

DM's CHEATSHEET

APPROACHING THE CITADEL

A great, disgusting scab the size of a large hill rises up from a stinking swamp of blood. The domed top of an alabaster temple pokes through the scab. Many black iron chains of Avernus converge on the building, attaching within the grotesque mound.

- The Bleeding Citadel is impenetrable and indestructible.
- Lulu says entrance is covered by lower portion of the scab.

THE SCAB

- 300 ft. high.
- Lower 100 ft. hard as rock (5 ft. cube has AC 17 & 18 HP)
- Upper 200 ft. is softer (5 ft. cube has AC 9 & 10 HP)

ENTERING THE SCAB

- Obvious entrance near hole in top (DC 15 Athletics climb).
Optional: 2 DC 15 Athletics checks. 1st fail, DC 13 Dex save or 50 ft. fall. 2nd fail, infected by scab's blood.
- Lulu can sense the way to the Bleeding Citadel's entrance.

INTERIOR FEATURES

- **Darkness.** No light sources unless otherwise stated
- **Interior Surfaces.** Dug by demon claws and teeth.
- **Pools of Blood.** Difficult terrain. If in blood, DC 13 Wis save or gain flaw 'I am cruel and uncaring toward others' for next 8 hours. *Dispel evil and good* removes.
- **Tunnel dimensions.** 10 ft. wide unless otherwise stated

S1. OOZING ENTRANCE

- 20-foot radius tube-shaped tunnel.

A circular gaping wound near the top of the scab forms a tunnel that descends into darkness.

S2. ANGELIC WINDOW

- A 20 ft. tall, 5 ft. wide window exposed by demons digging

The scab on one side of this narrow passage is stripped away, partially revealing one of the citadel's stained glass windows. The opaque blue and yellow panes depict the contemplative face of a beautiful angel.

- *Detect magic* finds abjuration magic from window.
- Window unbreakable and can't be bypassed.
- If creature with good alignment touches window = 20 temp hp (can't repeat for 24 hours.)

S3. DROWNED HAG

- 30 ft. wide chamber.

A pool of blood fills the center of this chamber. Five goat-headed demons reeking of rot crouch along the edges of the pool, staring at a corpse floating in it.

- Yiggleblight helping Trantolox find Crokek'toeck, but he suspected treachery and 5 **bulezaus** drowned her.

- **Treasure.** Hag's robes contain diamond (5000gp) and water from River Styx in small flask that preserves it.
Optional: A pair *dimensional shackles*.

S4. BLOODY DOWNPOUR

- 40 ft. wide chamber.

Blood streams down from a gaping wound in the ceiling, filling a large pool that covers the floor of this chamber. A hunk of scab floats in the blood.

- 3 invisible **barlurgas** cling to walls. Attack when characters enter room, pursues characters.
- Blood pours from wound in the ceiling made by barlurgas, five healer's kit and DC 15 Medicine to bandage. Takes 5 minutes and exposes character to the blood's effects. *Cure wounds* or similar magic also closes wound.

S5. FOOD FIGHT

- 30 ft. wide chamber.

Two fiends resembling scaly, 9-foot-tall, bipedal toads stand waist-deep in a pool of blood, bellowing as they claw at each other. Floating near them is the half-eaten corpse of a bearded devil clutching a glaive. The pool is 20 feet wide and 40 feet long, with a horseshoe-shaped ledge around it.

- 2 **hezrou** fighting over devil corpse. If not disturbed, fight until one dead, other has 30 hp left.
- Characters have advantage on Stealth check to sneak past.
- **Treasure.** Bearded devil has *+1 glaive*

S6. TORTURE CHAMBER

- Large, 30 ft. wide chamber

Two iron chains attached to the ceiling end in hyena skulls that bite into the flesh of a screaming devil with sharp spines covering its thin, man-sized body. Jabbing the chained fiend with their long proboscises are three droning flies as big as horses.

- Alazub **barbed devil** with 25 hp tortured by 3 **chasmes**
- Trantolox wants information about citadel from devil
- **Chains.** Two chains (AC 19, 15 HP, immune to cold, fire, poison, psychic) bind Alazub 25 ft. above floor. Action to remove chain from Alazub's arm, deals 2d6 piercing damage to devil. DC 15 Medicine to remove without harm.

Alazub

- Came to spy on Trantolox' progress for Zariel.
- Deception vs Insight to convince Alazub Zariel sent party.
- DC 15 Persuasion check to get Alazub to tell that a) Demons under Trantolox found entrance to Citadel but can't enter, and b) Shadow demon has found Yeenoghu's lost pet Crokek'Toeck and is trying to dig it out.
- If characters won't free Alazub, tries to make deal, offering information for freedom. Lulu suggests not making a deal with the devil.
- If characters mention interest in *Sword of Zariel*, Alazub will try to report to Zariel.

S7. TRANTOLOX'S LARDER

- 20 ft. wide cavern.

Hordes of hellish flies buzz around this dark chamber, which is strewn with mutilated devil corpses and gnawed bones. A hole in the floor reveals another dark cavern below this one.

- Corpses: 3 bearded devils, 2 barbed devils, 1 bone devil.
- 4 **swarms of insects** attack non-fiends crossing room.

S8. HAG'S LAIR

- Tunnel only 2 ft. high leading to 20 ft. wide chamber.

The floor of this dark cyst is strewn with bones and dotted with weeping sores. Shallow niches gouged into the scabby walls hold an assortment of stoppered flasks, polished black orbs, humanoid skulls, and other curios.

- **Treasure.** *Detect magic* reveals *heartstone* shaped like baby's fist, *soul bag* looking like black sack made of stitched flesh, an *iron flask* containing **fiendish flesh golem**, and 3 *soul coins*. Yiggleblight also has six poisons in tubes made of human finger bones: *burnt othur fumes*, *carriion crawler mucus*, *essence of ether*, *malice*, *oil of taggit* and *torpor*. Also 3 orbs of polished obsidian (100gp each).
- **Junk.** Empty casket for infant, a copper cowbell, a rope noose, a nothic's shriveled claw on the end of a black cord, a soot-stained wooden coffer containing three teeth from a red dragon wyrmling, a dead tomato plant in a ceramic pot adorned with images of dancing cherubs, and nine gnoll skulls.

S9. DIGGING DEMONS

- From this point, scab is hard as rock. 20 ft. wide chamber

Ten small, snarling demons covered in matted gray fur claw and bite a hole into the hard, scabby floor. A demon made of shadow flies over the smaller fiends, screaming at them in Abyssal.

- Lulu can sense Crokek'toeck nearby and informs party.
- Vatilán (**shadow demon**) and 7 **dretches** dig to S10. If attacked, shadow demon moves to S14 to warn Trantolox.

S10. CROKEK'TOECK'S PRISON

- **Crokek'toeck** incapacitated and restrained here.
- If 20 ft. walls destroyed, monster is freed.
- If freed, makes 30 ft. passage. Attacks anyone in path. Trantolox tries to control, but can't do it. After 3 rounds, Trantolox flees, Crokek'toeck leaves to find Yeenoghu.

S11. STATUE OF YEENOGHU

- 40 ft. wide chamber.

A nine-foot-tall statue of a hulking biped with clawed hands and feet stands on the floor of this chamber. Three vulture-like demons and six gnolls cackle as they dance around the statue.

- 3 **vrocks**, 6 **gnolls** dance around statue.
- Statue carved of hard scab. *Detect magic* shows evocation. Demons or gnoll within 30 ft. gain 10 hp at start of turn. AC 17, 60 hp, immune to poison and psychic. Explodes if destroyed, creatures within 30 ft. take 4d10 piercing, DC 15 Dex save halves.

S12. TRANTOLOX'S CHAMBER

- 30 ft. wide chamber.

A massive pile of bones and offal sits in the middle of this otherwise empty chamber.

- **Treasure.** *Eversmoking bottle* in the pile of offal.

S13. CACKLING GNOLLS

- Characters hear cackling of gnolls as they enter corridor.
- If no light and DC 10 Stealth, gnolls surprised.
- Targ Nar (**gnoll fang of Yeenoghu** with 100hp) and 15 **gnolls**.

S14. ENTRANCE TO THE CITADEL

- 40 ft. wide area.

Brass double doors stand exposed in the wall of the scab. A relief image on the doors depicts a blindfolded angel wielding a sword, and carved into the door frame are beautiful, gold-inlaid runes. Three goat-headed demons with barbed tails throw themselves against the door as a corpulent, ape-like fiend with tusks and tiny wings kicks at them, roaring commands in Abyssal.

- Trantolox (**nalfeshnee**) commanding 3 **bulezaus** trying to open door, but door won't open.
- Trantolox tries to trick party into opening doors: offering alliance and equal split of treasure. Lulu advises against it.
- Trantolox flees under 60 hp, bulezaus fight to death.
- **Doors.** Indestructable. Runes say: "Against evil, we stand united. Only the pure of heart can part these holy gates." *Detect magic* reveals abjuration magic. Can only be opened by creature with good alignment while Lulu is within 60 ft. If approaching without Lulu, voice telepathically says: "Bring Lulu here and I'll let you inside." If Lulu is dead, she is waiting inside the doors. When opened, S14 filled with bright light, 8d10 radiant damage to fiends and undead, DC 22 Con save halves.
- **LEVEL UP TO 12!**

ENTERING THE CITADEL

A bright white light burns away the blood and grit staining your clothes. Restorative energy brings life to numb muscles as the glow softens to reveal the interior of a sun-kissed cathedral. How light passes through the scab and into the stained glass windows is a mystery only magic can answer. Pillars line a path from the door to a raised dais carved with Celestial runes. Embedded in a stone atop the dais is a glowing longsword.

- If Lulu died, she is just inside the door.
- Characters get benefit of long rest from citadel.
- *Detect magic* finds abjuration and evocation all over.
- Sword atop dais is *Sword of Zariel*, carvings on dais reads: "The hero who becomes one with this blade exists no longer."

YAEL'S GHOST

- When characters move towards dais:

The translucent image of a woman in her thirties wearing plate armor and bearing a thin scar on her cheek appears before you. As she points toward the hollyphant, Lulu's eyes turn pure white. A whisper fills your ears and says, "I remember!" A wave of radiant energy erupts from Lulu's body and in that blinding flash the ghostly warrior, the hollyphant, and the Bleeding Citadel disappear. The solace of the cathedral is replaced by havoc, screams of panic, and acrid smoke. You stand at the edge of a small town of burning cottages, fields, and trees. A broken sign on the ground reveals the settlement's name: Idyllglen. Shrieking townsfolk run from cackling, snarling demons and gnolls.

- The party is transported to Idyllglen

OPTIONAL SCENE (SEE PAGE 3)

The translucent image of a woman in her thirties wearing plate armor and bearing a thin scar on her cheek appears beside you, staring solemnly at the sword with sad eyes. "It is beautiful, is it not?" the ghost says softly, her voice barely above a whisper, yet echoing off the citadel's alabaster walls. "I am afraid you cannot wield it. Yet."

- Answers questions about who she is and why she's here.

The woman moves in front of a stained glass window depicting an archdevil offering his hand to a beautiful female angel. "As you probably know by now, Zariel was not always the Archduke of Avernus." As she speaks, the stained glass moves and flows, showing the angel taking the archdevil's hand. The angel rises to her feet, and as she does, her blue-feathered wings wither and blacken, her soft hair dries out and falls off, and her shining halo becomes an arch of hellfire around her bald pate. "Her fall seemed sudden, but I knew her better than most. It was the natural conclusion of a promise she made long before."

The woman moves on to stand in front of another stained glass window showing Zariel – before her fall – fighting off hordes of demons and devils. Once again, the window begins moving, showing humanoid knights on horses fight alongside her, wielding lances and swords. "We followed her into hell because we believed in her. Because we believed she was right: that we could not win a war if we only defended ourselves. To defeat evil, we had to take the fight to the fiends. We all knew that, for we had seen many times the consequences of passivity and timidity.

The ghost moves on to pause in front of a third stained glass window showing a peaceful hamlet on a sunny day. "Zariel's fall began long before she came to this hell," she says, her voice sad and filled with regret. The window shifts, showing demonic figures running into the town, setting fires and slaughtering townspeople. The ghost's form begins to glow brighter and brighter, until the light shining from her is blinding. "If you want to wield the Sword of Zariel, you must first understand its wielder." The words are the last thing you hear before the world around you is only light.

As your sight returns, the solace of the cathedral is replaced by havoc, screams of panic, and acrid smoke. You stand at the edge of a small town of burning cottages, fields, and trees. A broken sign on the ground reveals the settlement's name: Idyllglen. Shrieking townsfolk run from cackling, snarling demons and gnolls.

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IDYLLGLEN

- DC 20 History or Religion knows that A) long ago, Idyllglen was attacked by gnolls. Cleric of Lathander, Solndor Brighstar, prayed to Lathander and B) Zariel came to defeat gnolls, B) generations later, gnolls and Yeenoghu returned to Idyllglen. Zariel and hellriders defeated them.

IDYLLGLEN FEATURES

- **Borders.** Smoky haze beyond map and 120 ft. up. If entering haze, 4d10 psychic, DC 15 Wis save halves
- **Burning Buildings.** Unlabeled buildings are on fire. Contains no value. One or two stories tall. DC 15 Athletics to climb. If starting inside, 3d6 fire, DC 15 Con halves.
- **Burning Trees.** All trees on fire, no check to climb, starting in tree, 3d6 fire, DC 15 Con save halves.
- **Townsfolk.** Figments of Lulu's memory. Fleeing or hiding. Know little beyond gnom and demon attacks.
- **Character Death.** Is real and permanent.

I1. IDYLL ROAD

- Paved street, littered with broken carts, debris, corpses.

I2. STATUE OF ZARIEL

- 30 ft. tall, white marble on 2 ft. high dais.
- Armored, blindfolded angel with sword drawn.
- Words on dais: "Zariel, guardian of Idyllglen. Offer prayers to Lathander, and his light will shield thee"
- Gargantuan object, AC 17, 300hp, damage threshold 15, immunity to poison, psychic, radiant. Abjuration aura on it
- Any fiend starting turn within 15 ft. causes it to flare with radiant energy, dealing 4d8 radiant damage to all fiends within 30 ft., DC 15 Con save halves.
- Character that touches statue and uses action to pray to Lathander gets *protection from evil and good* for 1 hour.

I3. TEMPLE OF LATHANDER

- Two-story, white stone temple carved with images of sun
- Iron shutters on windows, double doors of oak.
- **Occupants.** Jhessa Brightstar (neutral good **priest**) leads 50 **commoners** in prayer. Commoners take dodge action in combat, grateful for characters' aid.
- **Barred Entrance.** Oak doors barred from inside, action to open with DC 22 Athletics, or DC 15 Persuasion to convince townfolk inside to open.
- **Shuttered Windows.** AC 19, 25 hp, immune to poison and psychic. DC 15 Thieves tools opens.
- **Jhessa Brightstar.** Soft-spoken, 40ies, Priest of Lathander, descendant of Solndor Brightstar, prays for Lathander to send Zariel. Uses spells to heal and bolster characters, hope they can protect town until Zariel comes.

EVENT 1 – CHARACTERS' ARRIVAL

- Starts when characters arrive
- All occurs simultaneously:
 - 6 **gnolls** attack characters
 - 6 **dretches** on I1 attack cart and Ella Deepwell.
 - **Giant Hyena** attacks **mastiff** near I2.
 - **Hezrou** tries to force way inside I3.
- **Cart.** AC 15, 27hp, DC 15 Athletics to lift If cart is destroyed, dretches attack Ella Deepwell.
- **Giant Hyena and Mastiff.** Hyena kills mastiff, then attacks characters. Mastiff stays with characters if rescued, using *help* action to distract enemies. DC 12 Animal Handling convinces it to stay away from fight.
- **Hezrou.** Tries DC 20 Athletics to open door. If successful, attacks townfolk inside. Attacks characters after.
- **Next Event.** When only one enemy remains, go to event 2.

OPTIONAL ARRIVAL SCENE

As you appear on the road in the small town, you are immediately surrounded by six dogfaced humanoids wielding bloodstained spears. They laugh maniacally as they approach you. Not far away, you can see half a dozen small demons furiously hacking away at an overturned cart with their claws. A woman's shrill screams of terror sound from underneath the cart. Further ahead on the road, near an immense statue of an angel, you can see a giant hyena circling a much smaller mastiff. The dog growls defiantly, although it is clearly outmatched. Behind the two canines, a hulking demon is clawing at a large set of doors leading into a two-story, white stone temple. From within the temple, you can hear a cacophony of muffled screams and shouts.

EVENT 2 – YEENOGHU'S CHAMPION

A chorus of screams rises up as people, sheep, and pigs scamper through the town, chased by a demon with the lower body of a great serpent and the upper body of a six-armed gnom clutching a wicked sword in each of its clawed hands.

- Garoknul, **marilith**, attacks townfolk. Stops to attack characters. If reduced to 50 hp or less, teleports away.
- **Next Event.** When Garoknul leaves or dies, go to event 3.

EVENT 3 – MADNESS REIGNS

Five guards wielding spears advance from the north. Splattered head-to-toe with black ichor, they gaze at you with hungry eyes.

- 5 human **guards** (Caladra Telmaster, Esselyn Xharn, Jai Wen, Tal Hannefar, and Yaerklos Summerlast) driven mad by demon ichor attack characters.
- If a character kills a guard, Lulu's mind attempts to punish character. DC 15 Wis save or 1 level of exhaustion.
- *Dispel evil and good*, *greater restoration*, or *remove curse* cures madness. Guards explain they were fighting demons in fields when overcome by madness. Leave town again.
- **Next Event.** When guards are dealt with, go to event 4.

EVENT 4 – UNSETTLING CALM

A woman's voice enters your mind. "Nice work. Take a break. You've got an hour before the really bad stuff happens."

- Characters can explore town, speak to NPCs, etc.
- **Optional Content.** Jhessa warns party that more demons are coming, asks characters to pray with her by Zariel's statue. Party gains benefit of *protection from evil and good*. Jhessa proclaims that Lathander has promised aid, statue begins shining with slowly expanding light, signaling when aid will come.
- **Next Event.** Party hears cackling laughter, go to event 5.

EVENT 5 — RENEWED ASSAULT

Six demons appear on the western edge of Idyllglen — a hulking, ape-like brute and five small, doglike creatures with rubbery gray bodies and big ears. Cackles in the distance signal more enemies on the way.

- **Bargura** and 5 **dretches** appear on western edge, attacks characters or townsfolk in temple.
- On second round of combat, **gnoll pack lord** and 6 **gnolls** attack from south.
- On third round of combat, **vrock** attacks from the air.
- **Next Event.** When only three enemies remain or after six rounds of combat, go to event 6.

EVENT 6 — YEENOGHU

A wild, hideous laugh pierces the air and cuts through the din of battle. A giant gnoll covered in matted, bloodstained fur and swinging a three-headed flail charges out of the haze from the west. Gore drips from his red maw, open in a violent laugh.

- Yeenoghu attacks anyone, or statue of Zariel.
- **Next Event.** After three rounds of combat or when Yeenoghu below 100 hp, go to event 7.

EVENT 7 — ZARIEL'S ARRIVAL

The cackling demon lord shuts his maw and narrows his eyes, gazing up toward the sky as a beam of radiant light pierces the haze. A powerful angel streaks down from above, followed by a gold-furred mammoth with feathered wings. The angel slashes her sword across Yeenoghu's chest and utters a spell. A portal opens behind the demon lord as the mammoth rams its head into Yeenoghu. The demon lord is sent tumbling through the portal, which quickly closes behind him.

- Zariel (**solar**) and Lulu introduce themselves to characters and heal them. Hellriders (**knights on warhorses**) kill remaining demons and gnolls. Yael blinks to party as she lines up with rest of battalion.
- Zariel can resurrect 3 characters.
- Before they leave, time freezes and Zariel asks: "Yeenoghu slaughtered those I swore to protect. I can stop him and others like him. I might have to give up all I stand for, but I could stem the tide of chaos and save many lives from the demonic terrors of the Abyss. Were you in my place, would you risk it all to save others?"
- Zariel lets each character answer in turn, and utters blessing to Lathander. Characters who answer risk it all get *charm of vitality*, characters who said not risk it all get *charm of restoration*, no answer = nothing.
- Light flashes and characters go back to the citadel.

CLAIMING THE SWORD

You stand before the dais, atop which glows the Sword of Zariel. Also before you are Lulu and the ghostly warrior, Yael. The hollyphant is the first to speak. "I remember everything now. Idyllglen was the last straw. We followed Zariel to Avernus, but the evil there proved to be too much for us. Asmodeus appeared and promised Zariel infernal legions to end the Blood War, but she had to give the Lord of the Nine Hells her fealty. She accepted and became an archdevil, but not before Yael and I took her sword, hoping it could redeem Zariel someday. I gave up my magic and memories, and Yael gave her life to construct this place to protect the sword."

Yael's ghost says, "You have faced many trials to claim the Sword of Zariel. I'm sorry to say, you face one more. As the inscription on the dais says, 'The hero who becomes one with this blade exists no longer.' Which of you is brave enough to draw the blade and be gone forever?"

- Any character who survived Idyllglen can pull *Sword of Zariel* from the dais.
- If Sword approves, attunes immediately to character.
- Citadel and scab explode in rays of blinding light. Creatures in scab take 20d10 radiant damage and hurled 1,000 feet away. Creatures inside citadel take no damage.
- Yael bids party good luck and fades away. Lulu's memories are completely restored.