



IN THE GARDEN OF EVIL

An Avernus Rising Adventure

Long before it was a war-ravaged battlefield, Avernus was a den of temptation; a place to which ambitious, greedy, and covetous mortals were lured by the promise of power, wealth, and love. While the plane no longer serves this purpose, small pockets of terrible beauty remain. You have been sent in search of one such oasis to locate a fallen celestial. Will you be able to find it? More importantly, will the creature still be capable of service as an agent of good?

A Four to Six-Hour Adventure for 5th through 10th Level Characters.

Optimized For: APL 8



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ADVENTURE PRIMER

"And into the forest I go, to lose my mind and find my soul."

—Mariah Danu

This adventure is designed for **three to seven 5th- to 10th-level characters** and is optimized for **five characters with an average party level (APL) of 8**. Characters outside this level range cannot participate in this adventure.

This adventure occurs in Bloodroot Grove, a lost oasis in Avernus, the first layer of the Nine Hells.

BACKGROUND

During **ZARIEL'S GREAT RIDE**, a unicorn named **ZHALRUBAN** served as a mount to one of Zariel's lieutenants, **SHALREL PRALL**, a virtuous and honorable **PALADIN**. When Shalrel succumbed to fear and fled from battle, however, Zhalruban was distraught. The unicorn retreated with her rider into **BLOODROOT GROVE**, hoping to shelter there while she tried to convince Shalrel to remain by Zariel's side. Once inside, however, the duo was beset by **DEVILS**. They fought valiantly, but when defeat seemed inevitable, the devils made Zhalruban an offer she couldn't refuse: in exchange for sparing the paladin's life, the unicorn would be forever confined to Bloodroot Grove.

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: The Forest Beckons.** The characters discover strange signs of Zariel's Great Ride and enter Bloodroot Grove.
- **Part 1: Bloodroot Grove.** The characters explore the depths of the grove, discover its dangerous delights, and reach the Heart of the Grove. This is **Story Objective A**.
- **Part 2: The Heart of the Grove.** The characters overcome Zhalruban's devilish keepers and beseech her to return to the light. This is **Story Objective B**.
- **Bonus Objective A: Bleeding Heart.** The characters discover and defend a dying Hellrider who requires a hair from Zhalruban's tail to sew his magical wound shut. This bonus objective is found in **Appendix 1** and occurs during **Part 1: Bloodroot Grove**.
- **Bonus Objective B: Steel Willows.** Agents of Zariel hunt the characters and lay a trap within the dense forest of Bloodroot Grove. This bonus objective is found in **Appendix 2** and takes place after completing **Story Objective B**.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

The players may have participated in other adventures this season, or this may be their first foray into Avernus. Below are some adventure hooks to introduce the players to Bloodroot Grove.

The Crusade Endures. If the players have taken part in the previous trilogy, they approach Bloodroot Grove after acquiring the battle plans from Plagueshield Point. Dara

tells the party that they might find more information, and perhaps even an alliance, from a heroic unicorn and her mistress who fled into Bloodroot Grove during the doomed battle. At Dara's behest, the characters approach the forest to sway the pair to their cause.

Emporium Whispers. Characters who have completed the bonus objective The Price of Knowledge in DDAL09-05 Faces of Fortune learned from Elliach that Zhalruban, a unicorn, was rumored to have been seen and heard on the outskirts of Bloodroot Grove. As the emporium passed by the blighted forest, the players chose to seek the celestial to further bolster their companions in Dara's quest.

Welcome to Hell. If the characters are entering Avernus for the first time, they come to consciousness near Mahadi's Wandering Emporium and are quickly discovered by Fai Chen. He whisks them to meet Dara, the young Chosen of Ilmater, who is their best chance for getting out of the Hells alive. Dara informs the characters of her mission and beseeches them to aid her by searching for a lost celestial, a unicorn rumored to be in the nearby Bloodroot Grove.

Out of Balance. If this adventure is being used separate from this season's content, whispers spread through the planes of existence of a dangerous corruption that could disrupt the nine hells ability to defeat the armies of the abyss. Whether sent by celestials, devils, or a servant of the balance, the characters are dispatched to Bloodroot Grove, the source of the corruption. There they must prevent the growing corruption from destabilizing this region of Avernus and tipping the scales of the blood war.

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: THE FOREST BECKONS

Estimated Duration: 15 minutes

IN THE MIDDLE DISTANCE

The woodland edge of Bloodroot Grove is eerily quiet. The forest is both a haven from the harsh plains of Avernus and a bitter trap waiting for its next victims. Massive trees with thick leaves fill the horizon and wide paths lead into the forest itself.

Rounding a curve in a ravine, you see a great forest of tall, white trees with blood-red leaves that extends as far as the eye can see. A thin line of smoke curls from behind one of the boulders along the road—a campfire? Or something else?

AREA INFORMATION

This small roadside camp has the following features.

Dimensions & Terrain. The flat ground is littered with large boulders. Behind one boulder, a tendril of smoke twists and curls into the sky.

Light. The ambient light of Avernus brightly lights the area, though as the characters get closer to Bloodroot Grove, the light dims.

Smells & Sounds. The thuds of distant meteor-falls and the din of faraway battles are normally audible throughout the plains of Avernus, but the sounds here are muffled and fade away as the forest grows thicker.

Camp. Tucked away in the shelter of two large boulders is a campsite. A **figure** beside the small campfire is fully covered by its bedroll. The body is unmoving.

Sleeping Figure. The figure responds to neither prodding nor calling out. Drawing back the blanket reveals that it is a corpse with warm blood still oozing from their wounds. Roots grow in and around the body, pulling them beneath the ground. All the equipment nearby except for a journal, however, is rusted and half-buried in drifts of dust.

Examining the body with a successful DC 11 Wisdom (Medicine) check reveals that the corpse appears to have only recently died of blood loss from multiple stab wounds. However, its clothing is quite old and a badge depicting a horse's head beneath a sunburst is emblazoned upon the chest; the nature of Avernus has prevented the body from rotting. Characters who participated in the *Betrayal in the Blood* trilogy or those who succeed on a DC 11

Intelligence (History) check know that the badge bears the symbol of the **Hellriders**. Characters from Elturgard or those with the Soldier background make this check with advantage.

CREATURE INFORMATION

If the characters use *speak with dead* or similar magic, the corpse speaks erratically before the roots that have grown around the body pull it into the ground.

What Do They Want? The Hellrider originally wanted nothing more than to see Zariel's mission succeed, but before their death their goal was to return to their home in Elturgard.

What Do They Know? The Hellrider is a last bastion of knowledge on the fall of Zariel's forces and the desertion that they, Shalrel, and Zhalruban all partook in, but they don't know much about the rest of Bloodroot Grove. If the characters don't speak to the Hellrider directly, their journal contains the same information.

TREASURE

Most of what the Hellrider carried is rusted or rotted, but a pouch at their waist contains a handful of old gold coins and a small folded piece of paper upon which is written a prayer to Torm.

WHAT WENT BEFORE

This adventure occurs after the *Behind Infernal Lines* trilogy. In these adventures, the characters accompanied Fai Chen and Dara on their journey into Avernus. Once there, Dara plotted a way to free the spirits of the Hellriders who joined Zariel on her fated ride into the Nine Hells. To do so, the characters stormed an infernal fortress and learned the location of the Hellriders' doomed final battle.

CALL TO ACTION

As the characters investigate the area, they find a set of fresh hoof prints leading deep into the forest. The tracks are deep (as if the creature was running) and marked by drops of blood. A character who succeeds on a DC 13 Intelligence (Nature) check determines the tracks don't belong to just any hooved creature, but that of a unicorn—and a wounded one at that. The characters must ultimately find their way to the Heart of the Grove, the great tree where Zhalruban has made her home.



PART 1: BLOODROOT GROVE

Estimated Duration: 2 hours

BLOODROOT GROVE

Originally grown of good intentions, Bloodroot Grove is a forest filled with strange and terrible plants that even devils fear.

AREA INFORMATION

The grove has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. Like many other areas in Avernus, the vast forest of Bloodroot Grove isn't subject to the normal rules of space. The ground is mostly flat, except for occasional, large ravines that are filled with the same **white trees** as elsewhere in the forest, making them difficult to see at a distance. Occasional roots trip up the unwary, and once in a while, a rare stream passes through the area, though the water is usually brackish and nigh-undrinkable.

Light. The sky overhead glows with the ambient light of Avernus, but a thick canopy of blood-red leaves shades the forest floor, where a thin fog clings to the ground. The forest is dimly lit.

Smells & Sounds. It's completely silent here. The smell of wet earth and rot fills the air, only eclipsed by the sickly-sweet smell of fruits hanging from some of the trees.

White Trees. The trees here are tall and slender. In the upper canopy, the branches sport smooth-edged, blood-red leaves, which cover the ground beneath as they fall.

Bloodroot Flora. The characters might encounter the strange and terrible plants that grow within the forest (see **Appendix 4**).

USING THE BLOODROOT FLORA

The Bloodroot flora offer a way to enhance an encounter, rest, or travel. Here are a few ways to incorporate them into the game:

- While traveling, a character could be tempted by a strange fruit hanging from a tree, which can impart **corruption** and hallucinations.
- In the middle of combat, a hangman vine could grab onto a character and begin to strangle them.
- A tree full of screeching leaves could attract the attention of a larger threat.

NAVIGATING THE FOREST

At the beginning of each day spent in the forest, the characters must succeed on a DC 15 group Wisdom (Survival) check. On a failure, the group becomes lost and may have another encounter with the dangerous flora and fauna of the forest. Characters suffering from corruption make this check with disadvantage.

CORRUPTION IN BLOODROOT GROVE

The infernal nature of Bloodroot Grove can leave its mark on creatures traveling within it. If a creature consumes fruit, sap, water from streams, or any vegetation native to Bloodroot Grove they must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, they gain a form of Bloodroot corruption (see **Appendix 4**).

A. ENTERING BLOODROOT GROVE

Once the characters move past the fallen Hellrider, they enter the oppressive atmosphere of Bloodroot Grove.

Taking your first steps into the forest, you're smothered in an almost tangible silence. The sounds of birds chirping and the movement of creatures on the forest floor are conspicuously absent here.

When describing the environment in Bloodroot Grove, emphasize the vibrant colors of the flora, the too-sweet smell of the fruit, and the ever-present feeling of being watched.

Fed by Flesh. Due to the lack of sun in Avernus, the trees of Bloodroot Grove don't synthesize food by photosynthesis; instead, they're fed by blood and, in some cases, flesh.

Forbidden Fruit. The forest produces various types of fruit that have no nutritional value and an addictively sweet taste. A creature who consumes any of the sweet fruit becomes impulsive, irritable, and defensive of their new favorite food. Characters find emaciated devils, mortals, and other beasts huddled around fruit-bearing plants endlessly feasting on the deceptive fruit. If a character eats some of these fruits and fail a DC 10 Willpower saving throw, they become addicted to the fruit. This effect can be cured by a *lesser restoration* spell or similar magic.

Spreading Corruption. Many trees have been infected by the parasitic fruit devil's harvest and have mutated to suit the fruit's purposes. These trees now bleed a corrupted sap that carries the vile fruits corruptive properties. Any tree touched by the sap eventually grows more devil's harvest.

LOCATIONS IN BLOODROOT

As the characters traverse the forest of Bloodroot Grove, they encounter challenges that reflect Zhalruban's corruption or that of the forest. It's recommended that the characters participate in three to four encounters before proceeding to **Part 2**.

BLOODROOT GROVE ENCOUNTERS

d10	Encounter
1	B1. Carnivorous Plants
2	B2. Fallen Devil
3	B3. Great Oak's Fall
4	B4. Harvest Farm
5	B5. Obelisk of Silvanus
6	B6. Pit of Anguish
7	B7. Tree of Skin
8	B8. Sickened Orchard
9	B9. Troop of Woe
10	B10. Untainted Husk

B1. CARNIVOROUS PLANTS

In the absence of proper sustenance, these plants feed off of one another in a symbiotic, cannibalistic relationship.

CREATURE INFORMATION

This clearing is dominated by a large **corpse flower**, its buds swollen with corruption. Decaying corpses are littered around its exposed root system. An **assassin vine** hides at the edge of the clearing, waiting for its next meal.

The assassin vine attacks the last creature to enter the clearing. Once the assassin vine engages the characters, the corpse flower attacks.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak:** Replace the **corpse flower** with a **shambling mound**.
- **Very Strong:** Add a **corpse flower**.

TREASURE

One of the corpses wears a platinum and silver ring set with a ruby.



B2. FALLEN DEVIL

Creatures hiding from infernal dangers often find refuge amongst the trees of Bloodroot Grove.

A wet, heavy cough echoes through the trees, drawing your attention to a large figure walking towards you along the path. An old, gnarled horned devil rests its weight on a cane, avoiding the roots stuck in the path.

CREATURE INFORMATION

Malenkthis is a **horned devil** who has made his home in Bloodroot Grove.

What Do They Want? Wounded and in no condition to command any lesser devils nor wanting to serve any greater, **Malenkthis** has found comfort in his self-imposed exile. In those rare instances where he happens across a traveler, he's willing to act as a guide for the price of a *soul coin* (or a treant's heart if the characters encounter **B3. Great Oak's Fall** later in the adventure).

What Do They Know? **Malenkthis** has spent decades exploring this vile forest and knows many, though not all, of its secrets. He knows of Zhalruban and her story and can lead the characters near the unicorn's lair, but not any closer than a half day's travel—muttering something about being forbidden from allowing the great tree's shadow to fall upon him. If the characters secure Malenkthis's aid, they have advantage on the next Wisdom (Survival) group check made to navigate the forest.

TREASURE

Malenkthis carries a few spare coins and small gems on him, but has survived with the bare essentials since his fall. If Malenkthis is defeated, the characters can claim his staff. While it's not magical, destroying it voids all the contracts bound to Malenkthis's service—freeing his obligors.

B3. GREAT OAK'S FALL

To dissuade anyone from seeking her out, Zhalruban created a plant that produced a nectar that instills fear in any who smelled it. Like Zhalruban herself, this plant was slowly corrupted by the forest. The nectar now entralls any who touch it.

Between the trees, you see a treant bent over the gaping petals of a huge flower. Vines wrapped around the treant's form hold it in place. The flower oozes nectar that spills into the treant's open mouth and trickles into pools around it.

AREA INFORMATION

The area has the following features:

The Flower. The tendrils holding the treant have AC 20, 20 hit points, and are immune to poison damage. The treant can be forcefully pried free of the vines with three successful DC 17 Strength (Athletics) checks before two failures. Alternatively, if the characters feed the treant an angel's weed seed pod (see **Appendix 4**), it immediately recovers and bursts free from the vines with a powerful roar.

CREATURE INFORMATION

A treant is here, bound by the tendrils of an immense, brightly colored flower.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak:** Replace the **treant** with a **tree blight**.
- **Very Strong:** The flower is a **tree blight** that defends its claim to the treant.

What Do They Want? The treant is clearly suffering, groaning and shaking its limbs as its mouth fills to the point where must swallow, its eyes rolling back in delirium. It wants nothing more than its freedom. However, in its stupor, it can't tell friend from foe, so it's likely to attack those who free him.

What Do They Know? The treant originally sought to destroy the flower, but succumbed to the flower's intoxicating nectar. The tendrils drain the life from the treant, while the flower nourishes it with its nectar. The treant knows of the great danger at the heart of Bloodroot Grove, and if freed, aids characters plagued by corruption from the plants of Bloodroot.

TREASURE

If the treant is killed, its corpse contains a crackling, watermelon sized burl (the treant's heart). It is warm to the touch and valuable.

B4. HARVEST FARM

You come upon an odd orchard. A single tree stands tall in a clearing filled with the stumps of felled trees. Alongside the solitary tree stands a devil, snipping at volunteer growth.

AREA INFORMATION

The area has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The devil's **tree** is in the middle of a large clearing where the usual **white trees** have been cut away.

The Tree. The tree is similar to the **white trees** found elsewhere in the forest, but bears the pungent and dangerous fruit **devils' harvest**. Six **roots**, which Tol'Rukaz can animate as if they were chains, span a 40-foot-radius surrounding the tree. A creature that starts its turn grappled by a root takes 7 (2d6) necrotic damage and Tol'Rukaz regains a number of hit points equal to the necrotic damage dealt.

Smells & Sound. An overpowering, acrid smell of bitter fruit fills the air around the clearing.

CREATURE INFORMATION

Tol'Rukaz (a **chain devil**) tends a single tree bearing large, red fruit. His companion Tilly (a **hell hound**) growls at the characters when they approach.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak:** Tol'Rukaz is a **barbed devil**.
- **Very Strong:** Add a **hell hound** named Belly.

What Do They Want? Tol'Rukaz ignores the characters until they engage with him. The fiend is quite proud of his tree and wants to see it grow. **Tilly** keeps a watchful eye and reacts only if the characters attempt to take any fruit.

What Do They Know? Tol'Rukaz knows about Zhalruban and her story. He also knows the general direction of the Heart of the Grove and is willing to share this information, but only if a character will take a fruit from his tree and plant it on the Material plane within the next one-hundred and one days. If they agree, Tol'Rukaz conjures a steel knife and carves the terms of the contract into the bark of his tree. A character that carves their initials into the tree is bound to the contract. The characters have no way of knowing it, but once planted, such a fruit grows into a similar tree that bears delicious fruit, but other plants within a mile wither and die.

TREASURE

Tol'Rukaz carries a number of gems on his person and **Tilly** wears an iron collar.

B5. OBELISK OF SILVANUS

A sudden calm envelops you as you step into a wide clearing. The grass is lush and verdant, and moss grows on rocks unlike any seen in Avernus. Three tree stumps sit equidistant from an obelisk that pierces the sky in the center of the clearing.

AREA INFORMATION

The clearing has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The clearing with the obelisk in the center is a rough 25-foot-diameter circle. Vibrant green grass and similar small ferns and bushes bearing nuts and fruit grow around the stumps and rocks in the clearing.

Wildlife. Small wildlife such as mice, rabbits, and voles run between the blades of grass and watch anything that enters the clearing from the safety of inside the stumps or within the bushes.

Smells & Sound. The smell of fresh dew on blades of grass saturates the air. A gentle symphony of crickets and small birds gives the glade a sense of calm. No sound leaves the confines of the clearing.

Obelisk. The 15-foot-tall obelisk of blue and green crystal stands atop a 5-foot-tall plinth that is 10 feet on a side. A plaque on the plinth reads (in Elvish) "For an unasked burden." Any creature that completes a short or long rest within 20 feet of the obelisk gains the benefits of a *greater restoration* spell.

CREATURE INFORMATION

If a creature defaces or destroys the obelisk (AC 18, 75 hit points, immune to poison and psychic damage), it releases a shock wave of energy that conjures three **wood woads**.

What Do They Want? The wood woads exist to protect the obelisk at any expense—including their own lives.



What Do They Know? As solitary creatures, the wood woads only know of the surrounding dangers. Each wood woad offers a single angel's weed seed pod (see **Appendix 4**) if they believe the party intends to protect the obelisk.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak:** Remove a **wood woad**.
- **Very Strong:** Add a **wood woad**.

TREASURE

Each of the wood woads have a single angels' weed seed pod growing from their bodies.

B6. PIT OF ANGUISH

A forgotten trap lingers here to snare unwelcome travelers.

A two-foot-long shard of silvery metal juts from the middle of this empty clearing.

AREA INFORMATION

The area has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The clearing is 40 feet in diameter. The ground is the same as the rest of Bloodroot Grove: barren and dry except for the center of the clearing around the **metal horn**, where the ground is a strange green and spongy to the touch (visible if the characters clear away the leaf litter obscuring it).

Metal Horn. The metal shard appears to be a beautiful spiraling unicorn horn, but a character who examines the horn with a successful DC 13 Intelligence (Nature) check determines that it's not from a unicorn.

Smells & Sound. A creature within 10 feet of the trap with a passive Perception score of 17 or higher hears the muttering of the **gibbering mouthers** within the **trap**.

Pit Trap. Zhalruban created this trap to stymie any adventurers foolish enough to enter Bloodroot Grove. Any creature that touches the metal shard triggers the trap. The trap doors are covered with a blanket of leaves and they can't be perceived unless the leaves covering it are cleared away—in which case it's easily noticed (no check required). If triggered, the ground in a 25-foot square centered on the shard falls away. Each creature in the area must succeed on a DC 11 Dexterity saving throw or fall into a 30-foot-deep pit. The bottom of the pit is 20 feet square.

CREATURE INFORMATION

Five **gibbering mouthers** babble and slaver at the bottom of the pit.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak:** Remove two **gibbering mouthers**.
- **Very Strong:** Replace the **gibbering mouthers** with **cloakers**.

TREASURE

The bottom of the pit is covered in debris, among which are a handful of Hellrider badges and a single *potion of greater healing*.

B7. TREE OF SKIN

Ahead of you, a strange tree rises above the others. Its bark is a sickly mottled brown, bare of leaves or fruit.

From behind the tree, a large husk of a creature emerges, leering at you. Its horrible white skin is pulled tight across its spiked and winged body. A green devil carrying a pail of disgusting, murky water empties the contents of its bucket at the base of the tree.

AREA INFORMATION

The area has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The ground around the tree is gnarled with roots and littered with the discarded skeletons of the devils' victims.

Tree of Skin. The tree is covered from root to branch in the skin of all kinds of creatures. The skin of humans, elves, demons, devils, orcs, half-orcs, and other races is stretched over every inch of the tree. The tree has AC 16, 150 hit points, immunity to psychic damage, and vulnerability

to fire damage. If the tree is destroyed, the contracts are voided, freeing Hir'Ket's obligors.

Well. This well is 10 feet wide and 50 feet deep. A doorway partially submerged in murky water opens into an earthen chamber 50 feet on a side. Roots from the trees above dangle from the ceiling and walls.

CREATURE INFORMATION

The tree is tended by Hir'Ket (a **bone devil**) and his servant Derrith (a **barbed devil**). Unbeknownst to the characters, two **flesh golems** reside in the bottom of the well.

What Do They Want? **Hir'Ket** uses the tree to record his contracts. At the moment, he's desperate to know what is poisoning the well and is willing to accept whatever help he can get, even if the characters refuse a formal contract. **Derrith** serves his master, dutifully caring for the contracts stretched over the tree, but he secretly plots to kill Hir'ket and claim ownership of the contracts.

What Do They Know? **Hir'Ket** knows about Zhalruban and regrets not binding her to his service. He happily offers the characters insight into the dangers of Bloodroot Grove and show them a path that leads to the Heart of the Grove, if they promise to complete a task for him in exchange. He claims that something at the bottom of his well is poisoning the water, and asks the characters to find it and fix the well. The **flesh golems**—created by Derrith to overtake his master—are waiting to attack any creature that falls down the well. Derrith telepathically communicates with the characters and convince them to kill Hir'ket—promising directions to the Heart of the Grove in exchange. Otherwise, if the characters destroy the flesh golems, **Hir'Ket** provides this information (along with some gold coins for the trouble). In either case, this gives the characters advantage on their next Wisdom (Survival) check to navigate the forest or even an automatic success if time is short. If the players decide to tell Hir'ket about Derrith's plan, Hir'ket quickly dispatches the barbed devil (but still asks that the characters figure out what is poisoning the well).

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak:** Remove a **flesh golem**.
- **Strong:** Add a **flesh golem**.
- **Very Strong:** Add two **flesh golems**.

TREASURE

Hir'Ket hoards valuable trinkets as well as souls and skin. His stash contains gold and silver charms of various deities and rings of various sizes. He also carries some gold, a *soul coin* and two angel's weed seed pods in a pouch.

B8. THE SICKENED ORCHARD

As the corruption of Bloodroot Grove spreads, it continues to worsen the blighted growth within. This thicket of trees suffers from a corruption that causes their bark to bubble and ooze.

AREA INFORMATION

The orchard has the following features.

Dimensions & Terrain. Covering a few thousand square feet within Bloodroot Grove, the Sickened Orchard has sucked the moisture from the ground, leaving it cracked

and broken. The orchard is surrounded by a 25-foot-wide strip of barren land where the corrupted trees have killed any other forms of vegetation.

Trees. The trees throughout the orchard are covered in bulging blisters and pulsing veins of corruption.

Corpses & Victims. The corpses of those foolish enough to travel through the corrupted trees litter the expanse of the orchard. Many of them have been pulled into the ground to feed the endless hunger of these malformed trees.

CREATURE INFORMATION

If any creature moves within 5 feet of an infected tree, the tree pulses and its bark bubbles and throbs. If the creature is still within 5 feet of the tree at the end of the next round, it explodes, dealing 14 (4d6) piercing damage to creatures within 10 feet. A creature succeeding on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw reduces this damage by half. Any character damaged by the tree must succeed a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for 24 hours from the slivers of toxic wood.

TREASURE

At the center of the grove is a large collection of angel's weed that contains three seed pods (see **Appendix 4**).

B9. TROOP OF WOE

The forest is unusually silent, until you are startled by what sounds like the howling of monkeys. In front of you is a large tree with abnormally thick branches, covered in strange monkey-like creatures hollering at you.

This immense tree and its branches have grown through and over the surrounding trees. Each heavy limb seems to have a hovel made by the imps for their living quarters. When the imps see trespassers enter the clearing, they summon the entirety of the Troop of Woe, a few dozen **imps** and four fiendish **girallons**.

AREA INFORMATION

The area has the following features.

Dimensions & Terrain. The troop has made their home in a white tree that has grown from their care and fiendish influence. The ground around the tree is littered with half-eaten fruits along with the discarded clothing and remains of the troop's victims.

Tree Hovels. The imps have made ramshackle homes from leaves and branches among the limbs of this tree.

CREATURE INFORMATION

The characters find the **imps** jabbering and relaxing in their tree hovel before noticing them.

What Do They Want? The troop prefers to stay in their hovel, eat, and fight with one another and have no intention of starting a fight but instead stalk mortals they find. If the troop is engaged in combat, the **imps** flee and the devilish **girallons** defend the troop's retreat.

What Do They Know? The Troop knows the rough locations of a handful of landmarks within the forest. The only location that they do not know and refuse to travel near is the Heart of the Grove.

If the Troop end up following the characters, they make quite a racket as they travel—attracting possible dangers and imposing disadvantage on any Dexterity (Stealth) checks the characters might make to remain unseen or unheard. Once the characters enter combat while the troop is following them, the troop hoot and holler at the characters, pointing out flaws and belittling misses or mistakes. The imps try and goad the characters into entering a contract with them for additional combat prowess while the girallons watch to defend the imps. If the players attack, the imps flee and return to their tree while the girallons enter combat.

BONUS OBJECTIVE A. If utilizing this additional content, the imps all know where an elf named Lancel Darkblade can be found. As Lancel was fighting their way deeper into the grove they were harassed by the troop before being beset by the devils plaguing them now.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak:** Remove two **girallons**.
- **Weak:** Remove a **girallon**.
- **Very Strong:** Add two **girallons**.

TREASURE

The Troop of Woe have various mundane coins.

B10. UNTAINTED HUSK

A remnant of the Feywild, this tree is starved of light and water but still holds some its magic. This encounter should be run only if the characters are struggling. However, once the Husk has been found, it can't be found again—no matter how hard the characters might try.

Just ahead of you the path, enters a wide clearing. In the center of it is the husk of an ancient tree. Its bark is graying and its leafless branches still extend into the sky, reaching for a sun that was never there. A large hole in the trunk leads to the hollow center of the once-great tree.

AREA INFORMATION

The Husk has the following general features.

Dimensions & Terrain. The Husk's huge trunk is a full 40 feet in diameter. The tree is hollow and forms a chamber with several holes in its sides that let in the strange, ambient light of Avernus. The ground inside the tree is covered in moss, soft to the touch and easy to rest upon.

The tree is a safe haven for any characters travelling through Bloodroot Grove, since the devils and other denizens seem to avoid it. The characters can safely rest within the Husk, though they may be suspicious of such a seemingly lucky opportunity.

TREASURE

A number of succulent, golden fruit dangle within the chamber. Each fruit (one for each character) functions as a *potion of healing* if eaten. Additionally, a cluster of angel's weed with two seed pods grows in the middle of the chamber.



PART 2: HEART OF THE GROVE

Estimated Duration: 1 hour 45 minutes

A. THE HEART OF THE GROVE

The Heart of the Grove is a gargantuan tree that towers above the rest of the forest and is the home—and prison—of Zhalruban, the corrupted unicorn.

Story Beat. Here, the characters defeat or redeem the corrupted unicorn.

The immense tree before you has branches the size of castle towers, roots pushing up from the ground that rival city walls, and leaves so immense that if one fell it could level a house.

Your eyes find the maw that opens into a great tunnel leading beneath the tree. For brief moment, the silhouette of a great horse can be seen as a strange, pulsing light emanates within.

AREA INFORMATION

The grove has the following features.

Dimensions & Terrain. The space around the **Heart of the Grove** is characterized by sickly moss that squishes under your feet. The tree's massive roots have starved all smaller trees of any sustenance, leaving it the only tree for hundreds of feet.

Heart of the Grove. The roots of this immense, 400-foot-tall tree range from 2 feet in diameter to 15 – 20 feet. A roughly 30-foot-wide opening sits at the bottom of the tree, leading to Zhalruban's subterranean lair.

Hovels. There are several ramshackle wooden huts are built into the roots of the great tree.

Light. The ambient light of Avernus appears bright compared to the shadowy landscape in the rest of Bloodroot Grove. Light emanates from within the tunnel that leads below.

Smells & Sounds. The silence of Bloodroot Grove continues in this area. A strange smell of decay hangs in the area.

CREATURE INFORMATION

Two **barbed devils** and one **bone devil** bind the unicorn to the grove.

What Do They Want? The devils' goal is to keep Zhalruban within the bounds of Bloodroot Grove, as described in their contract with her (see **Zhalruban's Contract**, below). Their lies have kept the unicorn confined for over a century as they grow in strength from the contract's power. They don't discuss the terms of the contract with anyone, though a character that succeeds on a DC 20 Charisma (Deception or Persuasion) check eases the devil's taciturn demeanor.

What Do They Know? The bearded devils are aware of the extent of their treachery: with no way to keep Shalrel alive, they followed the letter of the contract and not the spirit. Shalrel sits a husk, save for a small section of her skin that serves as the parchment for the contract. This gives her a semblance of life that keeps Zhalruban under the devils' thumb. The devils would only willingly reveal their scheme to those they truly trust—in other words, no one. If any violence is threatened, the devils quickly claims that harming them will violate Zhalruban's contract, killing her and binding her soul to the forest forever. Any character who succeeds on a DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check can tell this claim is false. Alternatively, the devils can be persuaded to allow the characters to pass with a successful DC 20 Charisma (Deception) check by a character clever enough to invent a smart enough ruse. If Malenkthis accompanied the characters to the Heart of the Grove, he privately offers to help them bypass the devils guarding Zhalruban. If the characters promise to let Malenkthis drink a pint of Zhalruban's blood, he uses his rank as a horned devil to coerce the devils into believing that the characters are agents of Zariel. While reluctant, the devils eventually capitulate rather than risk facing Zariel's wrath.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Weak:** Replace the **barbed devils** with a **bearded devil**.
- **Strong:** Replace the **barbed devils** with a **chain devil**.
- **Very Strong:** Replace the **bone devil** with an **erinyes**.

ZHALRUBAN'S CONTRACT

Zhalruban and the devils agreed to the following terms:

- Shalrel will remain alive.
- Zhalruban must remain in Bloodroot Grove.

If either of these tenants are broken, the other term of the agreement can be broken.

B. ZHALRUBAN'S DEN

Once the characters enter the subterranean Heart of the Grove, read the following aloud:

A cavern full of roots and the whispers of the dead welcomes you. A great beating heart of plant matter and strange ichor festers in the center of the cavern, pulsing with light.

Before the heart you finally see Zhalruban. The once great unicorn is now drained of hope and light. Wide-eyed, gaunt, and covered in corrupted sores, Zhalruban pants, her fetid breath washing over you. She eases her weight from each of her hooves in a strange, sickly dance before her clouded eyes meet yours.

AREA INFORMATION

Zhalruban's den has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The cavern is 45 feet wide and 20 feet high, filled with roots that are hungry for sustenance. Any creature that doesn't move on its turn must succeed on a DC 13 Strength save or become restrained by grasping roots (escape DC 13). Any creature restrained by the roots for the first time or who starts its turn restrained by them takes 7 (2d6) necrotic damage at the start of its turn. Zhalruban regains hit points equal to the necrotic damage dealt.

Corrupted Heart. The heart-shaped knot of plant fiber in the center of the chamber is 8 feet tall and 4 feet wide. The heart is immune to all damage. Any melee strike against the heart pushes the attacker back 5 feet. A *detect magic* spell determines that the heart itself isn't magic, but the roots feeding into it are. The *dispel magic* spell does nothing to affect the heart.

The heart is the stasis cage for Shalrel's withered body. She can be seen through the plant fiber with a successful DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check. On a 17 or higher, the player is able to make out more details. **Shalrel** is mostly dead. An infernal rune, branded on her shoulder, throbs with light. Roots attach around the rune and into her skin. The rune glows with a fiendish light to any character using Divine Sense or *detect magic*. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals that the large roots connecting the heart to the earth are filled with the blood that the trees of Bloodroot Grove harvest.

Roots. Three enormous roots grow from the base of the corrupted heart and intertwine with the earth above before returning to the ground. They pulse with the same strange energy that emanates from the heart.

CREATURE INFORMATION

What Do They Want? Zhalruban wants to do good; she yearns for another chance to ride in the light and guide those on the path of good once more. However, she also wants to hide away from her failure of allowing herself and Shalrel to become imprisoned by devils.

What Do They Know? Having been swindled by the devils guarding her, Zhalruban believes that Shalrel is still alive. She hopes that someday they can return to the cause of good and endeavors to keep her mistress alive at any cost. This is her last grasp on existing as a being of goodness and light. Zhalruban knows that Shalrel's body is kept within the tree's corrupted heart and protects it with her life. The unicorn immediately assumes that the characters as harbingers of justice come to punish her and her mistress for their failure. If the characters attempt to persuade Zhalruban to leave the forest, she seems to almost jump at the idea of being able to fight for her redemption—but then she immediately retreats into herself, reminding the characters of Shalrel, the contract, and her failure to protect those good of heart.

BONUS OBJECTIVE A. If using this bonus objective, any mention of Lancel Darkblade, the fallen Hellrider wounded in the forest, eases Zhalruban's temperament towards the players. A successful DC 17 Charisma (Persuasion) check convinces Zhalruban to lend them one of her hairs—or to aid Lancel herself once she is redeemed.

PLAYING THE PILLARS

Here are some optional suggestions for this encounter:

Combat. Zhalruban is reluctant to initiate any combat. She only fights if the players attack her or the corrupted heart, she battles viciously once provoked. If the players choose to attack, the corrupted heart and roots sprouting from it begin to pulse. The pulse grows in intensity as the unicorn becomes weaker. If the three roots connected to the heart are still intact when Zhalruban is reduced to 0 HP, they pulse ones more and she returns to her hit point maximum at the end of the following round. Each root has an AC of 15 and 30 hit points. Once all the roots are destroyed, the heart bursts open and reveals the putrefying corpse of Shalrel.

Exploration. Characters can find evidence of corruptive, fiendish energies pulsing from the heart and the roots connected to it, suggesting that if the roots are destroyed, the heart surrounding Shalrel would fall apart.

Social. The fallen celestial unicorn can also be redeemed by convincing her to leave the forest with the characters. To successfully convince Zhalruban, the players must help her discover purpose beyond Bloodroot Grove. A DC 17 Charisma (Persuasion) check is required to sway Zhalruban to any idea. Informing Zhalruban of Zariel's fall and her new position as ruler of Avernus lowers the DC to 15. If any proof of the devils' deception is provided, the DC lowers further to 10. If the players succeed in swaying Zhalruban, she wishes to see her once vibrant mistress. When she discovers the lifeless body and realizes that the contract has been broken, Zhalruban mourns for Shalrel.

REDEEMING ZHALRUBAN

Shalrel's true fate must be revealed before Zhalruban can begin her journey of redemption. If the devils' treachery is exposed, Zhalruban is filled with anguish at Shalrel's fate and severs the roots feeding infernal magic into Shalrel's body, ending her life. After a moment of grief, Zhalruban agrees to join the characters and aid in their quest.

All Shalrel's armor and belongings have rotted away save for her *arrow-catching shield*. Zhalruban begs the characters to take it so that it may the forces of good once more.

If Zhalruban's jailors see that the contract is broken, they do anything in their power to force her into another, but with Zhalruban's new resolve she refuses all offers. The devils soon turn on the players and strike at them in revenge.

SLAYING ZHALRUBAN

If Zhalruban is killed, the roots of the tree shudder and send a shockwave of energy throughout the surrounding area. The heart of the grove withers and dies with Zhalruban does, revealing Shalrel's lifeless body.

All Shalrel's armor and belongings have rotted away save for her *arrow-catching shield*. If anything is taken from her body, her form crumbles into dust.

If the devils are alive, they attack the characters when the contract is ended. Bloodroot Grove endures but any further corruption from the contract's presence is ended. Another corrupted entity or a more powerful devil may claim Bloodroot Grove as their own in Zhalruban's absence.

WRAP-UP: RECLAMATION

If Zhalruban has been redeemed, much of the blood-red foliage begins to turn green at the edges. Though still a corrupted oasis in the middle of Avernus, a great weight has been lifted from this once wondrous gift from Silvanus.

Before they leave the forest, Zhalruban offers the characters a choice:

- **Holy Protector.** Zhalruban can return with the characters to Dara, becoming her protector for future adventures in case Dara needs to leave the Emporium. Characters who return to the Emporium with Zhalruban earn this story award.
- **A Welcome Haven.** Zhalruban can stay and tend to Bloodroot Grove, beginning the forests purification and granting the players a place to rest safely during future adventures. Characters who leave Zhalruban to tend to Bloodroot Grove earn this story award.

Either way, Zhalruban thanks the characters and beams with pride at the opportunity to champion the forces of good once more. She relays that she has heard whispers of a mighty dwarven warrior and a dragon elsewhere in Avernus who might also be able to aid the forces of good (these creatures are found in DDAL09-09 *Ruined Prospects* and DDAL09-10 *Tipping the Scales*, respectively).



REWARDS

The characters receive rewards based upon their accomplishments. Aside from advancement, these rewards are earned during the session.

CHARACTER REWARDS

The characters earn the following rewards:

ADVANCEMENT

Upon **completing** this adventure, each character gains a level. At their discretion, they may choose to decline advancement. Remind those that express an interest in this that they have a limit to how much gold they can earn per level; 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 5**:

- *Arrow-catching shield*
- *Greater healing potion*
- *Soul coin*

STORY AWARDS

The characters may earn these story awards during play; these story awards are described in **Appendix 6**:

- **Holy Protector**
- **A Welcome Haven**

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.

Zhalruban (ZALL roo bann). This pious and good-hearted unicorn served her mistress, Shalrel, who fought at the behest of Zariel before she fell. Zhalruban has reluctantly embraced her captivity and sought to make Bloodroot Grove as dreadful as possible to dissuade anyone from discovering her failure.

- **What They Want.** *Part of* Zhalruban wants the chance to be at the vanguard of the armies of good once more, but she is weighed down by her desire to hide her failure and protect her fallen mistress.
- **Undisclosed Desires.** After a century and a half spent imprisoned in and corrupted by Bloodroot Grove, a small part of Zhalruban has come to enjoy the dominion and power she holds over the corrupted forest.

Shalrel Prall (SHAWL rell). A once-great paladin, Shalrel served in Zariel's vanguard during her Great Ride. She succumbed to fear, fled with her steed and companion Zhalruban, and was eventually dealt a mortal wound. Through Zhalruban's deal with the devils, she was kept in a coma by the devils' magic but she is now almost entirely dead, her body serving as the contract between the two parties.

- **What They Want.** Shalrel wants nothing more than for her perpetual pain to end. Stuck in a loop of suffering, physically and spiritually, Shalrel would beg for death if she could.
- **Passive Enmity.** Though she carries a great love for her companion, Shalrel has grown to despise Zhalruban for striking a deal with the devils. Shalrel blames the unicorn for her current suffering.

Malenkthis (muh LAYNK thiss). A horned devil wounded and left for dead in an ancient battle of the Blood War, Malenkthis has made Bloodroot Grove his home. Malenkthis walks with a cane and uses his ruined wings as a sort of cloak. His cane is etched with the terms of a scores of infernal contracts made between him and his clients.

- **What They Want.** Malenkthis hungers for any opportunity to deal with strangers and does his utmost to convince any newcomer to Bloodroot Grove that they need a guide to navigate the deep forest.

- **Burning Ambition.** Deep within his infernal heart, Malenkthis wants to make Bloodroot Grove his domain. He's eager to assert dominance over other devils.

The Troop of Woe. The Troop of Woe are a contingent of imps and other assorted devils corrupted by the forest and Zhalruban's strange influence over the grove. The imps have diminished wings and oversized forearms; they walk primarily on all fours, making them adept at climbing. Along with their mutated arms, the imps have enlarged canines and wide ape-like mouths. Though their wings and arms have changed, their characteristic stinger still hovers prominently behind them, waiting to strike.

- **What They Want.** The Troop have no greater desire than to watch others suffer—and to profit from their suffering.
- **Mocking Barrage.** Knowing their strengths, The Troop keeps their distance, proposing deals to compensate for characters' inadequacies and mocking them until they succumb to a deal.

Lancel Darkblade. Compatriot to Shalrel and Zhalruban, Lancel fled from Zariel's army soon after Shalrel urged Zhalruban towards Bloodroot Grove.

- **What They Want.** Lancel sought justice and truth when he joined Zariel's Great Ride and continues to seek those ideals if he survives the strange confines of Bloodroot Grove.
- **Secret Coward.** Though staunch in his beliefs and convictions, Lancel deserted the Great Ride for fear of death and shudders at the thought of suffering or pain.

Hrazhilen (RAH zill uhn) and Rowlkazra (roll KAHZ ruh). These devils are agents of Zariel, sent by Zariel herself to end the characters' incursion into Bloodroot Grove. This duo has been successful on their past several assignments from Zariel and wish to continue pleasing their mistress.

- **What They Want.** Driven by sadism and ambition, Hrazhilen and Rowlkazra seek out their targets to accomplish their mission, but not before sating their torturous desires.
- **Unending Loyalty.** This pair has no intention of starting any contracts with their targets, as other devils might do. Hrazhilen and Rowlkazra's devotion to Zariel outshines their ambition.



CREATURE STATISTICS

The following creatures are encountered in this adventure.

ASSASSIN VINE

Large plant, unaligned

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 85 (10d10 + 30)

Speed 5ft., climb 5ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	1 (-5)	10 (+0)	1 (-5)

Damage Immunities cold, fire

Condition Immunities blinded, deafened, exhaustion, prone

Senses blindsight 30ft., passive Perception 10

Languages -

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

False Appearance. While the assassin vine remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a normal plant.

ACTION

Constrict. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 20 ft., one target. *Hit:* The target takes 11 (2d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage, and it is grappled (escape DC 14). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and it takes 21 (6d6) poison damage at the start of each of its turns. The vine can constrict only one target at a time.

Entangling Vines. The assassin vine can animate normal vines and roots on the ground in a 15-foot square within 30 feet of it. These plants turn the ground in that area into difficult terrain. A creature in that area when the effect begins must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be restrained by entangling vines and roots. A creature restrained by the plants can use its action to make a DC 13 Strength (Athletics) check, freeing itself on a successful check. The effect ends after 1 minute or when the assassin vine dies or uses Entangling Vines again.

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

Damage Resistances cold; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks not made with silvered weapons

Damage Immunities fire, poison

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 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) piercing damage

Hurl Flame. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +5 to hit, range 150 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (356) 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 not made with silvered weapons

Damage Immunities fire, poison

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 target. *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

Damage Resistances cold; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks not made with silvered weapons

Damage Immunities fire, poison

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 melee 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.

CHAIN DEVIL

Medium fiend (devil), lawful evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 85 (10d8 + 40)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	15 (+2)	18 (+4)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Con +7, Wis +4, Cha +5

Damage Resistances cold; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks not made with silvered weapons

Damage Immunities fire, poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Infernal, telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

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

Multiattack. The devil makes two attacks with its chains.

Chain. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage. The target is grappled (escape DC 14) if the devil isn't already grappling a creature. Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained and takes 7 (2d6) piercing damage at the start of each of its turns.

Animate Chains (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). Up to four chains the devil can see within 60 feet of it magically sprout razor-edged barbs and animate under the devil's control, provided that the chains aren't being worn or carried.

Each animated chain is an object with AC 20, 20 hit points, resistance to piercing damage, and immunity to psychic and thunder damage. When the devil uses Multiattack on its turn, it can use each animated chain to make one additional chain attack. An animated chain can grapple one creature of its own but can't make attacks while grappling. An animated chain reverts to its inanimate state if reduced to 0 hit points or if the devil is incapacitated or dies.

REACTIONS

Unnerving Mask. When a creature the devil can see starts its turn within 30 feet of the devil, the devil can create the illusion that it looks like one of the creature's departed loved ones or bitter enemies. If the creature can see the devil, it must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened until the end of its turn.

CORPSE FLOWER

Large plant, chaotic evil

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 127 (15d10 + 45)

Speed 20 ft., climb 20ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	7 (-2)	15 (+2)	3 (-4)

Condition Immunities blinded, deafened

Senses blindsight 120ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 12

Languages -

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Corpses. When first encountered, a corpse flower contains the corpses of 1d6 + 3 humanoids. A corpse flower can hold the remains of up to nine dead humanoids. These remains have total cover against attacks and other effects outside the corpse flower. If the corpse flower dies, the corpses within it can be pulled free.

While it has at least one humanoid corpse in its body, the corpse flower can use a bonus action to do one of the following:

- The corpse flower digests one humanoid corpse in its body and instantly regains 11 (2d10) hit points. Nothing of the digested body remains. Any equipment on the corpse is expelled from the corpse flower in its space.
- The corpse flower animates one dead humanoid in its body, turning it into a zombie. The zombie appears in an unoccupied space within 5 feet of the corpse flower and acts immediately after it in the initiative order. The zombie acts as an ally of the corpse flower but it isn't under its control, and the flower's stench clings to it (see the Stench of Death trait).

Spider Climb. The corpse flower can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

Stench of Death. Each creature that starts its turn within 10 feet of the corpse flower or one of its zombies must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw, unless the creature is a construct or undead. ON a failed save, the creature is incapacitated until the end of the turn. Creatures that are immune to poison damage or the poisoned condition automatically succeed on this saving throw. ON a successful save, the creature is immune to the stench of all corpse flowers for 24 hours.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The corpse flower makes three tentacle attacks.

Tentacle. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or take 13 (3d6) poison damage.

Harvest the Dead. The corpse flower grabs one unsecured dead humanoid within 10 feet of it and stuffs the corpse into itself, along with any equipment the corpse is wearing or carrying. The remains can be used with the Corpses trait.

ERINYES

Medium fiend (devil), lawful evil

Armor Class 18 (plat)

Hit Points 153 (18d8 + 72)

Speed 30 ft., fly 60ft.

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

Saving Throws Dex +7, Con +8, Wis +6, Cha +8

Damage Resistance cold; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks not made with silvered weapons

Damage Immunities fire, poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Infernal, telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 12 (8,400 XP)

Hellish Weapons. The erinyes's weapon attacks are magical and deal an extra 13 (3d8) poison damage on a hit (included in the attacks).

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Erinyes makes three attacks.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8) slashing damage, or 9 (1d10 + 4) slashing damage if used with two hands, plus 13 (3d8) poison damage.

Longbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7(1d8 + 3) piercing damage plus 13 (3d8) poison damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned. The poison lasts until it is removed by the *lesser restoration* spell or similar magic.

REACTIONS

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

FLESH GOLEM

Medium construct, neutral

Armor Class 9

Hit Points 93 (11d8 + 44)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Damage Immunities lightning, poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks not made with adamantite weapons

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

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

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

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The golem makes two slam attacks.

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

GIBBERING MOUTHER

Medium aberration, neutral

Armor Class 9

Hit Points 67 (9d8 + 27)

Speed 10 ft., swim 10ft.,

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	8 (-1)	16 (+3)	3 (-4)	10 (+0)	6 (-2)

Condition Immunities prone

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages -

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Aberrant Ground. The ground in a 10-foot radius around the moulder is dough like difficult terrain. Each creature that starts its turn in that area must succeed on a DC 10 Strength saving throw or have its speed reduced to 0 until the start of its next turn.

Gibbering. The moulder babbles incoherently while it can see any creature and isn't incapacitated. Each creature that starts its turn within 20 feet of the moulder can hear the gibbering must succeed on a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw. On a failure, the creature can't take reactions until the start of its next turn and rolls a d8 to determine what it does during its turn. ON a 1 to 4, the creature does nothing. On a 5 or 6, the creature takes no action or bonus action and uses all its movement to move in a randomly determined direction. On a 7 or 8, the creature makes a melee attack against a randomly determined creature within its reach or does nothing if it can't make such an attack.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The gibbering moulder makes one bite attack and, if it can, uses its Blinding Spittle.

Bites. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (5d6) piercing damage. If the target is Medium or smaller, it must succeed on a DC 10 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone. IF the target is killed by this damage, it is absorbed into the moulder.

Blinding Spittle (Recharge 5-6). The moulder spits a chemical glob at a point it can see within 15 feet of it. The glob explodes in a blinding flash of light on impact. Each creature within 5 feet of the flash must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or be blinded until the end of the moulder's next turn.

GIRALLON

Large fiend (devil), lawful evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 59 (7d10 + 21)

Speed 40 ft., 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	5 (-3)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +5

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages understand Infernal but can't speak it

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Keen Smell. The girallon has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

Pack Tactics. The hound has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the hound's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

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

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The girallon makes five attacks: one with its bite and four with its claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack*: +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) slashing damage.

HELL HOUND

Medium fiend, lawful evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 45 (7d8 + 14)

Speed 50 ft.

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

Skills Perception +5

Damage Immunities fire

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

Languages understand Infernal but can't speak it

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Keen Hearing and Smell. The hound has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

Pack Tactics. The hound has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the hound's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

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

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack*: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) fire damage.

Fire Breath (Recharge 5-6). The hound exhales fire in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw, taking 21 (6d6) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

HORNED DEVIL

Large fiend (devil), lawful evil

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 178 (17d10 + 85)

Speed 20 ft., fly 60ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	17 (+3)	21 (+5)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Str +10, Dex +7, Wis +7, Cha +7

Damage Resistances cold; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks not made with silvered weapons

Damage Immunities fire, poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 120ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Infernal, telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 11 (7,200 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 melee attacks: two with its fork and one with its tail. It can use Hurl Flame in place of any melee attack.

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

Tail. *Melee Weapon Attack*: +10 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d8 + 6) piercing damage. If the target is a creature other than an undead or a construct, it must succeed on a DC 17 Constitution saving throw or lose 10 (3d6) 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 10 (3d6). 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.

Hurl Flame. *Ranged Spell Attack*: +7 to hit, range 150 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (4d6) fire damage. If the target is a flammable object that isn't being worn or carried, it also catches fire.

IMP

Tiny fiend (devil, shapeshifter), lawful evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 10 (3d4 + 3)

Speed 20 ft., fly 40ft.

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 not made with silvered weapons

Damage Immunities fire, poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 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 20ft.), 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 a DC 11 Constitution saving throw, taking 10 (3d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

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

ORTHON

Large fiend (devil), lawful evil

Armor Class 17 (half plate)

Hit Points 105 (10d10 + 50)

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	16 (+3)	21 (+5)	15 (+2)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Dex +7, Con +9, Wis +6

Skills Perception +10, Stealth +11, Survival +10

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

Damage Immunities fire, poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., truesight 30 ft., passive Perception 20

Languages Common, Infernal, telepathy 120ft.

Challenge 10 (5,900 XP)

Invisibility Field. The orthon can use a bonus action to become invisible. Any equipment the orthon wears or carries is also invisible as long as the equipment is on its person. This invisibility ends immediately after the orthon makes an attack roll or is hit by an attack.

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

ACTIONS

Infernal Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d4 + 6) slashing damage, and the target must make a DC 17 Constitution saving throw, taking 22 (4d10) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. On a failure, the target is also poisoned for 1 minute. The poisoned target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Brass Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d10 + 3) piercing damage, plus one of the following effects:

1. **Acid.** The target must make a DC 17 Constitution saving throw, taking an additional 17 (5d6) acid damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.
2. **Blindness (1/Day).** The target takes 5 (1d10) radiant damage. In addition, the target and all other creatures within 20 feet of it must each make a successful DC 17 Dexterity saving throw or be blinded until the end of the orthon's next turn.
3. **Concussion.** The target and each creature within 20 feet of it must make a DC 17 Constitution saving throw, taking 13 (2d12) thunder damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.
4. **Entanglement.** The target must make a successful DC 17 Dexterity saving throw or be restrained for 1 hour by strands of sticky webbing. A restrained creature can escape by using an action to make a successful DC 17 Dexterity or Strength check. Any creature other than an orthon that touches the restrained creature must make a successful DC 17 Dexterity saving throw or become similarly restrained.
5. **Paralysis (1/Day).** The target takes 22 (3d10) lightning damage and must make a successful DC 17 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed for 1 minute. The paralyzed target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.
6. **Tacking.** For the next 24 hours, the orthon knows the direction and distance to the target, as long as it's on the same plane of existence. If the target is on a different plane, the orthon knows which one, but not the exact location there.

REACTIONS

Explosive Retribution. When it is reduced to 15 hit points or fewer, the orthon causes itself to explode. All other creatures within 30 feet of it must each make a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw, taking 9 (2d9) fire damage plus 9 (2d8) thunder damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. This explosion destroys the orthon, its infernal dagger, and its brass crossbow.

SPINED DEVIL

Small fiend (devil), lawful evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 22 (5d6 + 5)

Speed 20 ft., fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	8 (-1)

Damage Resistances cold; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks not made with silvered weapons

Damage Immunities fire, poison

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Infernal, telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

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

Flyby. The devil doesn't provoke an opportunity attack when it flies out of an enemy's reach.

Limited Spines. The devil has twelve tail spines. Used spines regrow by the time the devil finishes a long rest.

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The devil makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its fork or two with its tail spines.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (2d4) slashing damage.

Fork. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d6) piercing damage.

Tail Spine. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 2-/80 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d3 + 2) piercing damage plus 3 (1d6) fire damage.

TREANT

Huge plant, chaotic good

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 138 (12d12 + 60)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	8 (-1)	21 (+5)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)

Damage Vulnerabilities fire

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages Common, Druidic, Elvish, Sylvan

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

False Appearance. While the treant remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a normal tree.

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The treant makes two slam attacks

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (3d6 + 6) bludgeoning damage.

Rock. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, range 60/80 ft., one target. *Hit:* 28 (4d10 + 6) bludgeoning damage.

Animate Trees (1/Day). The treant magically animates one or two trees it can see within 60 feet of it. These trees have the same statistics as a treant, except they have Intelligence and Charisma scores of 1, they can't speak, and they have only the Slam action option. An animated tree acts as an ally of the treant. The tree remains animate for 1 day or until it dies; until the treant dies or is more than 120 feet from the tree; or until the treant takes a bonus action to turn it back into an inanimate tree. The tree then takes root if possible.

TREE BLIGHT

Huge plant, neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 149 (13d12 + 65)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	10 (+0)	20 (+5)	6 (-2)	10 (+0)	3 (-4)

Condition Immunities blinded, deafened

Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 10

Languages understands Common and Druidic but doesn't speak

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

False Appearance. While the blight remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a dead tree.

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The blight makes four attacks: two with its branches and two with its grasping roots. If it has a target grappled, the blight can also make a bite attack against that target as a bonus action.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 19 (3d8 + 6) piercing damage.

Branch. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (3d6 + 6) bludgeoning damage.

Grasping Root. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 15 ft., one creature not grappled by the blight. *Hit:* The target is grappled (escape DC 15). Until the grapple ends, the target takes 9 (1d6 + 6) bludgeoning damage at the start of each of its turns. The root has AC 15 and can be severed by dealing 6 slashing damage or more to it at once. Cutting the root doesn't hurt the blight but ends the grapple.

WOOD WOAD

Medium plant, lawful neutral

Armor Class 18 (natural armor, shield)

Hit Points 75 (10d8 + 30)

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	8 (-1)

Skills Athletics +7, Perception +4, Stealth +4

Damage Vulnerabilities fire

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages Sylvan

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Magic Club. In the wood woad's hand, its club is magical and deals 7 (3d4) extra damage (included in its attacks).

Plant Camouflage. The wood woad has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks it makes in any terrain with ample obscuring plant life.

Regeneration. The wood woad regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn if it is in contact with the ground. If the wood woad takes fire damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of the wood woad's next turn. The wood woad dies only if it starts its turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

Tree Stride. Once on each of its turns, the wood woad can use 10 feet of its movement to step magically into one living tree within 5 feet of it and emerge from a second living tree within 60 feet of it that it can see, appearing in an unoccupied space within 5 feet of the second tree. Both trees must be Large or bigger.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The wood woad makes two attacks with its club.

Club. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (4d4 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

ZHALRUBAN

Large fiend, lawful evil

Armor Class 18 (plate barding)

Hit Points 135 (18d10 + 18)

Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+5)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	11 (+0)	17 (+3)	16 (+3)

Damage Immunities fire, poison

Condition Immunities charmed, paralyzed, poisoned

Senses Darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Celestial, Elvish, Infernal Sylvan, telepathy 60 ft.

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Devil's Sight. Magical darkness doesn't impede Zhalruban's darkvision.

Fiery Charge. If Zhalruban moves at least 20 feet straight toward a target and then hits it with a horn attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 9 (2d8) fire damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 16 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Innate Spellcasting. Zhalruban's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 14). Zhalruban can innately cast the following spells, requiring no components:

At will: *detect evil and good*, *druidcraft*, *fire bolt*, *pass without trace* 1/day each: *calm emotions*, *entangle*, *faerie fire*, *hellish rebuke*

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

Magic Weapons. Zhalruban's weapon attacks are magical.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Zhalruban makes two attacks: one with her hooves and one with either her horn or infernal blast.

Hooves. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6+5) bludgeoning damage.

Horn. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d10+5) piercing damage.

Infernal Ray. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +6 to hit, range 60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 21 (6d6) fire damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or catch on fire. At the start of each of its turns, the creature takes 7 (2d6) fire damage. The fire can be extinguished by spending an action.

Healing Touch (3/Day). Zhalruban touches another creature with her horn. The target magically regains 21 (4d8 +3) hit points. In addition, the touch removes all diseases and neutralizes all poisons afflicting the target.

Teleport (1/Day). Zhalruban magically teleports herself and up to three willing creatures she can see within 5 feet of her, along with any equipment they are wearing or carrying, to a location Zhalruban is familiar with, up to 1 mile away.

LEGENDARY ACTION

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

- **Hooves.** Zhalruban makes one attack with her hooves.
- **Infernal Ray (Costs 2 Actions).** Zhalruban makes one attack with her Infernal Ray.
- **Heal Self (Costs 2 Actions).** Zhalruban magically regains 21 (4d8 + 3) hit points.
- **Infernal Trample (Costs 3 Actions).** Zhalruban moves her speed in a straight line. During this movement, she can pass through a hostile creature's space—making an attack with her hooves against any creature whose space she moves through. This movement doesn't provoke opportunity attacks.

ZOMBIE

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 8

Hit Points 22 (3d8 + 9)

Speed 20ft.

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

Saving Throws Wis +2

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses Darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 8

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

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

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

ACTIONS

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

APPENDIX 1: THE BLEEDING HEART (BONUS OBJECTIVE A)

Estimated Duration: 1 hour

Lancel Darkblade is a Hellrider who sought shelter amongst the trees of Bloodroot Grove when it became clear that Zariel's defeat was inevitable. Following Shalrel and Zhalruban, Lancel was immediately beset upon by fiends. One hundred and fifty years later, Lancel is still gravely wounded fighting to their last breath. He's no idea that it's been almost a century and a half since their ride; to him, it feels as if it's been only a few hours.

Combing through the heavy foliage of Bloodroot Grove, you stumble upon a raging battle. A gravely wounded Hellrider, grips their weapon with one hand while fending off a devil with the other.



BONUS OBJECTIVE A

Recovering a strand of Zhalruban's hair to save Lancel is **Bonus Objective A**.

AREA INFORMATION

The area has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The site of this battle is a small craggy clearing decorated with sharp rocks that Lancel has used as cover to save his life several times already. The clearing is 35 feet across.

CREATURE INFORMATION

Lancel (LG male elf **knight**) is here, fighting off two **bearded devils** and two **spined devils**.

What do They Want? The devils assailing Lancel were among the outriders that pursued any deserters from Zariel's vanguard and seek to accomplish their mission.

What do They Know? The devils, denizens of Bloodroot Grove, discovered the fallen Hellrider and bent their will to wound and torture Lancel. The devils know the magical properties of Lancel's wound and the general location of Zhalruban; the outriders were initially ordered to kill Zhalruban as well but were turned away by the unicorn's keepers. If the characters intervene the devils turn their attention to them allowing the Hellrider to crawl to safety. With the devils dispatched, the Hellrider introduces himself and tells the characters of Shalrel's flight from battle and the wound he suffered in his attempt to aid Shalrel. Lancel's wound is bound by a strange magic born of the corrupted Grove. No spell, potion, or conventional means can aid Lancel. Lancel, knowing nothing of Zhalruban's fall, petitions the characters to bring him a strand of hair from the unicorn's tail to sew his wound closed. The characters recover the hair once Zhalruban has been convinced to leave the Grove or defeated in combat. This side quest should be begun before **Part 2** but can only be completed after **part 2**. When Lancel is healed he joins the characters and Zhalruban.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak:** Remove a **barbed devil** and a **spined devil**
- **Weak:** Remove a **barbed devil**; replace the **spined devils** with a **bearded devil**
- **Strong:** Replace the **spined devils** and **barbed devil** with a **horned devil**.
- **Very Strong:** Add a **barbed devil**

TREASURE

The band of devils assaulting Lancel carries a trophy, an ancient banner of the Hellriders along with other trinkets looted from the corpses of the devil's victims.

APPENDIX 2: STEEL WILLOWS (BONUS OBJECTIVE B)

Estimated Duration: 1 hour

Zariel has taken notice of the characters and has dispatched a pair of her most dangerous agents to stop them. While the players are making their way through the forest, read the following aloud:

The sound of metal ominously gliding across metal rings out as you come upon a pair of barren trees. The chains hanging from the branches drip fresh gore.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

Very Weak: Replace a **chain devil** with a **bearded devil**.

Very Strong: Replace a **chain devil** with an **orthon**.

TREASURE

Amongst the hanging chains the players find a collection of silver trinkets and gems.

AREA INFORMATION

The area has the following features.

Dimensions & Terrain. The pair of trees covered in chains stand 20 feet apart amid the forest. The terrain immediately surrounding them is slick with gore and assorted body parts that have been flayed and removed from their original owners.

Chained Trees. Chains cover the trunks of both trees and wrap around in spirals across each branch. Blood-stained links hang low from each branch, in a macabre mockery of drooping willow branches.

CREATURE INFORMATION

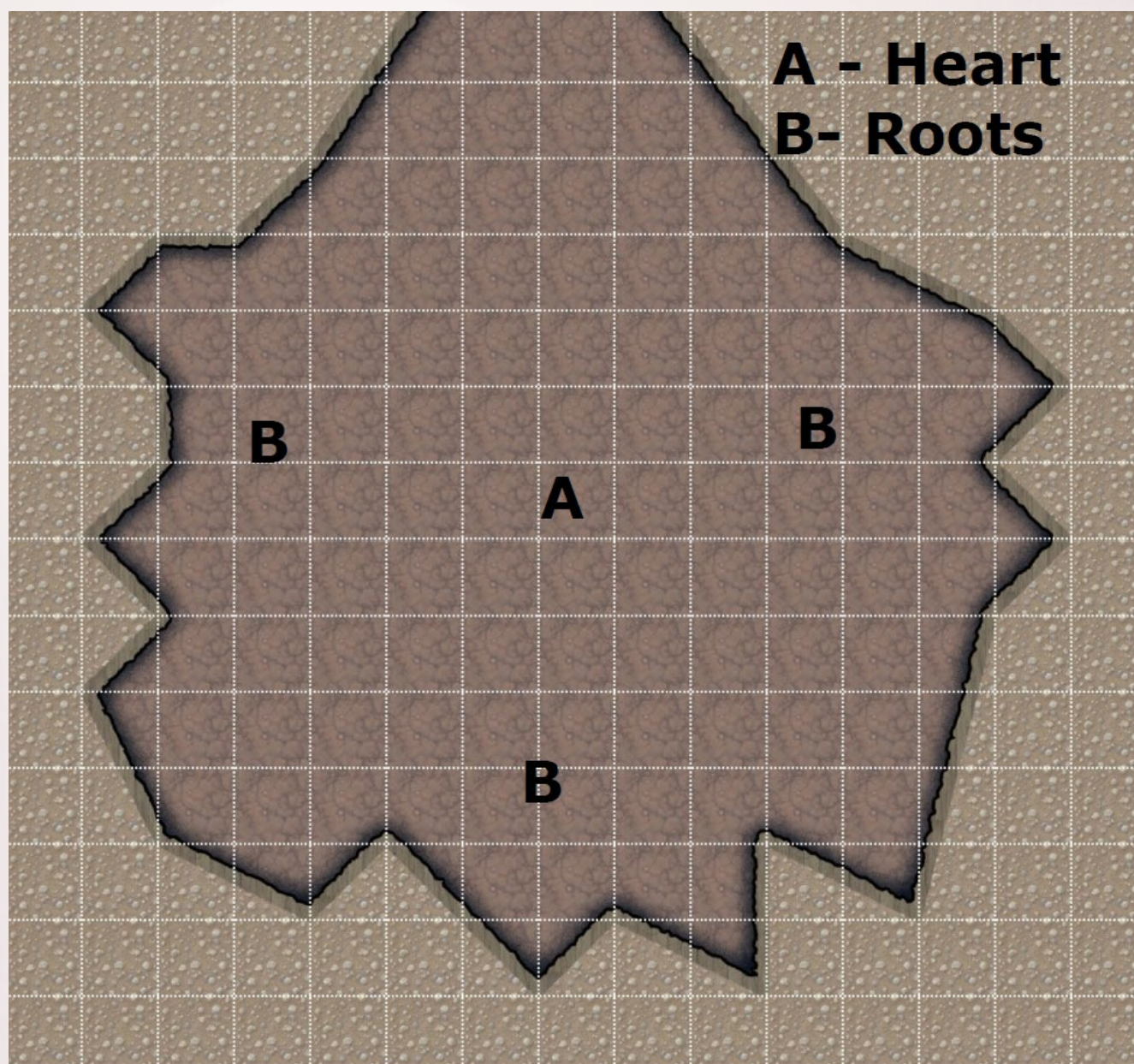
Hrazhilen and Rowlkazra (**chain devils**) lurk in the branches, concealed by the numerous chains.

What Do They Want? Hrazhilen and Rowlkazra were dispatched by Zariel to slay the characters and prevent them from redeeming Zhalruban. In conjunction with their mission from their mistress, the pair of chain devils wish to revel in the pain and suffering of the characters.

What Do They Know? The orders given to Hrazhilen and Rowlkazra gave no other information about the characters other than that they were “mortal filth” who must be dispatched before they cause any trouble. The chain devils have heard only fleeting reports of Hellriders stranded in Bloodroot. They use the hanging chains from the trees to maximum effect, animating the chains as often as possible to grapple a character.



APPENDIX 3: ZHALRUBAN'S DEN MAP



APPENDIX 4. FLORA OF BLOODROOT GROVE

The forest contains a number of different plants that corrupt mortals.

Corruption. Many of the plants and beasts within Bloodroot Grove excrete or consume a sap that is highly addictive and dangerous to ingest. Any creature that ingests the sap experiences intense hallucinations, which can manifest in various ways. If a player completes a long rest while under the effects of corruption, they gain a level of corruption until they consume an angel's weed seed pod. A level of corruption can also be removed with a *lesser restoration* spell.

BLOODROOT CORRUPTION

Hallucination	Description
The Worm	The character is plagued by the presence of a great devilish worm that burrows beneath the ground and seems to be hunting them.
Wood Whispers	The trees grow faces and leer at the character, whispering to each other of how their body will break beneath their roots and feed their growth.
Forbidden Fruit	The fruit of the many nearby trees and plants seem to pulse with life and their acrid smell turns pleasant and enticing.
Hopeless Good	The character sees brief images and hears voices whispering about their failures.

Flora. Bloodroot Grove is home to many types of plants. There are recognizable and unremarkable plants, but also strange, terrible, and wholly alien ones unique to the grove. Some plants have vines that twist onto themselves and resemble nooses, leaves that appear to be made of human skin, or fruit resembling lidless eyes that seem to dart around hungrily.

- **Hangman Vines.** Thin vines lash out at the necks of creatures that pass within 5 feet of this plant. The creature must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be restrained (escape DC 13) 5 feet off of the ground and unable to breathe (see the suffocation rules in the *Player's Handbook*).
- **Screeching Leaves.** If a creature passes within 10 feet of one of these trees, the leaves begin to rub against one another, emitting a terrifying sound like that of a screaming human that can be heard from 300 feet away.
- **Sightless Sorrow.** These berries resemble eyeballs and grow in pairs. Anyone foolish enough to eat one must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or take 22 (4d10) poison damage and be poisoned for 10 minutes. While poisoned in this way, the creature is blinded, their eyes constantly weeping tears of blood. The creature can repeat the saving throw every minute, removing the condition early on a success. If the poison runs its full course without being removed, the blindness is permanent: the creature's eyes wither away into two tiny black seeds and fall to the ground (later growing into new sightless sorrow plants). At this point, only *greater restoration*, *regenerate*, or *wish* can restore the victim's eyesight.
- **Devil's Harvest.** The fruit of this parasitic plant has seeds that attach to other trees, latching on and corrupting their hosts. The trees change produce more of the highly addictive fruit a sickly sap that serves as cider for devils and corrupting nectar for other creatures.
- **Angel's Weed.** The devils of the grove hate this plant. The root of the weed is thick and forks to form a pair of leaves from which sprouts a round, white bulb, giving the plant the appearance of an angel with outstretched wings. When consumed, the bulbs stave off the grove's corruption. Any creature afflicted with corruption from any of the local fauna that eats a seed pod is cured of the corruption but gains a level of exhaustion. These plants are exceptionally rare, and each plant bears only a few seed pods.

APPENDIX 5: 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 off rewards they didn't receive during the session):

ARROW-CATCHING SHIELD

Armor (shield), rare

You gain a +2 bonus to AC against ranged attacks while you wield this shield. This bonus is in addition to the shield's normal bonus to AC. In addition, whenever an attacker makes a ranged attack against a target within 5 feet of you, you can use your reaction to become the target of the attack instead. This item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

This round, metal shield is decorated with braids of hair from the unicorn Zhalruban and emblazoned with the insignia of the Hellriders on the boss of the shield. The boss itself pulses with magic when the shield attracts ranged attacks.

POTION OF GREATER HEALING

Potion, uncommon

You regain 4d4+4 hit points when you drink this potion. The potion's red liquid glimmers when agitated.

The potion is held in a bottle decorated with metal sculpted to resemble branches that reach to the stopper.

SOUL COIN

Wondrous item, uncommon

Soul coins are about 5 inches across and about an inch thick, minted from infernal iron. Each coin weighs 1-third of a pound and is inscribed with Infernal writing and a spell that magically binds a single soul to the coin. Because each soul coin has a unique soul trapped within it, each has a story. A creature might have been imprisoned as a result of defaulting on a deal, while another might be the victim of a night hag's curse.

Carrying Soul Coins. To hold a soul coin is to feel the soul bound within it—overcome with rage or fraught with despair. An evil creature can carry as many soul coins as it wishes (up to its maximum weight allowance). A non-evil creature can carry a number of soul coins equal to or less than its Constitution modifier without penalty. A non-evil creature carrying a number of soul coins greater than its Constitution modifier has disadvantage on its attack rolls, ability checks, and saving throws.

Using a Soul Coin. A soul coin has 3 charges. A creature carrying the coin can use its action to expend 1 charge from a soul coin and use it to do one of the following:

Drain Life. You siphon away some of the soul's essence and gain 1d10 temporary hit points.

Query. You telepathically ask the soul a question and receive a brief telepathic response, which you can understand. The soul knows only what it knew in life, but it must answer you truthfully and to the best of its ability. The answer is no more than a sentence or two and might be cryptic.

Freeing a Soul. Casting a spell that removes a curse on a soul coin frees the soul trapped within it, as does expending all of the coin's charges. The coin itself rusts from within and is destroyed once the soul is released. A soul can also be freed by destroying the coin that contains it. A soul coin has AC 19, 1 hit point for each charge it has remaining, and immunity to all damage except that which is dealt by a hellfire weapon or an infernal war machine's furnace. Freeing a soul from a soul coin is considered a good act, even if the soul belongs to an evil creature.

APPENDIX 6: STORY AWARDS

This appendix includes descriptions of the various story awards that might be earned for completing the adventure.

HOLY PROTECTOR

Filled with the pride and glory she once felt in the vanguard of the Hellriders, you have guided Zhalruban to her redemption. She has found her purpose in Dara's mission and taken to the chosen of Ilmater as steadfastly as she did for Shalrel, her previous master.

Zhalruban now serves as a guide, protector, and mount for Dara in all future adventures.

A WELCOME HAVEN

You have helped to redeem Zhalruban who has joined your and Dara's quest. You have instructed her to stay within Bloodroot Grove to tend the once divine forest, so that they both can return to their once sacred standing.

As you travel through the depths and dangers of Avernus you will always find a haven from devils and other adversaries amongst the trees of Bloodroot Grove.

APPENDIX 7: 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.

NEW TO D&D ADVENTURERS LEAGUE?

<http://dnd.wizards.com/playevents/organized-play>

NEW TO THE ANNUAL STORYLINE?

<http://dndadventurersleague.org/storyline-seasons/descent-into-avernus/>

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 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