



MADDENING SCREAMS

An Avernus Rising Adventure

The final resting place of the Hellrider company known as the Bloody Hooves has been found. Unfortunately, the Canyon of Screams is well beyond the reach of safe haven, so you must protect Dara behind enemy lines with no one to count on but yourselves. Her holy mission, and your very souls, are at stake.

Part One of the *Doors and Corners* series of adventures.

A Four to Six-Hour Adventure for 11th through 16th Level Characters.

Optimized For: APL 13



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ADVENTURE PRIMER

"If any honor existed in war, it was in fighting to protect others from harm."

—Christopher Paolini, Eldest

This adventure is designed for **three to seven 11th- to 16th-level characters** and is optimized for **five characters with an average party level (APL) of 13**. Characters outside this level range can't participate in this adventure.

This adventure is set in Avernus, and takes place primarily in the Canyon of Screams. The characters must resist the maddening aura of the Canyon, search for the remaining Hellriders, and evade the pursuing forces of Zariel.

SAVING DARA

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

If Dara dies during the adventure, award the story award **You Let Dara Die** and note how many times she died. In future adventures, tables will use the average number of deaths among the characters for determining how many abilities she loses.

BACKGROUND

The recovered battle plans of the **BLOODY HOOVES** flanking maneuver required the company to fall back to a nearby canyon if separated from the rest of **THE RIDE**. Unbeknownst to the Bloody Hooves, the **CANYON OF SCREAMS** drove most of them mad. Badly injured, running out of supplies, and burdened by many dead, the company took refuge in an abandoned complex carved into the walls of the canyon. Rather than risk their souls being lost to the devils of **AVERNUS**, the clerics of the Bloody Hooves interred the company behind powerful wards until such time as **ZARIEL** was victorious and they could be rescued to their holy reward. Unfortunately, that day never came.

Meanwhile, Zariel's forces have taken note of the repeated interference of the adventurers in her plans. **GENERAL EVERBLEED** (an ice devil that the characters may have encountered in previous adventures) has been tasked with disrupting their plans and claiming whatever prize the characters seek on behalf of Zariel. At the same time, working independently for Zariel, **SAREASH THE BLOODY HOOKS**, has been dispatched with a small team to root out the characters and destroy them.

OVERVIEW

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

- **Call to Action: Lost Souls Scream.** Dara and Fai Chen determine the Canyon of Screams is where they will find the Bloody Hooves. However, the party must avoid notice as the Emporium packs up and moves on, taking Fai Chen with them.
- **Part 1: Descent into the Canyon.** The characters arrive at the Canyon of Screams and find a small scouting party of devils searching for the tunnels that contain the Bloody Hooves. They must get past the fiendish scouting party. This is **Story Objective A**.
- **Part 2: Tracing the Bloody Path.** Using the Ward of Suffering, the characters must locate and explore the first cave system. They must rescue the Bloody Hooves warriors and convince them to ride to Eturel's aid. This is **Story Objective B**.
- **Bonus Objective A: Infernal Resurgence.** Failing to breach the wards, General Everbleed orders his minions to dig around them. The characters must defeat the invaders and collapse the new tunnels or risk more devils following them. This bonus objective is found in **Appendix 1**.
- **Bonus Objective B: Bloody Hooves Ride.** After Dara revives the Bloody Hooves, they learn of Zariel's fall. Convince the despondent Bloody Hooves to help Eturel. This bonus objective is found in **Appendix 2**.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

The Bloody Hooves, a feared and respected squadron who fought beside Zariel before she fell, could turn the tides in the struggle to save Eturel. The evidence suggests they entombed themselves in the Canyon of Screams after a failed flanking maneuver, and Dara should be able to revive them so they can join the fight.

Bloody Hooves Stampede. Any fighter character or NPC would have heard of the Bloody Hooves and would know how much help they could offer. That character may also be a fan of the Bloody Hooves and might love the opportunity to rescue and meet them.

Ward of Faithfulness. Those characters that retrieved the *wards of suffering* in DDAL 09-14 *The Vast Emptiness of Grace* are returned to Mahadi's emporium by Yuriial. Dara then shares the location of a similar item—the *ward of faithfulness*, which she believes was entombed along with the Bloody Hooves.

Bloody Treasure. Among the ranks of the fierce fighters and paladins of the Bloody Hooves are accomplished clerics. With all these powerful warriors in one place, there's sure to be valuable treasure.

ADVENTURE FLOWCHART

This section provides a basic understanding of not only the flow of the adventure, but also the outline of the different paths that your players may take in reaching their stated objective.



CALL TO ACTION: LOST SOULS SCREAM

Estimated Duration: 15 minutes

As Mahadi's Wandering Emporium prepares to move to a new location, there are many creatures moving through this area. While no one pays the characters much mind in all the hustle and bustle, they must still be careful to avoid attracting any unwanted attention.

AREA INFORMATION

The emporium has the following features:

Tents and War Machines. The emporium usually consists of colorful and interesting carts and tents, but they're currently being packed away into the infernal war machines.

Sounds. The hustle and bustle of the emporium packing up creates a constant stream of noise, allowing the characters to speak quietly and move stealthily with ease. Once the emporium starts up the infernal war machines, they can operate without detection easily, but the sound of the machines also makes it more difficult to communicate with one another.

CREATURE INFORMATION

Dara sits on a plain wooden stool within her tent, discussing her next steps with the Fai Chens, who are sprawled amidst a pile of comfy-looking cushions. If one or more of the characters has the story award **Wards, Got!** from DDAL09-14 *The Vast Emptiness of Grace*, Dara is in possession of the *wards of suffering*, occasionally fidgeting with the uncomfortable bracers.

THE WARDS OF SUFFERING

Only a creature that has successfully read from the *Book of Exalted Deeds* can safely wear and attune to the *wards of suffering*. When worn by any other creature, the *wards* burn with holy flame, dealing 22 (4d10) radiant damage at the start of each of the creature's turns.

The *wards of suffering* are an ancient artifact fashioned by Ilmater himself shortly after the Triad—an alliance of the lawful good deities Tyr, Torm, and Ilmater—was formed.

The *wards* are a pair of bracers made from coarse hair, bound at the wrists with red cord and inset with sharp, iron barbs inside. Donning the *wards* causes intense pain as the iron barbs dig into the flesh of the wearer; while the pain subsides, the coarse hair constantly irritates the skin. Only a lawful good celestial or a creature who has read from the *book of exalted deeds* can attune to the *wards of suffering*. The precise powers bestowed by the *wards* aren't full known, but among them are the ability to cast *cure wounds*, *mage armor*, and *shield* at will.

What Do They Want? **Dara** wants the characters to accompany her to the Canyon of Screams and to seek out

and free the Bloody Hooves from their interment. **Fai Chen** is eager to help, but is concerned that the emporium will be packed up and ready to travel soon, which means that the characters need to make themselves scarce.

What Do They Know? **Dara** and **Fai Chin** discuss what they've learned so far, reviewing the Bloody Hooves' recovered battle plans and encouraging the characters to share what they know to ensure everyone is on the same page. **Fai Chen** reminds the characters that they can't travel with the Wandering Emporium once it's packed up and in motion. To that end, if the characters don't have the ability to teleport or pass unseen, **Fai Chen** suggests that they bury themselves beneath his tent, where they can hide while Mahadi's underlings search the area to ensure that all of their master's indentured servants are ready to travel. The rakshasa yearns to make **Dara** part of his entourage.

DIGGING YOUR GRAVE

Without the use of magic such as *move earth*, it takes an hour to dig a hole large enough for a character to hide in. A character who succeeds on a DC 16 Strength (Athletics) check digs the hole in half the time—allowing the character to attempt to dig a hole for another character, or for **Dara**.

CREATURE INFORMATION

At the DM's discretion, **Leim** (a nonbinary chaotic neutral yuan-ti **commoner**), one of Mahadi's merchants, might find the characters in their hiding place.

What Do They Want? **Leim** wants nothing to do with the characters, but is willing to sell them out to Mahadi for a chance to gain his favor—unless the characters can offer them something better. They can be bribed (preferably with a *soul coin*, though other trinkets and baubles may also work) to go along their business without alerting Mahadi. If the characters use force to stop **Leim** from reporting them, they'll have to find a new hiding spot. If all else fails, **Fai Chen** may also intervene with **Leim**.

What Do They Know? **Leim**, like all members of the Emporium, knows that Mahadi trades in information. The whereabouts of troublemakers might make for a useful bargaining chip for them.

CALL TO ACTION

Once the emporium departs, the characters are free to travel onward to the Canyon of Screams unseen. Once there, they are to escort **Dara** to the resting place of the Bloody Hooves and retrieve the *wards of faithfulness*.

If the Mahadi learns about the characters' ruse (whether on his own or from **Leim**) he alerts the devils near the canyon, who are then on the lookout when the characters arrive in **Part 1**, below.



PART 1: DESCENT INTO THE CANYON

Estimated Duration: 45 minutes

The Canyon of Screams contains a maze of tunnels full of traps, dead ends, and underground caverns. While creatures are outside of the tunnels, they're buffeted by the howling winds, but the tunnels afford protection against the wind.

If the characters earned the **Wards Got!** story award from DDAL09-14 *The Vast Emptiness of Grace*, they've have a much easier time finding the set of tunnels leading to the cavern where the Bloody Hooves are entombed. If Dara wears the *wards of suffering* and leads the group, travel through the tunnels takes six hours. If she doesn't have them, travel takes ten hours.

AREA INFORMATION

This large canyon is carved through on all sides with tunnel entrances that lead underground. Most importantly, the howling winds in the Canyon of Screams can cause temporary madness.

Falling Rocks. Due to the unstable canyon walls and intense winds, rocks occasionally fall from above. At the end of each hour spent traveling in the canyon, a creature must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or take 22 (4d10) bludgeoning damage.

Sounds. The falling rocks and intense winds cause enough noise that anything else is difficult to hear. All Wisdom (Perception) checks based on hearing are made with disadvantage.

Howling Winds. The winds whipping through the canyon create a dangerous maddening effect. A creature in the canyon must make a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw after each hour spent in the howling winds. On a failed save, the creature gains one level of madness. A creature that gains three levels of madness develops a specific indefinite madness marked by constant, incessant screaming. Fiends

are not affected by the Howling Winds. If any character develops this madness and screams, they may alert the devils to their approach or draw attention while trying to sneak through the caverns.

STORY OBJECTIVE A

Dara leads the way to the Canyon of Screams, where the party finds a small party of devils. The characters must **get past the fiendish scouting party**.

A GUIDING LIGHT

When Dara wears the *wards*, she occasionally describes a feeling like a string pulling her along. She believes the *wards* are telling her how to find the entombed Bloody Hooves.

A. SEARCHING DEVILS

The characters arrive at the Canyon of Screams and find a network of tunnels carved into the walls of the mountains.

CREATURE INFORMATION

A small party of devils (a **bone devil** commanding six **bearded devils** and two **imps**) is here, keeping a sharp eye out for things to report back to General Everbleed. Three bearded devils arrive as reinforcements once the bone devil is reduced to half its hit points.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak:** Remove the bearded devil reinforcements.
- **Very Strong:** Replace the **bearded devils** with **merregons**

What Do They Want? The **bearded devils** can't be bargained with; they're here to explore, and are little more than cannon fodder. The **bone devil**, however, seeks power, delighting in making the weaker devils to do its bidding and always on the lookout for ways to dupe naïve mortals. Likewise, the **imps** want to trick the characters into giving up their souls, if possible, but at least to turn them away from the Canyon of Screams.

What Do They Know? General Everbleed sent this cadre of fiends to disrupt whatever the characters were up to and to learn more about the resting place of the Bloody Hooves.

PLAYING THE PILLARS

Here are some suggestions for this encounter:

Combat. If the bone devil sees the characters, it attacks immediately and calls out for reinforcements. Three **bearded devils** arrive at the end of the second round and enter initiative normally. The imps prefer hit-and-run techniques, especially against frail looking, lightly armored characters.

Exploration. The characters can see the devils before being spotted themselves, allowing them to look for another route. With so many tunnel entrances in the canyon, they can surely find a tunnel that leads around the devils and escape their notice. However, if the characters didn't escape the emporium unseen or angered Mahadi, he has sent word ahead; the devils are expecting the characters and any ability checks made to avoid the fiends are made with disadvantage.

Social. Though these devils are on a mission to learn the location of the Bloody Hooves' tomb, they're still devils and won't pass up an opportunity to make deals in an attempt to steal more mortal souls. If the characters manage to move through the canyon without catching the notice of the devils, they can attempt to eavesdrop to learn what the devils are doing. With a successful DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check (made at disadvantage due to the howling winds), the characters overhear the devils talking about the Bloody Hooves.

TREASURE

Along with various digging, spelunking, and camping supplies, the bearded devils carry an assortment of copper and silver pieces.

DEVELOPMENT

If the characters kill the devils here, their absence does not go unnoticed. They were a scouting party, and General Everbleed is expecting to hear from them soon. They're replaced by a retrieval party in **Part 2**, who explore the caverns searching for their comrades.

If the characters successfully snuck past these devils, they continue their scouting and eventually come across the path the characters took, attacking them in **Part 2**.

B. INTO THE TUNNELS

If Dara is using the *wards of suffering* to guide her, the path toward the correct network of tunnels is laid out clearly. Otherwise, the characters must rely on their own skills to find the correct caves.

AREA INFORMATION

The tunnels have the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. These tunnels are 20 feet wide and 100 feet long, and each end in a junction with two to four other tunnels. While there aren't any markings or clues indicating which tunnel is correct, all tunnels eventually lead to the Bloody Hooves.

The Tunnels. Each set of tunnels potentially contains a trap or a short encounter. If Dara possesses the *wards of suffering* or if time is an issue, consider skipping these encounters. Otherwise, roll 1d6 and consult the table below to determine what the characters face in the tunnel.



TUNNEL ENCOUNTERS

Roll	Encounter
1	The characters encounter a group of spined devils (one per character).
2	Every character must make a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw or take 22 (4d10) piercing damage from an arrow trap. Characters with a passive Perception score of 15 or higher make the saving throw with advantage.
3	The characters enter a tunnel whose walls are carved with religious iconography. They must each make a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw, taking 18 (4d8) radiant damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful save. Characters proficient in Religion make this saving throw with advantage.
4	The characters encounter a group of bearded devils (one per character).
5	The tunnel is empty and loops back around to the start.
6	The tunnel ends in a cave-in, with no way to push through. The characters must backtrack.

THE GLYPH

Eventually, the characters locate the correct tunnel. As they progress, characters with a passive Perception score of 17 or higher notice a disguised glyph in the ground—a symbol that some characters may be able to identify as a *glyph of warding* with a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check. The glyph is triggered by any living creature that passes within 10 feet of it. Unfortunately, the hallway is 20 feet wide and 10 feet tall, so dispelling the glyph or teleporting past it is the only way to avoid it.

If the glyph is triggered, every creature within 30 feet of it must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or take 33 (7d8) radiant damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful save. A creature that fails this saving throw by 5 or more is also blinded for an hour. The glyph resets itself after 10 minutes. Fiends make this save with disadvantage.

Once the characters pass the glyph, roll 2d4 on the **Tunnel Encounters** table to determine what awaits them farther down this tunnel. After these two encounters, the characters find themselves in a huge empty cavern.

CREATURE INFORMATION

If avoided earlier, the fiendish scouting party (a **bone devil** commanding six **bearded devils** and two **imps**) exploring the tunnels may notice the characters' tracks and begin pursuit, attacking at an inopportune time.

BONUS OBJECTIVE A

If utilizing this additional content, **goblins**, **imps**, and **spined devils** led by the dao **Ma'taz Ardu** break through a tunnel wall while the characters navigate the tunnels. General Everbleed has hired Ma'taz Ardu to create a more direct path to the Bloody Hooves, and the characters must defeat the invaders and destroy the tunnel. This bonus objective is found in **Appendix 1**.

DEVELOPMENT

After the characters explore four tunnels (or encounter the devils), they come to a dead end with a faded carving of a sword. Beneath the carved sword are two holes approximately six inches wide and a foot and a half apart. Above the holes is a message carved in the stone, written in Celestial. If no one in the party can read Celestial, Dara can translate the message.

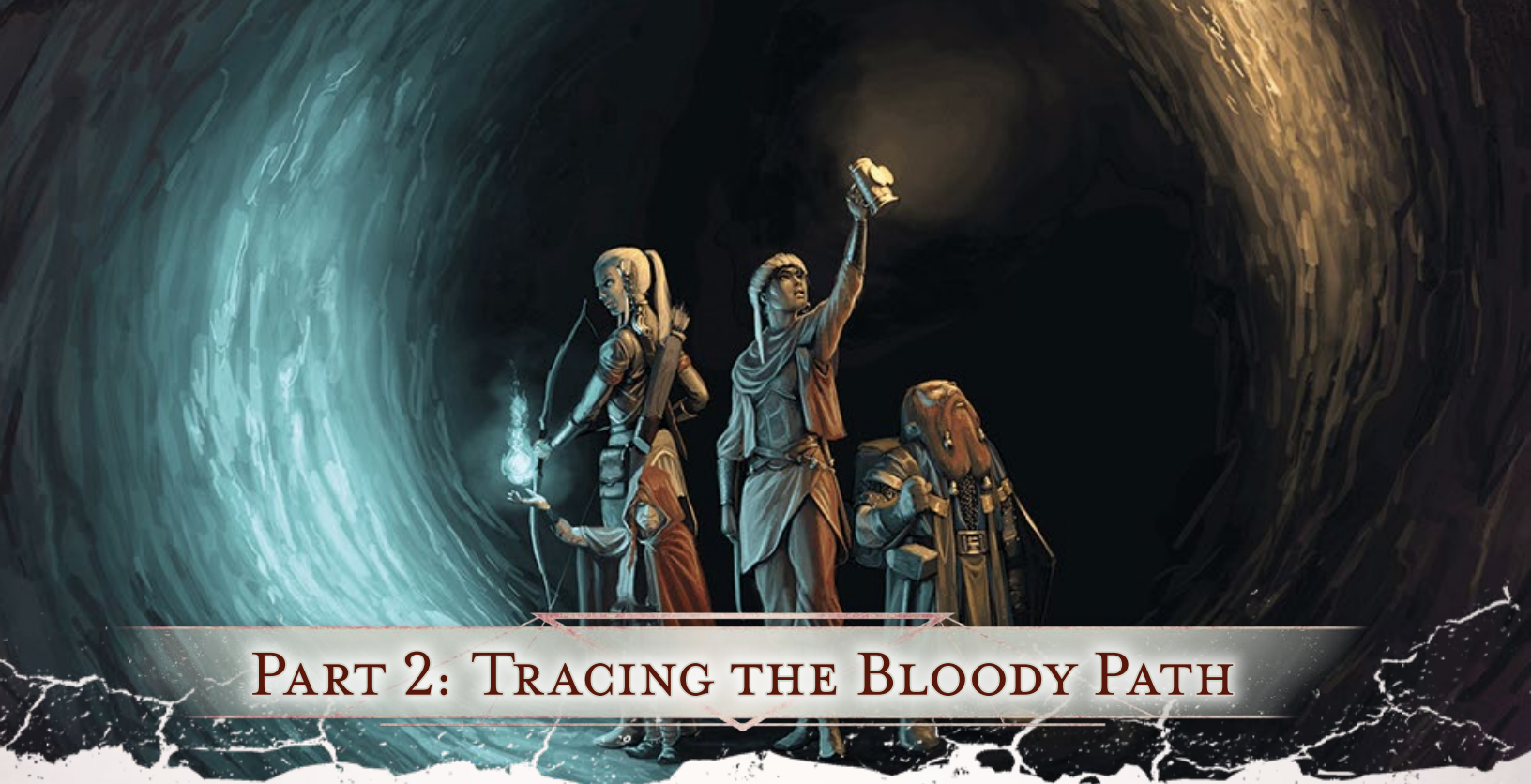
"We wait for you, Zariel. May your sword strike true; may your shield save those in need."

A character who succeeds on a DC 13 Intelligence (History) check identifies the carving as a stylized version of Zariel's sword. Dara notes that this carving looks very old.

The holes are about a foot deep and are designed for someone to reach their hands into. Once Dara places her arms, adorned with the *wards of suffering*, into these two holes, the wall opens up, revealing a dusty tunnel that leads further into darkness. If Dara doesn't have the *wards of suffering*, the wall opens if any creature places both arms inside the holes. Though some ominous grinding noises or unusual sensations might cause concern, nothing bad happens.

When the wall is opened, proceed to **Part 2**.





PART 2: TRACING THE BLOODY PATH

Estimated Duration: 2 hours 45 minutes

SETTING INFORMATION

Many dangers await within these deeper tunnels. While the characters search for the resting place of the Bloody Hooves, they must also contend with waiting fiends and various traps set by the Bloody Hooves during their hasty retreat.

STORY OBJECTIVE B

Awakening the Bloody Hooves warriors and convincing them to ride to Elturel's aid is **Story Objective B**.

AREA INFORMATION

These deeper tunnels have the following features:

Light. These tunnels are supernaturally dark, halving the range of darkvision and the radius of light created by mundane or magical means.

Sound. Magic users among the Bloody Hooves attempted to ensure no one would be able to find their way to their resting place by enchanting these tunnels to move. As a result, the constant grinding and shifting of stone makes it difficult to hear. Creatures traveling through these tunnels have disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks.

A. INTO THE TUNNELS

Once the cavern wall is opened, the characters are attacked by a group of devils who were following them.

CREATURE INFORMATION

If the devils exploring the outer caves are still alive, they finally find the characters and attack. Otherwise, if the characters destroyed those devils, the characters are set upon by three **bearded devils** and five **spined devils** that were sent to investigate why the first group of devils hadn't reported in.

What Do They Want? At this point, the characters are too deep into the caverns to bargain with; the fiends want them dead. They can't risk the characters venturing deeper into the tunnels and potentially finding the Bloody Hooves.

What Do They Know? Somewhere in these tunnels, the souls of the Bloody Hooves are waiting. If the devils get there first, they can harvest those souls. They know that Zariel wants the souls—and that she wants to put a stop to the characters' meddling.

Assistance from the Glyph. If the characters avoided triggering the glyph in **Part 1**, it was triggered by the devils, reducing their numbers; replace the spined devils with a bearded devil.

TREASURE

The devils have a random assortment of unusual coins and a gem or two.

B. THE WINDING PATH

The paladins and clerics who retreated down this path ensured any fiends who might follow would have a difficult time. The tunnels shift and move, making the path impossible to memorize or anticipate. The tunnels and caverns contain various creatures who make their homes here, as well as devils searching for the Bloody Hooves.

CREATURE INFORMATION

Spined devils, bone devils, bearded devils, and imps working for General Everbleed investigate any possible paths to the Bloody Hooves. They might be convinced to pause in their investigations for the right price, but it's costly to make deals with devils.

Several tunnels house small nests of **hellwasps**, preying on any creatures who make their way into the tunnels. A few colonies of **madcaps** and **bulezaus** have also found their way into these tunnels and become lost, encouraging

their blood frenzy. There's also a **tressym** that the characters may be able to convince to travel with them. Somewhere in the tunnels, there might even be a **fiendish flesh golem** wandering loose, as it slipped its devil handler and stormed off on its own to find something to eat. (See the **Creature Encounters** table for more information on these creatures.)

What Do They Want? Many of these creatures want to feed; they've been in a magically induced sleep for years, and they awoke confused and hungry.

What Do They Know? While the **tressym** knows the path through these tunnels, she doesn't share this information. The other creatures are mostly focused on feeding and protecting themselves after their long sleep.

THE SHIFTING TUNNELS

Each tunnel eventually leads to a 25-foot-diameter cavern. Every cavern has four exits, each marked with a small stone symbol (see **Celestial Clues**, below). Since the tunnels are constantly moving and shifting, the layout of each cavern is slightly different. Within many of the tunnels, pieces of damaged armor and dulled weapons lie next to dirty bones and chunks of desiccated corpses.

In the center of every cavern lies a hidden glyph. Any character who was able to identify the previous *glyph of warding* recognizes these with ease. Otherwise, characters with a passive Perception score of 17 or higher notice the glyphs.

Each glyph is triggered when a creature walks within 20 feet of it. Roll 1d4 on the **Glyph Wards Table** every time the characters come to another cavern to determine what effect the glyph has. As long as Dara wears the *wards of suffering*, she can't trigger the glyphs and the triggered spells don't affect her.

If the characters see the glyphs, they can attempt to disarm them with *dispel magic* or a similar spell. Attempting to change or damage the glyph automatically triggers it.

GLYPH WARDS TABLE

Roll	Triggered Glyph
1	Any fiends in the room must make a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, fiends take 4d8 radiant damage as a blinding light fills the room, or half as much damage on a successful one.
2	All creatures in the room must make a DC 18 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the creature succumbs to madness for 1d10 minutes and must use its action every turn to attack a random creature it can see within range. The creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each round.
3	A bloodcurdling scream echoes through the cavern. All creatures who have spent more than one tenday in the Nine Hells must make a DC 18 Intelligence saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 7d6 psychic damage and is stunned. On a successful save, the creature takes half as much damage and isn't stunned.
4	A radiant light flickers and then fades. The shifting of the tunnels has damaged the glyph, rendering it useless.

CELESTIAL CLUES

Each cavern has a note written in Celestial carved into the walls. If none of the characters can read Celestial, the *wards of suffering* allow Dara to translate.

Roll 1d4 in each cavern to determine which note the characters see. This is a trail the Bloody Hooves left for Zariel to find them. The messages correspond to the symbols carved into the tunnel walls—**sword**, **shield**, **mountain**, **horns**—indicating which route brings the reader closer to the Bloody Hooves.

Celestial Notes Table Roll	Translated Note
1	May your sword strike true.
2	May your shield save those in need.
3	In honor of Mount Celestia.
4	Let us smite the fiends.

The incorrect tunnels lead to an encounter with fiends (roll 1d6 on the **Fiend Encounters** table). When the characters choose the correct tunnel, roll 1d4. On a 1, it leads to a random creature encounter (roll 1d4 on the **Creature Encounters** table). On a 2, it leads to a ward (roll 1d4 on the **Glyph Wards** table). On a 3, it leads to a random fiend encounter. On a 4, there is no encounter; it simply leads the characters to the next cavern.

Along with the clearly marked four tunnels in each cavern, the characters also occasionally see extra tunnels that appear to be caved in and wide openings large enough to be new tunnels, though these are unmarked. If the party choose to travel down an unmarked tunnel, it winds and twists, either coming to a dead end after about an hour or leading back to the cavern that led the characters into this labyrinth of tunnels at the end of Part 1.

If Dara has the *wards of suffering* leading her, the characters make it through this first network after choosing the correct tunnel 1d2 + 2 times. If Dara doesn't have the *wards*, they find their way to the next set of caverns after exploring 2d2 + 4 tunnels.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

Various creatures are wandering the tunnels, and the characters may encounter them at any time during their exploration. These short encounters are not meant to be very difficult and can be scaled up or down easily by adding or removing a few creatures.

Fiendish Flesh Golems. It may take a few tunnels or ability checks for the party to realize that the carvings correspond to the messages in each room. If at any point, however, the party does come to this understanding and purposefully chooses the incorrect tunnel, they stumble across two **fiendish flesh golems**. At some point, the devils leading them through the tunnels were killed or separated from them, and the golems attack everyone and everything they see.



CREATURE ENCOUNTERS TABLE

Roll	Creatures
1	The characters stumble upon a hellwasp nest containing one hellwasp per character (two per character for a very strong party or one for every two characters, rounded up, for a very weak party).
2	Madcaps (one per character), frenzied and desperate for blood, attack the characters. (Add additional madcaps as needed for stronger parties.)
3	The characters are attacked by a mob of bulezaus (one per character), all struggling for scraps of metal and supplies. (Add additional bulezaus as needed for stronger parties.)
4	The characters stumble across Tylsi, a lounging tressym . She watches the characters when they enter the tunnel. She doesn't fight unless provoked, but neither does she try to help the characters. If a character attempts to communicate or befriend her, a successful DC 17 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check convinces the tressym to follow.

TYLSI SPEAKS

If the characters befriend the tressym Tylsi, or at least speak with her, she can reveal why there are so many creatures alive in these tunnels. Any creatures who were present when the Bloody Hooves' casters enchanted the cavern fell into a magical stasis-like slumber. She suspects that whatever magic allowed the characters to enter also woke the creatures in the tunnels.

It's also possible that the shifting tunnels may have disturbed other nearby cave systems the Bloody Hooves were unaware of, luring creatures from other tunnels into these.

If Tylsi becomes a character's familiar, her presence grants advantage on ability checks for navigating this area, as she's familiar with the shifting tunnels.

FIEND ENCOUNTERS TABLE

Roll	Fiends
1	A bone devil and a barbed devil attack the characters. (Remove the barbed devil for a very weak party or add an additional barbed devil for a very strong party.)
2	A barbed devil accompanied by a group of bearded devils (one per character) attack the characters. (For weaker parties, lower the number of bearded devils; for stronger parties, add an additional barbed devil.)
3	A bone devil and 12 imps attack the characters.
4	An imp sees the characters and attempts to flee. If the characters attack, it cries out for reinforcements: barbed devils (one per character) arrive after one round. If the imp escapes, it searches for reinforcements but loses track of its path in the labyrinth, and the characters don't see it again.

A DEVIL IN THE HAND

After exploring the tunnels (and perhaps completing **Bonus Objective B**), the characters come across another large cavern, again with holes into which Dara can place her hands and use the *wards* to open a hidden door.

Waiting in this room, however, is a crew of devils and imps. One bone devil, one barbed devil, and two imps per character attack as soon as the characters enter this chamber.

Hot Pursuit. If the characters killed the scouting party before entering the tunnels, add five spined devils, which were sent once General Everbleed realized the scouting party was missing.

If the characters didn't realize before this ambush, they now understand that while the path that led to the last door Dara opened was the most direct route, the shifting tunnels inadvertently created more entries into this part of the tunnel system.

TREASURE

In this cavern, one of the bodies left from the Bloody Hooves' retreat still has intact armor, which the characters can retrieve. This is a set of *red dragon scale mail*.

C. THE BLOODY HOOVES

After the party defeats the devils, Dara can open the next gate to the Bloody Hooves' resting place.

AREA INFORMATION

The tunnels in this part of the cave system don't move, so the noise is no longer an issue. The tunnels are 20 feet wide and average about 100 feet in length before releasing into a large cavern. This area, especially, is littered with bones and weapons, the last traces of the Bloody Hooves' retreat.

The characters must travel through 2d4 tunnels to the next area, traveling past glyphs in each tunnel. Use the **Glyph Wards Table** to determine which glyphs they come across. Since the tunnels don't shift here, the final glyph still works. On a 4, characters must make a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw or take 2d10 radiant damage as the glyph shines. If the characters see the glyphs, they can attempt to disarm them with *dispel magic* or a similar spell. Attempting to change or damage the glyph itself automatically triggers the ward.

The bones and weapons become more numerous here, and much better preserved. As characters explore more of the tunnels, they see more corpses, adorned in armor and still grasping weapons.

LOST SOULS

The next cavern the characters come across is a large 60-foot-square room with stone tablets inlaid along the walls.

Each tablet is carved with a series of letters and numbers in Celestial, but even someone who can read Celestial doesn't understand them.

Dara, however, can feel the presence of souls behind these stone tablets, and she sets to work reviving the Bloody Hooves paladins. The ranking member, Sir Gidor Honorsbright, has a place close to the entrance of the room, and her stone tablet is also the only one with a name under the mysterious letters and numbers.

After Dara revives this dwarven paladin of Helm, Sir Gidor greets the characters and asks who they are. When she learns why Zariel herself didn't come to revive the Bloody Hooves, Sir Gidor becomes despondent, but she puts on a brave face as Dara revives the others.

DEVIL'S TAIL

While Dara revives the Bloody Hooves, any character who succeeds on a DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check hears footsteps approaching. Sir Gidor isn't yet fit to fight, but she offers to protect Dara while the characters return to the tunnel to keep the invaders away from Dara while she works.

When Dara revives the Bloody Hooves, they come to with three levels of exhaustion. If the characters can reduce her exhaustion, Sir Gidor can join in the fight, though she would prefer to stay back and protect Dara as a last line of defense.

In the tunnel, the characters face off against three **barbed devils** who tracked the characters through the winding tunnels to find the Bloody Hooves. As soon as these three devils are down, however, a second wave consisting of two **bearded devils** and several **spined devils** (one per character) appears. The final wave consists of one **bone devil** and two **spined devils**.

Dara works as quickly as she can, but she must be careful to revive the Bloody Hooves properly. She can revive one every five rounds, and after the work is complete she requires two days of rest.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting these encounters:

- **Very Weak:** Only two barbed devils attack in the first wave, and only the spined devils attack in the second wave.
- **Weak:** Only two barbed devils attack in the first wave; replace the two bearded devils with spined devils in the second wave.
- **Strong:** Add an additional bearded devil to the first wave; add two additional spined devils to the second wave.
- **Very Strong:** Add an additional barbed devil to the first wave; add two additional bearded devils to the second wave.

The characters must keep the devils away from Dara. If she's interrupted during a revivification, she loses the soul of that Hellrider forever.

Every time a devil gets past the characters and attacks Dara, roll 1d12. On a 1-8, the devil is prevented from entering the cavern by Sir Gidor's *magic circle*, which she must continually recast because her powers are still very

weak. On a 9-11, Sir Gidor manages to hold the devil off until one of the characters can help, but in her weakened state, she can only hold it off for two rounds before it gets past her and interrupts the ritual. On a 12, the devil rushes past Sir Gidor, attacks Dara, and interrupts the ritual.

There are a total of twenty-five Bloody Hooves, including Sir Gidor. Every time a devil interrupts Dara, she loses another one, up to a total of 12. The characters save at least thirteen Bloody Hooves (Sir Gidor and twelve others) regardless of how many times devils interrupt Dara.

Bonus Objective B. If utilizing this additional content, the characters must **convince the despondent Bloody Hooves to help Elturel**. This is **Bonus Objective B**, found in **Appendix 2**.

ONWARD

After the fight, Sir Gidor takes the paladins to refresh the wards so they can prevent more devils from coming while Dara rests.

The Bloody Hooves, while quick to protect Dara, are otherwise listless when they learn of Zariel's fall. With some discussion and roleplay, or the inclusion of **Bonus Objective B**, the characters can convince the Bloody Hooves to take on a new quest: riding to Elturel's aid.

WRAP UP: FAITH AND TRUST

Since they seem to have come to a break in the devils' attacks, Sir Gidor suggests that they rest for a while before continuing their journey. Sir Gidor and her warriors also require rest, and they intend to recover here before heading out and beginning their journey to Elturel.

TREASURE

Sir Gidor provides Dara with the *ward of faithfulness*, which she needs to open the tomb containing the clerics who sealed the Bloody Hooves away to wait for Zariel's return. The characters earn the **Faith and Trust** story award.

Sir Gidor also gives the characters a *helm of telepathy*, an armored helmet that comes down over the eyes. This helm belonged to Sir Gidor's second-in-command, Nyave, who was killed while the Bloody Hooves retreated. Since she had to focus on keeping the rest of the Bloody Hooves alive, Nyave's helm was all Sir Gidor could recover of his belongings. She offers it to the characters as thanks for finding and reviving the Bloody Hooves and setting them on their new path to help Elturel.

Finding and reviving the clerics takes place in the next adventure in this trilogy, DDAL09-16 *Honors Unforeseen*.

WARD OF FAITHFULNESS

The *ward of faithfulness* was created by Torm himself shortly after the Triad—an alliance of the lawful good deities Tyr, Torm, and Ilmater—was formed.

The *ward* is a glove designed for a right hand, made from a light metal that is uncomfortable at first. However, once the wearer becomes accustomed to it, it fits wonderfully and feels so familiar they sometimes forget they're wearing a glove. The *ward* can only be worn by a lawful good celestial or a creature that has read from the *book of exalted deeds*. The precise powers bestowed by the *ward* haven't been fully catalogued, but among them are the ability to cast *protection from evil and good* and *lesser restoration* at will.

REWARDS

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

CHARACTER REWARDS

The characters earn the following rewards:

ADVANCEMENT

Upon successfully **completing** this adventure, each character gains a level. At their discretion, they may choose to decline advancement. Remind your players that the amount of gold that their characters can earn per level is limited; declining advancement means that they may reach a point where they earn no gold.

GOLD

Award each character gold for each hour of the session. Adventures typically features cues for this, but you can add it where you see fit. The maximum gold that you can award a character per hour is determined by their tier, as follows:

Tier	Hourly GP Award	GP Limit per Level
1	20 gp	80 gp
2	30 gp	240 gp
3	200 gp	1,600 gp
4	750 gp	6,000 gp

MAGIC ITEM(S)

If found during the adventure, the characters can keep the following magic items; these items are described in **Appendix 3**:

- *Red dragon scale mail*
- *Helm of telepathy*

STORY AWARDS

The characters may earn the following story awards during the adventure; this story award is described in Appendix 4:

- **Faith and Trust**

DUNGEON MASTER REWARDS

For running this adventure, you gain a **DM Reward**. This reward can be redeemed for levels, magic items, and other season-themed things. See the Adventurers League DM Rewards document for more info.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

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

- **What They Want.** Ultimately, Dara wants to save Elturel, but right now she's focused on rescuing the Bloody Hooves so they can aid her quest.
- **Wise Beyond Her Years** Dara is single minded about accomplishing her mission and often sounds much more knowledgeable and mature than her years would suggest.

Sir Gidor Honorsbright (gi DOOR HON ers bright). Sir Gidor is a dwarven paladin of Helm who commands the Bloody Hooves, a squadron of Hellriders who served Zariel before her fall.

- **What They Want.** Sir Gidor wants to keep the Bloody Hooves safe. After learning of Zariel's fall, she tries to stay strong for her troop, but she struggles with her determination.
- **Honor and Loyalty.** Sir Gidor was once loyal to Zariel, but when she learns that Zariel has become an archdevil, she seeks a new cause.

Ma'taz Ardu (MAW-tahz AR-doo). Ma'taz Ardu is a dao who owes General Everbleed a favor.

- **What They Want.** More than anything, Ma'taz wishes to fulfil his debt to General Everbleed so he can be free to make his own deals.
- **Dealmaker, Bonebreaker.** While he won't outright renege on a deal, Ma'taz would be all too happy to find a loophole to get him out of doing extra work.

CREATURE STATISTICS

The following creatures appear in this adventure.

BARBED DEVIL

Medium fiend (devil), lawful evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 110 (13d8 + 52)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	17 (+3)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Str +6, Con +7, Wis +5, Cha +5

Skills Deception +5, Insight +5, Perception +8

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

Damage Immunities fire, poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 18

Languages Infernal, telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Barbed Hide: At the start of each of its turns, the barbed devil deals 5 (1d10) piercing damage to any creature grappling it.

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

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack: The devil makes three melee attacks: one with its tail and two with its claws. Alternatively, it can use Hurl Flame twice.

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

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

Hurl Flame: *Ranged Spell Attack:* +5 to hit, range 150 ft., one target. Hit: 10 (3d6) fire damage. If the target is a flammable object that isn't being worn or carried, it also catches fire.

BEARDED DEVIL

Medium fiend (devil), lawful evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 52 (8d8 + 16)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	15 (+2)	15 (+2)	9 (–1)	11 (+0)	11 (+0)

Saving Throws Str +5, Con +4, Wis +2

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 10

Languages Infernal, telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

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

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

Steadfast. The devil can't be frightened while it can see an allied creature within 30 feet of it.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The devil makes two attacks: one with its beard and one with its glaive.

Beard. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 minute. While poisoned in this way, the target can't regain hit points. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Glaive. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 8 (1d10 + 3) slashing damage. If the target is a creature other than an undead or a construct, it must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or lose 5 (1d10) hit points at the start of each of its turns due to an infernal wound. Each time the devil hits the wounded target with this attack, the damage dealt by the wound increases by 5 (1d10). Any creature can take an action to stanch the wound with a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Medicine) check. The wound also closes if the target receives magical healing.

BONE DEVIL

Large fiend (devil), lawful evil

Armor Class 19 (natural armor)

Hit Points 142 (15d10 + 60)

Speed 40 ft., fly 40 ft.

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

Saving Throws Int +5, Wis +6, Cha +7

Skills Deception +7, Insight +6

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

Damage Immunities fire, poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Infernal, telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

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

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The devil makes three attacks: two with its claws and one with its sting.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 8 (1d8 + 4) slashing damage.

Sting. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 13 (2d8 + 4) piercing damage plus 17 (5d6) poison damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

BULEZAU

Medium fiend (demon), chaotic evil

Armor Class 14 (natural)

Hit Points 52 (7d8 + 21)

Speed 40 ft.

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

Damage Resistances cold, fire, lightning

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages Abyssal, telepathy 60 ft.

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

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

Standing Leap. The bulezau's long jump is up to 20 feet and its high jump is up to 10 feet, with or without a running start.

Sure-Footed. The bulezau has advantage on Strength and Dexterity saving throws made against effects that would knock it prone.

ACTIONS

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

DARA, CHOSEN OF ILMATER

Medium humanoid (human), lawful good

Armor Class 11

Hit Points 20 (3d8 + 6)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Damage Resistances Radiant; Bludgeoning, Piercing, and Slashing from Nonmagical Attacks

Condition Immunities Charmed, Exhaustion, Frightened

Skills Medicine +4, Religion +2

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Celestial, Common

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

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

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

1/week: *true resurrection*

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

Dara has the following cleric spells prepared:

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

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

ACTIONS

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

DAO

Large elemental, neutral evil

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 187 (15d10 + 105)

Speed 30 ft., burrow 30 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	12 (+1)	24 (+7)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)

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

Condition Immunities petrified

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Terran

Challenge 11 (7,200 XP)

Earth Glide. The dao can burrow through nonmagical, unworked earth and stone. While doing so, the dao doesn't disturb the material it moves through.

Elemental Demise. If the dao dies, its body disintegrates into crystalline powder, leaving behind only equipment the dao was wearing or carrying.

Innate Spellcasting. The dao's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *detect evil and good, detect magic, stone shape*

3/day each: *passwall, move earth, tongues*

1/day each: *conjure elemental* (earth elemental only), *gaseous form, invisibility, phantasmal killer, plane shift, wall of stone*

Sure-Footed. The dao has advantage on Strength and Dexterity saving throws made against effects that would knock it prone.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The dao makes two fist attacks or two maul attacks.

Fist. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 15 (2d8 + 6) bludgeoning damage.

Maul. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 20 (4d6 + 6) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a Huge or smaller creature, it must succeed on a DC 18 Strength check or be knocked prone.

EARTH ELEMENTAL

Large elemental, neutral

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 126 (12d10 + 60)

Speed 30 ft., burrow 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	8 (-1)	20 (+5)	5 (-3)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

Damage Vulnerabilities thunder

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, unconscious

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

Languages Terran

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Earth Glide. The elemental can burrow through nonmagical, unworked earth and stone. While doing so, the elemental doesn't disturb the material it moves through.

Siege Monster. The elemental deals double damage to objects and structures.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The elemental makes two slam attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 14 (2d8 + 5) bludgeoning damage.

FIENDISH FLESH GOLEM

Large construct, unaligned

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 210 (20d10 + 100)

Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	9 (-1)	20 (+5)	7 (-2)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

Damage Resistances cold, fire

Damage Immunities lightning, poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't adamantite or silvered

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 8 (3,900 XP)

Berserk. Whenever the golem starts its turn with 100 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. If the golem's creator is within 60 feet of the berserk golem, the creator 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 100 hit points or fewer, the golem might go berserk again.

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:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 16 (2d10 + 5) bludgeoning damage.

IMP

Tiny fiend (devil, shapechanger), 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 equip

MADCAP

Small fey, chaotic evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 45 (6d6 + 24)

Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	13 (+1)	18 (+4)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	9 (-1)

Skills Athletics +6, Perception +3

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Common, Sylvan

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Iron Boots. While moving, the madcap has disadvantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks.

Outsize Strength. While grappling, the madcap is considered to be Medium. Also, wielding a heavy weapon doesn't impose disadvantage on its attack rolls.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The madcap makes three attacks with its wicked sickle.

Wicked Sickle. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d4 + 4) slashing damage.

Ironbound Pursuit. The madcap moves up to its speed to a creature it can see and kicks with its iron boots. The target must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or take 20 (3d10 + 4) bludgeoning damage and be knocked prone.

MERREGON

Medium fiend (devil), lawful evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 45 (6d8 + 18)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	15 (+2)	15 (+2)	9 (-1)	11 (+0)	11 (+0)

Saving Throws Str +5, Con +4, Wis +2

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

Damage Immunities fire, poison

Condition Immunities frightened, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages understands Infernal but can't speak, Telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

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

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The merregon makes two halberd attacks, or if an allied fiend of challenge rating 6 or higher is within 60 feet of it, the merregon makes three halberd attacks.

Halberd. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 9 (1d10 + 4) slashing damage.

Heavy crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d10 + 2) piercing damage.

REACTIONS

Loyal Bodyguard. When another fiend within 5 feet of the merregon is hit by an attack, the merregon causes itself to be hit instead.

XORN

Medium elemental, neutral

Armor Class 19 (natural armor)

Hit Points 73 (7d8 + 42)

Speed 20 ft., burrow 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	10 (+0)	22 (+6)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)

Skills Perception +6, Stealth +3

Damage Resistances piercing and slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't adamantite

Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages Terran

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Earth Glide. The xorn can burrow through nonmagical, unworked earth and stone. While doing so, the xorn doesn't disturb the material it moves through.

Stone Camouflage. The xorn has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to hide in rocky terrain.

Treasure Sense. The xorn can pinpoint, by scent, the location of precious metals and stones, such as coins and gems, within 60 feet of it.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The xorn makes three claw attacks and one bite attack.

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

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (3d6 + 3) piercing damage.

APPENDIX 1: INFERNAL RESURGENCE (BONUS OBJECTIVE A)

Estimated Duration: 1 hour

BETWEEN A ROCK AND A HARD PLACE

Unable to breach the wards, General Everbleed has ordered an indebted dao named Ma'taz Ardu to dig a passage.

BONUS OBJECTIVE A

Defeating the dao, the devils, and collapsing their tunnel is **Bonus Objective A**.

CREATURE INFORMATION

The stone wall of the tunnel the characters are passing through collapses suddenly, and an **earth elemental** bursts through the tunnel wall, followed by a **xorn**, Ma'taz (a **dao**), two **spined devils**, three **imps**, and several **goblins**. The goblins aren't a threat to the characters so their number isn't relevant, but characters who participated in DDAL09-06 *Infernal Insurgency* recognize these as goblins similar to those encountered at the Dump.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter:

- **Very Weak:** Remove all creatures except the **dao** and the **earth elemental**.
- **Weak:** Remove the **spined devils** and **xorn**.
- **Strong:** Add a **xorn**.
- **Very Strong:** Add two **xorns** and a **spined devil**.

The unimpressed dao frowns at the characters. He nods at the devils and goblins, and the creatures advance, weapons drawn.

PLAYING THE PILLARS

Here are some suggestions for this encounter:

Combat. The dao immediately leads the devils and goblins into battle, seeking to wipe out the characters so he can continue his task.

Exploration. The collapsed wall has caused some instability. The characters could search for a way to cause a cave-in and bury their foes under the rubble.

Social. Though Ma'taz Ardu is bound to complete a task for General Everbleed, he despises being beholden to General Everbleed and would be happy to find a way out of completing this task. With some persuasion and perhaps a deal advantageous to Ma'taz, he might be convinced to abandon his band of devils. After all, he was sent to find a way to the tomb of the Bloody Hooves, and technically the characters have found such a path.



BLOCKING THE EXIT

However the encounter ends, the characters are now faced with a tunnel that leads directly from the Canyon of Screams to them. Since it winds past the various wards and traps set by the Bloody Hooves as they retreated into these tunnels, any creature could use this tunnel to enter the caverns at any moment.

Characters should work together to collapse the tunnel and prevent more devils from using it. They should note that simply filling the hole isn't enough—the devils could simply dig through that wall again. They must find a way to collapse the entire tunnel, or at least enough of it that it's no longer a viable option for the devils waiting to use it.

Cave-In. One option is to cause a cave-in large enough to render this path unusable. This would likely require the use of a spell such as *erupting earth* or *move earth*. Or, if the characters can cause an explosion, they may be able to damage the stability of the tunnel enough to fill it with rubble.

Wards and Traps. In addition to filling the tunnel with rocks and rubble, the characters could follow the Bloody Hooves' example and set up wards and traps. They would need to ensure, however, that the traps will keep the devils out, or they'll risk being attacked or outpaced by fiends.

There are many options to fill the tunnel, and player creativity and ingenuity should be rewarded. Since the tunnel was made in a rush, any appropriate skill checks to collapse the tunnel have a DC of 14.

APPENDIX 2: THE BLOODY HOOVES RIDE (BONUS OBJECTIVE B)

Estimated Duration: 1 hour

REDEMPTION, THE HARD WAY

Dara revives the fallen Bloody Hooves, but they are disheartened by the news of Zariel's fall. After learning how badly they failed, the Bloody Hooves no longer wish to fight for anyone. The characters must appeal to their faith and honor to secure their aid.

BONUS OBJECTIVE B

Convincing the despondent Bloody Hooves to help Elturel is Bonus Objective B.

DEVILS ON THE HORIZON

After learning of Zariel's fall, the Bloody Hooves feel lost. War brought them here and lost them Zariel, and they have no desire to enter this new fight against their former leader. Unsure of what to do next, they sit and try to recover, but they are listless, and even Sir Gidor feels unsure of her mission. With Zariel's fall on their minds, the Bloody Hooves don't wish to take on another quest, despite Dara's explanation of the situation in Elturel. Many Hellriders gave up and deserted the fight, leaving the Bloody Hooves behind, and now the Bloody Hooves wonder if they should do the same.

Dara, a beacon of hope and faith to them now, suggests that Sir Gidor try to encourage her people to participate in some sort of contest to boost their spirits and remind them of the glory and honor of fighting for those who can't defend themselves, and Sir Gidor requests the characters' help.

With devils everywhere and the clerics still to be rescued, Sir Gidor suggests a plan designed to both bolster the troops' spirits and keep the tunnels safe from the devils: setting up new traps. The Bloody Hooves set as many wards and traps as they could when they retreated, but the devils searching for them seem to be finding ways around or through the obstacles.

This mission might also help convince the Bloody Hooves that they could continue their quest and leave these caverns, despite knowing that many of their fallen comrades' remains still lie here.

SETTING THE TRAPS

Sir Gidor doesn't tell the party what traps to set, as the creativity and effectiveness of the traps are part of the contest. If pressed, however, she does point out some of the random debris from skirmishes and their retreat in the tunnels. There are random weapons, heavy rocks, and more items that could be useful. And if spellcasters can set wards that prevent devils from passing, even better.

The characters should get creative with their traps. Each character has time to attempt two traps, which require a successful DC 16 ability check using an appropriate skill to set it up, and a successful DC 18 Wisdom (Survival) check to conceal.



Each check can only be made once; on a failure, the characters either fail to set the trap properly or fail to hide it. Sir Gidor scores each trap on its effectiveness and how well it's hidden. Roll checks for the Bloody Hooves and tally up the scores of each group using the following table.

TRAP SCORES

Trap	Points
Trap or ward that would injure or restrain an enemy	1 point
Trap or ward that would kill or permanently incapacitate an enemy	2 points
Trap successfully hidden	1 point

A loss for the Bloody Hooves reminds them of the importance of defending others, and the excitement of competition reminds them they still have work to do.

If the Bloody Hooves win, they become somewhat rowdy and excited, exclaiming that they've "still got it," at which point Sir Gidor reminds them it's time to put their skills to good use.

DEVILS IN THE DETAILS

Before the Bloody Hooves can get too excited and take off on their journey to help Elturel, **bearded devils** (one per character) who were already traveling through the tunnels and saw the traps as the two groups set them, arrive and attack.

The presence of the devils serves as yet another reminder of what's at stake and how far Zariel has fallen. The Bloody Hooves fear for the safety of Elturel and know they can once again fight for good and justice—though this time they face Zariel on the battlefield instead of fighting alongside her.

The Bloody Hooves agree to take on the new quest of defending Elturel after Dara revives their clerics, which takes place in DDAL09-16 *Honors Unforeseen*.

APPENDIX 3: CHARACTER REWARDS

If found during the adventure, the characters can keep the following magic items; it's suggested that you print off enough copies of this page to be able to give one to each of your players (crossing out rewards they didn't receive during the session):

RED DRAGON SCALE MAIL

Armor (scale mail), very rare (requires attunement)

Dragon scale mail made of the scales of a red dragon. While wearing this armor, you gain a +1 bonus to AC, you have advantage on saving throws against the Frightful Presence and breath weapons of dragons, and you have resistance to fire damage.

Additionally, you can focus your senses as an action to magically discern the distance and direction of the closest red dragon within 30 miles of you. This special action can't be used again until the next dawn. This item is found in the *Basic Rules*.

This was once the armor of Carmine, an orc paladin of the Bloody Hooves. She didn't survive into the final set of caverns to have her soul entombed to wait for Zariel's return.

HELM OF TELEPATHY

Wondrous Item, uncommon (requires attunement)

While wearing this helm, you can use an action to cast the *detect thoughts* spell (save DC 13) from it. As long as you maintain concentration on the spell, you can use a bonus action to send a telepathic message to a creature you are focused on. It can reply—using a bonus action to do so—while your focus on it continues.

While focusing on a creature with *detect thoughts*, you can use an action to cast the *suggestion* spell (save DC 13) from the helm on that creature. Once used, the *suggestion* property can't be used again until the next dawn. This item is found in the *Basic Rules*.

This helm once belonged to Nyave, Sir Gidor's closest and most trusted friend.

APPENDIX 4: STORY REWARDS

The characters receive the *ward of faithfulness* from Sir Gidor for finding and reviving the Bloody Hooves.

FAITH AND TRUST

You've successfully retrieved the wards of faithfulness from the resting place of the Bloody Hooves.

APPENDIX 5: DUNGEON MASTER TIPS

To DM an adventure, you **must** have 3 to 7 players—each with their own character within the adventure's level range (see Adventure Primer). Characters playing in a **hardcover** adventure may continue to play to but if they play a different hardcover adventure, they **can't return** to the first if outside its level range.

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PREPARING THE ADVENTURE

Before you start play, consider the following:

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

Players can play an adventure they previously played as a Player or Dungeon Master but may only play it once with a given character. Ensure each player has their character's adventure logsheet (if not, get one from the organizer) with their starting values for level, magic items, gold and downtime days. These are updated at the conclusion of the session. The adventure information and your information are added at the end of the adventure session—whether the completed the adventure or not.

Each player is responsible for maintaining an accurate logsheet. If you have time, you can do a quick scan of a player's character sheet to ensure that nothing looks out of order. If you see magic items of very high rarities or strange arrays of ability scores, you can ask players to provide documentation for the irregularities. If they cannot, feel free to restrict item use or ask them to use a standard ability score array.

Point players to the *D&D Adventurers League Players Guide* for reference. If players wish to spend downtime days and it's the beginning of an adventure or episode, they can declare their activity and spend the days now, or they can do so at the end of the adventure or episode. Players should select their characters' spells and other daily options prior to the start of the adventure, unless the adventure specifies otherwise. Feel free to reread the adventure description to help give players hints about what they might face.

ADJUSTING THIS ADVENTURE

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

DETERMINING PARTY STRENGTH

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