

RED HAND OF DOOM

General Notes on this Conversion

This conversion was done by Ben Mazur (ben.mazur@gmail.com), aka Benimoto on ENWorld and some other message boards. Some creature conversions and other help was contributed by Boarstorm and Ketrys on ENWorld.

The purpose of this conversion document is to allow running the Red Hand of Doom adventure with D&D 4e rules. This document only supplements the adventure—it is assumed that you have a physical copy of the module. Due to the size of the adventure, some on-the-fly conversion will still be necessary. This module only covers major, experience-bearing encounters and skill checks. In many cases, you will have to covert some skill checks concerning background detail into their 4e skill equivalents. Additionally, you may have to improvise some details during skill challenges.

Preference is given to using monsters out of the Monster Manual when possible. This may mean that PCs are frequently fighting monsters up to 4 levels higher or lower than their own level. If your PCs are having trouble with these monsters, consider using the guideline for increasing or decreasing level given in the Dungeon Master's Guide (DMG 174).

The beast-like spawn of Tiamat are easy to convert, but the blackspawn raiders are trickier. Since they are essentially dragon-men, I just used dragonborn from the Monster Manual. You can describe them as normal dragonborn with a black dragon heritage, or as something more bestial, resembling normal dragonborn as orcs or gnolls resemble humans. Either way, they deal acid instead of fire damage with their breath weapons in all instances.

Where I give statistics for destroying an object, such as Skull Gorge bridge, I use level-appropriate ACs as used in Keep on the Shadowfell instead of the insignificant ones given in the DMG. It is my opinion that damaging an object is not just a matter of making contact, but of hitting the right spot, similar to damaging a creature.

This conversion is intended for a group of 5 6th level characters, using standard XP rules, and will take them to midway level 12 if they do well in the adventure. Each part mentions at the beginning what level group it is intended for. If your group is lower-level, misses critical events or quests, or otherwise falls behind consider using random encounters to supplement their XP totals.

PART 1: The Witchwood

Notes on Part 1

This part is intended for characters just starting 6th level and will take them to midway through 7th level.

Quest: Vault of Vraath Keep: This conversion assumes you are using the Vault of Vraath Keep hook from page 5. You can

inform the players that finding the vault is a level 7 major quest, worth 1,500 XP. You can give them more hooks and more quests, especially if they could use the extra XP, but this conversion assumes just the quest hook.

Marauder Attack: level 9, 2,058 XP

- Zarr, Doom Hand cleric (level 5 soldier) (custom)
- Uth-lar, hobgoblin bladebearer (level 5 skirmisher) (custom)
- 12 hobgoblin warriors (level 8 minion) (MM 138)
- 2 hell hounds (level 7 brute) (MM 160)

Setup: Characters are assumed to be using their passive Perception skill when traveling. Those not making a DC 15 check are considered surprised at the beginning of the combat.

Tactics: The only major change in tactics is that Zarr no longer has the same abilities. Note that the hell hound has a damaging aura, and the hobgoblins should avoid being damaged.

Treasure: 1 parcel

Notes: As the module mentions, this is a difficult encounter, but it is within the range the DMG suggests for “hard” encounters. Be sure to adjust it for your own party. The DC to identify Zarr's holy symbol of Tiamat is the same, DC 15. Some minor information on Tiamat can be found in the DMG, page 163.

Riding Into Town: 200 XP

- Minor skill challenge or
- 1 town guard (level 3 soldier) (MM 163)
- 3 human rabble (level 2 minion) (MM 163)

Interaction: You could treat interacting with the guards as a minor skill challenge, complexity 1 (4 successes before 2 failures) with easy (13) and moderate DCs (17) depending on the PCs' general tone. Alternately, feel free to resolve the whole encounter with roleplaying. If the PCs fail, they may have to sneak into town and risk being chased out of town by guards until they can gain the support of a prominent town citizen.

Jorr's Cabin: 200 XP

- Minor skill challenge or
- 1 human berzerker (level 4 brute) (MM163)

Notes: Treat this encounter similarly to the encounter with the town guards, but PCs mentioning their intention to deal with the goblins automatically win the encounter.

The Witchwood: level 4-9, variable XP

Notes: No random encounters are necessary by these conversion guidelines, but if your party is underleveled or you just want to fight something, a few random encounters couldn't hurt. Make your own encounters, modify, or use these suggested ones:

- shambling mound encounter (level 9, XP 1,900) (MM 232)
- vine horror encounter (level 8, XP 1,900) (MM 260)

- owlbear encounter (level 7, XP 1,650) (MM 212)
- stirge encounter (level 7, XP 1,500) (MM 248)
- bear encounter (level 6, XP 1,250) (MM 29)
- harpy encounter (level 6, XP 1,250) (MM 154)
- goblin outriders (same as in Vraath Keep stables)
- boar encounter (level 5, XP 1,150) (MM 39)
- ettercap encounter (level 4, XP 900) (MM 107)

Causeway: level 6, 1,250 XP

- 1 young hydra (level 6 solo brute) (custom)

Combat: The hydra hides in a similar fashion. It has improved cover, and a +5 Stealth modifier. Roll the hydra's stealth check. If the PCs beat its stealth check by less than 10, they see only a reptilian head in the water in the wagon. If they beat it by 10 or more, they notice the whole hydra.

Tactics: The hydra fights with the benefit of cover from the water, if possible. It climbs out onto the causeway only if it cannot reach its opponents any other way. It flees if reduced below 50 hit points.

Treasure: 1 parcel

Notes: Several hydras have been posted in the thread which should do nicely here.

Vraath Keep

Most of the details about Vraath Keep and the goblin activity within should work well. See the notes on the stables for the change in what kind of mounts the goblins have and what tracks they might leave.

In the story of the keep, it mentions the Twistusks, a clan of forest giants. One possibility in the 4e conversion is that the Twistusks are a clan of fomorians or cyclopes, stranded from the feywild by a planar accident. This change is also noted in the conversion for Old Wracklegnaw below.

Gardner's Shack: level 6, 200 XP

- Decrepit Shack trap!

Notes: I'm not going to bother with a full trap writeup here. It takes a Perception check, DC 20 to notice the hazard. At the end of each round in which a character stands in the shack, make a saving throw for the shack with a -2 modifier for each creature beyond the first. Failure means it collapses, attacking all within it at +9 vs Reflex for 1d10+4 damage.

Wolf Stables: level 6, 1,200 XP

- 3 dire wolves (level 5 skirmisher) (MM 264) or 3 rage drakes (level 5 brute) (MM 92)
- 3 goblin riders (level 5 skirmisher) (custom)

Creatures: There is one more pair of rider and mount here. The mounts are now large. See the notes below

Tactics: The goblins prefer to fight from wolfback (or drakeback) and do what they can to get mounted. The hobgoblins in the barracks need to make an effective Perception check of DC 22 (or 12 if the fight reaches into the courtyard), counting their distance and the walls between them.

Notes: Dire wolves are large and lack the association with goblins, but they fit well otherwise. Alternately, the goblins

could ride rage drakes. That would be more dragonny, and foreshadow the stormlizards in part 4. On the minus side it might ramp up the fantasy quotient too fast. The transition from low-fantasy humanoids to high fantasy dragons and demons is a great feature of this adventure otherwise.

Spike-littered nest: level 5, 1,000 XP

- 1 mantichore (level 10 elite skirmisher) (MM 184)

Tactics: The mantichore just watches the fight unless attacked or unless Koth orders it onto battle. It prefers to stay on the roof, bombarding the party with spikes and spike volleys indefinitely. If the adventurers put up a decent ranged fight and it is alone, it alerts any hobgoblins it can.

Notes: A single level 10 elite is a workable but not optimal fight for a 6th level party. Its defenses and attacks may be very high compared to the party capabilities. If it is spoiling this fight, remember that it is not particularly committed to the fight. It may return to simply watching if the party is having difficulty hitting it, or it may just fly off, particularly if it is bloodied.

Barracks: level 6, 1,350 XP

- Karkilan, minotaur fighter (level 7 elite brute) (custom)
- 5 hobgoblin soldiers (level 3 soldier) (MM 139)

Creatures: There are 5 soldiers now. Karkilan is medium-sized.

Tactics: Hobgoblins without their armor and shields have a 14 AC and lose their phalanx fighting ability. Otherwise, tactics work as outlined in the module.

Treasure: 1 parcel

Wyrmlord Koth's Quarters: level 6, 1,200 XP

- Wyrmlord Koth, bugbear wizard (level 7 elite controller) (custom)*
- 4 imps (level 3 lurker) (MM 63)

Creatures: Koth now has a small flock of imps accompanying him.

Tactics: Koth has no need for buffing spells or wands. If he decides fleeing is a better idea, he has no potions of fly, but is fast as an elf through the woods. He flees to Skull Gorge Bridge as mentioned in the module.

Treasure: 1 parcel

Notes: It is a Perception check, DC 25 to notice the secret door here.

Vraath Vault

Quest: Finding the vault finishes the Vault of Vraath Keep, which may be used as an adventure hook. If the PCs are on this quest, they earn the reward: 1,500 XP.

Treasure: 6 parcels

Notes: The iron bars have 30 hit points, AC 18, Defenses 6 resist all 10 and Break DC 23.

Old Wracklegnaw: level 7, 1,500 XP

- Skill challenge or

- Old Wracklegnaw, venerable fomorian warrior (MM 110, see notes)

Creatures: One possibility for Old Wracklegnaw is that he is an ancient Fomorian, one of a small clan that found their way onto the prime material plane almost two centuries ago. Modify the read-aloud text to reflect his pale, twisted, deformed body. In this case, his combat statistics would be similar to the fomorian warrior (MM 110), but with a -10 to all defenses, -5 to attacks and damage, and 252 hit points. His long years have mellowed him out some and his alignment is now best specified as unaligned. He would be roughly a level 7 challenge by himself.

If the adventurers take the better route of negotiation, this becomes a skill challenge.

Setup: This ancient creature seems threatening, but he has not yet attacked you. Perhaps you can not only save your skins, but turn the situation against your enemies?

Level: 7.

Complexity: 3 (requires 8 successes before 4 failures).

Primary Skills: Diplomacy, History, Insight.

Bluff (hard DCs): You try to convince Wracklegnaw using false pretenses, but he is skeptical and stoic in response.

Diplomacy (moderate DCs): You flatter Wracklegnaw and ask forthrightly for his aid. He is intrigued that he someone might actually want his help.

History (moderate DCs): You recall the might of the Twistusks' old hunting parties. Perhaps there is about to be an abundance of "game".

Insight (easy DCs): You empathize with the old giant. Old Wracklegnaw is an easy read. He longs for one last hunt and one last opportunity to be feared. The first use of this skill reveals the special use of the gauntlet from the keep.

Intimidate (hard DCs): You attempt to influence Wracklegnaw through threats. At the end of his life, it takes more than callow threats of violence to sway him and there is a good chance that failing at an intimidation attempts will simply cause Old Wracklegnaw to attack.

Special: Characters sharing his meal gain a +2 to their checks. Offering Old Wracklegnaw the spiked gauntlet from Vraath Keep instantly earns 3 successes.

Success: Wracklegnaw will do what he can against the Red Hand horde. This includes rounding up his surviving allies and kin from the Wyrmsmoke foothills.

Failure: If the PCs have at least 4 successes and they have not tried to intimidate Wracklegnaw, he simply sends them away, and they earn 1,000 XP for avoiding a fight. Otherwise, he attacks with the intent of driving them out of his campsite and possibly obtaining more meat for his larder.

Skull Gorge Bridge: level 10, 2,504 + 1,500 XP

Quest: Destroy the Bridge: When the PCs see Skull Gorge bridge, or figure out its significance from the map, give them a quest to destroy it. This is a major, level 8 quest, worth 1,500 XP.

- Ozyrrandion, young green dragon (level 5 solo skirmisher) (MM 80)
- 2 hell hounds (level 7 brute) (MM 160)
- 1 hobgoblin commander (level 5 soldier) (MM 140)
- 8 hobgoblin warriors w/longbows (level 8 minion) (MM

138)

Creatures: The hobgoblin archers are minions with the same stats as the hobgoblin warriors the PCs encountered in the marauder attack. They are equipped with longbows with essentially the same stats as their longswords: Ranged 20/40 +10 vs. AC; 6 damage. Wyrmlord Koth may also be here if he has fled from Vraath Keep, making the fight even more difficult. Ozyrrandion is large, of course.

If you want to use "real" archers, use the stats for hobgoblin archers (MM 139), but be aware that this makes the encounter a 3000 XP level 11 encounter. That's probably only barely suitable for a fully-rested level 7 party by the DMG guidelines, but this is supposed to be a very difficult fight.

Tactics: The hell hounds and hobgoblins use essentially the tactics the module recommends. Ozyrrandion uses flyby attacks and his breath weapon to weaken the party before engaging in melee. Using his luring glare to send PCs over the bridge railings is a very dangerous tactic, but one he will use if the PCs are making progress on destroying the bridge. Characters next to the gorge when the bridge is destroyed can make a saving throw to land prone in a safe area along the side. Those on the bridge when it collapses, fall. See the section below about being falling off the bridge.

Taking Out the Bridge: This is no easier a task in 4e. See specific details below. If the necessary damage is dealt (destroying the weak spot, 2 adjacent bridge sections, or both towers on one end), the bridge comes down one round later. A Perception check, DC 10 is needed to notice the imminent collapse.

Bridge Walkway (5-foot section): Each section has 300 hit points, AC 20, Defenses 18, resist all 5 and Break DC 43. The weak spot can be found with a DC 25 Perception check, and has 40 hit points.

Guard Tower (5-foot section): Each section has 150 hit points, AC 20, Defenses 18, resist all 5 and Break DC 35.

Falling Off the Bridge: Creatures falling or being pushed the bridge are allowed a saving throw to remain prone on the last intact square of bridge they previously occupied. In sections with an intact railing, characters receive a +5 on this saving throw. A fall deals damage depending on where on the bridge the falling character was. A character above one of the sloping sides of the gorge takes 7d10 damage. A falling character above the water can make a saving throw. Success allows the character to choose whether he lands in the water or on the rocks. Otherwise, determine it randomly. Falling into the water deals 5d10 + 25 damage and the character is now in the water, being washed downstream. Falling onto the rocks deals 5d10 + 50 damage. This is well above the survivable amounts of damage for PCs of the appropriate level so ummm... don't fall.

Treasure: 1 parcel.

Quest XP: As mentioned above, destroying the bridge is worth 1,500 XP as a major quest reward.

Goblin Raid: level 7, 1,500 XP

- 3 dire wolves (level 5 skirmisher) (MM 264) or 3 rage drakes (level 5 brute) (MM 92)
- 3 goblin riders (level 5 skirmisher) (custom)
- 1 hell hound (level 7 brute) (MM 160)

Second Wave: level 8, 1,704 XP

- 2 Kulkor Zuul war adepts (level 10 artillery) (custom)
- 8 hobgoblin warriors (level 8 minion) (MM 138)

Tactics: The war adepts are much simpler now, but the overall tactics of the raiders remain the same.

Notes: Again, the goblins could ride rage drakes instead. As the module mentions, you could re-use this encounter several times with modifications for bloodthirsty groups of players.

Chimera Attack: level 7, 1,600 XP

- 2 blackspawn raiders (dragonborn gladiators) (level 10 soldier) (MM 86)
- 2 griffons (level 7 brute) (MM 147)

Creatures: A chimera is a level 15 elite monster in 4e, clearly inappropriate for this stage of the adventure. You could customize the chimera to make it a lower-level solo, or just follow these recommendations and have the attack be from blackspawn raiders mounted on griffons. Alternately, you could re-run the goblin raid encounter with some changes. (A worg instead of a hell hound, blood ghost berserkers or kulkor zuul mindbenders instead of the war adepts, etc.)

Tactics: The dragonborn are thirsty for combat, and they dismount and fight from the ground as the griffons charge from the air.

Desperate Council: level 7, up to 1,500 XP

This can play out as a complicated skill challenge. The initial setup assumes that the PCs are trying to convince the council to flee, but they will have to take this position on their own. There are several courses of action the PCs could argue for.

Setup: To convince the townsfolk to take your preferred course of action, you will have to first convince several hard-headed members of the town council.

Level: 7 (easy DC 15, moderate DC 19, hard DC 23)

Complexity: 5 (requires 12 successes before 6 failures). There are 5 NPCs present, as described in the module. Some of the NPCs may already support the PCs' position and not need to be convinced. The PCs could address 2-3 of their attempts towards each reluctant NPC, and 2-3 towards the group in general.

Primary Skills: Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate, Streetwise.

Bluff (moderate DCs): You try to encourage the NPC to support your position using false pretenses.

Diplomacy (moderate DCs): You argue your position with reason and emotional appeal.

History (hard DCs): You remind the council of similar historical events which support your position. Most will just believe that their particular circumstance is different unless you think of a particularly pertinent example.

Insight (hard DCs): You empathize with the NPC and try to gain their support. This will generally have the effect of reinforcing their existing position but can occasionally sway an opinion.

Intimidate (hard DCs): You threaten the NPC either directly or indirectly. It is counterproductive to intimidate Delora or Soranna, and intimidating these two counts as a failure.

Streetwise (moderate DCs): You attempt to convince your target using information you've gained in the community.

Special: Certain circumstances may count as automatic successes. PCs using Koth's map and notes in support of their position is an automatic success. If Jorr saw the horde's might at Cinder Hill, his testimony counts as two successes. If the PCs fought off the goblin raid or raider attack, each victory counts as a success.

Success: The council decides to back your course of action. See the module for the following events depending on if the PCs advocated fighting, evacuation or talking with the horde. Award 1,000 XP for success and 500 extra XP if the PCs advocated evacuation.

Failure: If the PCs fail to convince the council of anything, the council sends out a delegation to negotiate with the horde. The delegation is ignored and the horde attacks.

Massacre at Drellin's Ferry

If the PCs try to stand up to the horde, run this event. Basically, send increasing waves of hobgoblins at the adventurers until they either get the idea or die.

First Wave: level 9, 2,000 XP

- 2 manticores (level 10 elite skirmisher) (MM 184)

Second Wave: level 11, 2,900 XP

- 3 griffons (level 7 brute) (MM 147)
- 2 wyverns (level 10 skirmisher) (MM 268)
- 2 Kulkor Zuul war adepts (level 10 artillery) (custom)

Third Wave: level 14, 4,550 XP

- Abithrax, young adult red dragon (level 12 solo soldier) (custom, though similar to MM 82-83)
- 3 doom fist monks (level 8 skirmisher)

Assault Barge: level 14, 5,360 XP

- 3 Blood Ghost berserkers (level 7 brute) (custom)
- Kulkor Zuul war adept (level 10 artillery) (custom)
- 2 Doom Hand clerics (level 5 soldier) (custom)
- 4 hell hounds (level 7 brute) (MM 160)
- 3 hobgoblin bladebearers (level 5 skirmisher) (custom)
- 20 hobgoblin warriors (level 8 minion) (MM 138)

Total XP for Part 1

20,466 XP without random encounters or Massacre at Drellin's Ferry

Notes: The party should be midway through level 7 if they've done well in this part.

PART 2: The Ruins of Rhest

Notes on Part 2

PCs who started part 1 at level 6 should be midway through level 7 when they start this part. They should be level 9 (or close to it) by the end of this part.

The Elsir War

This conversion document assumes that you run all of the Elsir War events except Captured! and Into the Horde. The PCs are probably eager to strike at the Red Hand forces after

the events of part 1, so feel free to save most of the events until after the main action of this part. If you want specific advice, run Easy Skirmish as the PCs head towards one of the roadblocks on the way to Rhest. Run Dirty Rotten Looters, Mercenary Gold, the Not-So-Sick Spy and Barghest Reavers after they return from the ruins of Rhest at the end of this part. Run Marked For Death after they return from the Ghostlord's lair in part 3, but before they reach Brindol for part 4.

If your PCs are above the recommended levels for each part, you may not need to run these. If they are below the recommended level, feel free to add some more random encounters to earn them more XP.

Easy Skirmish: level 6, 1,204 XP

- 1 hobgoblin bladebearer (level 5 skirmisher) (custom)
- 1 hell hound (level 7 brute) (MM 160)
- 8 hobgoblin warriors (level 8 minion) (MM 138)

Tactics: The hobgoblin warriors are equipped with longbows with essentially the same stats as their longswords: Ranged 20/40 +10 vs. AC; 6 damage. Their tactics play out as described the module.

Dirty Rotten Looters: level 7, 1,350 XP

- 4 halfling prowlers (level 6 skirmisher) (MM 153)
- 1 eladrin twilight incanter (level 8 controller) (MM 102)

Creatures: The Crimson Tiger thugs are halflings now, and they are led by an eladrin.

Tactics: The halflings attempt to flee when bloodied. Once at least two flee, the whole group tries to escape.

Mercenary Gold: level 8, 1,750 XP

- 1 ettin marauder (level 10 elite soldier) (MM 108)
- 5 goblin skullcleavers (level 3 brute) (MM 137)

Creatures: There is one less ettin and one more goblin.

Tactics: The goblins have no javelins, so they will reluctantly engage in melee when the ettin does.

Treasure: 6,000 gold, a princely sum as described in the module.

Notes: But, the right thing to do is to return that gold and earn valuable victory points!

The Not-So-Sick Spy: level 8, 1,750 XP

- 1 bog hag (level 10 skirmisher) (MM 150)
- 2 human berserkers (level 4 brute) (MM163)
- 12 human lackeys (level 7 minion) (MM 162)

Creatures: Poor Miha is a hag now, making the awesome art useless. Give her skill training and skill focus in Bluff, making her modifier +15. If a fight breaks out, a small mob rises to defend Miha. The PCs may be able to calm the mob as a skill challenge even as they fight Miha.

Tactics: Miha uses the tactics suggested for a bog hag in the Monster Manual.

Barghest Reavers: level 8, 1,728 XP

- 3 worgs (level 9 brute) (MM 265)
- 6 hobgoblin warriors (level 8 minion) (MM 138)

Creatures: Due to the lack of barghests in the Monster Manual, we've substituted worgs, which are about at the right level range. The hobgoblin warriors are equipped with longbows with essentially the same stats as their longswords: Ranged 20/40 +10 vs. AC; 6 damage.

Tactics: Lay the encounter out in the same fashion, but since the worgs are much simpler melee combatants than 3e barghests, they will simply engage the adventurers without using any spell-like abilities.

Notes: Instead of 3 worgs, you could use 5 spined devils (MM 66) for a more supernatural encounter.

Marked For Death: level 12, 3,390 XP

- 2 howling hags (level 7 controller) (MM 150)
- 4 blackspawn raiders (dragonborn gladiators) (level 10 soldier) (MM 86)
- 1 ogre skirmisher (level 8 brute) (MM 199)
- 5 hobgoblin warriors (level 8 minion) (MM 138)

Creatures: The greater barghests have been replaced by howling hags.

Tactics: The setup for this encounter should work as written. While there is no time spent buffing, the hags and blackspawn will hide in an attempt to ambush the adventurers. The hags move just close enough to the PCs to use their shriek of pain and howl attacks, while trying to stay out of melee.

Notes: Saving this for a dull point in part 3 might be a good idea. Perhaps spring this on the PCs at the end of part 3 as the reach civilization after dealing with the Ghostlord. Since this comes later in the adventure, when the PCs will likely be level 9 or 10, it has been increased to a level 12 encounter.

Total XP

11,172 XP for these optional encounters.

Road Blockade: level 7, 1,628 XP

- 2 ogre skirmisher (level 8 brute) (MM 199)
- 2 hobgoblin commanders (level 5 soldier) (MM 140)
- 6 hobgoblin warriors (level 8 minion) (MM 138)

Combat: As the PCs approach, if they roll under a 10 on their Stealth checks, the blockade lookouts will notice them.

Tactics: There is a reduced opportunity for goblin slapstick, since the minions here will never take enough damage to panic but not kill them. The ladder is DC 0 and there are no rules for accelerated climbing, meaning it is impossible to fall off the ladder.

Spawn of Tiamat: level 7, 1,600 XP

- 1 greenspawn razorfiend (level 10 elite skirmisher) (custom)
- 1 greenscale marsh mystic (level 6 controller) (MM 179)
- 2 greenscale hunter (level 4 skirmisher) (MM 178)

Creatures: Several lizardfolk are hunting nearby and do not hesitate to join the battle, hoping to take down PCs weakened by the greenspawn. The razorfiend is indifferent to the lizardfolk's presence in the battle and is much more likely to attack the PCs, who are more interesting, wealthier and tastier than lizardfolk.

Tactics: The razorfiend uses its leap attack to reach weaker PCs in the back ranks. The lizardfolk stay on the edges of the combat, hoping to pick off weakened PCs.

Treasure: 2 parcels.

Notes: If the lizardfolk are caught and interrogated, they can tell the PCs of the Red Hand's presence in Rhest, and of their black dragon god, Regiarix.

Starsong Hill

Starsong Hill is an opportunity to interact with the Tiri Kitor. Feel free to roleplay and improvise but be aware that it is important to determine how the 4 elves mentioned under the "important people" heading think of the party.

Quest: The Elf Alliance: When the PCs reach this point, you may make them aware that gaining the alliance of the Tiri Kitor against the Red Hand horde is a level 7 major quest, worth 1,500 XP.

Important People: The adventurers can impress some of the elves either with their deeds, or through skill challenges. All the skill challenges should be complexity 1 or 2, and run at the level of the party (7 or 8). The XP for these challenges is folded into the elf alliance quest.

Key skills for Killiar Arrowswift could be Insight, Athletics and Nature. Sellyria Starsinger could respond well to Arcana, Nature and Religion. Trellara Nightshadow is easy to impress, but if you want to make it a check, consider Bluff, Insight and Perception. Illian Snowmantle appears after the funeral and might respond well to Diplomacy, Religion, and History.

Lanikar's Funeral: As there is no more performance skill, Bluff, History, Insight or a raw Charisma check could determine the PCs reception at the funeral. Easy DCs are considered routine and Hard DCs are considered great. Keep a note of how many of each type of success each party member gets.

Random Encounters in the Blackfens: level 6-10, XP variable

At least one random encounter or clash with the lizardfolk may be necessary to have the party reach level 8 by the time they strike at the Rhest town hall. Suggested random encounters for the Blackfens include:

- chuul encounter (level 10, XP 2,500) (MM 43)
- shambling mound encounter (level 9, XP 1,900) (MM 232)
- grick encounter (level 8, XP 1,900) (MM 145)
- vine horror encounter (level 8, XP 1,900) (MM 260)
- greenspawn razorfiend(s) (see Spawn of Tiamat encounter, above) (level 7)
- carrion crawler encounter (level 7, XP 1,500) (MM 40)
- otyugh encounter (level 7, XP 1,450) (MM 211)
- stirge encounter (level 7, XP 1,500) (MM 248)
- harpy encounter (level 6, XP 1,250) (MM 154)

Lizardfolk Huts: level 6, 1,300 XP

- 1 greenscale marsh mystic (level 6 controller) (MM 179)
- 2 blackspawn bruisers (level 6 brute) (MM 179)
- 1 greenscale darter (level 5 lurker) (MM 178)
- 2 greenscale hunters (level 4 skirmisher) (MM 178)

Notes: Just using the Monster Manual lizardfolk encounter here. Feel free to switch around some of the monsters or replace some with visejaw crocodiles (MM 45) for variety if the party goes on a lizardfolk extermination rampage.

Bell Tower: level 7, 1,400 XP

- 4 hobgoblin archers (level 3 soldier) (MM 139)
- 4 more hobgoblin archers (level 3 soldier) (MM 139)
- Korkulan, hobgoblin bladebearer (level 5 solidier) (custom)

Creatures: Each wave has one more hobgoblin now.

Treasure: 2 parcels.

The Town Hall

Notes: The town hall can be a challenge to DM. There are a dozen separate creatures here, and combat with any one will alert several others. In 4e, there is almost no concept of a spell or attack that can take out a group of creatures before they have the opportunity to make noise and alert others. Thus, it is almost inevitable that the entire area will be on alert quickly and raring for battle. As a DM, you don't want to (nor is it even physically possible to) have every monster in the area attacking the PCs at once. Instead, throw the encounters at your party in small groups. 2 or even 3 encounters can be grouped into one larger encounter, and the notes sections in each encounter even mention which encounters go well together. Specifically, my advice is to merge the boardwalk and hatchery encounters, have Nurklenak and the ettin fight together, and to have Saarvith mounted on Regiarix.

Remember to allow the party the chance to rest occasionally. Even when the alarm is raised, the Red Hand troops may well occasionally wait 5 minutes to prepare or set up an ambush instead of all streaming out to attack.

The PCs should be 8th level by the time they reach here. If they are not, some random or lizardfolk encounters could be needed.

Roof: level 7, 1,400 XP

- 4 ogre skirmishers (level 8 skirmisher) (MM 199)

Tactics: As the module states, these ogres should quickly alert the other denizens of the town hall.

Boardwalk: level 5, 1,050 XP

- 3 ogre savages (level 8 brute) (MM 199)

Creatures: Added one more ogre.

Notes: Even so, 3 monsters is kind of on the low side of challenging, tactically. Unless the PCs are being total ninjas here, the ogres here get the razorfiend from the hatchery to join the fight, pronto.

Razorfiend Hatchery: level 5, 1,000 XP

- 1 greenspawn razorfiend (level 10 elite skirmisher) (custom)

Tactics: Any noise here will immediately draw the three ogres from the boardwalk into the fight, and eventually alert everything in the whole area.

Ettin Guardpost: level 5, 1,000 XP

- 1 ettin marauder (level 10 elite soldier) (MM 108)

Tactics: As soon as the mindbender Nurklenak is aware of combat in the area, he will open his door to this room. When the PCs engage the ettin, he will join the combat immediately. Even if he is not forewarned, Nurklenak will join the fight as soon as he is aware of it (probably on the first round the ettin acts). Any noise will alert Saarvith as well, who will mount up and join the combat in a few minutes.

Interrogation Room: level 5, 1,000 XP

- Nurklenak, hobgoblin mindbender (level 10 elite controller) (custom)

Tactics: Nurklenak should fight with his ettin rather than alone here. If cornered alone here, he will try to find any other allies to fight with rather than facing the party alone.

Treasure: 1 parcel.

Saarvith's HQ: level 3, 800 XP

- Wyrmlord Saarvith, goblin ranger (level 9 elite artillery) (custom)

Creatures: Sarvith's eagle is no longer a threat in combat, but could still be present as background detail.

Tactics: If the PCs have somehow killed everyone else but Saarvith, he surrenders. But, unless the PCs have been superhumanly fast or stealthy, Saarvith will not even be here. Instead, he will be readying his gear and mounting Regiarix in preparation for battle. See the section below for Saarvith's specific tactics when mounted.

Treasure: 2 parcels and a letter.

Notes: Opening the chest in Saarvith's room is a Thievery DC 30.

Regiarix's Lair: level 10, 2,500 XP

- Regiarix, young adult black dragon (level 10 solo lurker) (custom, but similar to MM 75)

Creatures: Regiarix is a large dragon now. Assuming the alarm is raised, which it almost surely should be, Saarvith is here on dragonback, lurking in ambush.

Tactics: If the alarm is raised, Regiarix and Saarvith will be lurking underwater, waiting to ambush the PCs. Since he has total concealment in the murky water, PCs beating his Stealth check (typically around 31) with their Perception checks only know that something is lurking in the water. They need to beat Regiarix's check by 10 or more to actually pinpoint him.

It doesn't matter much though since as soon as a reasonable concentration of PCs is in the room, Regiarix bursts from the water, surprising those failing their Perception checks. On the surprise round he breathes on the assembled PCs, spends an action point to use his cloud of darkness, and then uses his move action to fly up and out of the building, an action that those in the cloud of darkness will be entirely unaware of.

Outside, he begins circling the building, either flying low in the air or entirely underwater. If Saarvith is not with him, or falls off during the combat, Regiarix lands near him to pick him up. He prefers to stay in the air, using his breath weapon and Saarvith's arrows to pick off the PCs one by one. Only if the PCs have a clear ranged advantage, or if he has taken half their group out of the battle, does he land to engage in melee. His first round in melee, he uses another action point (if he has any left) to use his frightful presence, and then tears into the party with a double attack. He prefers to keep 1 square between him and the PCs so that Saarvith can fire without drawing opportunity attacks. If reduced below 100 hit points, he withdraws from combat and flies off, taking his rider with him if possible. This makes Regiarix the dragon voted "most likely to return in part 5."

Treasure: 3 parcels, including the Ghostlord's phylactery.

Notes: The party should be level 8 by the time they attack the town hall, but even so, Regiarix and Saarvith together are a high level 11 fight, a hard fight for that level. If you think they will overwhelm your party, feel free to decrease their levels, have them spend rounds lurking underwater, or suggest that your party withdraw and come back later.

Concluding Part 2

The PCs should have learned of the role of the Ghostlord and realized they have a powerful bargaining chip against him. It is a good time to use most of the "Elsir War" encounters as the PCs travel across the vale towards the Thornwaste. As the module mentions, this is a hook too good to miss. If the PCs somehow fail to find the phylactery, or fail to grasp its significance, perhaps some of the Tiri Kitor could clue them in.

Quest: Confront the Ghostlord: Once the PCs realize the significance of the Ghostlord, they get a quest. The objective of the quest is to revoke the Ghostlord's support of the Red Hand horde. The quest is a level 9 major quest, worth 2,000 XP.

As the PCs return to Starsong Hill, total up their alliance points, as described in the module. If they have 9 or more alliance points, they succeed in the Elf Alliance quest, earning 1,500 XP as mentioned in the description above. They may also earn the use of the giant owl mounts.

Total XP for Part 2

16,178 XP from the main part, plus 11,172 XP from the Elsir War encounters (which may not all be played specifically during this part).

Notes: As mentioned, the party should be level 8 by the time they hit the ruins of Rhest. They should be level 9 by the time they finish here (including the Elsir War encounters on the way to the Thornwaste).

PART 3: The Ghostlord's Lair

Notes on Part 3

PCs should be level 9 by the time they reach the Ghostlord's lair. Run some of the remaining Elsir War encounters as they travel through the vale, and top it off with a few random encounters in the Thornwaste if needed.

Ghostlord Lore

This should be about the same ***check DCs***

Random Encounters in the Thornwaste:

levels 8-11, variable XP

Some suggested random encounters for the Thornwaste include:

- basilisk encounter (level 11, XP 3,400) (MM 26)
- wight encounter (level 11, XP 3,100) (MM 263)
- ettin encounter (level 10, XP 2,550) (MM 108)
- skull lord encounter (level 10, XP 2,500) (MM 236)
- bulette encounter (level 9, XP 2,000) (MM 38)
- ghost dire lions (as in The Lion's Path, below, or custom)
- gargoyles encounter (level 9, XP 2,400) (MM 115)
- panther encounter (level 9, XP 2,000) (MM 213)
- troll encounter (level 9, XP 2,000) (MM 255)
- flameskull encounter (level 8, XP 1,750) (MM 109)

The Ghostlord's Lair

If the PCs approach at night, they may see the swirling shapes of the Ghostlord's failed attempts at creating ghost lions. You may use the stats for ghost lion vestiges to determine the interaction of powers such as turn undead, but the vestiges do not attack the PCs outside the lair.

Varanthian's Lair: level 10, 2,500 XP

- Varanthian (level 10 solo monster) (custom)

Tactics: The many-legged Varanthian fights as described in the module. She flees if reduced below 50 hit points.

Treasure: 2 parcels (sting of black pearls)

The Lion's Path: level 9, 2,000 XP

- 1 ghost dire lion (level 9 elite brute) (custom)
- 2 ghost lions (level 9 lurker) (custom)
- 4 ghost lion vestiges (level 9 minion) (custom)

Creatures: Several ghost lion vestiges are added to this encounter. Describe these as the poorly-formed swirling shapes from outside the lair, but here the presence of more powerful spirits incites them to attack.

Tactics: The lions all attack at once, instead of one at a time. Their roles influence their tactics in combat. The ghost dire lion stands off with the PCs, staring them down with its corrupting gaze. The weaker ghost lions move in and out of solid surfaces, striking suddenly and then withdrawing. The vestiges swirl around without much intelligence or purpose, attacking the closest targets.

Guardroom: level 9, 2,000 XP

- 5 Doom Fist monks (level 9 skirmisher) (custom)

Creatures: There are now five monks here, to make this more of an actual challenge.

Tactics: As in the module, if the PCs reach here without raising the alarm, one of the monks retreats to warn Wyrmlord Stormcaller.

Ooze Pit: level 7, 1,500 XP

- 1 grey ooze (level 7 solo brute) (custom)

Treasure: 1 parcel (iou stone?)

Notes: The ooze takes a Perception check, DC 30 to notice. The treasure is easier, DC 20.

Guest Quarters: level 11, 2,800 XP

- 3 Doom Fist monks (level 9 skirmisher) (custom)
- 2 Doom Hand clerics (level 5 soldier) (custom)
- Ulwai Stormcaller (level 11 elite artillery) (custom)

Tactics: These converted creatures have little to prepare themselves with, so the main difference between alert and surprised hobgoblins is their position. When surprised, Stormcaller will be by herself in room 12, and the monks and clerics will be positioned randomly in rooms 10 and 11.

When alerted, the monks will position themselves near the door in room 10, ready to engage intruders with their chains. The clerics will wait outside the door to Wyrmlord Stormcaller's room, and Stormcaller herself will hide just inside the door.

When combat starts, the monks will attack and attempt to constrict enemies with their chains. The clerics will use their *grip of doom* on enemies not wrapped in chains, or move into melee in subsequent rounds. Ulwai Stormcaller uses *fascinate* or *thunderstrike* every round she can, striking with her whip if neither ability is available. With her minor action, she uses *ventriloquism* to move dazed enemies into what she thinks might be undesirable positions, or uses *soothing song* to cure herself or her allies.

As in the module, Wyrmlord Stormcaller doesn't fight to the death. If things look grim, she uses the obscuring fog from her staff to obscure her escape. Her escape plans are the same as they are in the module. She knows the *phantom steed* ritual and will use it if she can remain hidden for 10 minutes.

Treasure: 1 parcel (huge statue)

Guest Quarters (Stormcaller's room)

Treasure: 2 parcels (unfinished opera)

The Pool of Rebirth: level 9, 2,100 XP

- 6 lesser bonedrinkers (level 9 soldier) (custom)

Notes: The pool attacks creatures in it each round at +14 vs. Fortitude. A hit causes a creature to lose a healing surge. When a creature with 0 remaining healing surges is affected, they fall unconscious.

Chamber of the Betrayed: level 13, 4,000 XP

- The Ghostlord (level 13 solo controller) (custom)

Notes: See Confronting the Ghostlord, below.

Shrine of Blight: level 8, 1,700 XP

- 1 ghost dire lion (level 9 elite brute) (custom)
- 2 vine horror spellfiends (level 7 artillery) (custom)
- 3 ghost lion vestiges (level 9 minion) (custom)

Creatures: The ghost dire lion lurks as described in the module, monitoring the room. When it attacks, two tangles of the magic-warped branches of the tree detach themselves, attacking as vine horror spellfiends. The combat attracts 4 ghost lion vestiges, who float in through the walls as the space presents itself.

Treasury

Treasure: 5 parcels

Confronting the Ghostlord: level 9, 4,000 + 2,000 XP

The PCs can either fight or negotiate with the Ghostlord. Negotiation is a skill challenge.

Setup: Simply to convince the Ghostlord to leave you alive would challenge the most courteous diplomat. To convince him to abandon his support for the horde, you must go beyond that.

Level: 9.

Complexity: 4 (requires 10 successes before 5 failures).

Primary Skills: Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate

Bluff (moderate DCs): You try to convince the Ghostlord using false pretenses.

Diplomacy (moderate DCs): You try to reason with or bargain with the Ghostlord.

Insight (moderate DC): You can sense the Ghostlord's obsessive, demanding curiosity about the whereabouts of his phylactery. Success with this skill reveals the circumstances governing Intimidate checks and the use of the phylactery (see Special, below). This skill can only be used for one success.

Intimidate (moderate DCs): You threaten the Ghostlord's most prized possession, his phylactery. You obviously cannot do this if you've already give it to him. Intimidating the Ghostlord by threatening him personally just causes him to attack.

Special: Giving the Ghostlord his phylactery back counts as 5 successes. If the Ghostlord knows that the PCs have his phylactery, they cannot win this challenge without giving it to him.

Success: The lich agrees to withdraw his support of the Red Hand horde, to the extent of helping to destroy any remaining hobgoblins here. Depending on the promises he made during the negotiation, he may even let the PCs help themselves to some of his treasure horde.

Failure: If the party has achieved at least 5 successes, the lich simply demands that the adventurers leave his lair at once. Otherwise, he attacks.

Quest: Success in either negotiation or combat earns full XP

for both defeating the lich and succeeding in the "Confront the Ghostlord" quest.

Concluding Part 3

As per the module. If you've saved the last Elsir War encounter, Marked for Death, spring that on the PCs as they travel back across the vale towards Brindol.

Total XP for Part 3

20,600 XP for non-random encounters, including finding and defeating the ooze.

Notes: The party should be level 10 by the time they finish this part.

PART 4: Enemy at the Gates

Notes on Part 4

This part is intended for early level 10 PCs, who will reach level 11 by the end of this part. The main action of this part all takes place during one day, which may be problematic from a healing and recovery perspective. Suggestions are given below for some unusual healing circumstances.

Audience With the Lords: level 10, 2,500 XP

- major skill challenge

Notes: Divide this up into 3 parts?

Battlefield Resources

Reinforcements: None are specifically necessary, but some are given in the Streets of Blood encounter. You may parcel out others if the party is having a rough time.

Magic Items: 6 treasure parcels, representing supplies given to the PCs for the battle.

Healing: Tredora Goldenbow has prayed for and received a special ritual from Pelor for the battle ahead. The ritual takes 10 minutes and will fully heal and refresh the PCs as if they had taken an extended rest. The components are rare, but she has enough to cast the ritual twice. (Note that if she is not at the cathedral, she will only be available able to cast it once.)

Notes: The "ritual of healing" is cheesy, but it's my best idea to allow the whole battle to be run in one night.

Save the Walls: level 11, 3,200 XP

- 4 hill giants (level 13 brute) (MM 121)

Creatures: Note that there is errata for the hill giants, bringing their club damage to ***

Tactics: The setup where the hill giants are throwing rocks 500 feet to the walls doesn't work in 4e. Consider putting the hill giants a mere 80 feet from the walls and describing the archers on the walls as too cowed by the boulders to lay down any significant fire or too inaccurate to hit the giant's AC.

When the PCs reach the giants, the walls have 700 hit points left, AC 3 (and concealment), Defenses 15 and Resist all 5. They will last the same 25 rounds the module mentions if the giants are left to their attacks.

There is no bonus for higher ground. The giants will fight the PCs if engaged in melee or bloodied by ranged attacks. They will flee if reduced below 30 hit points.

Treasure: 2 parcels

Abithrax's Rampage: level 12, 3,500 XP

- Abithrax, young adult red dragon (level 12 solo soldier) (custom, though similar to MM 82-83)

Tactics: As mentioned in the module, Abithrax casually terrorizes the city without any significant opposition until the PCs arrive. When the PCs draw his attention, he attacks them using the general red dragons tactics from the Monster Manual (MM 82). As mentioned in the module, he favors those displaying holy symbols of good gods as targets. He only has his breath weapon to fight with from the air, so unless the party is entirely unable to affect an aerial target, he stays in melee, fighting to the death.

Brindol in Flames: This is a good place for a skill challenge.

Development: If Tredora is stationed at the cathedral, she will be available to perform the ritual of healing on the PCs. If she is stationed elsewhere in the city, she is unable to be found before moving to the next part of the battle.

Notes: Abithrax could be level 10-13, depending on party level and number.

Streets of Blood

Setup: The PCs are aided by 1 Lion of Brindol (custom) and 10 town guards (custom). If they have an alliance with the elves, they can call upon an elven strafing run twice during the battle. The elves fly overhead in a round, attacking each visible enemy with their bows (+15 vs. AC, 1d8+5 damage).

The barricade is physically set up as described in the module. Medium and small creatures can move through the barricade using a squeeze action (PHB 292). Note that squeezing is a separate move action and not part of a normal move. Jumping the barricade requires a DC 40 Athletics check, or DC 20 with a running start. Each square of the barricade can be destroyed by a DC 24 Strength check, or it can be damaged by attacks. Each square has 40 hit points, AC 4, and Defenses 12. A destroyed square becomes difficult terrain, and can be rebuilt in 4 rounds, or fixed by restoring 10 hit points per round of work.

Healing: Allow the PCs to recover as if they had taken a short rest between each wave, even though only 1d4+2 rounds pass.

Streets of Blood, First Wave: level 9, 1,928 XP

- 1 manticore (level 10 elite skirmisher) (MM 184)
- 2 hobgoblin commanders (level 5 soldier) (MM 140)
- 6 hobgoblin warriors (level 8 minion) (MM 138)

Creatures: There is only one manticore, since it is elite. The hobgoblin warriors are equipped with longbows with essentially the same stats as their longswords: Ranged 20/40 +10 vs. AC; 6 damage.

Streets of Blood, Second Wave: level 10,

2,400 XP

- 8 Blood Ghost berserkers (level 7 brute) (custom)

Streets of Blood, Third Wave: level 11, 3,000 XP

- 5 bluespawn stormlizards (level 9 brute) (custom)
- 5 goblin riders (level 5 skirmisher) (custom)

Streets of Blood, Fourth Wave: level 12, 3,500 XP

- 3 greenspawn razorfiend (level 10 elite skirmisher) (custom)
- 1 Kulkor Zuul mindbender (level 10 controller) (custom)

Creatures: There is only one mindbender.

Notes: If the PCs aren't completely exhausted, consider running this wave regardless of whether the PCs cleared the hatchery in part 2.

Streets of Blood, Fifth Wave: level 13, 3,850 XP

- 2 ghost dire lions (level 8 elite brute) (custom)
- 3 ghost brute lions (level 8 lurker) (custom)
- 4 lesser bonedrinkers (level 8 soldier) (custom)

Notes: Hopefully there's no need to run this.

Streets of Blood Development

Streets of blood is a grueling encounter and the PCs are likely depleted of resources at this point. Allow them to find Tredora Goldenbow, where she will perform the ritual of healing to refresh the PCs as if they had taken an extended rest. If she is in the cathedral, then the PCs will exit the cathedral to witness the aftermath of Skather's sniper attack. Otherwise, the PCs receive Jarmaath's telepathic summons to the cathedral square to begin the next phase of the battle.

Sniper Attack: level 11, 3,000 XP

- 2 Kulkor Zuul war adepts (level 10 artillery) (custom)
- Skather, blackspawn ninja (level 14 elite or level 9 solo) (custom)

Setup: Skather lurks in the coffin shop, firing his bow at the unwitting targets below. He has used his assassin's arrow power to kill several soldiers. He has no particular way to knock Lord Jarmaath unconscious, aside from reducing him to 0 hit point, but if you'd like to say that he has used a strange and unusual poison on Jarmaath, go ahead. The mechanics for Skather's superior cover have changed (see PHB 188) but the result is similar. PCs beating Skather's stealth check by less than 10 (he has +18) only learn the rough direction and distance of his attacks, but cannot pinpoint his location. If pinpointed, he will hide again on his next turn.

Tactics: As the PCs draw near, the combat plays out similarly to the description in the module. PCs targeting Skather from the street take -5 to their attacks if they can spot him at all. You may consider rolling for initiative as soon as

the PCs draw close to the building and having the war adepts take readying actions. Nobody has any potions to drink or scrolls to use. When the war adepts are bloodied, they will try to flee upstairs, using their tactical teleport ability to avoid the caltrops. The caltrops attack at +15 vs. AC and deal 3 ongoing damage and the target is slowed (save ends both). Skather fights until reduced below 60 hit points, at which point he will try to flee to the fane of Tiamat, as described in the module.

Treasure: 2 parcels

Final Battle: level 12+, 3,600+ XP

- 4 ogre thugs (level 11 minion) (MM 198)
- 2 hill giants (level 13 brute) (MM 121)
- Wyrmlord Kharn (level 12 elite soldier) (custom)

Creatures: The ogres are minions now. Hopefully that won't be too jarring of a shift. As mentioned, any wyrmlords who have fled, or even the Ghostlord are also present for this battle.

Notes: The module's description works great for this battle. Kharn and the hill giants are tanks, but they should eventually go down.

Victory Points

If the PCs have over 40 victory points, they earn XP for an 11th level major quest (3,000 XP for 5 PCs).

Notes: If the PCs started at level 6, and have done well in the module, then they should make level 11 by this point. This is a very appropriate point for their entry into the paragon tier, so if they didn't make 11 and have been doing well, consider fudging the quest XP to make them level 11.

Total XP for Part 4

29,628 (33,478 with streets of blood fifth wave).

PART 5: The Fane of Tiamat

Notes on Part 5

This part is intended for level 11 characters, who will reach level 12 partway through. If the PCs are not level 11 yet, some random encounters in the Wyrmsmoke mountains may be useful.

Random Encounters in the Wyrmsmoke

Mountains: levels 9-12, variable XP

Suggestions for random encounters:

- 6 blackspawn raiders (see guard barracks)
- 8 blood ghost berserkers (see part 4)
- either ogre encounter group (MM 199)
- ettin encounter group (MM 108)
- either manticore encounter group (MM 184)
- galeb duhr encounter group (MM 114)
- level 12 cyclops encounter (MM 112)

The Fane of Tiamat

The features of the fane are as suggested in the module, with reinforced masonry walls, iron doors, and stone secret doors.

The Perception DC to notice a secret door is 25.

Security is as mentioned in the module. There are a few lower-level encounters where it is specifically recommended that 3 of the blackspawn raiders interrupt the combat, but otherwise it isn't necessary to have too many pointless confrontations with the guards.

The Mark of Tiamat: level 13, 4,000 XP

- Tyragun, adult blue dragon (level 13 solo artillery) (MM 78)

Creature: Taking his role as guardian of the fane seriously, Tyragun has taken both skill training and skill focus in perception, giving him a +21 modifier instead of the +23 mentioned in the module. (Passive Perception is thus 31). His stats are otherwise the same as the adult blue dragon in the Monster Manual. He no longer has the sound imitation ability, so he is simply making an untrained Bluff check (at +8) to play his little game at the beginning of the encounter. He no longer has any buff spells to cast before combat.

Tactics: Tyragun's simple tactics are essentially the same as in the module. He flies down to a point level with the ledge and uses his breath weapon to bombard the PCs to death. Instead of a wand of fireballs, he now has the lightning burst ability to supplement his breath weapon. If forced into melee, he uses his fury ability, spending an action point to use frightful presence or attack again, when available. He avoids landing if at all possible. Tyragun normally flies level with the cliff ledge, so any stalls will cause a 150-foot fall that deals 75 damage. If he is being repeatedly dropped into the chasm, he will switch to flying 10 squares above the ledge with the PCs, where he can safely land if knocked out of the air.

The Mark of Tiamat: level 9, 2,000 XP

- Tiamat Trap (level 9 solo blaster) (custom)

Notes: Having this trap just sitting here, guarding the door isn't really going with the 4e paradigm, but we'll go with it.

Dragon's Lair

Treasure: 7 parcels?

Notes:

Foyer: level 10, 2,500 XP

- 3 blue abishai (level 11 skirmisher) (custom)
- 2 zombie hulks (level 8 brute) (MM 275)

Creatures: One more abishai than in the module, but it should fit.

Tactics: The abishai no longer have any of their summoning or spell-like abilities. They will simply harass the PCs with their flyby attacks, preferring to land back on their ledges or otherwise end their turn out of the PCs' reach when possible.

Guard Barracks: level 11, 3,000 XP

- 6 blackspawn raiders (dragonborn gladiators) (level 10 soldier) (MM 86)

Creatures: Use the stats for dragonborn gladiators, but

change their description and the damage type of their breath weapon to reflect their black dragon heritage.

Tactics: No potions, no oils. The gladiators follow their Monster Manual tactics in combat.

Notes: Should I use 4 dragonborn raiders instead of 6 gladiators? Should they have a more varied group?

Torture Chamber: level 11, 3,000 XP

- 4 chain devils (level 11 skirmisher) (MM 62)
- 4 legion devil hellguards (level 11 minion) (MM 64)

Tactics: Disregard the module tactics and use the chain devil tactics from the Monster Manual.

Notes: Bone devils are much too high level now and chain devils are better torturers anyways. This is a small room for 8 enemies.

Priest Cells: level 11, 2,928 XP

- 2 red hand warpriests (hobgoblin hand of bane) (level 11 elite soldier) (custom)
- 6 hobgoblin zealots (hobgoblin warriors) (level 8 minion) (MM 138)

Tactics: The clerics still react to intrusion with the same amount of shock and rage, but their tactics are much more straightforward.

Notes: Same old hobgoblin minions they've been fighting the whole adventure, just dressed in cleric's clothing now. Should I bother leveling up the minions to level 10 just for the two encounters they'll be in?

Laryssa's Kitchen: level 10, 2,600 XP

- Laryssa, night hag (level 14 lurker) (MM 151)
- 2 bearded devils (level 13 soldier) (MM 60)

Tactics: Laryssa uses essentially the same tactics outside of combat. Her Passive Insight DC is 20, if the party tries to bluff her. If she gets the drop on the party, consider giving her the shapeshifting powers of a bog hag instead her own powers, allowing her to appear as an elf (or eladrin) maiden. She has a +13 Bluff skill to maintain this ruse. During a fight, she uses her wave of sleep instead of magic missile. If she renders a PC unconscious, she can use her dream haunting in combat.

Treasure: 1 parcel

Notes: This encounter translated fairly smoothly, but the PCs may be slightly higher level by the time they reach this point, making 3 enemies a less than challenging encounter. If the confrontation raises a lot of noise, perhaps a guard patrol could interrupt and join the battle.

Great Temple of Tiamat: level 10, 2,500 XP

- 5 wyverns (level 10 skirmisher) (MM 268)

Tactics: The wyverns use their suggested tactics from the Monster Manual.

Notes: There is no exact conversion for the unhallow or invisibility purge effects in this room. Due the reduced effect of invisibility spells, they may not be necessary, but it is easy to simply add their effects back in to this without a known

ritual to create the effects. Again, since the party may be higher than level 10 at this point, perhaps a guard could interrupt and join the battle.

Cavern of the Guardian Spawn: level 11, 3,000 XP

- 3 greenspawn razorfiend (level 10 elite skirmisher) (custom)

Tactics: The greenspawn use essentially the same tactics, though they do not attempt to sunder weapons.

Notes: Seems like lurkers might be more appropriate here. Still, the razorfiends were great, dangerous fun in my 3rd edition playthrough.

Outer Sanctum: level 13, 3,928 XP

- 2 red hand warpriests (hobgoblin hand of bane) (level 11 elite soldier) (custom)
- 6 hobgoblin zealots (hobgoblin warriors) (level 8 minion) (MM 138)
- 2 advanced wraiths (level 10 lurker) (custom)

Tactics: The priests are distracted, and so their Passive Perception DC is only 8. As in the priest cells, the warpriests are more straightforward melee combatants, though they retain a limited ability to dominate foes.

Notes: There are only two wraiths. If you wish to replicate the effects of the aid spell, consider giving all combatants 5 temporary HP and +1 to attack rolls. Non-worshippers of Tiamat using the altar face an attack at +20 vs. Will. If the attack hits, the target is reduced to 0 hp. If the attack misses, the target is stunned (save ends). Aftereffect: the target is dazed (save ends).

The shaft to the inner sanctum will likely be inaccessible to PCs at the suggested levels for this adventure. To solve this, consider the following suggestion: the shaft is enchanted to grant a limited form of flight to those using it. A creature standing in, or on the edge of the shaft feels swirling winds picking up around them. At the end of 3 round, a non-flying creature can fly in the shaft at a speed of 6, as a clumsy flier (see DMG 48). Exiting the shaft or landing ends the effect. Also, since there is the possibility that a PC may be pushed or jump down the shaft in the final confrontation in the inner sanctum, consider reducing the height, since the DMG categorizes a 100 foot fall as "deadly" obstacle. A 50-70 foot fall may be more reasonable.

High Wyrmlord's Chambers: level 11, 3,100 XP

- 2 succubus (level 9 controller) (MM 67)
- 2 bearded devils (level 13 soldier) (MM 60)
- 2 rot scarab swarms (level 8 soldier) (MM 30)

Creatures: In addition to Azarr Kul's two charming consorts, two rot scarab swarms are hiding under the bed in dragon-headed canopic jars. The sound of combat brings them out to attack. They recognize Lucia and Francesca's perfume and will not attack them. Additionally, two bearded devils "coincidentally" appear in the summoning circle if it is

still intact at this point.

Tactics: The two succubi use their charming kiss ability to procure unwilling bodyguards, and their domination ability to cause general havoc. They attempt to escape if they are bloodied. The rot scarabs swarm and bite with minimal intelligence. If present, the bearded devils fight as well as they can with their glaives in the cramped quarters.

Treasure: 2 parcels

Notes: This is a very small room, so there may be problems even fitting all these creatures in.

Summoning Room

Notes: This circle counts as a permanent teleportation circle for the purposes of the linked portal and planar portal rituals. The PCs may memorize and use the sigils surrounding this circle for their own use, or they may destroy the circle. The circle has 200 hp, AC 26, Defenses 24 and resist all 10. If the PCs choose to destroy the circle loudly, the succubi in the room across the hall may notice (effective Passive Perception 13, counting the door as a penalty on their check.) If the portal “coincidentally” opens when the PCs are present to release the bearded devils, then it stays open for a round, linked to Tiamat's court in the Nine Hells. PCs entering the portal are in way above their heads.

Treasury: level 13, 4,050 XP

- 1 guardian nags (level 12 elite artillery) (MM 194)
- 3 trap haunts (level 8 lurker) (MM 116)
- Wall of Tiamat's Wrath (level 13 elite blaster) (custom)

Creatures: Instead of a barbed devil, a guardian naga now watches over Azarr Kul's coffers. Additionally, the ghosts of three hobgoblins who tried to rob the Kulkor Zuul treasury remain as trap haunts.

Treasure: 3 parcels spread out in 5 chests.

Inner Sanctum: level 14, 5,000 XP

- 5 blue abshai (level 11 skirmisher) (custom)
- High Wyrmlord Azarr Kul (level 14 elite soldier) (custom)

Tactics: Azarr Kul is now more of a straightforward melee combatant. He engages the PCs in melee straightaway using the tactics noted in his creature entry. The abishai have no summoning ability to use, so they fight by using their flyby attacks. They are aware of the High Wyrmlord's antilife shell ability, and try not to land close to him if he is engaged in melee. If they have managed to escape to this location, Lucia and Francesca cause as much trouble as they can with their abilities. They start the combat fully healed by Tiamat's divine energy. Azarr Kul does not have a particularly good escape plan anymore. Perhaps I should devise one.

Notes: The rushing winds in the chamber cause only a -5 penalty to perception checks. There is no straight equivalent to the unhallow and silence spells, but none are probably necessary. See the notes entry for the outer sanctum for special rules regarding the shaft.

Tiamat's Wrath: level 15, 6,000 XP

- Aspect of Tiamat (level 15 solo brute) (custom)

Tactics: After manifesting (see notes, below) the aspect fights using the tactics outlined in her creature entry. If the PCs flee, the aspect is happy to rampage around in the local countryside, as outlined in the module.

Notes: The sequence of events following the death of Azarr Kul should play out in roughly the same way. Creatures hearing the roar of Tiamat are attacked at +20 vs. Fortitude and are deafened (save ends) if hit. Any unlucky creatures standing on the pedestal as the aspect manifests are attacked 5 times at +20 vs. Reflex for 3d8+5 acid, cold, fire, lightning, then poison damage in turn, half damage on a miss and then pushed off the pedestal and knocked prone.

Conclusion

Treasure: 5 treasure parcels representing Lord Jarmaath's hand-picked rewards for each PC.

Total XP for Part 5

44,700 XP in all.