into a charnel pit below the tower. Some demons feed upon their decaying flesh, so the way is not without risk. Carella can give them directions to caves that lead into that area. She thinks this path is safer, as they are well separated from possible reinforcements. (See **Scene B: Desecrated Ground** if the characters choose this path.)

- The tower is made of twisted dimensions that block all teleportation magic. Carella believes it to be some ancient arcane experiment in dimensional magic.
- The Tenet has bound all the demons to itself somehow. It should be possible to use that connection to send them all back through the portal, if one can wrest control of it away from Sax.
- Carella strongly discourages the party from fighting the horde around the tower. There are over two hundred strong demons in the horde. The Howling Ravagers (a gnoll warband) tried, and now their bodies strengthen the horde.
- The demons are all from just beyond the open portal, so *banishment*, or similar magics, will not get rid of them for long.

Carella offers the characters the following spell scrolls, which she was able to recover from her body: *feather fall* and *silence*. She is willing to accompany them, but fears she will lose control of the demon in combat. Use the **gnoll flesh gnawer branded dybbuk** statistics for Carella in combat. Give the demon a save (Charisma DC 13) against her possession each round of combat. If it succeeds, she is ejected from it. The strain of possessing a demon has weakened her such that, once ejected, she will fade into the ethereal plane and be unable to manifest again until the next day. She can be laid to rest by saving Alithana from Sax.

Carella does not know exactly how Sax is maintaining control over the demons, nor the effects of the Brand of Fear upon them. She only knows the demon she possesses fears Sax beyond all reason.

FACING A HORDE OF DEMONS

A vast horde of demons can be seen rampaging in the poisonous mists that extend for 200 feet around the Tower. Their numbers are such that it should be clearly suicidal to fight through them.

No specific guidance is given for parties attempting a foolhardy direct assault. Use your best judgement with the demons presented in appendix 1 to provide a challenge that dissuades the players from pursuing such a course of action. Try to leave them a path of retreat, perhaps with a distraction provided by Carella, so they can regroup and resume the adventure using one of the viable approaches described in this episode.

BRANDED DEMONS

In *The Fear of Fiends* Sax Magnus has branded demons using the Tenet of Fear. The process requires that the Tenet be empowered by with the life of a sacrifice that died in fear. Sax then focuses and channels that power into a brand on the face of a restrained demon pulled through by the act of sacrifice. The branding process overcomes the immunity to fear many demons possess. Branded demons live in fear of Bane, Bane's servant Sax Magnus, and Gorbash. They are otherwise immune to the frightened condition, unless the name of Bane is invoked when it is being imposed. They have disadvantage to all saving throws imposed by spells of those who invoke them in Bane's name, and disadvantage on all opposed skill checks against those who invoke the name of Bane in the attempt.

A brand is effectively a *Planar Binding* cast at 8th level. Treat anyone holding the Tenet of Fear as if they had cast *Planar Binding* on all branded demons. A brand can be destroyed by a *dispel magic* with an ability check of DC 18. A failed check damages the brand, reducing the dispel DC by 1. Once it falls below 10, it is destroyed. Once the brand is disabled, or destroyed, the demon is free to return to its usual murderous proclivities.

A branded demon can walk through the open portal, as the soul sacrifice that permits it to pass is still in effect. However, each crossing out of the Abyss drains the power of the brand, reducing the dispel DC by 1.

Note: All the branded demons were collected from just beyond this portal. They can easily return through the portal. The timing of a banished branded demon's return is up to the DM, as it depends on how far from the portal one feels the demon should arrive when banished.

SCENE B: DESECRATED GROUND

The charnel pit is twenty feet across, in a room that is sixty feet in diameter and thirty feet in height. The edges around the pit are a slope of loose scree. The pit is the site of a body recovery operation by a troop of **four dybbuks**, sent down to claim strong bodies from the fallen humanoid. The freshest corpses are from the Howling Ravagers gnoll war band. They have selected the strongest of the fallen. They are guided by a pair of dybbuk in the bodies of **gnoll pack lords**, while the remainder are in the bodies of **gnoll flesh gnawers**.

ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

Here are recommendations for adjusting this combat encounter. These are not cumulative.

- **Very weak party:** Remove two **gnoll pack lord branded dybbuks**.
- **Weak party:** Remove one **gnoll pack lord branded dybbuk**.
- **Strong party:** Replace one **gnoll flesh gnawer branded dybbuk** with a **gnoll fang of Yeenoghu branded dybbuk**.
- **Very strong party:** Replace all **gnoll flesh gnawer branded dybbuks** with **gnoll pack lord branded dybbuk**, and add one **flind branded dybbuk**.

AREA INFORMATION

The area has the following features. See **Appendix 4: Charnel Pit** for a map.

Light. Dim light from hole in ceiling.

Massacred Bodies. The area below is strewn with hundreds of corpses that make it difficult terrain.

Scree. The loose scree makes the marked slopes treacherous terrain. Moving over the scree at faster than half speed requires a successful DC 10 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check or fall prone and slide 2d10 feet downwards.

Sounds. A hole in the ceiling at the top of the stairs leads into the south side of the tower. The sounds of screaming, the dim roaring of demons, and the distant booming sounds of volcanic eruptions in the Abyss can be easily heard.

TACTICS

The dybbuk thrive on shock and disgust. They have little concern for their own safety, but especially relish the horror of victims being attacked by the body of a former friend or ally. They gang up on whoever seems weakest so they can be possessed to horrify the rest of their new victims. They start the fight by using fear, or violate corpse, to weaken the opposition and then gang up on whoever is slowest to flee. Disembodied dybbuk can use *dimension door* at will, and they do so to close with vulnerable ranged opponents or chase down those who flee.

Due to the temporary hit points of their host bodies, mass fear effects, and desire to kill so they can possess new bodies, this fight can be extremely dangerous. If it is going badly for the party, note that these demons revel in disgust and horror, and could do so to the exclusion of tactical advantage. They could easily waste actions making their bodies do horrific things, like tearing their own arm off to use as a club. Alternatively, they could use *phantasmal force* to project horrific images into the minds of their victims, (i.e., they have slid into the pit of decaying body parts).

A dybbuk that has lost its host is not a very sturdy melee opponent, and they seek to inhabit a new host body as soon as possible. Revealed dybbuk use *dimension door* to reach (possibly stronger) bodies, within the heap of dead, achieving total cover if it seems appropriate, and come back next round. Also, note that a dybbuk can cast *fear* multiple times, and other dybbuk are immune to the frightened condition. The number of replacement bodies available for the dybbuk should be restricted to three if this is being run in a two-hour slot. The bodies should be proportional to the strength of the party, with gnoll flesh gnawers as the minimum.

DEVELOPMENT

When they are exposed in their true form, the party can easily see the brand mark where the Tenet of Fear has been burnt into the head of each dybbuk.

TREASURE

The dead gnolls carry miscellaneous coins and gems, looted from the bodies. Carella's partially eaten body can be recovered from the pit with a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check by someone sturdy enough to brave the DC 10 Constitution saving throw required for each round of searching. Failing the Constitution save results in nausea (i.e., the poisoned condition). Failing it twice results in being overcome by revulsion, leaving the individual shaken to the point of inducing a level of exhaustion.

CONTINUING THE ADVENTURE

If the party is victorious, they can proceed up to the stone door at the top of the rocky slope. It is possible to get a short rest, but delaying for a long rest (taken elsewhere, as patrols are sent to investigate the charnel pit if the dybbuk take more than an hour to return) should make the last fight more difficult (increase by the encounter adjustment by one increment). Proceed to **Episode 3: Facing Your Fears**.

SCENE C: HIGHER GROUND

The top of the tower is eighty feet across, with a hole in the center leading to the west side of its base (see **Appendix 5: Top of Tower** for a map of the area). It is used as a perch for flying demons and is currently occupied by **one vroock** and **one chasme**.

If the party obscures their approach by making a successful DC 13 group Dexterity (Stealth) check, or if they use *feather fall* from high up, they can land atop the tower without alerting any additional flying enemies. If they fail the check, or if they linger atop the tower too long, they draw the notice of another **vroock** flying in the area. It arrives six rounds after the start of the fight atop the tower.

Carella advises the characters to approach rapidly from high up and cast *silence* before landing. That way, they should be able to limit the fight to the guardians of the top chamber and proceed inside without alerting more enemies.

DM Note. The high route is riskier and affords no opportunity for a short rest, weaker parties should be discouraged from considering it.

TACTICS

These demons have little in the way of strategy. Given an opportunity for mayhem, they will fight. If the party uses their *silence* scroll wisely, this should be a fairly straightforward fight.

ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

Here are recommendations for adjusting this combat encounter. These are not cumulative.

- **Very weak party:** Remove one **branded vrock**.
- **Weak party:** Halve the hit points of each **branded vrock**.
- **Strong party:** Add one **branded vrock**.
- **Very strong party:** Replace the **branded chasme** with a **branded glabrezu**, and add one **branded vrock**.

AREA INFORMATION

The area has the following features. See **Appendix 5: Top of Tower** for a map.

Light. Appropriate for time of day

Dangerous Ground. The floor is made of folded dimensions. Movement across it is difficult terrain and damaging (as the *spike growth* spell; 5 (2d4) piercing damage per 5 feet of movement).

DEVELOPMENT

Each demon has a conspicuous brand mark where the Tenet of Fear has been burnt into their face. A dybbuk flies in after a minute or two, on its way to report to Sax below for transport duty. Interfering with it alerts Sax that something is amiss. A short

rest will be nearly impossible here. If the characters alerted the horde, Sax sends forces from above and below to destroy them.

THE MELTED TOWER

The Melted Tower was built by some of the Phaerimm as an experimental weapon in their war against Netheril and the Sharn. Battle damage caused it to fall mostly out of phase with Toril and be locked into a single planar destination. The Phaerimm abandoned it when they concluded it was no longer useful. Though it is stuck in place in Toril, and its gate is locked onto the Shard of the Fall, its extrusion into the Abyss can be piloted. However, as a Phaerimm device, the controls are designed for a 10-foot creature with four arms and control over wind and weaving magic. Four people can attempt to cooperatively operate the four control ribbons with a successful DC 13 land vehicle check every minute. On a failed check, each creature in contact with the controls takes 3 (1d6) necrotic damage.

A successful DC 20 Intelligence (Arcana) check is required to deduce its Phaerimm origin and learn a little about its workings. Characters with knowledge of ancient Netheril make that check with advantage. Having knowledge of its origin also grants advantage on checks to manipulate the tower and portal.



EPISODE 3:

FACING YOUR FEARS

Expected Duration: 45 minutes

The Melted Tower was created by some long lost magical process that folds dimensions into a physical substance. As the Phaerimm never walked anywhere, they had no concern for smooth floors. Sax has walled off a square area approximately 100 feet across within a much larger space. The ceiling is 60 feet above and comprised of the folded dimensional material of the rest of the tower. A 10-foot-wide hole in the ceiling to the west leads to the top of the tower, and a 10-foot-wide hole in the south leads to the charnel pit below.

Sax has used *wall of stone* spell to create walls and walkways across the uneven surface. A trail of blood leads from the basalt block in the center to the southern alcove. To the east, a rough pen of stone blocks marks a cage for the humanoids.

ROLEPLAYING SAX MAGNUS

Sax Magnus was an arrogant and powerful archmage in life. Her death and return has done nothing to diminish her overbearing self-confidence. She happily monologues about how she has made demons kneel before the might of Bane. She even offers the characters a chance to join her forces, for she shall soon have the unending armies of the Abyss at her feet. If they refuse, they will be subdued for sacrifice.

AREA INFORMATION

A 120-foot-square area at the base of the Tower has been customized by Sax. See **Appendix 6: Base of the Tower** for a map.

Light. Bright light from the blue flames of the Abyss beyond the portal.

Sound: The booming of volcanic activity and screams of the damned can be heard coming from the portal.

Dangerous Ground. The areas not marked as stone are folded dimensions. Movement across those areas is difficult terrain and damaging, (as the *spike growth* spell; 5 (2d4) piercing damage per 5 feet of movement).

Paths: Crude 10-foot-wide stone paths crisscross between the points of interest.

Portal. The 20-foot-wide portal dominates the north wall (see the “About the Portal” sidebar).

Altar. A black nimbus projects around Sax Magnus from the black basalt altar. A gnoll is chained to the altar as the next sacrifice. Sigils of Phaerimm magic are carved into the altar.

Holding Pen: A crude holding pen, opposite the portal, contains 9 orcs, 7 gnolls, 9 hobgoblins, 1 half-orc and 1 ogre, all too injured and exhausted to be capable of impacting the combat.

SCENE A. SACRIFICIAL RITUALS

Sax Magnus has discovered that a blood sacrifice will permit demons to cross through the portal. She has stationed a branded nalfeshnee on the Abyss side to keep lesser demons away and keep worthwhile demons near enough to send through when the portal becomes clear. The branded nalfeshnee on the Abyss side should not be involved in the fight, as it has orders to maintain a pool of suitable demons in The Shards of the Fall, and is not observing the interior of the tower, unless the party does something extraordinarily foolish.

ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

Here are recommendations for adjusting this combat encounter. These are not cumulative.

- **Very weak party:** Replace the **glabrezu** with a **hezrou** and Sax’s 4th and 5th-level spells have already been cast. Also no displacement effect is on **Sax Magnus**.
- **Weak party:** Replace the **glabrezu** with a **hezrou**, and no displacement effect is on **Sax Magnus**.
- **Strong party:** Use the **conjurer** stat block for Sax, and add two **bulezau**.
- **Very strong party:** Replace the **glabrezu** with a **nalfeshnee**, use the **archmage** stat block for Sax.

The main opposition in this room is **Sax Magnus** (use the **conjurer** stat block) and her branded **glabrezu**. Sax’s standard procedure here is that the big demon selects a victim, hauls it to the altar, and chains it down. Sax then sacrifices it and uses the charge in the Tenet to pull a new demon with the same challenge rating as the sacrifice (or accumulated sacrifices) through. The big demon then grabs it for Sax to brand. Every few minutes a branded **dybbuk** comes for the new arrivals.

The portal presents several opportunities and challenges. See the “About the Portal” sidebar for details.

DEVELOPMENTS

If the party does not interfere, Sax sacrifices the gnoll on her turn. When she does, the portal flashes clear, at which point a **bulezau** demon waiting outside the gate crosses over on her turn. Roll initiative for it as normal; it will have used a readied action to cross over. Note that it has not been branded yet, so its loyalty to Sax is only the wildly unreliable gratitude of a freed demon.

If the party rejects Sax’s offer, she sends the **glabrezu** to kill them. It starts by casting *confusion* on the party, or focuses on whoever is providing the greatest difficulty for Sax, such as counterspell users. Sax supports the **glabrezu** by casting *cloudkill*, *fireball*, and *evards black tentacles* on her turns. She also defends herself with the *shield* spell when

needed. The magic around her and the altar grants her 40 temporary hit points, while she stays within 5 feet of the altar. The *brooch of shielding* she wears grants her immunity to *magic missile* spells and resistance to force damage.

If the portal is still operational after ten rounds, a dybbuk arrives from above and provides transport out. If left unmolested, it returns upward the next round, alerting the horde to the new situation. Have the dybbuk return with whichever members of the horde you feel will present an interesting motivation for the party to get busy closing the portal. If they have achieved control over the Tenet of Fear, this presents an opportunity to explore its power over the demons.

Sax does not retreat, as she believes she cannot be defeated. Her bond with the Tenet renders her immune to fear, intimidation, and other mind altering effects. Someone who has overcome the intensified fear effect (see “Tenet of Fear” sidebar) can attempt to wrest the Tenet of Fear from her grasp. They succeed if she is grappled and then loses a second opposed grapple attempt targeted at wrenching the Tenet from her.

Any individual(s) crossing over that is unable to present the Tenet of Fear will be regarded by the branded nalfeshnee as an undamned soul, and as such, currency suitable for capture and barter to other demons.

THE TENET OF FEAR

Any character grabbing the Tenet of Fear during the fight will experience a momentary intense need to make everyone cower before them. That feeling will gradually fade into a milder anxiety. See the “Tenet of Fear” sidebar for additional information.

TREASURE

Sax wears a *brooch of shielding* looted from Carella. If Carella is still in play, she will encourage her avengers to keep it as a reward. See **Appendix 7: Players Handouts** for details.

TENET OF FEAR

The Tenet of Fear is one of the three palm-sized discs that make up the Tenets of Bane. It once belonged to the wizard, Sax Magnus. The disc bears the word FEAR in black letters on one side and a symbol of Bane (a painted black hand outlined in red) on the opposite. In spite of its age, the disc’s paint remains bright and flawless. Any attempt to deface or damage the item has no discernable effect.

Creatures that touch the disc feel a sudden and intense rush of fear, which quickly subsides to minor anxiety. The disc radiates a less intense aura of fear in a 100-foot radius. While the aura is faint, creatures that experience prolonged exposure to it become anxious, distrustful, and prone to fits of violence. That effect of the effect imposes no mechanical disadvantages. It is for roleplaying purposes only. The effect dissipates if the creature spends an equal amount of time out of the disc’s aura. In addition, a *calm emotions* spell suppresses the effect, and a *lesser restoration* spell removes it completely.

While the disc is empowered by life energy it does 1 point of necrotic damage per round to anyone within 1 foot of it who is not a worshipper of Bane. Those who are not worshippers of Bane must make a successful DC 17 Wisdom saving throw against fear to touch the Tenet in its powered up state. Once the save is made, it need not be attempted again for 24 hours.

THE SHARDS OF THE FALL

The history behind the name of this layer of the Abyss, known only as The Shards of the Fall is long lost. It is not known to have ever been ruled by any demon lord or evil god. Its current ruler is Gorbash the Balor. The land itself is unstable, given to frequent tremors and volcanic activity.

The following facts can be recalled or deduced via successful Intelligence (Arcana, Religion, or History) checks. History checks would be made at disadvantage due to obscurity.

- All flames, no matter the source, burn blue here, including the lava. (DC 13 check)
- The air itself is poisonous. Creatures who are not immune to poison must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution save every round they breathe or become poisoned until they breathe fresh air again. (DC 15 check)
- The only attraction of this place is in the brilliant blue sapphires that may be collected from the cooled lava. (DC 18 check)
- The difficulty of making it out is that none may leave until a life debt is paid. That debt must be paid in undamned souls equivalent to the power (hit dice equivalent to CR) of the one who seeks to leave. Few undamned souls survive long here against the depredations of the demons who have had the misfortune to fall through a rift into this place. The nature of the place leads some sages to believe it was once a prison plane, perhaps fallen from Carceri in the long lost past. (DC 20 check)

A successful DC 20 Intelligence (Arcana or Religion) check reveals all of the information above.

ABOUT THE PORTAL

The portal is a 40-foot-by-40-foot passage from Toril to The Shards of the Fall layer of the Abyss. It provides a clear view in both directions between the tower and the abyssal rift beyond. Nothing else can pass through the portal unless driven by the expenditure of life force (see below). The sound of volcanic activity and the roars of demons can be heard very faintly, similarly sounds from inside the tower are only barely audible.

The portal is being held open in stable form by the steady stream of soul sacrifices. It can be held open by sacrificing a sentient being, damning its soul to the Abyss. Or by the willing sacrifice of life energy in the form of hit dice. The sacrifice can be given at the portal itself (also subjecting a creature to the draining field), or by pressing a hand to the basalt altar.

The area within five feet of the portal is a cerulean draining field that does 3 (1d6) necrotic damage to any creature that ends their turn there. It also dispels anything that ends its turn within the field as a *dispel magic* spell with an ability check level of 13 (3rd level spells or below).

A sentient living creature native to Toril may cross through the portal by moving adjacent to it and expending some of its life force, in the form of a hit die. Doing so moves them, and whatever they carry, into the The Shards of the Fall layer of the Abyss. Demons can return to the Abyss through the portal without any difficulty. Other creatures may only pass when carried by one of the former. Getting back is significantly more difficult, see the “The Shards of the Fall” sidebar for details.

For every fifteen minutes without sacrifices, the necrotic field expands in a 5-foot radius and intensifies by +3 (1d6) necrotic damage and +1 to its dispel check. This continues until a soul is captured, or a hit die of life force is voluntarily expended, then it reduces by 5 feet and 3 (1d6) for each CR of the soul, or per hit die, (to a minimum of 5 feet and 3 (1d6)). The timing of an expansion can be observed and predicted by a round of observation accompanied by a successful DC 10 Intelligence (Arcana) check.

CONTINUING THE ADVENTURE

There is no peaceful conclusion option. The party can only survive by incapacitating their enemies. If they are successful, proceed to **Scene B: Disbanding the Horde** and then **Scene C: Closing the Portal**.

If you are utilizing **Bonus Objective A or B**, you should direct the party to **Appendix 2 or 3**.

SCENE B: DISBANDING THE HORDE

The wielder of the Tenet of Fear can command branded demons to return through the portal. They can also be commanded to harvest gems, with the same limitations as in the “Gems for Souls” section. Finally, they can be commanded to destroy each other. However, the latter move is somewhat risky, as babau demons can cast *dispel magic*, which may dispel the brands that control some foes or cause other collateral damage. The portal itself destabilizes without additional sacrifices, so there is insufficient time to gain much using that strategy alone.

A wise party will command the demons to go back through the portal before closing it.

Control over the Tenet of Fear allows the possessor to command any branded demon. The horde can be ordered to return through the portal. A successful DC 13 Intelligence check reveals that they should send dybbuk to recall any remote patrols. It will take about an hour for them to be ferried back by dybbuk using *dimension door*.

SCENE C: CLOSING THE PORTAL

The portal can be closed by holding the Tenet of Fear in it and making three successful DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana or Religion), Wisdom, or Charisma checks (one per round) to cancel all life price bargains made through it, thereby expelling its energy into the portal. This can only be done by imposing one’s will through the Tenet while in physical contact. Failing a check intensifies the necrotic field (see the “About the Portal” sidebar for details).

When the portal is closed, the wall returns to the form of an inert 20-foot-by-20-foot obsidian bas relief of the volcanic horizon beyond, and the necrotic field collapses. This also discharges the Tenet of Fear so that it is in the more dormant state described in the “Tenet of Fear” sidebar.

The tower fades out of alignment with Toril, over the next minute. Anyone remaining within after 1 minute is dropped into the pit, falling at least 30 feet (see **Appendix 4**).

EPISODE 4: CONCLUSION

Expected Duration: 15 minutes

When the characters return to the Helping Hand with the high cleric Alithana Shieldheart in tow, Malana is relieved to see they were successful in their mission and happily rewards them. If Alithana somehow perished during the adventure, Malana sends for another cleric of Torm to raise her from the dead. If she remains alive, she vows to find a way to drive the foul soul of Sax Magnus from her body and save her.

Once retrieved, Malana turns the Tenet of Fear over to Rylan Elentaur, who stores the disc in a pocket of extradimensional space—accessible only by him—at his tower in Thentia. She assures the characters that the wizard is actively searching for a way to finally destroy the discs once and for all.

STORY AWARD

If the characters defeated Sax Magnus and closed the portal without sacrificing any humanoids, and if they managed to return Alithana to the Helping Hand alive with the Tenet of Fear, they earn the ***Torm's Compassion*** story award, which is detailed under **Adventure Rewards**.



ADVENTURE REWARDS

Upon completing the adventure, the characters each receive rewards based upon their accomplishments. These rewards include advancement and treasure, and may include special rewards, such as story awards or new downtime activities, as follows:

ADVANCEMENT AND TREASURE CHECKPOINTS

The characters receive 2 advancement checkpoints and 2 treasure checkpoints for completing the **story** objective below:

- **Story Objective:** Rescue the high cleric, Alithana Shieldheart, and return her to Malana Homwell at the Helping Hand temple.

The characters receive 1 advancement checkpoint and 1 treasure checkpoint for completing each of the **bonus** objectives below:

- **Bonus Objective A:** Either collect gemstones or save souls by playing **Appendix 2: Virtue or Greed?**
- **Bonus Objective B:** Successfully resettle most of the surviving humanoids in **Appendix 3: Resettlement**.

PLAYER REWARDS

The characters earn downtime and renown as outlined in the *D&D Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide* for completing the adventure and any bonus objectives. They also earn the following player rewards:

MAGIC ITEM UNLOCK

Characters completing the adventure unlock this magic item.

Brooch of Shielding This brooch depicts the white raised hand of Torm. A full description of this item can be found in **Appendix 7: Player Handouts**.

CONSUMABLES

During this adventure, the characters may find the following consumable items:

Spell Scroll of Feather Fall. This item can be found under **Appendix 7: Player Handouts**.

Spell Scroll of Silence. This item can be found in **Appendix 7: Player Handouts**.

STORY AWARDS

During this adventure, the characters may earn the following story award:

Torm's Compassion. You showed compassion by not sacrificing any humanoids when closing the portal to the Abyss. In addition, you managed to retrieve the Tenet of Fear and deliver it to Malana Homwell. The priestess is impressed by your dedication to Torm's ways.

Touched by Torm. Your dedication to Torm's ways has impressed Malana Homwell and others in the church of Torm. As a result, you are invited for an intense period of study, prayer, and reflection at the Temple of Torm's Coming in Tantras. If you choose to attend, you emerged with a deep connection to Torm and his beliefs. You feel as though the deity has touched your very being, but what this means for your future is still unclear.

Important: This story award is only available to characters with the **Torm's Honor, Torm's Compassion, Torm's Duty, and Inspired by Torm** story awards. While it may have benefits in future adventures involving the Tenets of Bane, it is intended primarily for roleplaying purposes.

A full description of each story award can also be found in **Appendix 7: Player Handouts**.

DM REWARDS

In exchange for running this adventure, you earn advancement and treasure checkpoints and downtime as though you played the adventure, but none of the other rewards listed above.

However, this adventure may qualify for rewards earned by completing DM Quests. See the *Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide* for more information about DM Quests.



DRAMATIS PERSONAE

The following NPCs and locations feature prominently in this adventure.

- **Glister.** Glister is a small town that sits at the base of the western Galena Mountains. Hills surround the remote community, which serves as a trading post, exchanging ore from the nearby mountains for food and other supplies from cities and towns of the Moonsea.
- **Malana Homwell.** A native of Elturgard, Malana comes from a long line of paladins and clerics dedicated to the worship of Torm. She typically dresses in clean white robes and a pale-blue shawl bearing the upraised hand of Torm. She keeps the right sleeve of her garment is rolled and pinned at her elbow, making her missing appendage easily apparent. Light streaks of grey grace her lustrous blond hair, and her bright blue eyes convey both intelligence and authority.

Personality: I believe everyone deserves kindness, compassion, and dignity, and I do my best to set this example through my actions.

Ideal: I believe that my purpose is to spread the teachings of Torm.

Bond: I am dedicated to Torm with all of my being.

Flaw: My desire to please Torm sometimes blinds my judgement.

- **Onthar Frume.** Ontharr Frume is a good-natured paladin of Torm, the god of heroics and bravery. He is a man of action who loves jokes and pranks, a stiff drink, and a friendly scuffle. He typically wears a light-blue tabard bearing the gauntleted hand of Torm over his armor.

Personality: I love a good laugh, and I'm quick to help those in need.

Ideal: I strive to be an example of goodness to everyone in my life.

Bond: I live to serve Torm.

Flaw: I sometimes look upon those without conviction or purpose unfavorably.

- **Rylan Elentaur.** A high elf of noble birth, Rylan's family acquired the collective works of the archmage Rililar Shadow-water after his death. The wizard has spent the better part of his life studying Rililar's journals. While not a Harper, Rylan claims a loose affiliation with the organization, and when Malana's latest call for assistance went out, he learned of it through his Harper affiliates.

Personality: I'm used to helping out those who aren't as smart as I am, and I patiently explain anything and everything to others.

Ideal: History is only important if we learn from it and do not make the same mistakes twice.

Bond: I want to use my knowledge to make the world a better place for everyone.

Flaw: I sometimes risk too much in my quest for forgotten lore.

- **Servants of Strife.** Three of Bane's devout followers who originally carried the Tenets of Bane. Collectively, they were known as the Servants of Strife.
- **Tenets of Bane.** Three palm-sized discs make up the Tenets of Bane. These discs once belonged to the Servants of Strife, three of Bane's most devout worshipers. Each disc bears a word (HATE, FEAR, or TYRANNY) in black letters on one side and a symbol of Bane, a painted black hand outlined in red, on the opposite. Creatures that touch the disc feel a sudden and intense rush of emotion related to the word it bears.

The wizard, Sax Magnus, magically created each of the three discs. Upon their completion, they were bathed in the blood of the assassin, Cyran Steel, and blessed by the blackguard, Mace Dred. This process somehow bound the discs to the souls of each Servant of Strife, but since the exact nature of the joining is both arcane and divine, it is unknown to all but their original owners.

- **Thar.** Thar is a desolate, broken moor with a cold and unforgiving climate. Orcs, ogres, and other humanoids make their homes there and in the nearby mountains. They sometimes threaten the human cities of the northern Moonsea.
- **The Helping Hand.** This two-story stone temple to Torm is simple and austere in comparison to many of those dedicated to the Hand of Righteousness. When Malana arrived in the Moonsea many decades ago, it was little more than a burnt-out shell, but over time, the structure has seen several expansions. It now includes separate wings for travelers and its permanent clergy, gardens for raising vegetables, and three large barns that serve as a dairy for a sizeable herd of milking goats. The Helping Hand augments the income it generates from lodging by making cheeses seasoned with herbs, which the temple sells in Melvaunt and Thentia. Many of its specialty products are prized by the nobility of both cities and command a steep price.

APPENDIX 1: MONSTERS/NPCS

ARCHMAGE

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)

Hit Points 99 (18d8 + 18)

Speed 30 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 10 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 12 (+1) | 20 (+5) | 15 (+2) | 16 (+3) |

Saving Throws Int +9, Wis +6

Skills Arcana +13, History +13

Damage Resistance damage from spells; non-magical bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing (from *stoneskin*)

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages any six languages

Challenge 12 (8,400 XP)

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

Spellcasting. The archmage is an 18th-level spellcaster. It's spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks). The archmage can cast *disguise self* and *invisibility* at will and has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *fire bolt*, *light*, *mage hand*,

prestidigitation, *shocking grasp*

1st level (4 slots): *detect magic*, *identify*, *mage armor**,
magic missile

2nd level (3 slots): *detect thoughts*, *mirror image*, *misty step*

3rd level (3 slots): *counterspell*, *fly*, *lightning bolt*

4th level (3 slots): *banishment*, *fire shield*, *stoneskin**

5th level (2 slots): *cone of cold*, *scrying*, *wall of force*

6th level (1 slot): *globe of invulnerability*

7th level (1 slot): *teleport*

8th level (1 slot): *mind blank**

9th level (1 slot): *time stop*

* *The archmage casts these spells on itself before combat.*

ACTIONS

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

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 (2d6 + 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 + 6) 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.

BABAU

Medium fiend (demon), chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 82 (11d8 + 33)

Speed 40 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 19 (+4) | 16 (+3) | 16 (+3) | 11 (+0) | 12 (+1) | 13 (+1) |

Skills Perception +5, Stealth +5

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

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 15

Languages Abyssal

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. The babau's innate spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 11). The babau can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *darkness*, *dispel magic*, *fear*, *heat metal*, *levitate*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The babau makes two melee attacks. It can also use Weakening Gaze before or after making these attacks.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) slashing damage.

Spear. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage, or 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage when used with two hands to make a melee attack.

Weakening Gaze. The babau targets one creature that it can see within 20 feet of it. The target must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target deals only half damage with weapon attacks that use Strength 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.

BULEZAU

Medium fiend (demon), chaotic evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 52 (7d8 + 21)

Speed 40 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|--------|--------|
| 15 (+2) | 14 (+2) | 17 (+3) | 8 (-1) | 9 (-1) | 6 (-2) |

Damage Resistances cold, fire, lightning

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages Abyssal, telepathy 60 ft.

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Rotting Presence. When any creature that isn't a demon starts its turn within 30 feet one or more bulezau, that creature must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or take 3 (1d6) necrotic damage plus 1 necrotic damage for each bulezau within 30 feet of it.

Standing Leap. The bulezau's long jump is up to 20 feet and its high jump is up to 10 feet, with or without a running start. Sure-Footed. The bulezau has advantage on Strength and Dexterity saving throws made against effects that would knock it prone.

ACTIONS

Barbed Tail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d12 + 2) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw against disease or become poisoned until the disease ends. While poisoned in this way, the target sports festering boils, coughs up flies, and sheds rotting skin, and the target must repeat the saving throw after every 24 hours that elapse. On a successful save, the disease ends. On a failed save, the target's hit point maximum is reduced by 4 (1d8). The target dies if its hit point maximum is reduced to 0.

CHASME

Large fiend (demon), chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 84 (13d10 + 13)

Speed 20 ft., fly 60 ft.

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

Saving Throws Dex +5, Wis +5

Skills Perception +5

Damage Resistances cold, fire, lightning

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses blindsight 10 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 15

Languages Abyssal, telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Drone. The chasme produces a horrid droning sound to which demons are immune. Any other creature that starts its turn within 30 feet of the chasme must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or fall unconscious for 10 minutes. A creature that can't hear the drone automatically succeeds on the save. The effect on the creature ends if it takes damage or if another creature takes an action to splash it with holy water. If a creature's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, it is immune to the drone for the next 24 hours.

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

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

ACTIONS

Proboscis. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 16 (4d6 + 2) piercing damage plus 24 (7d6) necrotic damage, and the target's hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the necrotic damage taken. If this effect reduces a creature's hit point maximum to 0, the creature dies. This reduction to a creature's hit point maximum lasts until the creature finishes a long rest or until it is affected by a spell like *greater restoration*.

CONJURER (SAX MAGNUS)

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)

Hit Points 40 (9d8)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Int +6, Wis +4

Skills Arcana +6, History +6

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages any four languages

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Spellcasting. The conjurer is a 9th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). The conjurer has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *acid splash**, *mage hand**, *poison spray**, *prestidigitation*

1st level (4 slot s): *mage armor*, *magic missile*, *unseen servant**

2nd level (3 slots): *cloud of daggers**, *misty step**, *web**

3rd level (3 slots): *fireball*, *stinking cloud**

4th level (3 slots): *Evard's black tentacles**, *stoneskin*

5th level (2 slots): *cloudkill**, *conjure elemental**

*Conjuration spell of 1st level or higher

Benign Transportation (Recharges after the Conjurer Casts a Conjunction Spell of 1st Level or Higher). As a bonus action, the conjurer teleports up to 30 feet to an unoccupied space that it can see. If it instead chooses a space within range that is occupied by a willing Small or Medium creature, they both teleport, swapping places.

ACTIONS

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

DYBBUK

Medium fiend (demon), chaotic evil

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 37 (5d8 + 15)

Speed 0 ft., 40 ft. (hover)

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

Skills Deception +6, Intimidation +4, Perception +4

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

Damage Immunities poison

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

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages Abyssal, Common, telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 4 (1, 100 XP)

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

Innate Spellcasting. The dybbuk's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 12). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *dimension door*

3/day each: *fear*, *phantasmal force*

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

Violate Corpse. The dybbuk can use a bonus action while it is possessing a corpse to make it do something unnatural, such as vomit blood, twist its head all the way around, or cause a quadruped to move as a biped. Any beast or humanoid that sees this behavior must succeed on a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened of the dybbuk for 1 minute. The frightened creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. A creature that succeeds on a saving throw against this ability is immune to Violate Corpse for 24 hours.

ACTIONS

Tendril. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) necrotic damage. If the target is a creature, its hit point maximum is also reduced by 3 (1d6). This reduction lasts until the target finishes a short or long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

Possess Corpse (Recharge 6). The dybbuk disappears into an intact corpse it can see within 5 feet of it. The corpse must be Large or smaller and be that of a beast or a humanoid. The dybbuk is now effectively the possessed creature. Its type becomes undead, though it now looks alive, and it gains a number of temporary hit points equal to the corpse's hit point maximum in life.

While possessing the corpse, the dybbuk retains its hit points, alignment, Intelligence, Wisdom, Charisma, telepathy, and immunity to poison damage, exhaustion, and being charmed and frightened. It otherwise uses the possessed target's game statistics, gaining access to its knowledge and proficiencies but not its class features, if any.

The possession lasts until the temporary hit points are lost (at which point the body becomes a corpse once more) or the dybbuk ends its possession using a bonus action. When the possession ends, the dybbuk reappears in an unoccupied space within 5 feet of the corpse.

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 Intimidate +5, Perception +5

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

Languages Gnoll, Abyssal

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.

GLABREZU

Large fiend (demon), chaotic evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 157 (15d10 + 75)

Speed 40 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 20 (+5) | 15 (+2) | 21 (+5) | 19 (+4) | 17 (+3) | 16 (+3) |

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

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

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Abyssal, telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. The glabrezu's spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 16). The glabrezu can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *darkness*, *detect magic*, *dispel magic*
1/day each: *confusion*, *fly*, *power word stun*

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The glabrezu makes four attacks: two with its pincers and two with its fists. Alternatively, it makes two attacks with its pincers and casts one spell.

Pincer. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (2d10 + 5) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a Medium or smaller creature, it is grappled (escape DC 15). The glabrezu has two pincers, each of which can grapple only one target.

Fist. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2d4 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

GNOLL FANG OF YEENOGHU

Medium humanoid (gnoll), chaotic evil

Armor Class 14 (hide armor)

Hit Points 65 (10d8 + 20)

Speed 30 ft.

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

GNOLL FLESH GNAWER

Medium humanoid (gnoll), chaotic evil

Armor Class 14 (studded leather)

Hit Points 22 (4d8 + 4)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Dex +4

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Gnoll

Challenge 1 (200 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 shortsword.

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

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

Sudden Rush. Until the end of the turn, the gnoll's speed increases by 60 feet and it doesn't provoke opportunity attacks.

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 creature. *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.

HEZROU

Large fiend (demon), chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 136 (13d10 + 65)

Speed 30 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|---------|
| 19 (+4) | 17 (+3) | 20 (+5) | 5 (-3) | 12 (+1) | 13 (+1) |

Saving Throws Str +7, Con +8, Wis +4

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

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Abyssal, telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

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

Stench. Any creature that starts its turn within 10 feet of the hezrou must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the start of its next turn. On a successful saving throw, the creature is immune to the hezrou's stench for 24 hours.

ACTIONS

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

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d10 + 4) piercing damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage.

NALFESHNEE

Large fiend (demon), chaotic evil

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 184 (16d10 + 96)

Speed 20 ft., fly 30 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 21 (+5) | 10 (+0) | 22 (+6) | 19 (+4) | 12 (+1) | 15 (+2) |

Saving Throws Con +11, Int +9, Wis +6, Cha +7

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

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Abyssal, telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 13 (10,000 XP)

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The nalfeshnee uses Horror Nimbus if it can. It then makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 32 (5d10 + 5) piercing damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 10ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (3d6 + 5) slashing damage.

Horror Nimbus (Recharge 5-6). The nalfeshnee magically emits scintillating, multicolored light. Each creature within 15 feet of the nalfeshnee that can see the light must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened 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 nalfeshnee's Horror Nimbus for the next 24 hours.

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

VROCK

Large fiend (demon), chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 104 (11d10 + 44)

Speed 40 ft. , fly 60 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 17 (+3) | 15 (+2) | 18 (+4) | 8 (-1) | 13 (+1) | 8 (-1) |

Saving Throws Dex +5, Wis +4, Cha +2

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

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Abyssal, telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

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

ACTIONS

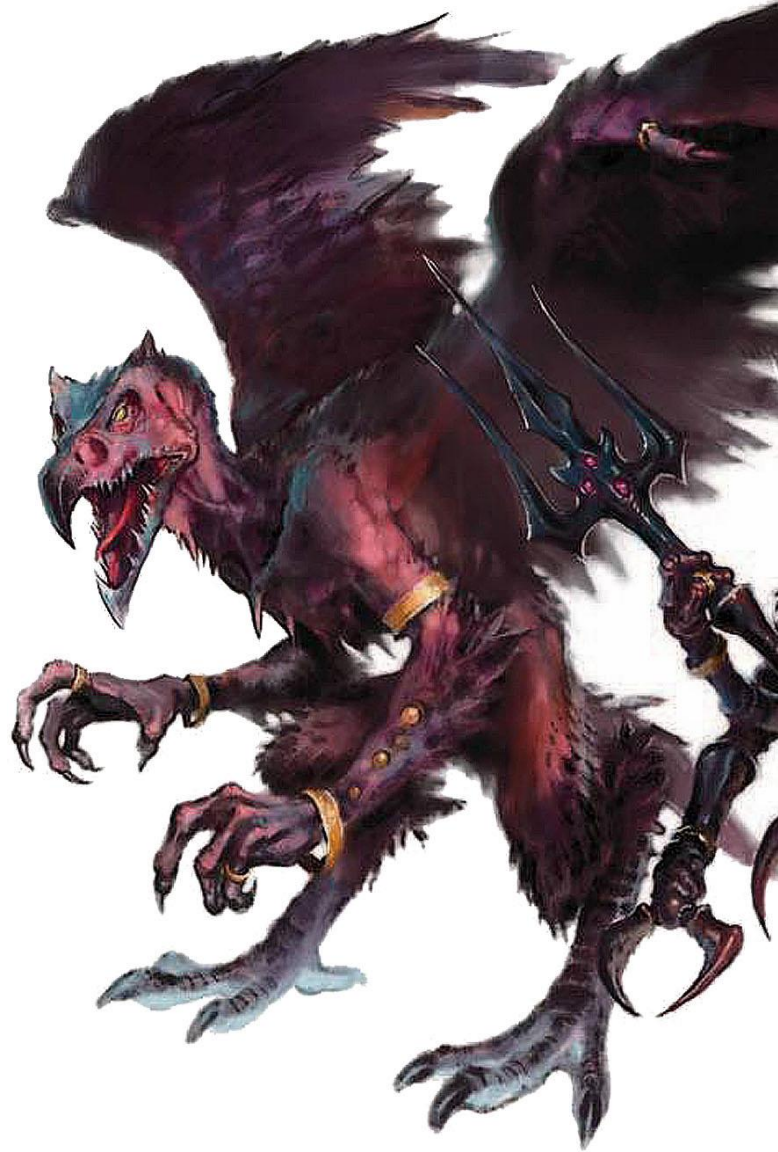
Multiattack. The vrock makes two attacks: one with its beak and one with its talons.

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

Talons. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d10 + 3) slashing damage.

Spores (Recharge 6). A 15-foot-radius cloud of toxic spores extends out from the vrock. The spores spread around corners. Each creature in that area must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned. While poisoned in this way, a target takes 5 (1d10) poison damage at the start of each of its turns. A target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. Emptying a vial of holy water on the target also ends the effect on it.

Stunning Screech (1/Day). The vrock emits a horrific screech. Each creature within 20 feet of it that can hear it and that isn't a demon must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or be stunned until the end of the vrock's next turn.



APPENDIX 2: VIRTUE OR GREED? (BONUS OBJECTIVE A)

Expected Duration: 20-40 minutes

The exchange of souls into the Abyss was paid to bind demons into service. Sending them back and negating their contract leaves a balance of souls in the Abyss that it has no claim upon. However, the Abyss is not concerned with legal niceties and does not give up souls without a struggle.

Alternatively, while the portal is open, it is possible to barter with the demons beyond. For a life price of souls, demons trapped in The Shards of the Fall will promise much. However, they are all chaotic evil denizens of the Abyss, so unless someone casts *planar binding* (or something similar), there is nothing to compel them to keep any agreements. Short term arrangements, such as gathering sapphires, can be arranged.

The tower can be navigated through the Abyss in pursuit of the lost souls, or for sapphires. Whichever of these the party chooses to pursue, tower navigation follows the rules described in the “Driving the Tower” sidebar.

SAVING SOULS

Souls can be sought by using their connection to the Tenet of Fear used in their sacrifice. It can be used to cast *locate object* at will for the demons and souls connected to it. With that as a bearing, the tower can be piloted around the Abyss to seek out the souls who have been imprisoned there.

Finding the souls via the Tenet of Fear is the easy part. Following the directional path to each one requires a successful vehicle check. Transit to each soul requires 1d6 minutes. Freeing them from the clutches of the Abyss can be difficult, as each of the newly arrived souls is pinned to a magma pool.

The souls are wracked with agony as their substance is gradually consumed by the Abyss and slowly transformed into manes demons. To free them, their bonds must be destroyed. The bonds of a soul can be completely dissolved by one dose of holy water. Otherwise, the chains have AC 15 and 10 hit points, (immune to psychic, poison, fire) and each soul is bound by four chains. However, a creature must be in the field of the portal in order to interact with the chains of a soul.

GEMS FOR SOULS

Though the sapphires are abundant, most are flawed, or corrupted by the Abyss, so the actual yield is only 20 gp worth of sapphires per demon per hour. Each demon is only viable for 1 hour of such work per CR level. Furthermore, demons lower than CR 6 are not able to survive the lava strewn areas that hold the most valuable gems, or to wrest them

from those that can survive in those areas. Branded demons crossing back and forth to Toril to drop off sapphires eventually have their brands dispelled.

The imprisoned humanoids can be indirectly converted to sapphires by sacrificing their lives to bargain with the demons.

Gems can be carried through by a demon (see prior issues with bargains and/or the destruction of their binding brands) or one of the pilots of the tower can sacrifice a hit die to allow ten pounds of non-living material to fall through the portal into the tower. Ten pounds of the raw sapphires yields 20 gp worth of salable sapphires. A successful DC 13 group land vehicle check is required to gather one pound of sapphires up against the portal.

DRIVING THE TOWER

Sax Magnus understood only how to misuse the altar as a portal to the Abyss, to the detriment of the humanoids in the surrounding area that she captured for sacrifice. The original builders of the tower designed it as a vehicle of planar exploration and war. The means to change the plane to which it is attached has been destroyed. However, if the controls are deciphered and unlocked, it is possible to navigate the portal through the plane to which it is attached.

Sacrificing one hit die of life energy into the altar with the express purpose of gaining control over the tower will cause four dimensional ribbons to emerge from the perimeter of the base of the dais the altar stands upon. The ribbons can be pulled to move the tower and direct its motion. Using magic (i.e., *mage hand*), or wind, to control the ribbons grants advantage on the check and allows them to be controlled using Arcana or Nature. Physical control can be done using either Athletics or Acrobatics. All four ribbons must be controlled. Since they are 10 feet apart, each navigation change requires a group DC 13 check. Allow creativity to grant advantage as appropriate.

The portal moves at 30 feet per round and can be navigated over to the lava flows up to 500 feet away from its starting location to harvest gems or hunt souls. When it moves, the inhabitants of the tower see the view through the portal moving across The Shards of the Fall.

From the side of The Shards of the Fall, the demons are shoved aside by the motion of the Melted Tower moving across the land. The movement of the tower eventually attracts the attention of Gorbash the Balor. Once the party has been moving the tower for an hour (or 12 souls), check (unmodified d20 roll of 15 or higher) for the Balor every minute. Gorbash becomes visible 100 feet away. If allowed to reach the tower, it attacks the closest creature through the portal. The DM should have the tower force the portal closed to eject him before he destroys the entire party.

Note. Gorbash is a master of the plane and can move freely through the portal. That information would have been available from any branded demons they chose to question about the area.

APPENDIX 3: RESETTLEMENT (BONUS OBJECTIVE B)

Expected Duration: 45 minutes

If time permits, the party can be presented with the additional challenge of what to do with the surviving humanoids. They have all been beaten and terrorized to the point of presenting no threat. So many of their tribes have been slaughtered that they have little to no hope of surviving on their own in the brutal wilderness of Thar.

A ROLEPLAYING ENCOUNTER

This optional encounter focuses on roleplaying and skill checks. Many players enjoy this type of scenario, but extensive roleplaying can be intimidating to some and tiresome for those who prefer combat to social interaction. Keep an eye out for players that seem distant, and make an effort to engage their characters in a way that allows them to participate without feeling forced to roleplay. Simply asking them what their character is doing while others engage in negotiations, or how their character feels about the situation, is often enough to keep them focused on the encounter.

HUMANOID SURVIVORS

- The leader of the Razor Fist orc tribe, Krutchak, is open to discussion. His mother Ovak was of the Broken Fangs, so he has some familial connections there and is not hostile to the Oaken Branch. The eight surviving orcs look to him for leadership.
- Gnoll pack lord, Gnash, of the Howling Ravagers is delusional and thinks he and his six gnolls flesh gnawers can make it on their own.
- Hobgoblin Captain Norsin is traumatized and having trouble coping. The seven surviving hobgoblins of the Long Knives look to him, but he is too shattered to lead them.
- Half orc acolyte of the Oaken Branch, Zannith, will plead on behalf of the humanoids for their lives.
- Barraha the ogre has been maimed, missing her left eye and left arm. Brutish and dim, she doesn't understand how bad her circumstances are.

What to do with them is open to various solutions. The party could easily slaughter them all, in which case they fail to accomplish this bonus objective.

- Form a mixed tribe of the remaining survivors, and find a place where they can reasonably make a go of it.
- Take them to Glister, or another outpost of civilization, and work to integrate them into that society.
- Escort them to the Helping Hand and try to convert them into dutiful servants of Torm.
- Escort them to a grove of the Oaken Branch until each group can work their way towards acceptance into a new tribe.
- Escort them to the Broken Fangs in the Galena Mountains and work with the Oaken Branch to integrate them there.
- Some alternative idea of the party's own invention.

Regardless of which path is taken, the process requires passing DC 15 skill checks in a complex challenge. Success requires that four out of six checks, using different skills, succeed. The DM should integrate these into roleplaying moments and grant advantage for creativity.

The recommended pattern is:

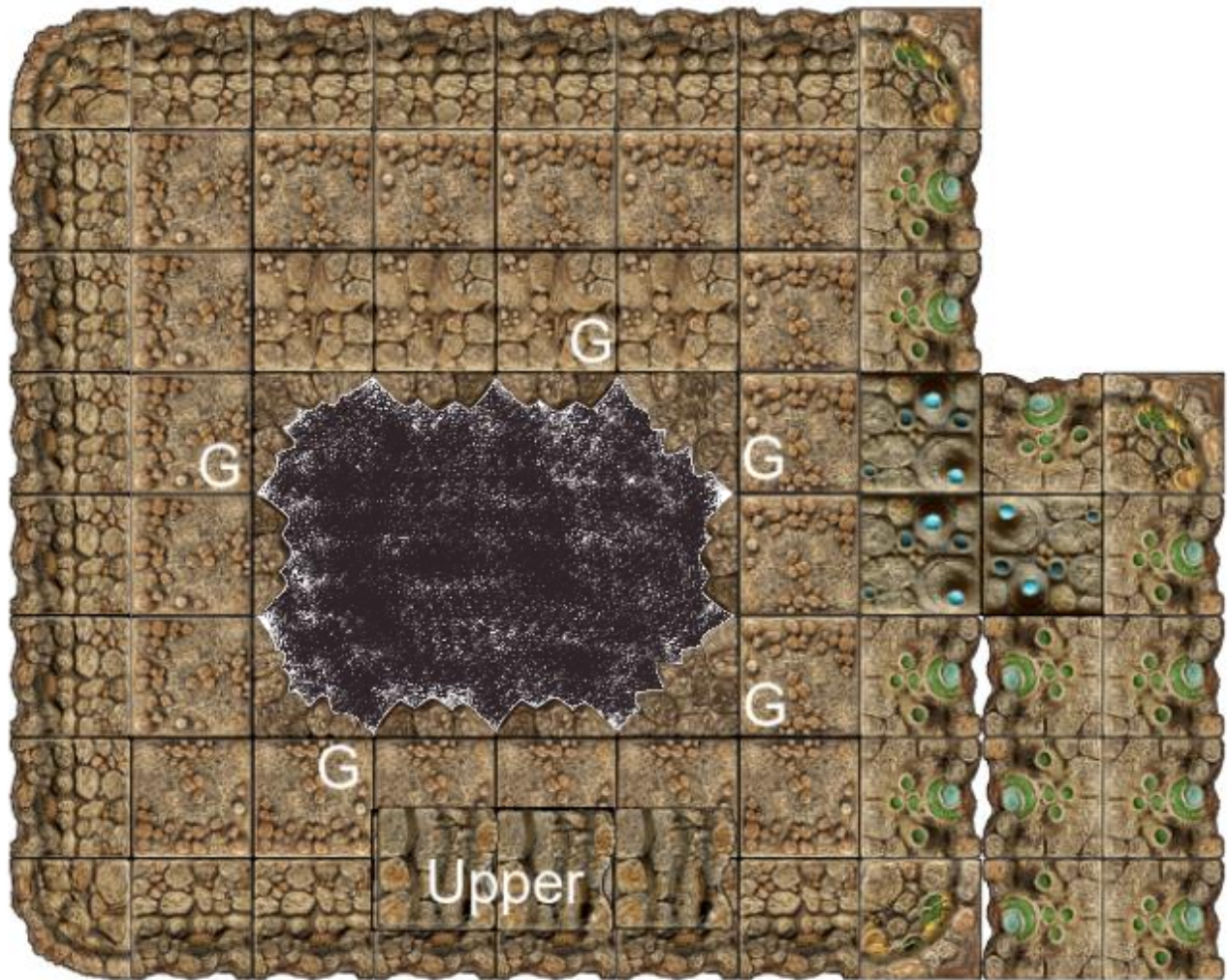
1. Start with saving the humanoids from their current dire condition (Medicine).
2. Determine course of action and convincing the survivors (Persuasion).
3. Proceed through getting them all to the destination alive (Survival).
4. Check on arrival at the destination for initial reaction (Insight).
5. Check for initial negotiations (Investigation).
6. Check to recover from contrary actions, or infighting, by the savage humanoids.

Recommended skill checks:

- **Wisdom (Survival) or Intelligence (Nature).** These weakened and fractious creatures must be escorted across the wilderness.
- **Charisma (Persuasion or Intimidation).** The survivors must be convinced of the merits of the plan.
- **Charisma (Persuasion or Intimidation).** The hosts at any chosen destination must be convinced to take them in.
- **Wisdom (Medicine).** The survivors have a variety of maladies due to the torture inflicted by demons and proximity to the noxious vapors of the Abyss.
- **Strength (Athletics).** Displays of skill may be substituted for persuasion when dealing with most savage humanoids.
- **Intelligence (Investigation).** May be used to learn about important resources, animal or mineral, that could tip the balance of negotiations.
- **Wisdom (Insight).** May be used to identify what various sides truly require from a lasting agreement.

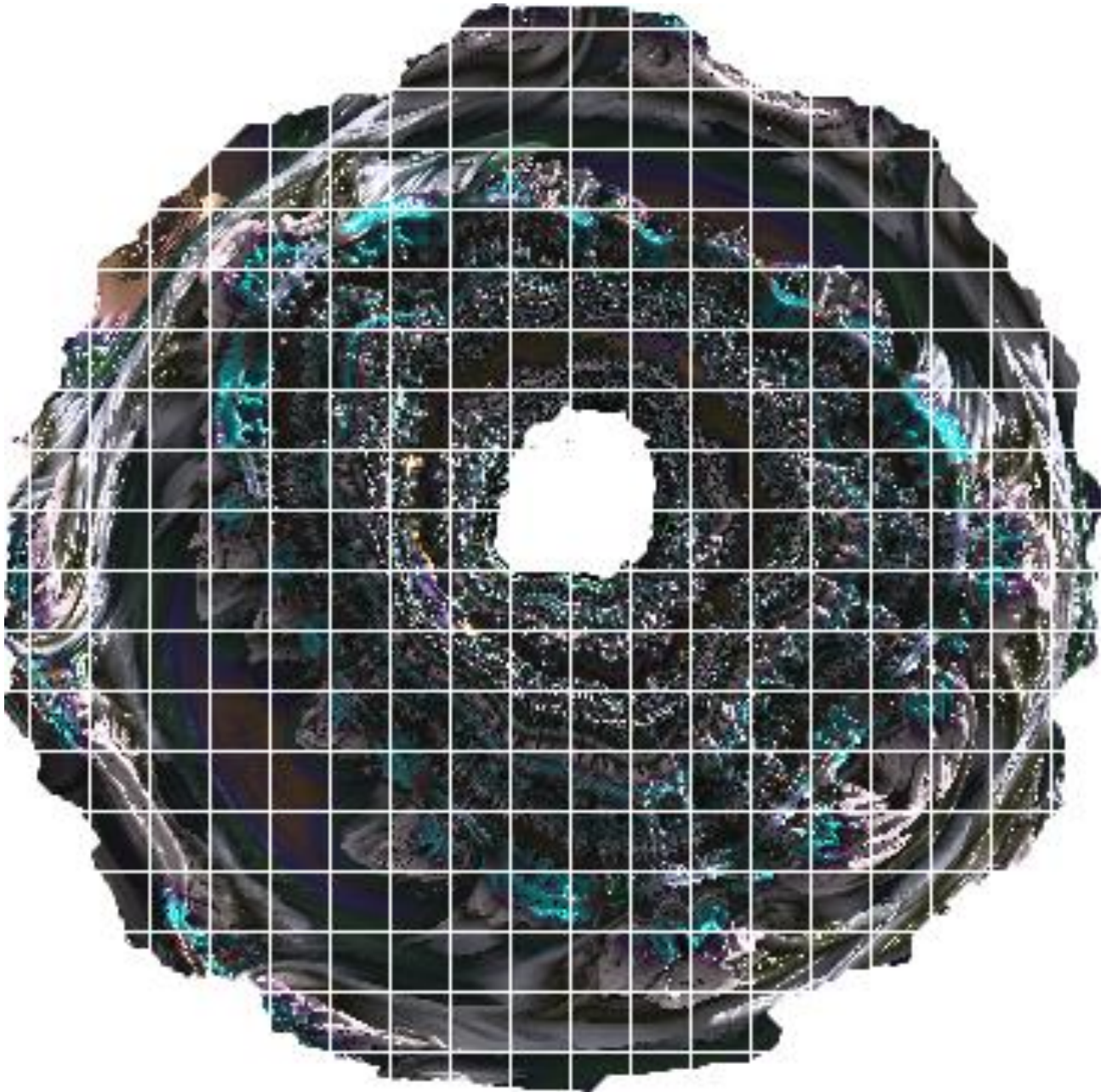
APPENDIX 4: CHARNEL PIT

Scale: 1 square = 10 feet



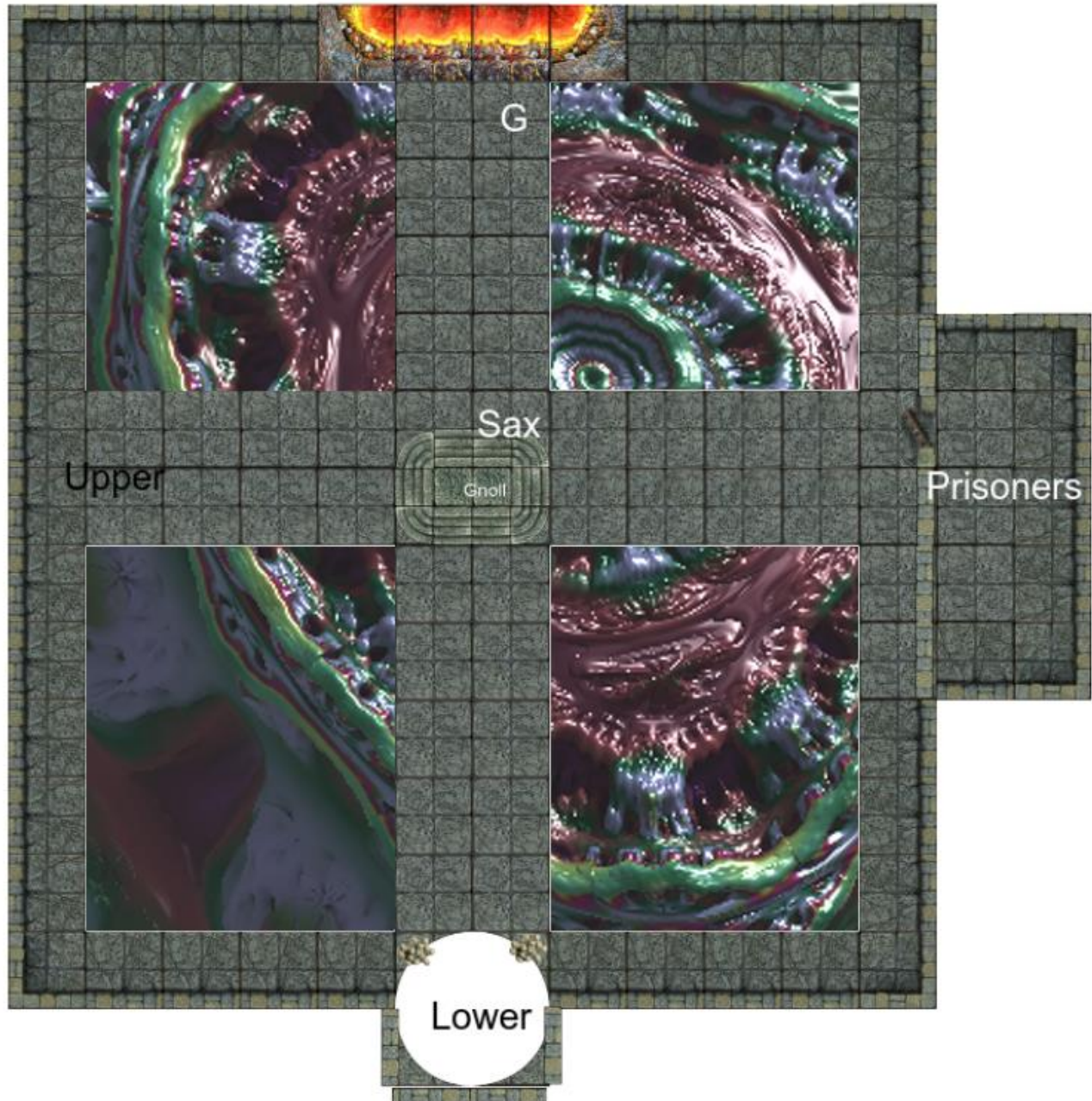
APPENDIX 5: TOP OF TOWER

Scale: 1 square = 5 feet



APPENDIX 6: BASE OF TOWER

Scale: 1 square = 5 feet



APPENDIX 7:

PLAYER HANDOUTS

During the course of the adventure, the characters may unlock or acquire the rewards below. If you are distributing these to your players, print and cut out as many of each as you need to ensure all eligible characters receive a copy. Alternatively, allow each player to take a picture of the information with their mobile device.

MAGIC ITEM UNLOCK

BROOCH OF SHIELDING

Wondrous item, uncommon (requires attunement), table F

This white metal brooch depicts the white raised hand of Torm. You have resistance to force damage, and immunity to the magic missile spell, while you wear it.

This item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

CONSUMABLES

SPELL SCROLL OF FEATHER FALL

Scroll, common

This scroll contains a single *feather fall* spell.

A description of spell scrolls can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

SPELL SCROLL OF SILENCE

Scroll, uncommon

This scroll contains a single *silence* spell.

A description of spell scrolls can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

STORY AWARDS

TORM'S COMPASSION

You showed compassion by not sacrificing any humanoids when closing the portal to the Abyss. In addition, you managed to retrieve the Tenet of Fear and deliver it to Malana Homwell. The priestess is impressed by your dedication to Torm's ways.

TOUCHED BY TORM

Your dedication to Torm's ways has impressed Malana Homwell and others in the church of Torm. As a result, you are invited for an intense period of study, prayer, and reflection at the Temple of Torm's Coming in Tantras. If you choose to attend, you emerged with a deep connection to Torm and his beliefs. You feel as though the deity has touched your very being, but what this means for your future is still unclear.

Important: This story award is only available to characters with the ***Torm's Honor, Torm's Compassion, Torm's Duty, and Inspired by Torm*** story awards. While it may have benefits in future adventures involving the Tenets of Bane, it is intended primarily for roleplaying purposes.

APPENDIX 8:

DUNGEON MASTER TIPS

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

NEW TO D&D ADVENTURERS LEAGUE?

Welcome to the D&D Adventurers League! [You can learn more about this global organized play campaign on our website.](#)

NEW TO BEING THE DUNGEON MASTER?

A plethora of great Dungeon Master advice can be found all across the internet. New DMs are urged to purchase a copy of the Dungeon Master's Guide and join our Facebook ([player group](#) and [DM group](#)) and [Twitter discussions](#).

To DM an adventure, you **must** have 3 to 7 players—each with their own character whose level is within the adventure's level range. 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 one if they're outside its level range.

PREPARING THE ADVENTURE

Before you start play, consider the following:

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

Players can play an adventure they previously played as a Player or Dungeon Master, but may only play it once with a given character. Ensure each player has their character's adventure logsheet (if not, get one from the organizer). The players fill out the adventure name, session number, date, and your name and DCI number. In addition, the player also

fills in the starting values for advancement and treasure checkpoints, downtime days, and renown. These values are updated at the conclusion of the session.

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

When combat is a possibility, the adventure provides a sidebar to help you to determine the best mix/number of opponents to provide characters with to create an appropriate challenge. You are not bound to these adjustments. They are presented for your convenience and consideration.

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

Determining Party Strength

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