

# Temple of the Nightbringers



M.T. Black



# INTRODUCTION

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*Of beginnings there are no end.*

—Tordek the Mad

*Temple of the Nightringers* is an introductory adventure for newly created characters. It is designed to be played in a single session.

Although the adventure is set on the Long Road, it can easily be transported to any other setting. The combat sessions have been geared toward four 1<sup>st</sup> level characters.

This adventure assumes you have access to the Dungeons & Dragons 5<sup>th</sup> Edition Basic Rules, which are available for free download.

This adventure is designed to be run with minimal preparation. Before running the session, you should skim through the contents of this document and also ensure you are familiar with the following creatures –

- Bugbear
- Goblin
- Goblin Boss
- Hobgoblin
- Imp
- Scout
- Worg
- Zombie

Detailed descriptions for these creatures can be found in the Monster Manual. If you don't own the MM, you can find basic stats in the D&D 5<sup>th</sup> Edition SRD online.

The names of important NPCs are given in the adventure text. The following sample names are supplied here for use in random encounters –

*Villager names:* Darrick, Seth, Tordek, Nix, Cordelia, Kelsie, Lia, Varis, Katyra, Peren

*Goblin names:* Gabox, Snox, Ket, Smakob, Gaxam, Sud, Trub, Noz, Boxug, Xog

In the following sections, the text in the boxes should be read aloud to the players.

## MELTON

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*The tiny village of Melton lies a few days north of Triboar on the Long Road. It is completely unremarkable.*

—Rael Hornbar, “Travels in the North”

It's cold this far north – the sort of cold that sinks deep into your bones and makes you feel like you'll never be warm again. When the rain starts falling and the wind comes up, it feels like needles of ice are piercing your face.

A few days ago you were in Triboar with your companions, looking for an adventure. You heard tales of a tribe of goblins up north, attacking travelers on the Long Road. They are being led by an especially savage goblin chief.

“Head north up the Long Road,” you are told. “Find the village of Melton – you'll learn more there.”

Well, this afternoon you found Melton - and maybe you wish you hadn't. To call it a “village” seems generous – it's really about a dozen primitive huts and one larger building, surrounded by a sturdy little palisade. There is mud everywhere.

Melton is a village of just 50 or so souls, mostly human. The village has an innkeeper, blacksmith, butcher, baker and carpenter – all of whom do good trade with caravans passing through. The rest of the village are mostly hunters and trappers, involved with the fur trade.

All NPCs should be treated as **commoners** for the purpose of combat, unless otherwise stated.



## The Constable

You hurry toward the village as twilight falls – at least you won't have to spend another night on the road. You slow down as you realise the gates are closed. An old and grizzled face looks over the palisade.

"I'm **Frida Greatheart**, constable of Melton," she says in a raspy voice. "What's your business here?"

The first challenge is to persuade the Constable to let them in. She will question them suspiciously about their background and intentions. If they mention they are there to hunt goblins, she will look frightened and say, "We don't need no foreigners coming here and stirring up trouble with the goblins."

She will finally let them in on an DC 10 Charisma (Persuasion) check – but make them roleplay it out a bit first. If they fail the check, they can try again every half hour until they succeed. If they become aggressive she will admit them and try and pacify them ("No offense meant – it's my job to ask questions").

## The Weary Knight

Most of the villagers have turned in for the night – if the adventurers knock on any of the huts they will be told to "go away", and will find the doors are locked. The only real place



for them to go is the large building in the middle of Melton. This is, of course, the inn.

The single story building is long and low, with eight shuttered windows facing the muddy street. A hanging sign proclaims it to be an inn called "The Weary Knight". Noise and firelight seep out from the doorway, promising warmth and company.

As you kick the mud from your boots and enter, all conversation stops. The small common room is crowded with perhaps twenty people across half a dozen tables. A huge fire roars in the corner.

A wiry old man scowls at you from behind the bar. "Close the door – it's cold!" he snaps.

The innkeeper is **Seth Grimhill** - and he is a bit short tempered! Ale costs **5cp/mug**, the goat stew is **1sp/serving**, and rooms are **2sp/night**.

Other people in the common room include –

- **Flint Frostforge**, a dwarven blacksmith
- **Brynn Copperhold**, a carpenter
- **Dain Quickfellow**, a hunter
- **Thorn Farwalker**, a trapper

If the adventurers engage the villagers in conversation, they will be able to learn the following facts –

- A new tribe of goblins moved into the area about 3 months ago
- Since then, they have attacked at least half a dozen caravans, preferring those that are weakly guarded
- Survivors report that the tribe is led by an especially vicious goblin chief
- A hunter named **Dawn Mistwalker** claims to know where the goblin hideout is

Around about this time the Constable, **Frida Greatheart**, will enter. When she finds out

what the adventurers have been discussing, she will try very hard to dissuade them from their quest. Her reasoning is that the goblins have so far left Melton alone – any kind of attack might provoke a hostile response toward the village.

This sets off an argument, some agreeing with Frida and some disagreeing. If the characters ask, someone will point out where **Dawn Mistwalker** lives.

There are plenty of rooms available should the characters decide to stay at the inn.

## Dawn Mistwalker

Dawn Mistwalker is an Elven hunter who lives with the butcher's family. If the adventurers try to see her that night, the butcher will tell them to come back the next day and refuse to unlock the door.

When they meet Dawn in the morning, she will happily tell them what she knows. She was following an old game trail several weeks ago when she came across a cave in a small hill, and saw a number of goblins enter and leave it. She concluded this was their hideout.

The cave is about a day's travel east of Melton. Dawn will take them to the cave and wait for them outside, but she will not enter the cave herself. She is willing to begin the journey right away.

If the adventurers want to talk to anyone else, they will discover that most of the hunters and trappers (including **Frida Greatheart**) have left for the day.



## FOLLOW THE TRAIL

*To step out into the wild, to leave behind the cloying securities of civilisation – there is nothing like it in the world!*

—Ulgar the Unready, *Memoirs*



## Wuzig's Bridge

You leave Melton and Dawn leads you into the light woods to the east of the village. She soon spots the game trail she told you about – it is barely visible to your eyes. She sets a brisk pace, and you stop only briefly for lunch.

It is mid-afternoon when the trail is interrupted by a shallow, rocky creek with steep, overgrown banks. A fallen tree provides a natural bridge, and Dawn lightly leaps upon it and begins crossing.

There is a sudden roar from the far side – “That is Wuzig's bridge! You can't use it!”

A large bugbear crashes out from the wood, a club in his hand and a nasty snarl on his face.

Wuzig the **bugbear** has moved into the area recently. Unless the players can somehow calm him down, he will charge across his “bridge” and attack them. **Dawn** will fight alongside the party – her stats of those of a **scout**.

## THE TEMPLE

*Few people understand how truly depraved are the teachings and worship of the goddess Shar.*

—Gonthar Grim, *Concise Religious Dogmatics*

The shadows are long and faded; twilight is upon you.

“There it is, ahead,” whispers Dawn.

You see it now, a low rocky hill pushing up from the surrounding trees. A large natural cave is plainly visible near the base. As you creep closer to the entrance, you see a set of stairs just inside the entrance, hewn from the rock and descending into the earth.

The players are in luck, as there are no goblins around the hill or cave mouth. Dawn urges the characters to wait until the next morning before they descend the stairs. Under no circumstances will she accompany them.

### General

The goblins are hiding out in an abandoned Temple which was built by the Nightbringers, an especially depraved sect of Shar, goddess of darkness. (See final page for the map – squares are 10’).

The ceilings are 10’ high in the corridors and smaller rooms, and 20’ high in the larger rooms. Narrow shafts to the surface fill the temple with a dim light during the day. It is much darker at night, though there are fires in most of the inhabited rooms due to the cold.

The corridors are long and the doors are thick, so fighting in one room will likely not be heard from the others. In addition, the goblins do not move about much – they are used to spending long stretches of time between raids just eating, drinking and sleeping. There should be ample opportunity for the party to take short rests when needed, and even a long rest.



### 1. Foyer

A large room lies at the bottom of the stone steps, and it is full of dust and rubbish. The only other exit from the room is a wide corridor to the north, flanked on either side by dark statues.

A single goblin lies near the bottom step, snoring loudly.

The **goblin** is named Pox and he is meant to be on guard duty, but he has fallen asleep. The party will be able to sneak up on him easily – use the *grappling* rules if they wish to restrain him. If they question him (he speaks only *Goblin*), he will tell them that the “big

boss” is in a room up north, that there are many goblins in the temple, and that there is also lots of “bad magic” around. If the party force him to come with them, he will constantly try to escape.

The two statues flanking the corridor are identical – they are made of obsidian, are about 3 feet tall and depict a fully cloaked humanoid with the face hidden by a cowl. On the bases of the statues is inscribed “Love is a lie. Only hate endures.” A Medium Intelligence (Religion) check will reveal that this phrase is one of the dogmas of the goddess Shar.  
*Treasure.* Pox has **15sp**.

## 2. Guardroom

A short corridor opens out into a small room. The odor of canine refuse assaults your nostrils immediately. Amidst a den created from smashed furniture and old linen are two enormous worgs! They growl and stare at you with intelligent, malevolent eyes.

The two **worgs** are allied to the goblins and accompany them on their raids. Their keen sense of smell means they cannot be surprised while in their den. If one of the adventurers speaks *Worg* or *Goblin*, they might possibly make a deal with them. Otherwise, they will attack.

*Treasure.* Hidden in their den is a silver necklace worth **80gp** – make a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check to find it.

## 3. Storeroom

It appears that this room has not been visited for a long time. A thick layer of dust hangs over the smashed crates, barrels and shelves.

*Treasure.* A DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check will uncover an unusual item – an **obsidian disk** about 18 inches across and an inch

thick. The goblins found this when they trashed the room, but did not realise it was valuable. It is actually the key to the magical barrier in room 6.

## 4. Dormitory

This large room contains two rows of beds as well as a few benches and tables. Three of the beds are occupied with goblins, who appear to be dozing.

The party may be able to surprise the **goblins**. Otherwise they will quickly rise and arm themselves as soon as the party enters.

*Treasure.* If they search the room they will find **65sp**. There is also a soft felt bag with four rubies worth **200gp** in total. The bag has a note tied to it, written in common. It says, “Melton”.

## 5. Library

The door to this room has been jammed shut with iron stakes, and the word “Danger!” in goblin has been scrawled across it in chalk. A DC 15 Strength check is required to force it open.

The walls of this room are lined with shelves, most of which have been smashed. In one corner lies a charred pile of books and scrolls. The rest of the floor is covered in dust, ashes and scraps of parchment.

Standing in the middle of the floor are four undead monstrosities. Humanoid in shape, their flesh is putrid and rotting. They stare at you for a moment through diseased eyes, then begin shambling forward.

These four miserable creatures are **zombies**, and they will attack the party immediately.

They were originally prisoners captured on one of the raids and the goblins, for their own



sadistic amusement, locked them in the old library without food or water. They soon perished, but a stray trace of necromantic magic caused them to revive as undead.

The goblins were horrified when a dull thumping on the door commenced several weeks later, and have too scared to open the door since.

*Treasure.* A DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check will uncover a spell scroll with *Charm*.

## 6. Sanctuary

The goblins fear this room due it's strange magic. Both doors have the words "Danger!" and "Keep Out!" scrawled on them in goblin.

This long and high room is filled with evenly-spaced stone benches. The walls are lined with dark marble, and carved to depict scenes of perversion and depravity.

An alcove in the northern wall houses an obsidian statue of a slender, robed figure, holding a wicked knife in one hand.

A DC 15 Intelligence (Religion) check will reveal that this is a statue of the goddess Shar.

There is an invisible barrier about 5' in front of the statue, stretching from floor to ceiling and wall to wall. It is impervious to any attack that the party has, and cannot be dispelled by a low level spell caster.

If the party searches the area near the barrier, an DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check will reveal an indentation in the floor. It is 18 inches across and 1 inch deep. If the party place the obsidian disk they found in room 3 in the indentation, the barrier will disappear.

*Treasure.* A DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check of the statue will reveal a secret hatch in the base. Opening the hatch will reveal a stash of **200gp**.

## 7. Summoning Room

A message has been scrawled in chalk on the floor of the south corridor leading into this room. It says in goblin, "Keep Out!"

A large stone pool, three feet high and twenty feet across, dominates the center of this room. The water glows with a flickering, green eldritch light. On the floor, a hint of mist curls about your ankles.

This room was used by the High Priest of Shar to summon infernal monsters for dark purposes. The pool is primed for a summoning now – anything that disturbs the surface of the pool will cause an **imp** to materialize. After a moment it will realise it has not been bound, and will then immediately attack the party.

The pool will cease glowing once the imp has been summoned.



## 8. Dining Hall

The door to the south has been spiked shut and cannot be opened. The room is noisy, and the party will hear the inhabitants from 30 feet away.

Smashed old chairs and tables are pushed up against the walls of this large room, and the middle has been covered with improvised bedding – straw, leaves and scraps of old canvas. There is an open barrel of beer in the corner.

There are 8 goblins here, some dozing, some drinking, and some chattering to each other in harsh, loud voices.

A frontal assault of so many **goblins** is likely to end badly. The party will need to consider a more tactical approach.

*Treasure.* A search of the area will locate **180sp** and **20gp**.

## 9. Kitchen

A bubbling cauldron full of rotten meat sits atop a roaring fire in a recessed hearth. Wooden tables are weighed down by animal carcasses in varying states of butchery. There is a small well in one corner.

Two dirty, naked humans cower near the fire place, not daring to look at you.

These two men were captured on one of the raids, and have been forced to work in the kitchen. The goblins call them “Stink” and “Retch”, and these are the only names they will tell the party or answer to. Their spirits have been utterly broken. They will not voluntarily go with the party, but can easily be intimidated into moving.

*Treasure.* There is nothing of value in the room. However, the men were originally from

wealthy families in Triboar. If they are returned home, their families will gladly pay a reward of **200gp** for each man.

## 10. Inquiry Chamber

Hooks, spikes, pinchers and other instruments of torment and persecution are hung about the walls.

The center of the chamber is dominated by a large and revolting pile of slimy goblin excrement. The smell is nauseating, and there are flies everywhere.

The goblin's use this room as a latrine. There is nothing of value here – however, it is a good place to set an ambush and whittle down the goblin numbers. For every 15 minutes they wait, there is a 25% chance that a goblin from room 8 will come to the latrine. After 2 goblins have gone missing, a group of 3 will come to investigate.

## 11. Priests Chamber

If they listen at the door, a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals voices speaking goblin. The door squeaks and is hard to open, so the party cannot surprise those within.

The door opens noisily and you find yourself looking at a large sleeping chamber. Several beds have been pushed against one wall, and some old tapestries lie in a heap in the corner.

Two large and well-armoured hobgoblins sit near a fire in the far wall. They look up at you in astonishment, but quickly recover and draw their weapons.

The **hobgoblins** will attack immediately.

*Treasure.* Searching the room will uncover **110gp**.



## 12. High Priests Chamber

Once more, the door squeaks and scrapes, so it will not be possible to surprise those within.

This room is much cleaner and more richly appointed than any other part of the temple. There are oak-paneled walls, vibrant tapestries, a four-posted bed and a writing desk. There is a large strongbox in one corner.

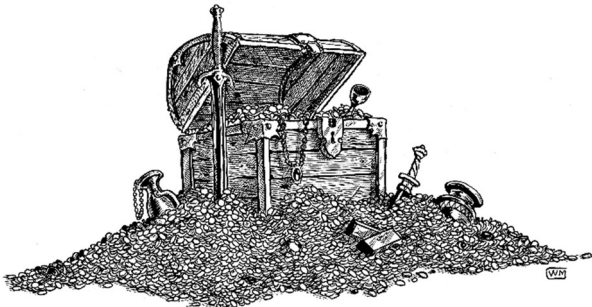
A squat figure in a dark cloak stands before a carved fireplace, it's back toward you. It turns as you enter, and you see it is wearing a grotesquely carved obsidian mask. There is an enormous worg sitting at its feet.

"Fools!" the dark figure hisses in a raspy voice. "I told you to stay away – now you must die!"

Use the stat blocks for a **goblin boss** and a **worg**.

Assuming they win the fight, the party will no doubt want to unmask the goblin boss. When they do, they will discover - Frida Greatheart, Constable of Melton! (If the party happened to slay Frida in Melton, then they simply unmask a goblin boss).

Here is the back-story (which the party may never learn). About a year ago, Frida discovered the temple and also found the obsidian mask. The mask is called the *Mask of the Nightbringers*, and it gives the wearer certain temporary powers.



Frida was delighted with the mask, which made her a much more effective hunter. However, the more she wore the mask, the more she fell under the sway of Shar, until she was a completely devoted follower. She took over a nearby goblin tribe and began raiding the caravans; her intent was both to collect money to restore the worship of Shar and also to satisfy her own evil greed.

*Treasure.* There is a poison needle trap on the strongbox latch. Whoever opens the strongbox takes 1 piercing damage and 2d10 poison damage, and must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 hour.

A DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) check allows a character to deduce the trap's presence. A DC 15 Dexterity check using thieves' tools disarms the trap. Unsuccessfully attempting to pick the lock triggers the trap.

Inside the box are **1100sp**, **150gp** and jewelry worth **200gp**.

*Mask of the Nightbringers.* If anyone puts on the mask, they will receive the same benefits as if they had just completed a short rest. They will also receive +1 to all rolls for an hour (so long as they wear the mask). These benefits may only be used once per day.

Each time they wear the mask, the effect lasts for one minute less. By the time they wear the mask for the 60<sup>th</sup> time, they will receive no benefit whatsoever. However, by this stage they will be addicted to the mask and will need to wear it at least once a day.

In addition, their alignment will have slowly changed to Neutral Evil, and they will grow increasingly obsessed with Shar, until they are a fully converted worshipper.

# CONCLUSION

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*An ending is really just a beginning in disguise.*

—Tordek the Mad

Dawn Mistwalker will be waiting for the party when they leave the temple. The journey back to Melton is uneventful, and the villagers are grudgingly appreciative.

The characters should have earned enough experience points to move to level 2. Alternatively, you may simply wish to level them up without calculating experience points.

Now, about this mask...

# WHAT NEXT?

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A nameless horror stalks the lands around Triboar. Can you unravel the town's dark secret before more lives are lost? Download **Terror at Triboar** today!

# CREDITS & LEGALS

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**Design:** M.T. Black

**Cover Illustration:** Jacob Atienza

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