

# A DARKLORD'S DENOUEMENT

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By Ginny Loveday & Jeremy Forbing

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## *A Ravenloft®: Mist Hunters Adventure*

The true mastermind behind the dark plot you've been investigating has been revealed. Bathed in the crimson light of the King's Tear, Alanik, Kabe, and a host of adventurers from countless Domains of Dread, stand ready to put an end to his profane aspirations. But will it be enough?

The three-hour Epic conclusion to the *Ravenloft: Mist Hunters* series of adventures.  
An adventure for 8th level characters.



CONTENT WARNING: torture, child in peril, death (child, loved ones), fighting yourself, unavoidable failure, demonic possession, possible phobia triggers (drowning, blood), being forced into evil actions, memory loss, false memories, disappointing loved ones, nonconsensual body swap, forced PvP combat, character retirement, mentions murder of an adult child.

Reference the [Mist Hunters' Safety Kit](#) article and *Van Richten's Guide to Ravenloft* for tips and tools on running a safe and fun game.

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# ADVENTURE PRIMER

*"It was thus rather the exacting nature of my aspirations than any particular degradation in my faults, that made me what I was..."*

—Dr. Henry Jekyll

This adventure can be played by **three to five 8th-level characters** and is optimized for **four 8th-level characters**.

A *Darklord's Denouement* occurs in the Domain of Darkon.

## BACKGROUND

**AZALIN REX** is on the cusp of enacting his endgame as the **ORDER OF THE GUARDIANS** summons adventurers far and wide to stop him. The lich, however, is prepared; he's created countless **MIRROR DIMENSIONS** within the **KING'S TEAR** to ensnare trespassers. While these alternate realities are deadly, their true intent is just to delay.

At the center of a crystalline maze, Azalin is ensconced in a **CRYSTAL COCOON** beside the terrible machine: the **APPARATUS**. With the **URN OF DREAMS**, the **ROD OF HOUTRAS**, and the **SCION OF DARKNESS**, it's his hope that he'll finally be able to escape **DARKON**. If successful, it will no doubt spell the end for the domain and every living creature within it.

## OVERVIEW

The adventure starts with a **call to action** and is then spread over three parts, each taking between 30 minutes and 120 minutes to play.

**Call to Action: Bathed in Blood.** The characters meet with Alanik and Kabe outside of Castle Avernus, and agree to venture into the King's Tear to stop Azalin Rex and his plan to escape Ravenloft.

**Part 1: The King's Tear.** The characters learn that Azalin has anticipated their arrival. Only by discerning the secrets of his Mirror Dimensions do they have any hopes of finding and stopping him.

**Part 2: The Apparatus.** The characters arrive at the center of the King's Tear and find that the Apparatus is close to completing the foul purpose for which it's been designed.

**Part 3: Escape.** The characters, having either succeeded or failed in thwarting Azalin's scheme, find the King's Tear collapsing, and they must escape.



## STORY AWARDS

At certain points in the adventure, you may see this glyph along with an entry describing how the specified story award is earned or how it impacts the story. Ignore the entry if it refers to a story award none of the characters have. If it refers to a story award the characters just earned, the entry instead provides information for you and the players.

## CHARACTER HOOKS

Previously, the characters met Ebbasheyth and the ghost of Irik, learning about Azalin's plan. After the characters reported back, Alanik deduced that Azalin is working within the King's Tear. Characters can still benefit from previous hooks, or the following hooks can also be considered.

## SAGE & ANTHROPOLOGIST

Characters with these two backgrounds have an easier time discerning the mindset of an ancient and disciplined scholar like Azalin. This grants them advantage on Wisdom (Insight) and Intelligence (Investigation) checks related to Azalin, including discerning how the Mirror Dimension missions connect to him. However, they have disadvantage on Intelligence (Arcana or Religion) checks within the King's Tear; they can feel a powerful mind, one as scholarly as their own, trying to steal magical and spiritual secrets.

## DARKONIAN CHARACTERS

Characters who serve Darkon's institutions, such as local constabularies, baronies, or the elite noble families of Il Aluk, might have been volunteered as a matter of duty. Alternatively, a religious order known as the Eternal Order are eager to send assistance. Other characters may be former political prisoners, previously held by the Kargat or another powerful organization, who have been freed in the hopes that they render service in this hour of need.



# CALL TO ACTION: BATHED IN BLOOD

**Estimated Duration:** 20 minutes

The adventure begins near Castle Avernus—the ruins of Azalin Rex’s former seat of power. Alanik Ray, Kabe Whippoorwill, Radaga, and a vast host of adventurers steel themselves against the ordeal that is to come. Here, the characters learn of what’s truly at stake.

**Themes:** urgency, foreboding, hope

## DARKON

**Darklord:** Azalin Rex

**Hallmarks:** Dark fantasy, magical fortress, arcane secrets

The domain of Darkon is failing. Ageless monuments and magical wonders crumble before the Shroud—the Mists turned hungry. The Darklord, Azalin Rex largely ignores his role as the “ruler” of the domain—dwelling in seclusion while attempting to discover a way of escape.

Recently, a magical event shook the entire domain: the Hour of Ascension. When this happened, a strange golden star called the King’s Tear appeared the heavens above, and the Mists that surround the domain have begun to consume it.

For more information about this domain and the people who reside there, refer to *Van Richten’s Guide to Ravenloft*.

## ADMINISTRATING THE CALL TO ACTION

The event administrators announce the commencement of this epic when the event is ready to begin. This part of the adventure is a timed event. One of the administrators should use a stopwatch to determine that the following announcements occur as prescribed below:

**0 Minutes:** Starting announcement

**10 Minutes:** 10-minute warning announcement

**20 Minutes:** Announce time’s up, bring Handout 1 to HQ

## ANSWERING THE CALL (ADMIN-RUN)

The characters have answered Alanik’s call one last time. The massed adventurers prepare to venture into the King’s Tear to stop Azalin Rex and his plan to escape Ravenloft. Many have been fighting waves of undead drawn here by Azalin, but the characters have been kept fresh for their more important mission.

## FOILING THE PLAN

To start this epic, an event administrator reads the following (if your group misses this, or any other admin announcement, you can read it to them yourself):

The King’s Tear no longer shines gold. Near Castle Avernus, the false star now sheds eerie red light upon an unprecedented gathering of champions from across the Domains of Dread. One of the most renowned, Laurie Weathermay-Foxgrove, climbs upon a crumbling dais to address you:

“This domain is dying! It began dying when the wizard-king Azalin Rex abandoned it and conjured this unnatural star. Alanik Ray and his investigators have revealed that Azalin’s returned to finish what he started. Within the King’s Tear, he seeks godlike power to fuel his final escape from Darkon—destroying it and its denizens forever!

“The shadow dragon Ebbasheyth, once Azalin’s greatest dragon ally, seeks to stop this catastrophe. She’ll ferry chosen adventurers up to the false star, where you must thwart Azalin’s ambitions, while the rest of us remain here to repel his summoned hordes of undead.

“Our war begins now. Steel your wills, gather your armaments, and fly star-bound on dark wings, for the time has come to answer the call—We save Darkon or die trying!”

## FINAL PREPARATIONS (DM RUN)

Once the admins begin the event, give players a chance to introduce themselves and their characters and choose table captains.

### INTERACTIVE ELEMENT: OUR GREATEST FEAR

Before proceeding, provide the players with handout 1: Our Greatest Fear. The group chooses the greatest fears their characters share. Once complete, the Table Captain delivers it to the administrators who, in turn, provide a different group’s handout (unless this is being played with a single table). If you get a handout back, use it to determine your table’s Mirror Dimension missions after the first.



## TOUCHED BY SHADOW

Record the names of players with this story award on appendix A: Story Award Tracker, then have the table captain take it to HQ for administrator use later.

## CREATURE INFORMATION

Ebbasheyth the ancient black shadow dragon flies in lazy circles overhead, while Laurie (whom characters may know from RMH-11 *A Calling Upon the Dead*) makes herself available to answer questions for the characters. Soon to arrive will be Alanik, Radaga, and Kabe, who have more specifics.

## CHARACTER INTRODUCTIONS

Allow each player a minute or so to introduce their character, describe their appearance and mannerisms, and establish the reason why they're working with Alanik and Kabe. Be sure to give everyone equal time in the spotlight and be prepared to gently stop players if they run on. Character introductions are crucially important for the players to understand who the other characters are, to build a basis for roleplaying opportunities, and for you as DM to learn more about the characters so you can create story elements that really speak to them.

Award **inspiration** once everyone's had a turn.



### EBBASHEYTH

#### *Draconic advisor*

Ebbasheyth (EBB-uh-shayth) is unfathomably old and held in high esteem by Azalin. While she's not absent minded, it's not surprising that it takes her a few moments to scour and access eons of collective knowledge and wisdom. The dragon is not benevolent by any means; her desires take precedence over those of others, and she's willing to use violence against those who she feels have wronged her.

**What They Want.** Ebbasheyth wishes for Azalin to return to Castle Avernus—even if it means stymieing the lich's grand plan.

**Trusted Advisor.** Ebbasheyth has seen and learned more than most of the creatures that dwell within Ravenloft—she is a nigh-bottomless font of information about the workings of the Domains of Dread.



### Laurie Weathermay-Foxgrove

#### *Human investigator*

Dark-haired and wiry, with genteel mannerisms and master strategy skills, Laurie (LORE-ee) is one of the most renowned monster hunters in the Domains of Dread. Trained by two famous uncles—blood relative George Weathermay and family-friend Rudolph van Richten—Laurie and her twin Gennifer became inseparable and relentless heroes in their own right. Laurie has dark brown skin and curly black hair, shorn on one side.

**What They Want.** Sworn to protect the innocent from evil, Laurie is determined to see Azalin defeated.

**Stalwart Hero.** Laurie is well-practiced at decisive action but knows it would benefit her to listen to the experienced, deliberate, and plan. More information on Laurie can be found in *Van Richten's Guide to Ravenloft*.

## TABLE CAPTAIN

Once introductions are done, each group designates a table captain. This is a player who relays information to the event administrators, a vital role that allows the DM to continue running the adventure without interruption.

## THE MEETING

Alanik waits until Laurie finishes her address before approaching. He loves Laurie like a sister and is glad she's here to "rally the troops." Read or paraphrase the following:

Moving with urgency you've never seen in the thoughtful detective before, Alanik Ray rushes to meet you in his wheelchair and settles next to Laurie. Kabe Whippoorwill and Radaga soon catch up.

"You've answered what may be my last and most desperate call," Alanik says. "We know Azalin's plans, now it falls to you to end them." He pauses for Radaga to share relevant details within her expertise.

In all the excitement Radaga's crawling claw familiar flies and flits around her until she impatiently lifts her hand for it to rest on. Excited herself, she releases a tense breath, "The King's Tear is hollow. Within, you'll find yourselves in a realm of magical deception reflecting Azalin's malevolent thoughts. He has likely imprisoned the other adventurers who attempted to discern the nature of the false star. Find as many as you can; they may be able to lead you to the lich himself." She then looks back to Alanik for him to continue.

"Azalin is the most powerful archmage ever to darken these lands, but direct battle with him is not your goal. You must focus all efforts on destroying his phylactery and stopping his use of the infernal machine called the Apparatus. Once more, the game is afoot."

## PROMOTED!

Impressed by the characters' investigation in previous adventures (or by their reputation, if this is their first *Ravenloft: Mist Hunters* adventure), Alanik promotes the characters to lead field operatives within the Ray Agency. While this means additional duties—such as searching for the urn—it also means opportunities for greater rewards and other possible benefits.

## OUTFITTING FOR THE INVESTIGATION

Before proceeding on this leg of their investigation, the characters decide what to bring with them on their journey:

**Mundane Equipment.** The Order of the Guardians has offered the characters access to its substantial resources to aid in their investigation. Each character has access to any mounts and nonmagical equipment from the *Player's Handbook*, as well as the material components for any spell they have prepared (or known for casters who don't prepare spells). Following the characters' promotion, the gp limit on these acquisitions has been removed. The characters are still bound to the normal rules regarding carrying capacity and, at your discretion, may find themselves in a situation that precludes being able to haul around too much—while their resources are great, the Order discourages frivolous requests.

**Magical Equipment.** As they adventure, the characters "unlock" magic items for later use. The group begins this adventure with one copy of each of these unlocked items and then decides who'll use them. At the end of the adventure, each item is returned to the character who

brought it with them. Magic items that are destroyed or that lose their magic, such as a quaffed *potion of healing* or an exploded *horn of blasting*, however, are removed from the character's investigation journal and are no longer unlocked; the character must find another one if they want to use it in a later adventure. The character who brought an unlocked item to the table has ultimate discretion in who gets to use it. They should, however, note that their investigations require teamwork and cooperation.

### EXAMPLE: OUTFITTING FOR INVESTIGATION

Peter's character, Gregov the Fighter, is preparing for their next adventure. He requisitions a greatsword, a longbow and some arrows, and a suit of plate armor. He's also heard rumors of werewolves, so he asks for a silvered dagger . . . just in case. In his previous adventures, Gregov unlocked a *horn of blasting* and a *potion of healing*. The group decides who should carry the horn and the potion. At the end of the adventure, both items are returned to Gregov. However, if a character uses the potion, or if the *horn of blasting* explodes during the adventure, Peter crosses it off the investigation journal where it was unlocked.

## ORDER OF THE GUARDIANS RING

Characters with this magical ring (more information can be found in the [Mist Hunters Safety Kit](#) article) can obtain another dose of the anti-charm tonic from Alanik—provided the last dose they obtained has been used.

## CREATURE INFORMATION

Alanik, Kabe, Laurie, and Radaga speak quickly, answering whatever questions the characters have about Azalin's plans before they depart. Beyond the urgency of the mission, this moment with the characters is a meeting of old friends—friends who don't know for sure if they'll ever see one another again.

**Firan.** Radaga encourages the characters to look for one prisoner in particular: Firan Zal'honan, a fellow scholar she met shortly before her possession, who was last seen in this area. His knowledge of the Domains of Dread and their secrets could be useful. She describes him briefly: long, ebon-black hair, angular face, and always wearing a pendant featuring a tiny gold dragon skull.



### ALANIK RAY

*Elf investigator*

Alanik (uh-LAHN-ick RAY) is confident and insightful, a shrewd investigator, and one of the most well-traveled mortals in the Domains of Dread. Alanik is a master of insights and deduction; he can learn details about others after a few moments of meeting them. For example, he can almost instantaneously deduce a character's native domain from their accent and mannerisms. An accidental fall during an investigation caused a spinal injury that paralyzed Alanik's legs. He uses a custom wheelchair that he created with the assistance of his husband, Arthur Sedgwick.

**What They Want.** Alanik's focus is saving Darkon. Knowing his entire homeland could be destroyed, he sent Arthur away to securely deliver copies of their casefiles to Dr. Van Richten in Mordent. The errand was real, but his deeper motive was saving his husband's life—now he needs to save everyone else.

**No Loose Ends.** Having solved Radaga's disappearance, he's moved on to investigate the reasons behind it. More information on Alanik can be found in *Van Richten's Guide to Ravenloft*.

### KABE WHIPPOORWILL

*Halfling interdomain informer*

Secretly a member of the Keepers of the Feather (a fact known to Alanik only), Kabe (KAYB WIP-er-wil) is Alanik's scout, associate, and friend. A lightfoot halfling with a quick smile and a mean right-hook, Kabe possesses a dark gift that allows them to traverse the Domains of Dread. Acting as both a ferry for the characters and a field contact, they're an invaluable member of the investigative team.

**What They Want.** Their line of work is dangerous, so they want to ensure everything goes smoothly. Losing an agent is never the desired outcome.

**Mist Walker.** Kabe is Alanik's scout, investigatory partner, friend, and an invaluable member of the team. They also work as the party's field contact.

### RADAGA

*Human scholar of the Dark Powers*

The initial object of the Order of the Guardians' search, Radaga (ruh-DAH-guh) is a scholar and arcanist who has delved far into the nature of the Dark Powers—some say a bit too far. She's brilliant but obsessive in her desire to catalogue the sinister, as well as a bit possessive of her knowledge. Radaga has olive skin and black hair.

**What They Want.** Because Alanik suspects that Radaga was possessed by creatures unknown, he insists that she avoid venturing out into the world. For now, she uses her knowledge to search the Order's accumulated treasures for items she feels might assist Alanik's investigators with their work.

**Obsessed with Forbidden Knowledge.** She is angry and laments the loss of time due to her recent possession. She chomps at the bit to get back to her life and studies.

## DEVELOPMENT

Proceed to part 1 when the administrator announces that it's time to do so.

# PART 1: THE KING'S TEAR

**Estimated Duration:** 120 minutes

## ADMINISTRATING PART 1

The event administrators announce the commencement of part 1 of the adventure when it's ready to begin. This part of the adventure is a timed event. One of the administrators should use a stopwatch to determine that the following announcements and activities occur as prescribed below:

**0 Minutes:** "A Glowing Red Omen" announcement

**60 Minutes:** 60-minute warning announcement

**90 Minutes:** 30-minute warning announcement

**120 Minutes:** Instruct DMs to proceed to part 2 if they haven't already

## A GLOWING RED OMEN (ADMIN-RUN)

An event administrator signals the beginning of Part 1 by making the following announcement:

A great darkness falls upon your group, blotting out the crimson starlight as the shadow dragon Ebbasheyth descends. Her talons clutch a small fishing schooner with its mast removed. She sets it down for you to climb aboard.

Ebbasheyth now waits for the characters to climb into the boat, which she will use as a container to carry each team of adventurers up to the King's Tear, one group at a time.

## TO THE STAR (DM RUN)

Once the characters are safely aboard the boat, Alanik bids them farewell with a personal message.

"I was born in Darkon," Alanik says. "It's where I learned the science of detection, where Arthur and I built our life together. It's little exaggeration to say I now trust you with everything I hold dear. Save our home."

Ebbasheyth lifts the boat—with the characters on board—into the sky towards the King's Tear. She does not initiate conversation, but may respond to inquiries loud enough for her to hear during flight. The star is much higher in the sky than it appears. After a few minutes, the characters look upon it from above rather than below for the first time.

With no other place to set the characters down, and no clear entrance, Ebbasheyth lights the craft atop the sphere. However, the solid amber comprising the outer layer of the King's Tear becomes semi-solid when touched, turning into a thick ooze the boat partially sinks into (see Area Information). As a result, Ebb quickly whisks the boat away.

## AREA INFORMATION

The exterior of the King's Tear has the following features.

**Dimensions & Terrain.** The King's Tear is a huge, perfectly smooth sphere of solid amber, half a mile in diameter. The outer layer is 10 feet thick with no visible entrance. A creature with a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 13 or higher can see that the star itself is still golden amber, but red light emanates from deep beneath its surface—as if it were translucent and hollow.

**Lighting.** The star's red light is dazzling on the surface; Wisdom (Perception) checks relying on sight are made at disadvantage.

**Weather.** The star radiates no heat. It's eerily cool.

**Sinking In.** A creature starting its turn on the star's amorphous surface must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or become grappled (escape DC 15) as they begin to sink. A creature grappled in this way at the start of their turn sinks 5 feet into the surface, imposing disadvantage on escape checks. A creature that has sunk 10 feet is restrained, a terrifying sensation that feels like drowning in the amber. They must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or increase their Stress Score by 1 (see the "Stress" sidebar below). However, such a creature emerges into the Crystalline Maze on their next turn. Unattended objects pass through as well. There's no other way in.

### STRESS

Each character has a Stress Score, which starts at 0 but increases in trying situations, and applies as a penalty on their attack rolls, ability checks, and saving throws. More information on Stress appears in *Van Richten's Guide to Ravenloft*, but handout 5: Stress Score includes all the rules you need to use it in this adventure. Give the players this handout the first time a character's Stress Score increases.

## THE CRYSTALLINE MAZE

Within the King's Tear, the characters find themselves in a labyrinth filled with alternate realities. They must learn the secrets of these Mirror Dimensions to find Azalin.

For a moment, you are trapped in the congealing amber. Then something pulls you out into a winding tunnel. The only sign of what saved you is the fading, spectral image of a young man with long, silver-blond hair standing in the dim light. He gives you a quick nod before vanishing.

Most creatures who become trapped in the star's outer layer remain trapped there, but the characters who sunk into the amber were pulled out of it by the merciful ghost of Irik Zal'honan, Azalin's long-dead son (whom characters



may recognize from RMH-12 *Beneath the New Star*). Since the very center of the King's Tear is Irik's original tomb (transported through the Mists by the Dark Powers from Azalin's homeworld), the ghost has discovered he can manifest in the star.

The characters find themselves in a crystalline amber labyrinth, its walls glowing with a dim magical radiance. Prisoners sleep in the unbreakable amber walls, dreaming Azalin's Mirror Dimensions. The characters are almost immediately drawn into these false realities.

- Their first mission is chosen by you as the DM.
- Choose later missions using another table's copy of handout 1 (assuming your table was given one by the administrators).

Just before entering a Mirror Dimension, the characters see an image reflected in the crystalline amber walls: a young man in mage's robes with long dark hair framing an angular face, wearing a chain with a tiny gold dragon skull. He says "*I've been expecting you.*" He then snaps his fingers, and briefly becomes a lich in red robes with a golden crown, before everything vanishes and the characters find themselves in the Mirror Dimension. The mage fits Radaga's description of Firan Zal'honan perfectly.

## MIRROR DIMENSION MISSIONS

Here, the characters participate in missions in various Mirror Dimensions. They must successfully complete two missions to escape the maze. The Mirror Dimensions were all born in Azalin's mind, but he uses the dreams of those inside the King's Tear to sustain them as he pursues his work. Their minds shape the Mirror Dimensions as well.

**Passing Strange.** Mirror Dimensions are temporary dream-worlds, and when they end nothing remains but their effects on the characters: hit points lost, levels of exhaustion, stress, or spell effects directly targeting the characters.

### SQUAD GOALS!

Upon completing a mission, the characters achieve a goal or free a dreaming prisoners that Azalin has otherwise used to sustain that Mirror Dimension. As a construct of Azalin's mind, dissolving the dimension helps the characters navigate the maze.

**The First Prisoner.** If the characters succeeded on their first mission, two *potions of greater healing* coalesce from the remnants of the shattered dimension. The Table Captain reports the group's success to the administrators, who give the boon described in appendix B to another table. The characters are drawn into another Mirror Dimension upon navigating the first.

**The Second Prisoner.** Once the second mission is successful, the characters earn the associated boon in appendix C along with a *spell scroll of dimension door*. They discern a route through the Crystalline Maze that avoids further Mirror Dimensions and leads directly to the Apparatus Chamber. This allows characters to move on to part 2. The characters might also receive a boon from another table.

### TRAPPED IN AMBER

Characters in Mirror Dimensions who end their turn incapacitated or prone, or who trigger this effect by other

means (as described under each Mirror Dimension) must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or become grappled (escape DC 15) by amber tendrils that extrude from the nearest surface. A character that starts their turn grappled in this way leaves the Mirror Dimension, becoming trapped in the amber of the maze and increasing their Stress Score by 1. Send such players to HQ, where they will participate in the encounter described in appendix E: My Dinner with Azalin.

If the entire group is trapped in this way, they're again pulled out of the amber by Irik's ghost.

#### INTERACTIVE ELEMENT: MY DINNER WITH AZALIN

Characters sent to experience this admin-run encounter will return shortly, but they may be... different; their consciousness returns, inside a flesh golem (as described in handout 4: What You've Become). If a character in flesh golem form successfully breaks out of a Mirror Dimension (Missions 1-6), or they find Azalin and stop him, send them back to HQ. If the character dies in flesh golem form, inform the player that they awaken in a new flesh golem form. They rejoin the group 1 minute later.

### REALITY IS SUBJECTIVE

Clues in the Mirror Dimensions point to their unreality. Characters who recognize the dream-worlds' nature might attempt to either manipulate that reality or escape it by "waking up."

**Lucid Dreaming.** A character can manipulate their nightmare-like reality as an action by succeeding on a DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) or Wisdom (Insight) check. Such manipulations can conjure a mundane piece of adventurer's gear that weighs less than 25 lbs. and costs less than 50 gp, or simulate the effects of any of the following spells: *catapult*, *conjure animals*, *create food and water*, *creation*, *druidcraft*, *fabricate*, *fog cloud*, *grease*, *levitate*, *mage hand*, *passwall*, *prestidigitation*, *spider climb*, or *thaumaturgy*. Don't list these options for the players. Ask what they want to change; if it falls within these parameters, it works. These manipulations vanish when the Mirror Dimension ends.

Be open to the idea of the characters using this effect creatively to succeed on Mirror Dimension missions in unexpected ways.

**Waking Up.** Characters who realize a Mirror Dimension is a dream can try to rouse themselves from it, effectively waking up, but doing so requires all the characters to try to awaken at once, making a DC 18 group Wisdom saving throw. If at least half the characters succeed, the Mirror Dimension vanishes, and the characters find themselves back in the crystalline maze. On a failed group save, the characters increase their Stress Score by 1, but they can keep repeating the save.

In most cases, however, leaving the mission before accomplishing certain goals will cause the characters to fail that mission.

## CREATURE INFORMATION

Azalin's malevolent genius is infused into every inch of this place, yet he doesn't sense the presence of his son's ghost; he dismisses any sight or sound of Irik as his own rebellious memory of the child he murdered. Irik helps characters out of the amber, but vanishes quickly to avoid his father.



### FIRAN ZAL'HONAN AKA AZALIN REX

#### *Human archmage*

Born second-in-line for his homeland's throne, Firan Zal'Honan (fee-RON zaal-HONE-in) found his true calling as a wizard, then king, finally becoming a lich before the Mists took him to Barovia. His royal title "azal'Lan," or "wizard-king," became "Azalin" (AZZ-uh-linn WRECKS) when he ruled Darkon. In the Hour of Ascension, he did what no other Darklord could: he escaped his domain. Now, using the Apparatus, he can claim the power to leave the Domains of Dread entirely.

**What They Want.** Azalin craves power and freedom. On the cusp of final ascension, he traps the characters in Mirror Dimensions to buy time. Yet his thoughts can be caught up in them as well, seeking reassurance that logic and ambition drove his choices, and that he's not to blame for his failures... or the tragedies that followed.

**The Domain Breaker.** The wizard-king is an arrogant, pragmatic, amoral genius, as ruthless in mastering his own mind as he is in his endless quest for power. Only two things stand in his way now: the buried emotions he longs to eradicate as weaknesses, and the heroes who have come to stop him. More information on Azalin (and his existence as Firan Zal'honan since his escape from Darkon) can be found in *Van Richten's Guide to Ravenloft*.



### IRIK ZAL'HONAN

#### *Ghostly reminder of past evils*

Irik (EER-ick) has conflicted feelings about his father; while he loathes Azalin for his misdeeds, he is also prone to periods of self-blame, believing he "should" have done more to "make his father become a better person." He appears as he did in life; silvery pale skin with long, blonde hair framing a thin, angular face.

**What They Want.** Irik still holds out the hope that Azalin will, despite everything he's done, repent and assume the mantle of benevolent ruler.

**Tied to the Land.** Irik's doubly troubled by more-recent events that have transpired. Since the Hour of Ascension, Irik realizes the danger the domain is in. Irik is anxious to find a resolution to the pending doom—and quickly.

## DEVELOPMENT

Proceed to part 2 once the characters free a second prisoner, since that prisoner provides directions to the Apparatus that avoid any further Mirror Dimensions. If two hours pass before the characters release two prisoners, the admins will announce the end of part 1; proceed directly to part 2.

## MISSION 1: THE TEST

The characters appear as young (the equivalent age to a 15-year-old human) version of themselves (a clue that "Reality is Subjective"); their size is Small and they have the following flaw: *"My emotions feel like the most important thing in the world right now!"* Their clothes turn into small red robes bearing a gold dragon symbol.

You're sitting in a classroom attached to a library. Addressing you and two dark-haired boys, a human in wizard's attire says "Your group has one hour to work together and cast the ritual *Corsalus' fateful conjuration*, detailed in these notes." He holds up some papers from his lectern. "Those who succeed will pass—everyone else will be expelled. Begin!" He flips over an hourglass on his lectern and vanishes in a puff of smoke.

The notes outline three steps for casting the ritual, which must be done in 1 hour or the characters fail the mission. Beating a check's DC by 5 or more halves the listed time.

**Research.** The ritual itself is in the library, but found across multiple books. Researching them takes 20 minutes and a DC 16 Intelligence (Arcana) check. (Young Firan, the elder boy, is eager to help.)

**Alchemy.** The characters must spend 10 minutes brewing a potion with a successful DC 15 Intelligence check using alchemist's supplies. However, the recipe requires the blood of a dragonborn.

**Squaring the Circle.** An intricate 10-foot-wide circular diagram must be painted on the floor with the potion. Doing so correctly takes 10 minutes and an ability check made at DC 17. This could be Intelligence (Arcana), or any ability check using a tool requiring precise drafting or artistic skill.

**Casting.** Casting the ritual takes 10 minutes, after which the circle is filled mist from which steps a **nalfeshnee**. Firan and his brother Irik (Irik Zal'honan's namesake) flee in terror. The demon attacks the characters, but three **veterans** (the princes' royal guards) burst into the room and attack the demon at the beginning of the second round. The first time it takes damage from a veteran, it dies.

## AREA INFORMATION

The area has the following features.

**Dimensions & Terrain.** A stately 50-by-50-foot room with Nharov oak walls, ten long bookshelves, tables and chairs, and no exits. A crystal cage is partially hidden behind a set of bookshelves to the south.

**Lighting.** Each table bears alchemy supplies and a portable candelabra shedding bright light in 10-foot radius.

**A Crystal Cage.** A 10-by-10-foot golden crystal cage with enchanted, unbreakable bars that permit only light, sound, and air to pass between them. It has a locked gate, but only creatures and whatever is on their person can pass through it. The metal lock is etched with Azalin's heraldic symbol, a gold eye. The lock can be broken with a successful DC 20 Strength (Athletics) check or unlocked with a DC 16 Dexterity check made with thieves' tools.

## CREATURE INFORMATION

The only creatures left in the room are the characters, the dragonborn **Dulcinea** in the cage, and two robed human children, who call identify one another as Firan and Irik (an **apprentice wizard** and a **noble**, respectively). Eager to research and cast the ritual, both treat the characters like classmates. Unless one of the characters is a topaz dragonborn, Dulcinea is the only source of blood for the potion.

## YOUNG FIRAN AND YOUNG IRIK

*Human princes*

Young Firan (FEER-uhn) is a younger Azalin who hasn't become evil yet. Young Irik (EAR-ick) isn't the ghost the characters met, but Firan's brother (later namesake for Firan's son). Both have white skin and aquiline features, but Irik's hair is dark red, much different than that of his son.

**What They Want.** Young Firan yearns only to master magic and prove himself. His little brother Irik is his best friend, the only person he loves without reservation. Young Irik doesn't "get" spellcasting, but wants to help his brother.

**Tragic Innocence.** The boys, both in their mid-teens, are polite and helpful. Young Irik's friendlier. His only interest in magic is being there for his brother. Firan is proud they are both the sons of the king, but Irik humbly shrugs this off as not a big deal.

## DULCINEA D'ULBRION

*Topaz dragonborn paladin*

Dulcinea (dull-sin-NAY-uh) is lithe and muscular, with horns that curl like those of a ram and seashell-adorned blue plate armor. Heroic and pessimistic, she's part of an enclave of dragonborn who fled their home in the Nocturnal Sea and settled the Darkonian port town of Vradlock. To protect her people, she answered the Order of Guardians' call, but became trapped in the Mirror Dimension alongside the other characters trying to prevent Azalin's ascension.

**What They Want.** Dulcinea's eager to escape and defeat Azalin.

**Resourceful.** Dulcinea won't go down without a fight but refuses to meet the characters with violence (as they appear to be children); she'll find another way out.

**Playing the Pillars.** You can make use of the following suggestions when running this encounter:

**Combat.** Dulcinea won't willingly allow draw blood without consent. The cage's magic means taking blood requires either letting her out or getting in with her.

**Exploration.** A DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check turns up the cage key in a false book. The amber windows glow, too opaque to look through.

**Social.** Dulcinea's is all too happy to bleed into a vial if the need is truthfully explained to her. She's eager to escape this place.

## ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

**Weak:** Dulcinea has 120 hit points.

**Strong:** Dulcinea has 240 hit points.

## MISSION 2: RIDDLE ME THIS

For this mission, the characters find themselves turning a corner and entering a hallway with a red door inscribed with the number 22 at the end. The skyline of a spired city is visible through the windows, which those familiar with Darkon recognize as Il Aluk. Beyond the door is a sphinx who seemingly only requires the answer to a simple riddle to pass. To succeed on this mission, the characters must get past the sphinx Mlezu and enter the hallway beyond her gallery.

## AREA INFORMATION

The area has the following features.

**Dimensions & Terrain.** The 60-foot-square room is constructed of large amber blocks, stacked upon one another in increasingly smaller layers. 30 feet in, a 15-foot-tall wall stands, with two ramps leading up on either side to the gallery above. Just barely visible beyond the gallery lies an entrance to a hallway that slopes downward into the darkness.

**Lighting.** Several dim torches flicker from the twelve columns spaced equidistant around the perimeter of the chamber.

**The Red Door.** Once the characters enter the room through the red door, from the other side they see the door has become a mere painting on the amber wall.

## CREATURE INFORMATION

A **gynosphinx** perches regally at the center edge of the gallery with her head upon the railing, pensively regarding the newcomers until she is either addressed or until the characters attempt to pass her.

“Welcome, trespassers,” she purrs. “I am Mlezu and I guard the exit you seek”. She yawns as she stands and stretches—extending razor-sharp claws. “Hopefully you can offer *some* novelty to relieve my boredom here. A game of riddles? Or shall the stakes be... higher?”

### MLEZU

#### Sphinx

Mlezu (MAH-le-zoo) stands as the guardian, the only obstacle preventing escape from the scene. This sphinx is slender with sandy-brown skin, slightly darker fur, and wings comprised of blood-red feathers. She wears a crown featuring spinters of jade and volcanic glass set in gold.

**What They Want.** Mlezu desires to prevent the characters' escape, even if it means breaking her own rules. Yet she's bored with her duty, and can't resist forbidden secrets or fresh riddles.

**Fickle Guardian.** Mlezu doesn't want to let the characters pass—even if they answer her riddle correctly. She prefers to toy with them, mocking and ridiculing them.

If the characters opt for a game of riddles, provide the following riddle.

*Everyone has it.*

*Some lose it.*

*Some find it.*

*Some seek it.*

*Some hide it.*

*Some give it away.*

*Everyone has it,*

*Some, less.*

*Some, absorbed.*

The correct answer is your “self.” If the characters can't guess the answer at first, allow them to make DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Insight) checks. For each success, give them a clue.

No matter what answer the characters give, however, Mlezu tells them they are wrong. Characters who argue with Mlezu after providing the correct answer increase their Stress Score by 1, but a successful DC 18 Wisdom (Insight) check perceives that she is lying.

### ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

**Weak:** Mlezu will not use her lair action to reset initiative, nor will she use her legendary actions to cast spells.

**Strong:** Mlezu has 200 hit points.

**Playing the Pillars.** You can make use of the following suggestions when running this encounter:

**Combat.** Mlezu uses her lair actions if the battle is turning against her. She uses her legendary actions to teleport adjacent to ranged combatants and claw them.

**Exploration.** The 15-foot-tall wall provides cover for any creatures being attacked from the gallery above.

**Social.** If the characters offer to provide new or unique knowledge to Mlezu (especially gossip, juicy secrets, or new riddles), she can be distracted—something discerned with a successful DC 16 Wisdom (Insight) check. A subsequent DC 18 Charisma (Deception or Persuasion) check convinces her that the characters have knowledge worth her time, compelling her to delay harming the characters or even pause mid-battle to chat. Afterwards, if there is combat, each character gains advantage on their first attack roll against her during their next turn.

## MISSION 3: HASHING THINGS UP

Characters familiar with Darkon notice that this area resembles the grounds of the Collegium Caelestis, a university on the shores of Lake Korst. Instead of the university's legendary observatory, however, the characters stand before massive crystalline amber scales, each plate holding group of shadowy figures. One group holds only illusions; the characters must choose the group that has even one real person.

## AREA INFORMATION

The area has the following features.

**Dimensions & Terrain.** A set of crystalline scales rises over 100 feet, it's base lost in the mists below. Two 20-foot-wide circular platinum plates hang from the scale, each holding a group of indiscernible figures. Each plate is encased in a cube of force.

**Lighting.** The area is dimly lit and any attempts to create bright light fail. The King's Tear hangs eclipsed in the sky.

**Shadow Beasts.** Below the plates are pools of snapping, snarling shadow-things; forms shifting and mutating. Characters who hurl themselves at these shadow beasts take 18 (4d8) psychic damage, then the “Trapped in Amber” effect attempts to grapple them.

**A Decision Point.** Two pedestals, each bare save for a single lever, stand before the characters. Between them, a sign in Common reads “*The most important must be saved.*”

**The Cubes.** Each cube has an AC of 18 and 50 hit points. A successful DC 22 *dispel magic* will destroy either cube. However, both plates immediately crumble if a cube is destroyed, and all the illusionary beings vanish and the shadow beasts’ howls are replaced with their disappointed voices. A new plate and cube of force immediately appear, imprisoning Smajsenca.

If time permits the cubes can be reset and Azalin places an illusionary appearance on Smajsenca to disguise her from the characters. Azalin (gleeful of how much this tortures Smajsenca) “allows” the character to try again (and hopefully fail).

**Making a Choice.** The characters must choose one lever to pull. Once the choice is made, the scales disappear, the cube of force ceases to exist, and the chosen group lands next to the characters.

## CREATURE INFORMATION

Each group is screaming and making rude gestures at the other, alternated with pleading cries to the characters from familiar voices. Barely audible through the shouting, one person (Smajsenca with an illusionary appearance) tells the characters the truth about the puzzle and her experience (a clue that “Reality is Subjective”). She shouts for them to use the lever that dispels the cube of force around her.

If you wish, ask each player to name two family members or other people important to them; one of the two is on each side of the scale.

### THE CHARACTERS’ LOVED ONES

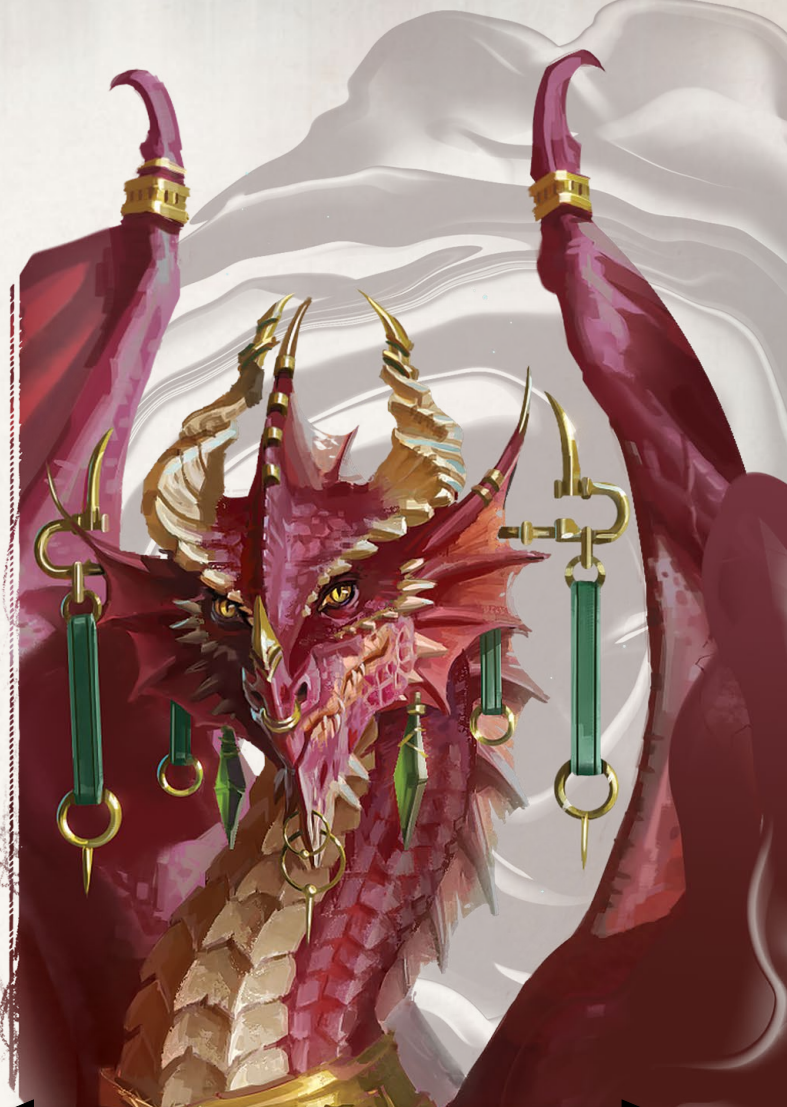
These are duplicates formed by Azalin. They are alive, have the expected memories, and so on, but are the most perfect and ideal versions of their loved ones. They cease to exist after the characters pull the lever. Only Smajsenca remains, flying free or, if her lever is not pulled, inside a cube of force.

**What They Want.** The figures are magical illusions—they have no motivations.

**Duplicious Doubles.** The characters’ “loved ones” aren’t real, though it would take some truly exceptional role-playing moments for the characters to discern that.

If the characters choose the lever for the illusion-filled cube, the illusionary people vanish, their disappointed voices are heard coming from the shadow beasts, and Smajsenca remains trapped in the cube of force. All characters increase their Stress Score by 1. Smajsenca takes her anger out on the characters. If time permits, the cubes can be reset and the characters try again (see “The Cubes” reset description).

If the characters pull the lever for Smajsenca’s cube prison she flies away infuriated, vowing revenge against Azalin. Once this is resolved, the characters have succeeded in the mission, and they wake up back in the Crystalline Maze.



### SMAJSENCA

Smajsenca is a large young red dragon whose wings are aching from being cramped inside a cube of force. She is a friend of Ebbasheyth. She also arrived at the King’s Tear, hoping to increase her knowledge, satisfy curiosity, and maybe add to her possessions. She knows Azalin is torturing her by keeping her repeatedly looping in this Mirror Dimension.

**What They Want.** She wants to be free and wishes to take out her anger on Azalin herself. So far, she’s been waiting in vain for someone to listen to the truth and what she needs (“Use this lever”).

**Vexed.** The knowledge that even someone as powerful, wise, and cautious as her could be made just as much a victim of Azalin as the characters and others vexes her as much as it frees her from self-blame.

## MISSION 4: A GRISLY END

While in this Mirror Dimension, the characters’ creature type changes to Undead, though they don’t feel different and may not notice. They find themselves on a blood-stained battlefield shrouded in fog, facing an endless onslaught of undead foes who look increasingly like the characters with each successive wave. Characters familiar with Darkon recognize this area as a fen amid the fetid swamps of the region called the Boglands.

## AREA INFORMATION

The area has the following features.

**Dimensions & Terrain.** The 30-foot-wide field stretches for 300 feet between dense swamp forests. The ground alternates between mud slick with spilled blood and piles of faceless corpses that create areas of difficult terrain.

**Lighting and Vision.** The King's Tear hangs in the night sky, but its light has faded. It sheds only a dim blood red light. Dense fog emanates from the forest, creeping forward 30 feet each round, obscuring the area it covers.

**Corpses.** Examining the bodies that already litter the field, a successful DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) allows them to note that the faces are those of their closest friends and loved ones. Each wear an amber pendant.

**Successive Waves.** After the initial combat is over, the first character to inspect the new bodies finds that the faces are those of the characters, albeit extremely rotted and broken down.

## CREATURE INFORMATION

The initial wave of undead—bedecked with polished armor—of three **wights** and three **zombies** is intended to be an easy challenge. The second, and each successive wave, of five **wights**, advance across the battlefield while using cover and other tactics. With each successive wave—especially by the third wave—the shapes and features of these undead are more clearly recognizable as identical to the characters (a clue that “Reality is Subjective”).

### UNDEAD ECHOES

*Undead humanoids*

The enemy combatants are echoes of the characters that Azalin has created to remind them that death is inevitable. The echoes act just as the characters would, and are dressed and armed similarly.

**What They Want.** The undead echoes believe that they are adventurers who have been sent here to cleanse this place of a scourge of undead, which they believe the characters to be.

**Mirror Match.** The undead echoes replicate the fighting styles of the characters.

During the combat, one undead shouts to their allies about how “*these undead horrors seem to be smarter than the average monster and should be put down.*” A DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check recognizes this haggard, rasping call as sounding like the most appropriate player character. These enemies don't react to attempts to communicate. They're hell-bent on the characters' destruction.

### ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

**Weak:** Remove one **wight**

**Strong:** Add one **wight**

**Playing the Pillars.** You can make use of the following suggestions when running this encounter:

**Combat.** Equipped and proficient with the same weapons and armor as the characters, each undead can make a DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check as a bonus action to study the fight. On a success, that undead gains advantage on attack rolls against the characters for 1 minute.

**Exploration.** Characters who realize they've become undead can attempt to hide amongst the other undead bodies (DC 12 Dexterity (Stealth) check), but this is disgustingly horrifying. Characters who do so must roll a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw, increasing their Stress Score by 1 on a failure.

**Social.** If the characters realize they are fighting copies of themselves (DC 16 Wisdom (Insight or Perception) check) and call out to the opposing undead using their own names, the enemies become startled. This grants each character advantage on the next attack roll they make before the end of their next turn.

## THE ENDLESS ONSLAUGHT

It should become apparent that waves of undead will just keep coming. A character who flees the field must roll a DC 18 Wisdom saving throw. Those who succeed wake up back in the Crystalline Maze. Those who fail fall unconscious, triggering the “Trapped in Amber” effect. If the whole group flees the field, they fail the mission.

If the characters fight three waves of enemies without noticing they are fighting undead copies of themselves or that they themselves are undead, they gain one level of exhaustion, fail the mission, and wake up back in the Crystalline Maze.

### UNWELCOME REALIZATIONS

If the characters they realize that they are fighting undead copies of themselves, or if they realize they are also undead, they gain advantage on the Wisdom saving throw to awaken from this Mirror Dimension. If they manage to discover both facts, they can each add a d4 to their Wisdom save results.

Once the characters have discovered one or both facts, they have succeeded at this mission, but it doesn't end immediately. They must now make the DC 18 group Wisdom saving throw to awaken (as described under “Reality is Subjective”). On a success, they wake up back in the Crystalline Maze and gain the following Bond: “*I've realized death is inevitable.*”

## MISSION 5: TRIAL AT SEA

The characters enter a twisted memory of the trial that ended in Azalin Firan executing his son Irik, set aboard a warship at sea. Those who know Darkon recognize the Sea of Souls, as well as Martira Bay a thousand feet off the portside bow.

You're on the deck of a great sailing ship at night. Aboard is the dark-haired mage who appeared to you when you arrived at the King's Tear. He calls out, "Crew of the flagship *Dominance*, you witness a trial at sea. My son, Prince Irik Zal'honan, is charged with treason, punishable by death! Prince Irik, you are accused of freeing prisoners condemned to die. Do you deny it?" In a cage, a weeping man shakes his head. "He admits his crime! I stand as accuser. The ship's captain oversees the trial. Will anyone stand as advocate for the prisoner?"

If the characters don't reply, another prisoner in the back of the cage, Sir Bresden, mutters "I've watched this travesty a thousand times. Nothing changes; no one helps the man. I'd be his advocate but no one can see or hear me."

### AREA INFORMATION

The area has the following features.

**Dimensions & Terrain.** The ship's 50 feet wide, 200 feet long, and almost as tall. The nearest land is Martira Bay.

**Lighting.** Hanging lanterns cast bright light on deck.

Distant lights beckon from Martira Bay. No moon, sun, or stars.

**The Sea of Souls.** Entering the freezing water or starting your turn there requires a DC 19 Constitution saving throw. A creature takes 2d6 cold damage on a failure, or half as much on a success. A character that fails the save by 5 or more also takes a level of exhaustion.

**A Crystal Cage.** A 10-by-10-foot cage with crystalline amber bars holds Irik (and Sir Bresden, who sits in back corner shadows). Its gate is locked (DC 20 to break, DC 16 to open with thieves' tools). Firan has the only key.

### CREATURE INFORMATION

Firan's and Irik's minds are caught in the dream, they relive this very different version of the day Irik died. Firan (an **archmage**) argues for executing his **noble** son Irik, who pleads his innocence. A number of marines (**pirate captains**) equal to twice the number of characters guard the cage, attacking anyone trying to free Irik; Firan doesn't engage in combat.

The "captain" stands on the quarterdeck. This is the Gaunt Cavalier, a tall, long-limbed **death knight** in red helm and armor, with a curving, scythe-like sword on its back. It travels through the Mists and realms beyond as silent witness to horrors, dragging **Sir Bresden** along to watch.



#### SIR BRESDEN MARSH

*Human paladin*

Sir Bresden (BREZ-din) bears a family curse. Each new moon, he must accompany the Gaunt Cavalier to witness an evil act he's powerless to stop—but maybe this time is different. He has white skin, a long-dark brown ponytail and goatee, and kind expression.

**What They Want.** Bresden calls on the characters to stop Firan from executing his own son. Since he is only an insubstantial spirit here, he can't do much himself.

**Earnest Advocate.** Thinking he's invisible, Bresden's surprised the characters can see and hear him. An expert in law and history (though not of Darkon), he answers the characters' questions, and points out that in many lands, the accused can request Trial by Combat and have champions fight for them.

The mission succeeds if Irik is spared or freed.

Irik's already admitted he released the prisoners to spare their lives, and the law demands his death. But on some level, Firan wants to spare Irik. His thoughts aren't guilt over executing his son, but a DC 19 Wisdom (Insight) check discerns feelings of regret as a father for not doing more to purge what he views as his son's "weakness."

A DC 30 Charisma (Persuasion) check convinces the king to imprison his son instead. The task is difficult but can be made easier by making other arguments first. Every time the characters succeed in swaying Firan a bit, check off a box below. Lower the DC of the final check by 5 for every box checked.

**Pleading the Case:**

**Example approaches:** (If no ability's listed, it's a Charisma check allowing characters to use proficiencies appropriate to their approach (Deception to lie, Persuasion to argue eloquently, etc.) Appealing to Firan's classism by claiming high birth or rank (DC 14 (DC 17 Charisma (Deception) if false)); arguing a royal heir deserves a chance to change (DC 22); citing legal knowledge or Darkon's customs (DC 17 Intelligence (History) check); or

arguing Irik's "crimes" are more an indictment of Firan's own impossible standards (DC 16; checks *two* boxes). If witnesses are called, a water genasi marine, Scylla, steps forward to describe Irik pulling the characters out of the amber. This doesn't check a box.

**Playing the Pillars.** You can make use of the following suggestions when running this encounter:

**Combat.** If the characters call for Trial by Combat, the Gaunt Cavalier steps down and removes its helm—and its head with it! It hands both to Firan, becoming a **dullahan**, and fights the whole party. If it loses, Irik lives.

**Exploration.** A dozen lifeboats hang from ropes 20 feet down both sides of the ship, just over the water. Climbing down requires a Strength (Athletics) check (DC 12 for ropes, DC 15 for the hull) to avoid falling into the water.

**Social.** Charisma (Intimidate) checks against Firan are at disadvantage—he respects strong will, but fears no one. If Irik's condemned, the "captain" offers its sword. Firan wavers, then takes it. Firan leads the condemned away.

#### ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

**Weak:** The **dullahan** has 97 hp.

**Strong:** The Gaunt Cavalier retains the statistics of a **death knight** (but won't use Hellfire Orb aboard the ship).

## MISSION 6: THE CITY ON THE EDGE OF OBLIVION

This Mirror Dimension tries to persuade the characters that their mission has already failed. Those familiar with Darkon quickly recognize the location as the port city of Vradlock.

You find yourselves walking out of a dark seaside cavern into a sprawling port, traveling at the head of a group of gray-robed monks. You feel a strange sensation of having forgotten something important. Two familiar women approach you.

The characters now hold two new objects: a chunk of amber and an artifact called the *Key to the Abyss*.

Approaching are Laurie Weathermay-Foxgrove and Radaga from the Call to Action. They greet the characters with bewildering questions like "Did you get the *Key to the Abyss*?" or "Which plan should we pursue?" Seeing the characters' confusion, Radaga theorizes they've lost some memories to a temporal fugue, an effect afflicting those who spend time in the mines beneath the Mountains of Misery.

Give the players handout 3: In Search of Lost Time, listing events they "missed." In this Mirror Dimension's (false) history, the attempt to stop Azalin failed, and Darkon was consumed by the Mists. Weird time magic has slowed the Mists near Vradlock, but soon it will be destroyed too.

The characters succeed on this mission if they deny the false reality here and make the group saving throw to awaken (as described under "Reality is Subjective").

They also succeed if any of the survivors escape Darkon, or if they make and enact a plan to create a new Darklord. However, characters who end the mission complicit in evil acts that harmed innocents raise their Stress Score by 2.

## AREA INFORMATION

The area has the following features.

**Dimensions & Terrain.** Vradlock is built into a slim ravine where the river empties into a bay. Partly due to this narrow geography, the city is built up—with tall buildings connected by skybridges and outdoor staircases—and out, on barges and houseboats.

**The Populace.** Most locals are drow or dragonborn. Drow here prefer to live up high, believing the night sky sacred, a source of divine omens. The dragonborn, who dress like seafarers and favor homes on the water, came fleeing persecution. Together, they've created a unique culture.

**The Key to the Abyss.** This artifact of unknown metal has crystal pipes along the side, ending in a sharp-edged tube. Long kept by the Order of Guardians at the Watcher's Stronghold, it must be fed blood each day, or at sunset it opens a portal to the Abyss, making it one of the few means of truly escaping the Domains of Dread.

**The Nemesis.** Laurie found an old enemy in town: the charming, brilliant, evil **loup garou** Natalia Vhorishkova. Aided by the locals, Laurie surrounded Natalia, who locked herself in the top floors of an observatory.

**Time Anomalies.** Temporal fugues from nearby tunnels both trouble and protect Vradlock. Settlers chose this spot because these effects also stopped a curse that used to steal immigrants' memories of life before Darkon. Now, these anomalies delay Vradlock's destruction.

**Lighting.** Despite the thick clouds of an overcast day, the sun provides bright light. The King's Tear is gone.

## CREATURE INFORMATION

Radaga and Laurie have been waiting for the characters. They're eager to consult them on a plan to escape Darkon. These Mirror Dimension versions are much like the real ones, but haunted by guilt over Darkon's annihilation and driven to save the survivors here (a clue that "Reality is Subjective"). Other clues that "Reality is Subjective" could be that Radaga does not have her crawling claw familiar with her and Laurie doesn't know who Gennifer is, if asked about her sister.

Laurie wants to use the *Key to the Abyss* to open a portal to that evil plane and lead Vradlock's people there. This could save everyone, but the Abyss is a deadly hellscape. Laurie hopes they could find a way out to somewhere safe.

Radaga produces handout 2: Azalin's Notes. Characters pursuing the notes may conclude that this information (and the amber) might make Vradlock part of a new domain by creating a new Darklord. Since this also requires an utterly depraved act of true evil, Radaga suggests Laurie's wicked prisoner Natalia. Reading the notes, the characters may conclude that one of them would be a good candidate instead. Laurie (a **veteran** who wields a *mace of disruption*) opposes the horrific deed required, and will have no part in it—evil begets evil.

**Playing the Pillars.** You can make use of the following suggestions when running this encounter:





**Combat.** The **loup garou** Natalia, holed up in the shadowy top three floors of a towering observatory, waits to ambush any of Laurie's allies.

**Exploration.** If any characters seek clues as to whether they might be a clone of Azalin, all signs in the Mirror Dimension point to yes. If the *Key to the Abyss* opens a portal, a slime-covered demon rises out of the ground before it, wielding a barbed pike and whistling an eerie tune. DC 14 Intelligence (Arcana) checks (made with advantage by Darkonians) identify this creature as the Whistling Fiend, a demon that has long terrorized the people of this domain. It grins and splits into three **babau** demons, all seeking to take the *Key to the Abyss* and keep anyone else from escaping through the portal.

**Social.** If the characters convince Natalia to talk instead of fight (DC 18 Charisma (Deception or Persuasion) check), she's all too happy to become a Darklord by committing some dark deed. Natalia refuses to provide any details but assures the characters that she's got her own ideas.

#### ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

**Weak:** The **loup garou** Natalia only has 102 hit points. The Whistling Fiend manifests as two **babaus**.

**Strong:** The **loup garou** Natalia's *dominate humanoid* spell uses 1 legendary action. The Whistling Fiend manifests as four **babaus**.

**Special:** Add one **babau** to the battle with the Whistling Fiend if Laurie joins the fight alongside the characters.

## PART 2:

# THE APPARATUS

**Estimated Duration:** 60 minutes

## ADMINISTRATING PART 2

Administrators should ensure the following announcements occur as prescribed below:

**30 Minutes:** 30-minute warning announcement

**45 Minutes:** 15-minute warning announcement

**60 Minutes:** Announce time's up, report results to HQ

**Themes:** extreme urgency, impending doom, complicated mechanical devices

## REACHING THE CENTER

The far side of this 90-foot circular chamber is dominated by the Apparatus: a massive array of glass globes and tubes, metal rods and plates, coiled wires, and two glass chambers. One chamber contains a crystalline cocoon around a humanoid body. The other contains a giant dragon skull, covered in gold. The dark-haired mage who appeared to you earlier monitors the Apparatus' controls. As you enter, he has just inserted a two-foot-long clear crystal rod into the controls.

Gauging from the high-pitched, keening wail emanating from the device, it is close to completing its foul purpose.

Roll initiative, and make sure the players know they must hurry. Any warlock characters who have a Darklord as their patron gain advantage on this initiative roll—unless their patron is Azalin himself, which imposes disadvantage.

At the start of the first character's turn, all the characters hear a ghostly voice whisper that the golden skull is the phylactery the characters must destroy. The voice is Irik; this area is his original tomb.



### HUNTER'S FERVOR

The humanoid within the crystalline cocoon might be familiar to one or more players. If any character has the Hunter's Fervor story award, that player's previous character willingly accepted Azalin's possession at the end of RMH-10 *The Scion of Darkness*. The character recognizes that previous character in the cocoon. Take a moment to allow the player to describe what they see. If more than one character has the story award, randomly determine who describes the creature.

## AZALIN'S ASCENSION

Azalin Rex is possessing the body in the cocoon. Operating the Apparatus is what appears to be Firan Zal'honan is an exquisitely well-crafted **flesh golem**, who

has just inserted the *rod of Rastinon*—the final action necessary to fulfill Azalin's plan. The Apparatus does everything from here. The only other creature present is a piebald raven—Azalin's **imp** familiar Skeever—who turns invisible just before the battle starts. Rounds proceed as follows, with the events of Round 2-4 occurring on initiative count 0 (losing ties):

**Round 1.** The characters arrive. Azalin's flesh golem inserts the *rod of Rastinon*. Initiative begins.

**Round 2.** Via the Apparatus, the phylactery absorbs the vestige hosted by the humanoid in the cocoon. The flesh golem body crumbles to ash and Azalin's incorporeal form fades.

**Round 3.** The Apparatus continues powering up. The phylactery smokes and smolders.

**Round 4.** Azalin wins. The phylactery shatters and he vanishes.

The following events happen each round on the listed initiative count (losing ties):

- **Initiative 20:** A metal rod in the center of the ceiling releases a surge of lightning. Every creature in the room must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or take 12 (5d4) lightning damage. The imp Skeever is immune, while the flesh golem automatically fails, allowing the lightning to heal it.
- **Initiative 15:** If Skeever is within 5 feet of a character, it can use its reaction to deliver one of the following touch spells, using Azalin's statistics (spell save DC 20, +12 to hit with spell attacks): *bestow curse*, *vampiric touch*, or *contagion*. Otherwise, the imp tries to stay hidden.
- **Initiative 10:** Any creature within the Apparatus chamber (which includes the cocoon and phylactery) must make a DC 18 Intelligence saving throw, taking 11 (2d10) psychic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. Creatures within 5 feet of the cocoon or the phylactery take 22 (4d10) psychic damage (or half with a successful saving throw).

## AREA INFORMATION

The area has the following features.

**Dimensions.** The circular room is 90 feet in diameter. The Apparatus stands at the far side of the room.

**Lighting.** The Apparatus emits a bright green, sickly light, the room is otherwise dark.

**Wards.** Every 5-foot space in a line from the center of the room's northern wall to the center of its southern wall is protected by a *glyph of warding* which triggers an explosive runes effect when stepped on, requiring creatures within a 20-foot-radius sphere of that space to make a DC 20 Dexterity saving throw. A creature takes 22 (5d8) thunder damage on a failure, or half as much damage on a success.

**The Phylactery.** The only way to stop Azalin is to destroy the dragon skull. It has an AC of 18 and 150 hit points, is

immune to lightning, poison, and psychic damage, and has resistance to acid, cold, and fire damage.

**The Cocoon.** The crystalline cocoon rests atop a coffin etched with Irik's name. It has an AC of 18 and 150 hit points, is immune to lightning, poison, and psychic damage, and has resistance to acid, cold, and fire damage.

**The Apparatus.** The device stands over 30 feet tall, taking up every space within 20 feet of the cocoon. However, there is enough space between components that the area of the device is not considered difficult terrain. At the top, steel rings attached to a 15-foot glass globe absorb lightning that powers the eldritch machine. The Apparatus has an AC of 18 and 200 hit points, and resistance to all damage except thunder damage, force damage, or non-magical bludgeoning, piercing, or slashing damage. Unless it has taken 50 or more damage, the Apparatus grants three-quarters cover to the cocoon and the phylactery.



## THE COMPONENTS

It is possible that the characters have been able to the required components out of Azalin's hands during their previous adventures. Ask each of the players if their character has any of the below story awards. If more than half of the characters do, then the encounter is modified as follows:

**The Scion is Ours.** If the characters prevented Azalin from obtaining the Scion of Darkness, the humanoid within the cocoon hosts different, subpar vestige from the Amber Temple. If the cocoon is destroyed before the vestige is transferred, the humanoid within dies and the Dark Powers pierce Azalin's veil of deception. Azalin's body and the phylactery vanish and return to Castle Avernus. If any of the players had a character accepted Azalin's possession at the end of RMH-10 *The Scion of Darkness*, the creature within the cocoon resembles their lost character. If more than one player surrendered a character in this way, choose one of them at random.

**The Rod is Ours.** Azalin had to resorting to constructing his own rod, but it doesn't work as well. When the vestige transfers to the phylactery, the Apparatus malfunctions, spewing a necrotic-infused alchemical foam. From then on, any creature that starts its turn within 10 feet of the Apparatus or enters that area must make a DC 17 Strength saving throw or it falls prone and takes 10 (2d10) necrotic damage.

**The Urn of Dreams is Ours.** Azalin was forced to construct an inferior receptacle—slowing the transformation process. This adds a one-round delay between rounds 2 and 3, and between rounds 3 and 4 in the process detailed above—causing the entire process to take a total of six rounds instead of four.

## CREATURE INFORMATION

Having just inserted the Rod of Houtras, the **flesh golem** defends the Apparatus.

## FLESH GOLEM (FIRAN)

### Construct

This sophisticated golem has the appearance of Firan Zal'honan: a striking young man in black finery whose long dark hair hangs loose around an angular, aquiline face. It moves with assured grace, its eyes betraying powerful intelligence.

**What They Want.** The flesh golem is controlled directly by Azalin, who only wills it to insert the rod and defend the Apparatus.

**Sacrificial Vessel.** The flesh golem will fight until it is killed—it is only a temporary body. All Azalin needs it to do is activate the Apparatus, then protect it at all costs.

### FLESH GOLEM STATISTICS

Normally, the Firan construct is a reborn (as described in *Van Richten's Guide to Ravenloft*) with his full spellcasting powers, but right now, Azalin's spirit is stretched across too many places. Instead, it has the statistics of a normal flesh golem, except with an Intelligence of 20 and fluency in all languages. In place of one or both of its slam attacks, Within 5 feet of the Apparatus area, it can deal 10 bludgeoning damage to the Apparatus itself to pull off a non-essential chunk of the device and hurl it at a target within 60 feet. The golem's attack rolls for this attack are made a +7, and the hurling attack deals 13 (2d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

The flesh golem and imp are immune to the wards set in the room and do not trigger them.

**Playing the Pillars.** You can make use of the following suggestions when running this encounter:

**Combat.** Azalin uses the golem to take any action he can to impede the characters from accessing the Apparatus or Phylactery. He knows if the characters focus on the golem too much, they'll fail.

**Exploration.** The glyphs can be detected with a successful DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) or Intelligence (Arcana or Investigation) check.

**Social.** Azalin, who saw everything in the Mirror Dimensions, taunts the characters over their choices or failings during Part 1. If he hears the name Irik, the first time this happens, the golem suffers disadvantage on the next attack roll or saving throw it makes before the end of its next turn.

## ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

**Weak:** The **flesh golem** has disadvantage on the initiative roll.

**Strong:** Add one **flesh golem**. This second golem also looks just like Firan Zal'honan—Azalin is possessing them both.

## DEVELOPMENT

Report success or failure to the event administrators. Don't proceed to part 3 until instructed. If you have time remaining, after the characters succeed or fail, they find handout 2: Azalin's Notes. (This is the real version of the notes found in the dream-world of Mission 6.) They can spend time poring over that or healing.

# PART 3: ESCAPE!

**Estimated Duration:** 30 minutes

Whether or not the characters thwarted Azalin's scheme, the King's Tear collapses—they must escape or die.

**Themes:** mortal peril, fleeing, complete devastation

## ADMINISTRATING PART 3

This part of the adventure is a timed event. One of the administrators should use a stopwatch to determine that the following announcements and activities occur as prescribed below:

**0 Minutes:** "Falling Star" announcement

**15 Minutes:** 15-minute warning announcement

**30 Minutes:** Event HQ advises DMs on outcome and tables move to "Wrap Up: End Game"

## FALLING STAR (ADMIN-RUN)

The administrators declare the end of Part 2 and the beginning of Part 3 with a dramatic announcement:

The floor shakes as cracks great and small appear in the walls of amber crystal. The entire chamber in which you stand tilts. Then comes a sudden sickening lurch, followed by the sensation of dropping at speed. Not only is the King's Tear collapsing, but the entire star is falling out of the sky!

## ESCAPING THE TEAR (DM-RUN)

Roll initiative. Everyone gets one turn to brace themselves before the King's Tear hits the ground.

At that point, the floor beneath the characters shatters with the impact. Though the amber shell of the star absorbs most of the impact's force, everyone must still make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw. Those who fail take 6d6 bludgeoning damage and then fall prone from the fall as the King's Tear crashes. Those who succeed take half as much damage, but still fall prone.

Once the saving throw and its effects are resolved, the characters all find themselves together.

The impact shattered the star's bottom half beneath you. Now, the half over your heads begins falling apart. Great amber shards fall from the maze of tunnels above. At the same time, the Mists arise from the Apparatus. Not the ordinary Mists, but seething, hungry. As if borne on a fell wind, they race towards you, consuming everything they touch. The entire maze is collapsing, and you have only moments to escape.

### INTERACTIVE ELEMENT: MY DINNER WITH AZALIN

After the damage from the fall is resolved, characters who participated in the **My Dinner with Azalin** encounter experience special effects:

- If anyone is still trapped in a flesh golem body, they find themselves back in their own bodies after the star falls, prone but not far from their allies. In addition, they regain hit points equal to half their maximum.
- Ask the characters if any of them chose to drink from the fountain during the **My Dinner with Azalin** encounter. If so, if they dealt any damage to the Azalin's phylactery during Part 2, Azalin has cursed them, and they make Dexterity saving throws at disadvantage for 24 hours.

Warlock characters with Azalin as their patron who dealt damage to Azalin's phylactery suffer the same curse.

If the characters succeeded in stopping Azalin in Part 2, the mists of the Shroud are their normal gray color. If not, they have turned blood red.

Use the chase rules in chapter 8 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* to play out the escape. Give the players handout 6: Escaping the King's Tear. The characters must travel a total of 250 feet away from this area and the expanding Shroud to get out of the King's Tear, so keep a running tally of how far each character has gone.

**Chase Complications.** Each participant in the chase rolls a d20 at the end of its turn, and you consult the Escape Complications table in appendix D: Tracking the Escape. The result (if any) affects the next chase participant in initiative order.

**The Collapsing Maze.** On initiative count 20 of each round, check one of the following boxes, going from top to bottom. Then, all the characters who have not yet escaped must roll Dexterity saving throws to avoid being crushed by falling fragments as the crystalline maze collapses. The save DC and effects of failure are determined by how many boxes have already been checked. Characters who succeed don't take any damage. Characters with a passive Perception score higher than the listed DC succeed automatically, noticing the fragments before they fall.

- DC 12, 2d4 + 5 bludgeoning damage
- DC 13, 2d6 + 7 bludgeoning damage
- DC 14, 2d8 + 9 bludgeoning damage
- DC 15, 3d6 + 11 bludgeoning damage
- DC 16, 3d8 + 13 bludgeoning damage
- DC 17, 3d10 + 16 bludgeoning damage
- DC 19, 3d12 + 19 bludgeoning damage
- No saving throw, 4d12 + 26 bludgeoning damage

**The Expanding Shroud.** On initiative count 0 of each round, check one of the boxes below, going from top to bottom. Immediately after you check the box, the Shroud expands, and any character who hasn't moved at least the listed number of feet for that box is caught in the Shroud.

- 10 feet
- 30 feet
- 55 feet
- 85 feet
- 130 feet
- 185 feet
- 250 feet (escaped)

A creature that enters the Shroud for the first time or starts its turn there takes 100 (5d12 + 70) necrotic damage and reduces its hit point maximum by the same amount. Characters killed in this way rises at the start of its next turn as an **allip** under your control.

**Dashing.** Participants in the chase are strongly motivated to use the Dash action every round. During the chase, a participant can freely use the Dash action a number of times equal to 3 + its Constitution modifier. Each additional Dash action it takes during the chase requires the creature to succeed on a DC 10 Constitution check at the end of its turn or gain one level of exhaustion.

**Escape.** Once they have gotten 250 feet away from where the chase started, the characters have reached the edge of the King's Tear. This allows them to escape, stepping out into the lands around Castle Avernus where the adventure began. Nothing pursues them, for now.

## DEVELOPMENT

Any characters who escape the King's Tear alive have a moment to rest, nurse their wounds, and try to understand all that has happened. Once the administrators at Event HQ advise you on the larger outcome of the adventure, proceed to **"Wrap Up: End Game"**



### TOUCHED BY SHADOW (ADMIN-RUN)

Administrators (one per every 5 tables) playing the role of Ebbasheyth move from table to table—with a copy of **Appendix A:**

**Story Award Tracker** for each table they visit—bearing the names of each character who has this story award. Interrupt the action when you arrive to read the following announcement:

With a loud crash, Ebbasheyth smashes in through the collapsing remains of the King's Tear, calling out, "Death and darkness now claim this place, but the dragon Ebbasheyth pays her debts. Those who have done me service shall not die here today!"

Read the names of the characters at that table who earned the Touched by Shadow story award. Those characters (and their players) are taken away to a separate location. Once those characters are assembled, an administrator will read the following to the whole group:

Ebbasheyth descends to the nearby Castle Avernus, activating a hidden, over-sized teleportation circle atop one of its towers. She teleports to a high ridge overlooking a seaside settlement and sets you down before speaking.

"I do not yet know if you have succeeded or failed in stopping Azalin's plan and saving this domain. If the Dark Powers begin consuming this realm, I will use the circle to return you to your allies. If everything ends, I suspect this place will last longer than the rest of the domain, for here magic of time and memory wells up strange and strong. Either way, my debt is paid!"

One or more administrators should remain with this group of players, to answer any questions the characters may have (in character as Ebbasheyth), or to help with any other matters. The nearby settlement is Vradlock, known for weird local magical phenomena (described in Mission 6).

Once HQ has determined whether the characters who played this adventure succeeded or failed as a whole, the administrator here can act on that information.

If the characters succeeded in stopping Azalin, the administrator sends these players back to their tables for the **"Wrap Up: End Game"** section.

If the characters failed, the administrator reads the special announcement in **"Wrap Up: End Game"** for characters rescued by Ebb before sending them back to their tables.

## WRAP-UP: END GAME

After the characters have all either escaped the King's Tear or died with it, the administrators determine if at least half of all groups managed to stop Azalin. If they did, the whole group of adventurers who played this adventure succeeded. If not, the whole group fails. Based on this, an admin should go to each table and give the DM a note, letting them know which conclusion to use:

### AZALIN'S ASCENSION FAILS

Any characters who escaped the collapse of the King's Tear survive. Once the artificial star has crumbled completely, Castle Avernus is restored. A single howl of rage echoes from the castle's towers, in a voice much like Azalin's...

Read the following:

It's been weeks since your investigation has concluded, yet you find a hand-written letter in the mail; it seems that Alanik has need of you once more. This time, however, the request is more for pleasure than business: dinner and a glass of port.

Over the meal, the famed detective and his associates regale you with stories and listen in rapt attention at your own.

The evening ends with handshakes all around.

## AZALIN'S ASCENSION SUCCEEDS

Azalin ascends and escapes Ravenloft. In response, his prison domain of Darkon collapses. Read the following:

The King's Tear crumbles around you as your gaze falls upon the ruined lands of Darkon. The Mists, once cold and grey, now roil with anger and swell with crimson fury as they rush inward, consuming everything in their path. Alanik and Kabe arrive, breathless, and with disappointment-filled eyes.

"I guess that's that," Kabe sighs between long pulls from a silver flask.

"It appears that you are right," replies Alanik, "It's been an honor and a privilege, my friends."

Any character that remains behind after Ebbasheyth's rescue is destroyed as if by *disintegration*, obliterated by the Shroud along with the rest of Darkon.

### SPECIAL: FOR CHARACTERS HELPED BY EBBASHEYTH (ADMIN-RUN)

This section is only used if the characters failed. Otherwise, characters helped by Ebbasheyth return to their tables and hear the same messages as everyone else. But if the characters did fail, an admin reads the following to those helped by the shadow dragon:

The Mists, once cold and grey, now roil with anger and swell with crimson fury as they rush over the land, consuming everything in their path. Yet as Ebbasheyth predicted, the Mists stop at the edges of this area, slowing their expansion to an almost imperceptible crawl. The rest of Darkon is lost. In the nearby port, you may be able to acquire Mist talismans and flee to other domains.

Before long, Laurie Weathermay-Foxgrove arrives via the teleportation circle from Castle Avernus, carrying Radaga, unconscious but alive.

"The others didn't make it," she says, stone-faced. "We lost. Azalin won."

## EPILOGUE

Regardless of whether Azalin was stopped, end the adventuring by reading the following:

Silent darkness is suddenly interrupted by the screeching of a long-shut door and a sliver of lantern light growing in what appears to be a warehouse. A silhouetted figure passes shelves packed with boxes and chests stenciled with various writing: some words, some letters, in various languages. The figure carries a crate filled with several items: a tattered, threadbare haversack, a bone-hafted spear, a leather-wrapped decanter stoppered with cobalt glass, and a battered-looking machete.

The figure stops and wedges the crate into an available space before turning and walking back to the door. As they leave, the vision widens, revealing a vast warehouse full of packed shelves.

The figure draws close to the door, they stop, and with a curious look on their face, take a few measured paces backwards and turn to a shelf. On it rests an ancient tome, bound in what appears to be flesh, inscribed with foul runes that, for some reason, appear to be inked in still-wet blood. Shaking, hesitant hands reach out to the tome, which opens suddenly and hurls itself towards the figure.

The lantern falls to the floor with a clang, extinguishing the flame, and then all is silent and dark once more.

## INVESTIGATION JOURNAL

If the characters prevent Azalin's ascension, provide each character with a copy of handout 7: Investigation Journal. If they've played each of the preceding adventures, the characters can then collect each entry and assemble them as a memento of their investigation—and the trials and tribulations they suffered in pursuit of goodness in a realm of darkness and evil.

Those that fail to stop Azalin can do the same thing, but the final entry is an ominous reminder that sometimes the pursuits of evil can claim even the bravest, and most-noble soul.

# DRAMATIS PERSONAE

The following NPCs feature prominently in this adventure.

## ALANIK RAY

*Elf investigator*

Alanik (uh-LAHN-ick RAY) is confident and insightful, a shrewd investigator, and one of the most well-traveled mortals in the Domains of Dread. Alanik is a master of insights and deduction; he can learn details about others after a few moments of meeting them. For example, he can almost instantaneously deduce a character's native domain from their accent and mannerisms. An accidental fall during an investigation caused a spinal injury that paralyzed Alanik's legs. He uses a custom wheelchair that he created with the assistance of his husband, Arthur Sedgwick.

More information on Alanik can be found in *Van Richten's Guide to Ravenloft*.

**What They Want.** Alanik's focus is saving Darkon.

Knowing his entire homeland could be destroyed, he sent Arthur away to securely deliver copies of their casefiles to Dr. Van Richten in Mordent. The errand was real, but his deeper motive was saving his husband's life—now he needs to save everyone else.

**No Loose Ends.** Having solved Radaga's disappearance, he's moved on to investigate the reasons behind it.

## EBBASHEYTH

*Draconic advisor*

Ebbasheyth (EBB-uh-shayth) is unfathomably old and held in high esteem by Azalin. While she's not necessarily absent minded, it's not surprising that it takes her a few moments to scour and access eons of collective knowledge and wisdom. The dragon is not benevolent by any means; her desires take precedence over those of others, and she's willing to use violence against those who she feels have wronged her.

**What They Want.** Ebbasheyth wishes for Azalin to return to Castle Avernus—even if it means stymieing the lich's grand plan.

**Trusted Advisor.** Ebbasheyth has seen and learned more than most of the creatures that dwell within Ravenloft—she is a nigh-bottomless font of information about the workings of the Domains of Dread.

## FIRAN ZAL'HONAN AKA AZALIN REX

*Human archmage*

Born second-in-line for his homeland's throne, Firan Zal'Honan (fee-RON zaal-HONE-in) found his true calling as a wizard, then king, finally becoming a lich before the Mists took him to Barovia. His royal title "azal'Lan," or "wizard-king," became "Azalin" (AZZ-uh-linn WRECKS) when he ruled Darkon. In the Hour of Ascension, he did what no other Darklord could: he escaped his domain. Now, using the Apparatus, he can claim the power to leave the Domains of Dread entirely.

More information on Azalin (and his existence as Firan Zal'honan since his escape from Darkon) can be found in *Van Richten's Guide to Ravenloft*.

**What They Want.** Azalin craves power and freedom. On the cusp of final ascension, he traps the characters in Mirror Dimensions to buy time. Yet his thoughts can be caught up in them as well, seeking reassurance that logic and ambition drove his choices, and that he's not to blame for his failures... or the tragedies that followed.

**The Domain Breaker.** The wizard-king is an arrogant, pragmatic, amoral genius, as ruthless in mastering his own mind as he is in his endless quest for power. Only two things stand in his way now: the buried emotions he longs to eradicate as weaknesses, and the heroes who have come to stop him.



## IRIK ZAL'HONAN

### *Ghostly reminder of past evils*

Irik (EER-ick) has conflicted feelings about his father; while he loathes Azalin for his misdeeds, he is also prone to periods of self-blame, believing he “should” have done more to “make his father become a better person.” He appears as he did in life; silvery pale skin with long, blonde hair framing a thin, angular face.

**What They Want.** Irik still holds out the hope that Azalin will, despite everything he’s done, repent and assume the mantle of benevolent ruler.

**Tied to the Land.** Irik’s doubly troubled by more-recent events that have transpired. Since the Hour of Ascension, Irik realizes the danger the domain is in. Irik is anxious to find a resolution to the pending doom—and quickly.

## KABE WHIPPOORWILL

### *Halfling interdomain informer*

Secretly a member of the Keepers of the Feather (a fact known to Alanik only), Kabe (KAYB WIP-er-wil) is Alanik’s scout, associate, and friend. A lightfoot halfling with a quick smile and a mean right-hook, Kabe possesses a dark gift that allows them to traverse the Domains of Dread. Acting as both a ferry for the characters and a field contact, they’re an invaluable member of the investigative team.

**What They Want.** Their line of work is dangerous, so they want to ensure everything goes smoothly. Losing an agent is never the desired outcome.

**Mist Walker.** Kabe is Alanik’s scout, investigatory partner, friend, and an invaluable member of the team. They also work as the party’s field contact.

## LAURIE WEATHERMAY-FOXGROVE

### *Human investigator*

Dark-haired and wiry, with genteel mannerisms and master strategy skills, Laurie (LORE-ee) is one of the most renowned monster hunters in the Domains of Dread. Trained by two famous uncles—blood relative George Weathermay and family-friend Rudolph van Richten—Laurie and her twin Gennifer became inseparable and relentless heroes in their own right. Laurie has dark brown skin and curly black hair, shorn on one side.

**What They Want.** Sworn to protect the innocent from evil, Laurie is determined to see Azalin defeated.

**Stalwart Hero.** Laurie is well-practiced at decisive action but knows it would benefit her to listen to the experienced, deliberate, and plan. More information on Laurie can be found in *Van Richten’s Guide to Ravenloft*.

## RADAGA

### *Human scholar of the Dark Powers*

The initial object of the Order of the Guardians’ search, Radaga (ruh-DAH-guh) is a scholar and arcanist who has delved far into the nature of the Dark Powers—some say a bit too far. She’s brilliant but obsessive in her desire to catalogue the sinister, as well as a bit possessive of her knowledge. Radaga has olive skin and black hair.

**What They Want.** Because Alanik suspects that Radaga was possessed by creatures unknown, he insists that she avoid venturing out into the world. For now, she uses her knowledge to search the Order’s accumulated treasures for items she feels might assist Alanik’s investigators with their work.

**Obsessed with Forbidden Knowledge.** She is angry and laments the loss of time due to her recent possession. She chomps at the bit to get back to her life and studies.





# CREATURE STATISTICS



## ALLIP

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 40 (9d8)

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

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	17 (+3)	10 (+0)	17 (+3)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)

**Saving Throws** Int +6, Wis +5

**Skills** Perception +5, Stealth +6

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

**Damage Immunities** cold, necrotic, poison

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

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

**Languages** the languages it knew in life

**Challenge** 5 (1,800 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +3

**Incorporeal Movement.** The allip 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.

### ACTIONS

**Maddening Touch.** *Melee Spell Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (4d6 + 3) necrotic damage.

**Whispers of Madness.** The allip chooses up to three creatures it can see within 60 feet of it. Each target must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw, or it takes 7 (1d8 + 3) psychic damage and must use its reaction to make a melee weapon attack against one creature of the allip's choice that the allip can see. Constructs and undead are immune to this effect.

**Howling Babble (Recharge 6).** Each creature within 30 feet of the allip that can hear it must make a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, a target takes 12 (2d8 + 3) psychic damage, and it is stunned until the end of its next turn. On a successful save, it takes half as much damage and isn't stunned. Constructs and undead are immune to this effect.

## APPRENTICE WIZARD

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 10

Hit Points 9 (2d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)

**Skills** Arcana +4, History +4

**Senses** passive Perception 10

**Languages** any one language (usually Common)

**Challenge** 1/4 (50 XP)

**Spellcasting.** The apprentice is a 1st-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). It has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *fire bolt*, *mending*, *prestidigitation*  
1st level (2 slots): *burning hands*, *disguise self*, *shield*

### ACTIONS

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



## 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; nonmagical bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing (from *stoneskin*)

**Senses** passive Perception 12

**Languages** any six languages

**Challenge** 12 (8,400 XP)

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

**Spellcasting.** The archmage is an 18th-level spellcaster. Its 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 (3 slots): *cone of cold*, *scrying*, *wall of force*

6th level (3 slots): *globe of invulnerability*

7th level (3 slots): *teleport*

8th level (3 slots): *mind blank*\*

9th level (3 slots): *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.

## BABAU

Medium fiend (demon), typically 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 Resistance** 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.



## BLACK DRAGON WYRMING

Medium dragon, typically chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 17 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 33 (6d8 + 6)

**Speed** 30 ft., fly 60 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)

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

**Skills** Perception +4, Stealth +4

**Damage Immunities** acid

**Senses** blindsight 10 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

**Languages** Draconic

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

**Amphibious.** The dragon can breathe air and water.

### ACTIONS

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d10 + 2) piercing damage plus 2 (1d4) acid damage.

**Acid Breath (Recharge 5–6).** The dragon exhales acid in a 15-foot line that is 5 feet wide. Each creature in that line must make a DC 11 Dexterity saving throw, taking 22 (5d8) acid damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

## DEATH KNIGHT

Medium undead, typically chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 20 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 180 (19d8 + 95)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	11 (+0)	20 (+5)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)

**Saving Throws** Dex +6, Wis +9, Cha +10

**Damage Resistances** necrotic, poison

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 13

**Languages** Abyssal, Common

**Challenge** 17 (18,000 XP)

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

**Marshal Undead.** Unless the death knight is incapacitated, it and undead creatures of its choice within 60 feet of it have advantage on saving throws against features that turn undead.

**Spellcasting.** The death knight is a 19th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 18, +10 to hit with spell attacks). It has the following paladin spells prepared:

1st level (4 slots): *command*, *compelled duel*, *searing smite*

2nd level (3 slots): *hold person*, *magic weapon*

3rd level (3 slots): *dispel magic*, *elemental weapon*

4th level (3 slots): *banishment*, *staggering smite*

5th level (2 slots): *destructive wave* (necrotic)

### ACTIONS

**Multiaction.** The death knight makes three longsword attacks.

**Longsword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 + 5) slashing damage, or 10 (1d10 + 5) slashing damage if used with two hands, plus 18 (4d8) necrotic damage.

**Hellfire Orb (1/Day).** The death knight hurls a magical ball of fire that explodes at a point it can see within 120 feet of it. Each creature in a 20-foot-radius sphere centered on that point must make a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw. The sphere spreads around corners. A creature takes 35 (10d6) fire damage and 35 (10d6) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

### REACTIONS

**Parry.** The death knight adds 6 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, the death knight must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

## DULCINEA (GITHYANKI KITH'RAK)

Medium humanoid (gith), typically lawful evil

**Armor Class** 18 (plate)

**Hit Points** 180 (24d8 + 72)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	16 (+3)	17 (+3)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	17 (+3)

**Saving Throws** Con +7, Int +7, Wis +6

**Skills** Intimidation +7, Perception +6

**Senses** passive Perception 16

**Languages** Gith

**Challenge** 12 (8,400 XP)

**Proficiency Bonus** +4

**Innate Spellcasting (Psionics).** The githyanki's innate spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no components:

At will: *mage hand* (the hand is invisible)

3/day each: *blur*, *jump*, *misty step*, *nondetection* (self only)

1/day each: *plane shift*, *telekinesis*

**Rally the Troops.** As a bonus action, the githyanki can magically end the charmed and frightened conditions on itself and each creature of its choice that it can see within 30 feet of it.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The githyanki makes three greatsword attacks.

**Greatsword.** Melee Weapon Attack: +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage plus 17 (5d6) psychic damage.

### REACTIONS

**Parry.** The githyanki adds 4 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, the githyanki must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

### STATISTICS FOR DULCINEA D'ULBRION

The paladin Dulcinea uses the **githyanki kith'rak** statblock, but she's a lawful good topaz dragonborn with appropriate racial traits (including resistance to necrotic damage). She speaks Common and Draconic and replaces *jump* on her spell list with *cure wounds*. When she would deal psychic damage, it's radiant damage instead.

# DULLAHAN

Medium undead

**Armor Class** 16 (breastplate)

**Hit Points** 135 (18d8 + 54)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)

**Saving Throws** Con +7

**Skills** Perception +6

**Damage Resistances** cold, lightning, poison

**Condition Immunities** charmed, frightened, poisoned

**Senses** Truesight 120 ft., Passive Perception 16

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

**Challenge** 10 (5,900 XP)

## Headless Summoning (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest).

If the dullahan is reduced to 0 hit points, it doesn't die or fall unconscious. Instead, it regains 97 hit points. In addition, it summons three death's heads, one of each type, in unoccupied spaces within 5 feet of it. The death's heads are under the dullahan's control and act immediately after the dullahan in the initiative order. Additionally, the dullahan can now use the options in the "Mythic Actions" section. Award a party an additional 5,900 XP (11,800 XP total) for defeating the dullahan after it uses Headless Summoning.

**Legendary Resistance (2/Day).** If the dullahan fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

**Unusual Nature.** The dullahan doesn't require air, food, drink, or sleep.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The dullahan makes two attacks. **Battleaxe.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) slashing damage, or 9 (1d10 + 4) slashing damage if used with two hands, plus 11 (2d10) necrotic damage. If the dullahan scores a critical hit against a creature, the target must succeed

on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or the dullahan cuts off the target's head. The target dies if it can't survive without the lost head. A creature that doesn't have or need a head, or has legendary actions, instead takes an extra 27 (6d8) slashing damage.

**Fiery Skull.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d10 + 3) fire damage.

## LEGENDARY ACTIONS

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

**Attack.** The dullahan makes one attack.

**Frightful Presence (Costs 2 Actions).** Each creature of the dullahan's choice within 30 feet of it must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened of the dullahan until the end of its next turn.

**Head Hunt (Costs 3 Actions).** The dullahan moves up to its speed without provoking opportunity attacks and makes one Battleaxe attack with advantage. If the attack hits, but is not a critical hit, the attack deals an extra 27 (6d8) necrotic damage.

## MYTHIC ACTIONS

If the dullahan's Headless Summoning trait is active, it can use the options below as legendary actions.

**Coordinated Assault.** The dullahan makes a Battleaxe attack, and then one death's head the dullahan can see within 30 feet of it can use its reaction to make a melee attack.

**Headless Wail (Costs 2 Actions).** An echoing shriek issues from the dullahan's headless stump. Each creature of the dullahan's choice within 10 feet of it must make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw. Each creature takes 16 (3d10) psychic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. If one or more creatures fail the saving throw, the dullahan gains 10 temporary hit points.



## IMP

*Tiny fiend (devil, shapechanger), typically lawful evil*

**Armor Class** 13

**Hit Points** 10 (3d4 + 3)

**Speed** 20 ft., fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	17 (+3)	13 (+1)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)

**Skills** Deception +4, Insight +3, Persuasion +4, Stealth +5

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

**Damage Immunities** fire, poison

**Condition Immunities** poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 11

**Languages** Infernal, Common

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP)

**Shapechanger.** The imp can use its action to polymorph into a beast form that resembles a rat (speed 20 ft.), a raven (20 ft., fly 60 ft.), or a spider (20 ft., climb 20 ft.), or back into its true form. Its statistics are the same in each form, except for the speed changes noted. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

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

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

### ACTIONS

**Sting (Bite in Beast Form).** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage, and the target must make on a DC 11 Constitution saving throw, taking 10 (3d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

**Invisibility.** The imp magically turns invisible until it attacks or until its concentration ends (as if concentrating on a spell). Any equipment the imp wears or carries is invisible with it.

## GOLEM, FLESH (FLESH GOLEM)

*Medium construct, typically neutral*

**Armor Class** 9

**Hit Points** 93 (11d8 + 44)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	9 (-1)	18 (+4)	6 (-2)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

**Damage Immunities** lightning, poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons that aren't adamantite

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

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

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

**Challenge** 5 (1,800 XP)

**Berserk.** Whenever the golem starts its turn with 40 hit points or fewer, roll a d6. On a 6, the golem goes berserk. On each of its turns while berserk, the golem attacks the nearest creature it can see. If no creature is near enough to move to and attack, the golem attacks an object with preference for an object smaller than itself. Once the golem goes berserk, it continues to do so until it is destroyed or regains all its hit points.

The golem's creator, if within 60 feet of the berserk golem, can try to calm it by speaking firmly and persuasively. The golem must be able to hear its creator, who must take an action to make a DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check. If the check succeeds, the golem ceases being berserk. If it takes damage while still at 40 hit points or fewer, the golem might go berserk again.

**Aversion of Fire.** If the golem takes fire damage, it has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks until the end of its next turn.

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

**Lightning Absorption.** Whenever the golem is subjected to lightning damage, it takes no damage and instead regains a number of hit points equal to the lightning damage dealt.

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

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

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The golem makes two slam attacks.

**Slam.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage.



## GYNOSPHERIX

*Large monstrosity, typically lawful neutral*

**Armor Class** 17 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 136 (16d10 + 48)

**Speed** 40 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)	18 (+4)	18 (+4)

**Skills** Arcana +14, History +14, Perception +9, Religion +9

**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

**Damage Immunities** psychic

**Condition Immunities** charmed, frightened

**Senses** truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 19

**Languages** Common, Sphinx

**Challenge** 11 (7,200 XP)

**Inscrutable.** The sphinx is immune to any effect that would sense its emotions or read its thoughts, as well as any divination spell that it refuses. Wisdom (Insight) checks made to ascertain the sphinx's intentions or sincerity have disadvantage.

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

**Spellcasting.** The sphinx is a 9th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit

with spell attacks). It requires no material components to cast its spells. The sphinx has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrip (at will): *mage hand*, *minor illusion*, *prestidigitation*

1st level (4 slots): *detect magic*, *identify*, *shield*

2nd level (3 slots): *darkness*, *locate object*, *suggestion*

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

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

5th level (1 slot): *legend lore*

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The sphinx makes two claw attacks.

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) damage.

### LEGENDARY ACTIONS

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

**Claw Attack.** The sphinx makes one claw attack.

**Teleport (Costs 2 Actions).** The sphinx magically teleports, along with any equipment it is wearing or carrying, up to 12 feet to an unoccupied space it can see.

**Cast a Spell (Costs 3 Actions).** The sphinx casts a spell from its list of prepared spells, using a spell slot as normal.

## LOUP GAROU

Medium monstrosity (shapechanger)

**Armor Class** 16 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 170 (20d8 + 80)

**Speed** 30 ft., 40 ft. in hybrid form, 50 ft. in dire wolf form

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

**Saving Throws** Dex +9, Con +9, Cha +9

**Skills** Perception +13, Stealth +9

**Condition Immunities** charmed, frightened

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 23

**Languages** Common (can't speak in wolf form)

**Challenge** 13 (10,000 XP)

**Proficiency Bonus** +5

**Blood Frenzy.** The loup garou has advantage on attack rolls against a creature that doesn't have all its hit points.

**Legendary Resistance (2/Day).** When the loup garou fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

**Regeneration.** The loup garou regains 10 hit points at the start of each of its turns. If the loup garou takes damage from a silver weapon, this trait doesn't function at the start of the loup garou's next turn. The loup garou dies only if it starts its turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The loup garou makes two attacks: two with its Longsword (humanoid form) or one with its Bite and one with its Claws (dire wolf or hybrid form).

**Bite (Dire Wolf or Hybrid Form Only).** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) piercing damage plus 14 (4d6) necrotic damage. If the target is a Humanoid, it must succeed on a DC 17 Constitution saving throw or be cursed with loup garou lycanthropy.

**Claws (Dire Wolf or Hybrid Form Only).** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 17 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

**Longsword (Humanoid Form Only).** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) piercing damage plus 14 (4d6) necrotic damage. If the target is a Humanoid, it must succeed on a DC 17 Constitution saving throw or be cursed with loup garou lycanthropy.

### BONUS ACTIONS

**Change Shape.** The loup garou polymorphs into a Large wolf-humanoid hybrid or into a Large dire wolf, or back into its true form, which appears humanoid. Its statistics, other than its size and speed, are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

### LEGENDARY ACTIONS

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

**Swipe.** The loup garou makes one Claws attack (dire wolf or hybrid form only) or one Longsword attack (humanoid form only).

**Mauling Pounce (Costs 2 Actions).** The loup garou moves up to its speed without provoking opportunity attacks, and it can make one Claws attack (dire wolf or hybrid form only) or one Longsword attack (humanoid form only) against each creature it moves past.

**Bite (Costs 3 Actions).** The loup garou changes into hybrid or dire wolf form and then makes one Bite attack.

### NATALIA VHORISHKOVA

If a creature fails its saving throw against becoming cursed with the **loup garou** Natalia's lycanthropy, she can control it. She can use 2 legendary actions to cast *dominate humanoid* (save DC 17) on a creature currently cursed with her lycanthropy, changing the spell's duration to 24 hours. A creature that succeeds on its save against the spell is immune to this effect for 24 hours. (For a Strong party, this only costs her 1 legendary action.)



## NALFESHNEE

Large fiend (demon), typically 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 spell 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 10 ft., one target.  
*Hit:* 15 (3d6 + 5) slashing damage.

**Horror Nimbus (Recharge 5–6).** The nalfeshnee magically emits scintillating, colored 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.

## NOBLE

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

**Armor Class** 15 (breastplate)

**Hit Points** 9 (2d8)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

**Skills** Deception +5, Insight +4, Persuasion +5

**Senses** passive Perception 10

**Languages** any two languages

**Challenge** 1/8 (25 XP)

### ACTIONS

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

### REACTIONS

**Parry.** The noble adds 2 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, the noble must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

## PIRATE CAPTAIN

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

**Armor Class** 14 (studded leather)

**Hit Points** 45 (7d8 + 14)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)

**Skills** Athletics +5, Intimidation +2

**Senses** passive Perception 10

**Languages** any one language (usually Common)

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

**Flourish.** The captain adds its Charisma modifier to the damage roll for its longsword attacks (included in the attack).

**Sea Legs.** The captain has advantage on on ability checks and saving throws to resist being knocked prone.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The captain makes two attacks: one with its hand crossbow and one with its longsword.

**Hand Crossbow.** Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

**Longsword.** Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 + 5) slashing damage, or 10 (1d10 + 5) slashing damage if used with two hands.

### REACTIONS

**Shape Up, Ye Dog (2/day).** Whenever a friendly creature within 30 feet of the captain that can hear it misses with an attack, the captain can yell perilous threats to allow that creature to reroll the attack roll.

## VETERAN

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

**Armor Class** 17 (splint)

**Hit Points** 58 (9d8 + 18)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

**Skills** Athletics +5, Perception +2

**Senses** passive Perception 12

**Languages** any one language (usually Common)

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The veteran makes two longsword attacks. If it has a shortsword drawn, it can also make a shortsword attack.

**Longsword.** Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage, or 8 (1d10 + 3) slashing damage if used with two hands.

**Shortsword.** Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

**Heavy Crossbow.** Ranged Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d10) piercing damage.

## WIGHT

Medium undead, typically neutral evil

**Armor Class** 14 (studded leather)

**Hit Points** 45 (6d8 + 18)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)

**Skills** Perception +3, Stealth +4

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

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** exhaustion, poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

**Languages** the languages it knew in life

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

**Sunlight Sensitivity.** While in sunlight, the wight has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The wight makes two longsword attacks or two longbow attacks. It can use its Life Drain in place of one longsword attack.

**Life Drain.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) necrotic damage. The target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

A humanoid slain by this attack rises 24 hours later as a zombie under the wight's control, unless the humanoid is restored to life or its body is destroyed. The wight can have no more than twelve zombies under its control at one time.

**Longsword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) slashing damage, or 7 (1d10 + 2) slashing damage if used with two hands.

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



## YOUNG RED DRAGON

Huge dragon, chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 18 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 178 (17d10 + 85)

**Speed** 40 ft., climb 40 ft., fly 80 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	10 (+0)	21 (+5)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	19 (+4)

**Saving Throws** Dex +4, Con +9, Wis +4, Cha +8

**Skills** Perception +13, Stealth +4

**Damage Immunities** fire

**Senses** blindsight 30 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 18

**Languages** Common, Draconic

**Challenge** 10 (5,900 XP)

**Proficiency Bonus** +4

### ACTIONS

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

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (2d10 + 6) piercing damage plus 3 (1d6) fire damage.

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d6 + 6) slashing damage.

**Fire Breath (Recharge 5–6).** The dragon exhales fire in a 30-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw, taking 56 (16d6) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

## YOUNG RED SHADOW DRAGON

Large dragon, chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 18 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 178 (17d10 + 85)

**Speed** 40 ft., climb 40 ft., fly 80 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	10 (+0)	21 (+5)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	19 (+4)

**Saving Throws** Dex +5, Con +10, Wis +5, Cha +9

**Skills** Perception +8, Stealth +8

**Damage Resistances** necrotic

**Damage Immunities** fire

**Senses** blindsight 30 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 18

**Languages** Common, Draconic

**Challenge** 13 (10,000 XP)

**Proficiency Bonus** +5

**Living Shadow.** While in dim light or darkness, the dragon has resistance to damage that isn't force, psychic, or radiant.

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

**Sunlight Sensitivity.** While in sunlight, the dragon has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

### ACTIONS

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

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (2d10 + 6) piercing damage plus 3 (1d6) necrotic damage.

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d6 + 6) slashing damage.

**Shadow Breath (Recharge 5–6).** The dragon exhales necrotic energy in a 30-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw, taking 56 (16d6) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. A humanoid reduced to 0 hit points by this damage dies, and an undead shadow rises from its corpse and acts immediately after the dragon in the initiative count. The shadow is under the dragon's control.

### LEGENDARY ACTIONS

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

- **Detect.** The dragon makes a Wisdom (Perception) check.
- **Tail Attack.** The dragon makes a tail attack.
- **Wing Attack (Costs 2 Actions).** The dragon beats its wings. Each creature within 10 feet of the dragon must succeed on a DC 22 Dexterity saving throw or take 15 (2d6 + 8) bludgeoning damage and be knocked prone. The dragon can then fly up to half its flying speed.



## ZOMBIE

Medium undead, typically neutral evil

**Armor Class** 8

**Hit Points** 22 (3d8 + 9)

**Speed** 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	6 (-2)	16 (+3)	3 (-4)	6 (-2)	5 (-3)

**Saving Throws** Wis +0

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8

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

**Challenge** 1/4 (50 XP)

**Undead Fortitude.** If damage reduces the zombie to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the zombie drops to 1 hit point instead.

### ACTIONS

**Slam.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) bludgeoning damage.

# HANDOUT 1: OUR GREATEST FEAR

Table Number/Team Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Select the Top 3 Fears That Your Characters Share

<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>

- 1** Fear of Supernatural Forces or Magic
- 2** Fear of Being Wrong
- 3** Fear of Death
- 4** Fear of Disappointing Loved Ones
- 5** Fear of Failing Those Who Depend on You
- 6** Fear of Harming the Innocent

*DM: Choose from the Missions that correspond to the fears checked on the handout you receive from HQ*

Table Number/Team Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Select the Top 3 Fears That Your Characters Share

<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>

- 1** Fear of Supernatural Forces or Magic
- 2** Fear of Being Wrong
- 3** Fear of Death
- 4** Fear of Disappointing Loved Ones
- 5** Fear of Failing Those Who Depend on You
- 6** Fear of Harming the Innocent

*DM: Choose from the Missions that correspond to the fears checked on the handout you receive from HQ*

# HANDOUT 2: AZALIN'S NOTES

This arcane research journal has been badly damaged, but certain passages are still intact and legible:

Let my name, Firan Darcalus Zal'honan, called Azalin Rex of Darkon, warn those who would read my private research journ...

...curse stops me from acquiring new magical knowledge! By the Dark Powers' cruel joke, I can extrapolate from existing knowledge, but only when I perform my work in the original tomb of my son Irik, my greatest disappoint...

...obstacles to the clone project. My technique exceeds the crude limits of the common clone spell, and I can change my clones' appearance, gender, and more. Yet only a few survive. Subject D is useful, but mentally erratic. Subject S shows special insight, but I have other plans for her. Could another subject be groomed to replace me as Darklord? From afar, I've manipulated many into becoming adventurers, who don't...

...from the being known as "the Caller." A scroll of a spell to see future events. Yet results were bitter as wormwood. Unless I change my future, I shall waste decades enacting failed cataclysmic schemes to escape the Domains...

...that none of this is real! Most of Darkon's "people" don't even have souls! The Domains must be lies, created by the Dark Powers to...

...Incants of Exethanter my Kargat agent copied. The truth about Osybus offers new...

...my alchemy on the Amber Temple samples. I combine them with anthodite crystals mined beneath Mount Nyid, imbued with the strange time magic there, creating a version of the substance composing the Amber Prisons. The substance's tie to the Dark Powe...

...accelerate plan to replace myself as Darklord with one of my clones...

...must let go of two distracting passions to prevent the failed future I saw. One: the sense of kingly obligation drilled into me from boyhood. The other: my vengeance against the insipid, obsessed bloodsucker Strahd...

...hypothesis. But if my clone or another morally unfettered being holds the amber substance while committing acts the Dark Powers deem uniquely evil and depraved, they should at once become a Darklord, the lands around them forming a new Domain...

...clone project now only a backup to this new, greater plan to rewrite my fate. My body will remain in Darkon. Yet my soul will be free to travel other Domains, first in a construct based on my youth, then possessing other necessary pawns like the scholar R...

...massive construct of the amber substance will gleam like a new star in the sky. My soul may be divided, as when I first entered Darkon, but I will exert control over the core of my...

...initial Hour of Ascension will commence my domain's slow destruction. Effects will echo across the Mists and through all Domains, changing history and destiny alike. Once I make my final escape via the Apparatus, I know the Dark Powers will not permit Darkon and its denizens to survive. Yet it does not matter! It does not! None of this is real. I...

...adventurers, not knowing they were born my clones, will be drawn to stop me. Yet these "heroes" cannot succeed without...

# HANDOUT 3: IN SEARCH OF LOST TIME

It takes little prompting for Radaga and Laurie to recount the recent events you seem to have forgotten.

- Your assault on the King's Tear happened days ago.
- None of the gathered heroes could stop Azalin from using the Aparatus. The lich gained godlike power and escaped the Domains of Dread entirely. The King's Tear collapsed.
- The Shroud, the hungry Mists consuming Darkon, immediately expanded, annihilating the domain. Most of those opposing Azalin were lost—including Alanik and Kabe, the Weathermay-Foxgrove twins' uncle, and the entire population of Darkon.
- Due to strange local magical anomalies, the area of Vradlock and the mountains nearby haven't yet been consumed. As such, you have been brought here by the shadow dragon Ebbasheyth.
- Using mountain tunnels, you traveled to the Watchers' Stronghold, a nearby library and vault used as a base of operations by the Order of Guardians. You evacuated the remaining members of the Order just before their home was consumed, and claimed a powerful artifact known as the Key to the Abyss... You are just returning now.
- Using a magical research journal belonging to Azalin, you recovered in the King's Tear. Laurie and Radaga have been helping you develop a plan to escape.



# HANDOUT 4: WHAT YOU'VE BECOME

Your soul's trapped in a hulking, stitch-covered, rag-clad flesh golem body, as if you were possessing it with the *magic jar* spell. You don't have your equipment, and you cannot return to your own body unless an admin or the DM tells you to do so. If you successfully complete a mission, or you find Azalin and stop him, return to HQ and let them know.

## FLESH GOLEM FORM

Medium construct

Armor Class 9

Hit Points 93 (11d8 + 44)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	9 (-1)	18 (+4)	*	*	*

**Skills** You retain your own skill proficiencies

**Condition Immunities** lightning, poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical attacks that aren't adamantite

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception \*

**Languages** \*

**Challenge** 13 (10,000 XP)

**Proficiency Bonus** \*

\* = You retain your own scores for these abilities

**Berserk.** Whenever you starts its turn with 40 hit points or fewer, roll a d6. On a 6, you goes berserk. On each of its turns while berserk, you attack the nearest creature you can see. If no creature is near enough to move to and attack, you attack an object, with preference for an object smaller than you. Once you go berserk, you continues to do so until you die, become unconscious, or you regains all your hit points.

If an ally you can hear within 60 feet uses an action to calm you. You can make a DC 15 Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma saving throw. If the save succeeds, you ceases being berserk. If you take damage while still at 40 hit points or fewer, you might go berserk again.

**Aversion to Fire.** If you take fire damage, you have disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks until the end of your next turn.

**Lightning Absorption.** Whenever you are subjected to lightning damage, you take no damage and instead regain a number of hit points equal to the lightning damage dealt.

**Magic Resistance.** You have advantage on saving throws against spells and other magic effects.

**Magical Weapons.** Your weapon attacks are magical.

### ACTIONS

**Slam.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.  
*Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) piercing damage.





# HANDOUT 5: STRESS SCORE

## STRESS SCORE

You have a Stress score, which starts at 0 but increases in trying situations.

When you make an attack roll, ability check, or saving throw, you take a penalty on the roll equal to your current Stress score.

The main way to reduce your Stress score requires completing a long rest, which isn't possible during this adventure. But your score is reduced by 1 by means of lesser restoration or reduced to 0 by means of greater restoration.

Also, the penalties imposed by Stress can be suppressed by means of calm emotions, just as it suppresses the charmed and frightened conditions.

Further details on tracking Stress scores can be found in *Van Richten's Guide to Ravenloft*.



# HANDOUT 6: ESCAPING THE KING'S TEAR

## AS THE KING'S TEAR BEGINS TO CRUMBLE, A HECTIC DASH TO SAFETY BEGINS

---

Each character must move 250 feet in order to escape certain annihilation!

Action	Details
Dash	You can use the Dash action a number of times equal to 3 + your Constitution modifier. Each additional Dash action taken requires you to succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw at the end of your turn. If you fail this save, you gain a level of exhaustion.
Spells	You can cast spells against other creatures within range, using the normal rules for cover, etc.
Attacks	You can attack other creatures within range, using the normal rules for cover, etc.

# HANDOUT 7: INVESTIGATION JOURNAL

It is done. And it is in large part due to your bravery and intuition.

The plans of the Lich-King Azalin have been thwarted and the entirety of Darkon's tormented denizens have been saved. I will never ask you to revisit the horrors you experienced within the King's Tear; revisiting such memories shall serve no good save for continuing to allow Azalin the ability to traumatize you.

Instead, I cordially invite you to call upon me should you have any need to do so in the future. I and countless others owe you a debt of gratitude that can never be repaid.

In the meantime, Arthur and I humbly request your presence in two weeks' time for a dinner among friends. Kabe and Radaga have already promised their attendance, and the Weathermay-Foxgrove twins have assured that they shall do everything in their power to attend. Arthur has already started the arduous task of choosing which bottles of port we shall enjoy.

Yours in eternal gratitude,  
Alanik Ray

# APPENDIX A: STORY AWARD TRACKER

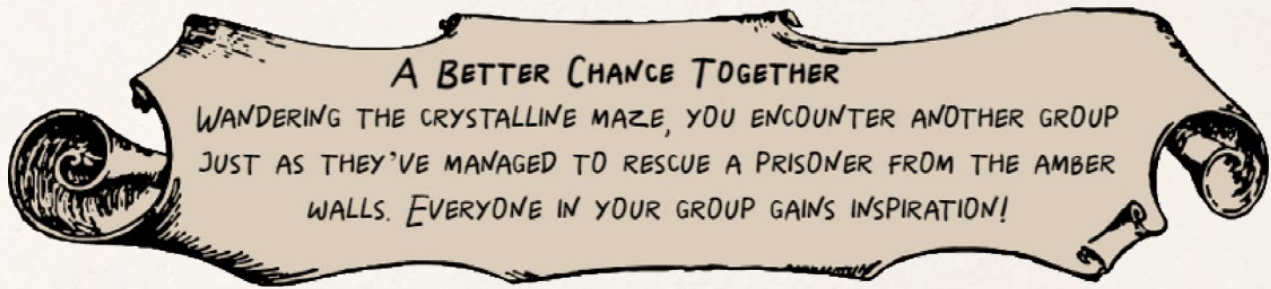
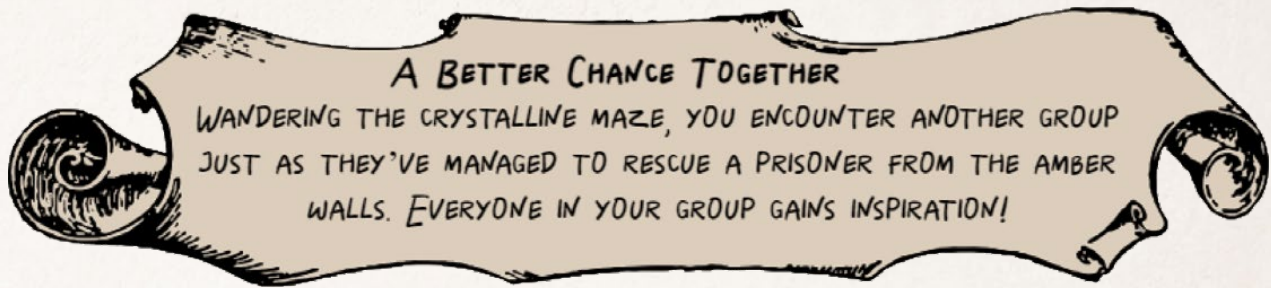
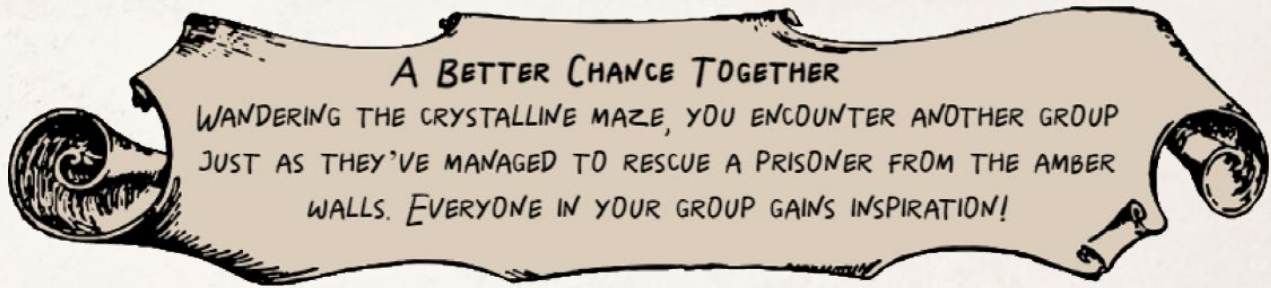
Table Number/Team Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Previous Story Awards	
Character Names	Names of Story Awards
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	<input type="checkbox"/> TOUCHED BY SHADOW <input type="checkbox"/> HUNTER'S FERVOR
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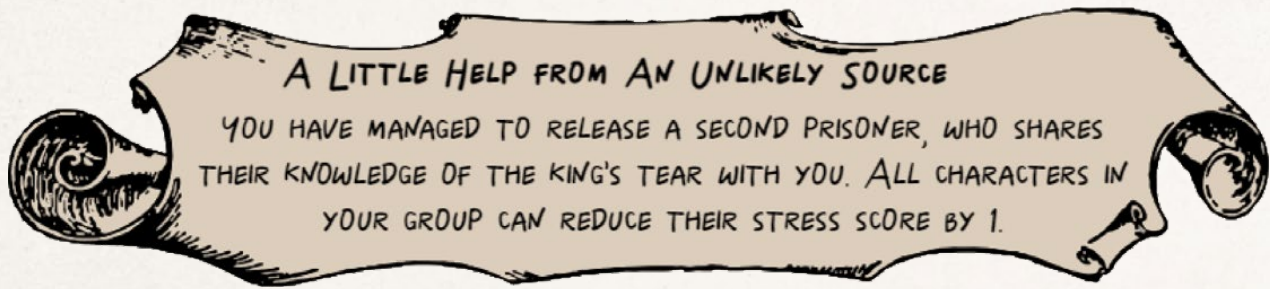
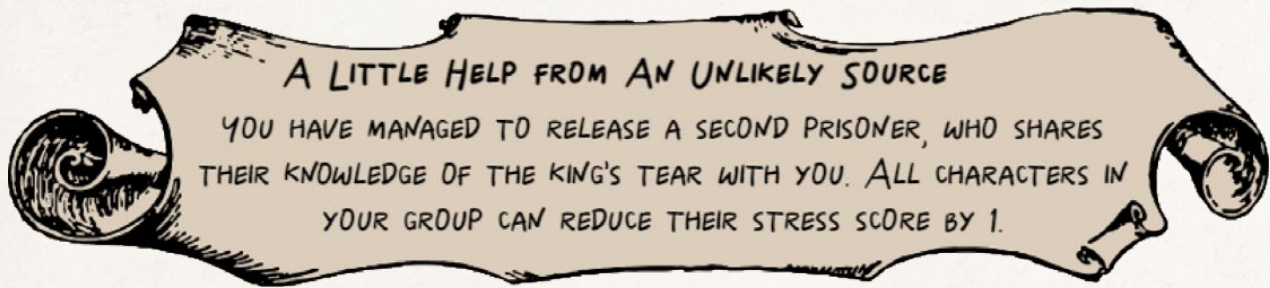
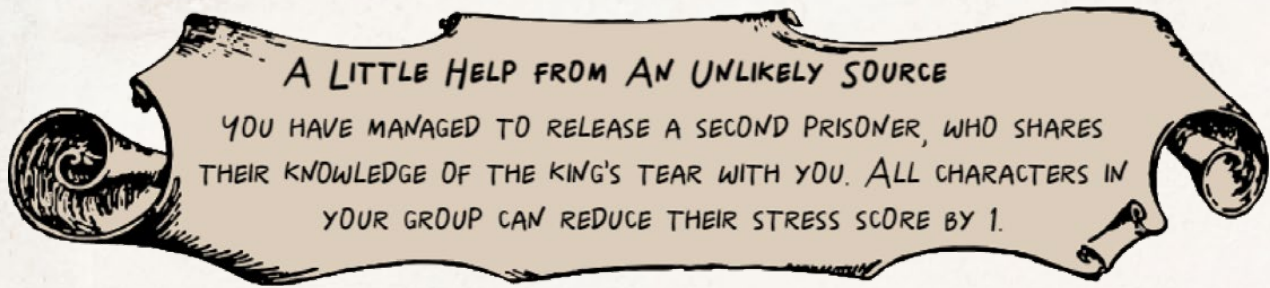
Table Number/Team Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Previous Story Awards	
Character Names	Names of Story Awards
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	<input type="checkbox"/> TOUCHED BY SHADOW <input type="checkbox"/> HUNTER'S FERVOR
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	<input type="checkbox"/> TOUCHED BY SHADOW <input type="checkbox"/> HUNTER'S FERVOR
	<input type="checkbox"/> TOUCHED BY SHADOW <input type="checkbox"/> HUNTER'S FERVOR

## APPENDIX B: A BOON FOR YOU!



## APPENDIX C: AND BOONS FOR US!



# APPENDIX D: TRACKING THE ESCAPE

STEP 1: DETERMINE PLAYER INITIATIVE

STEP 2: ON EACH CHARACTER'S TURN, TRACK MOVEMENT USING THE TRACKER BELOW

STEP 3: AT THE END OF EACH CHARACTER'S TURN, THEY ROLL ON ESCAPE COMPLICATIONS TABLE BELOW (COMPLICATIONS AFFECT NEXT PARTICIPANT IN INITIATIVE ORDER)

STEP 4: DETERMINE OUTCOME OF ROUND – MUST TRAVEL 250 FEET TO REACH SAFETY!

STEP 5: REPEAT STEPS 2-4 UNTIL ALL PLAYERS ESCAPE OR TIME RUNS OUT!

Character Name	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Round 4	Round 5	Round 6	Round 7	Total Distance	Escaped?
									Y/N
									Y/N
									Y/N
									Y/N
									Y/N

## d10 Description

- 1 Jagged chunks of amber and other debris bar your path, and you must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw to navigate through it. On a failure, you take 2d6 piercing damage and the ground counts as 10 feet of difficult terrain.
- 2 A collapsing section of amber releases an imprisoned vampire right in front of you, and she tries to charm you with her gaze. Make a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, you become charmed. If the vampire charms you, you spend 10 feet of movement this turn to let it bite you to recover its strength, then you take 7 piercing damage and 10 necrotic damage, and reduce your hit point maximum by 10 from the blood drain. Then the vampire turns to gaseous form and vanishes.
- 3 A massive chunk of amber suddenly juts out of the ground in front of you like a wall. Make a DC 19 Dexterity saving throw to leap before it can fully rise. On a failure, this barrier counts as 10 feet of difficult terrain.
- 4 A *glyph of warding* triggers near you while you're running. Make a DC 18 Charisma saving throw against the *divine word* spell.
- 5 The claw of a **loup garou** in its hybrid form trying to force its way out of its cracked amber prison suddenly crashes out of the nearby wall. It makes one Claws attack against you as you pass by (with advantage if you don't have all your hit points).
- 6 A section of floor collapses as you step on it. Make a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, you fall partway into the hole in the floor and become stuck. While stuck, you are prone and restrained. You can use an action on your turn to make a DC 14 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check, ending the effect on a success.
- 7 A wide crack opens on the ground before you. If you have a fly speed, you can fly over the gap, and you can jump it with a DC 14 Strength (Athletics) check (succeeding automatically if your Strength score is 14 or higher). If you jump, you spend 10 feet of movement, and you must then succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check or fall prone after landing.
- 8 Everything around you shakes violently. You must succeed on a DC 16 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check or fall prone.
- 9 A death knight in red armor rides out of the Mists on a nightmare and swings its scythe-like sword at you as it rides by. The attack it makes against you works as the Battleaxe attack of a **dullahan**. (This is the Gaunt Cavalier from Mission 5).
- 10-20 No complication

# APPENDIX E: MY DINNER WITH AZALIN

Characters restrained by the “Trapped in Amber” effect are sent to HQ, where an admin runs them through this brief encounter.

The character awakens in an inn called the Thundering Hearth, having regained hit points equal to their level. In this special Mirror Dimension, Azalin Firan attempts to dissuade them from opposing him with a mixture of lies, truth, and his own strange beliefs. Those familiar with Darkon recognize the city of Tempe Falls.

You find yourself seated at a table in a comfortable inn's common room. A curved wall of tall windows looks out over a spectacular waterfall whose roar can be heard even indoors. Across from you sits the dark-haired mage you saw in the maze, drinking pale white wine. “I am Firan Zal'honan, known to the people of Darkon as Azalin Rex. You live now only because I am curious. Why have you come here to attack me?”

The character's favorite food and drink are on the table in front of them. Eating causes them to regain hit points equal to twice their level. Drinking reduces their Stress Score by 1. The **archmage** Azalin (here, an insubstantial illusion) patiently awaits the character's answer.

Rather than replying, he merely nods, then explains that the food and drink, along with the whole inn, the waterfall outside, and the city above are all false and illusory. Then he claims the Domains of Dread themselves aren't real either, describing them as prisons conjured by the Dark Powers to contain those with the will to reject moral boundaries. He points out that most residents of Ravenloft don't even have real souls. On that basis, he asks why the character would oppose him to save this false realm.

Whatever the character's response, Azalin offers two options, then vanishes:

- If the character walks out of this inn, finds the local fountain called Dizard's Sorrow, and drinks from it, Azalin will take this as a pledge that the character will no longer oppose him, and he says he will send the character back to their allies, restored to full health.
- If the character passes the fountain without drinking, that will tell Azalin the character still chooses to oppose him. He says he will allow the character to continue—but like Azalin they will not have their bodies. Instead, their consciousness will be poured into an otherwise inanimate construct, a flesh golem.

A character leaving the inn sees three main features: the roaring river that cuts through town, ending in the towering falls; a wooden temple that walls in a garden beneath a wicker dome, marked with the symbol of a ring of snakes; and a fountain.

If a character follows Azalin's instructions and drinks from the fountain, the player regains their full hit points. Tell the character they awaken with their allies and send them back to their table.

If a character passes the fountain without drinking, they have a brief, dream-like flash of lying on a slab beneath a dome of glass, in a vast machine crackling with lightning, and seeing their own body on a separate slab, also encased in glass. Before it all goes black, they see that they are now in a different body: that of a flesh golem! Give the player **Handout 4: What You've Become**, which lists their new statistics as a flesh golem. Tell the character they awaken with their allies and send them back to their table.

The temple offers a third option Azalin didn't mention. The healers there are Celestial pact orc warlocks. In recent years, many strange phenomena afflicting those who work in the nearby mines have gotten worse and the healers here have developed the only techniques that help. They offer a minor healing salve that lets the character recover 4 (1d8) hit points but inform the character that true healing comes from within. The character can spend Hit Dice, as if at the end of a short rest (though they gain no other benefits of a short rest). Tell the character they awaken with their allies and send them back to their table.

## DEVELOPMENT

If a character in a flesh golem body returns to HQ and says they've successfully completed a mission or stopped Azalin in Part 2, tell them they return to their normal body, regain hit points equal to half their maximum, and can rejoin their table. (They also regain their body if they reach Part 3.)





# APPENDIX F: DUNGEON MASTER TIPS

To run this adventure you must have three, four, or five players, each with their own character within the adventure's level range (see the "Adventure Primer" section at the start of the adventure).

## NEW TO D&D ADVENTURERS LEAGUE?

Information about the Adventurers League, including finding places to play, organizing events, and a list of supporting resources and documents, can be found here: [https://dnd.wizards.com/ddal\\_general](https://dnd.wizards.com/ddal_general)

## 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 it, such as a way you'd like to portray an NPC or a tactic you'd like to use during combat. Familiarize yourself with the adventure's appendixes and handouts.
- Gather any resources you'd like to use to aid you in running the adventure, such as notecards, a DM screen, miniatures, and battle maps.
- Ask the players to provide you with relevant character information, such as name, race, class, and level; passive Wisdom (Perception) score; and anything the adventure specifies as notable (such as backgrounds and story awards).

Players can play an adventure they previously played as a player or ran as a DM, but they can do so only once with a specific character. Ensure each player has their character sheet (if not, get one from the organizer)

## PREPARING THE CHARACTERS

The adventure is designed to be played with characters of a specific level; characters of a different level should be modified accordingly. If necessary, the characters should be afforded the time needed to adjust their characters to suit.

If you have time, you can do a quick scan of a player's character sheet to ensure 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 can't, feel free to restrict item use or ask them to use a standard ability score array.

Characters that died during a previous adventure return to life, free of any conditions, curses, or other effects that would remove them from play—such as vampirism or lycanthropy. They keep any story awards they have, as any spells they might have copied during their adventures.

During the Call to Action, the characters are likely to review their available magic items among themselves and determine who is carrying what. Make sure they have a few moments to outfit one another.

## NEW PLAYERS? NO PROBLEM!

With starter adventures like this one, it's possible you might have players new to D&D, or new to fifth edition D&D. As the DM, it's up to you to ensure these players have fun with the game, and that they learn the basics of how to play. At this level, having fun is more important than learning every rule exactly right. Be gentle with new players who make mistakes.

Make sure to keep your players smiling and rolling dice. Be positive and enthusiastic when describing the action, and you'll notice the players will quickly follow suit.

If you're a new DM, then welcome—and thank you! New DMs are the lifeblood of the D&D community. To help you run your game, some adventures include sidebars like this one that provide an explanation of the game's rules as they're used in the adventure.

## ADJUSTING THIS ADVENTURE

To determine whether you should consider adjusting the adventure, assess the **party strength** by consulting the table below.

### DETERMINING PARTY STRENGTH

Party Composition	Party Strength
Three characters	Weak
Four characters	Average
Five characters	Strong

## SAFETY TOOLS

Safety tools help ensure players aren't pushed beyond their comfort levels. These tools let your players know you want them to have a positive experience. Some common safety tools are provided below, each with a summary of how they work. An [article about one such safety kit](#) is provided to help with further information. Ensure that you discuss these tools with your players before the game:

- **Code of Conduct.** This is a group agreement for play. It outlines desired and prohibited behaviors, confidential reporting, and possible consequences.
- **Pregame and Postgame Discussions.** Use time before the game to explain content warnings, set boundaries, and collaborate on a safety plan. Then decompress and discuss improvements at the end of the game.
- **Be Welcoming.** Welcome and encourage respectful and open conversations about issues as they arise. Show that you're listening by avoiding defensive responses.
- **Confidentiality.** Provide contact information for private and confidential conversations between players and DM. Only disclose another player's name if that player gave unpressured permission for you to do so.
- **Safety Tools.** Learn about the safety tools that TTRPG community members have created and compiled. A broad range of such safety tools are available for you and your players online, or you can get more information by reaching out to your event organizer or [community@dndadventurersleague.org](mailto:community@dndadventurersleague.org).