

# LOST SOULS

## A DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® *LIVING* *FORGOTTEN REALMS* ADVENTURE

BY DAVE KAYSERMAN

REVIEWED BY PIETER SLEIJPEN

PLAYTESTED BY DAN ANDERSON, DAN GAULZETTI, ERIK OPAROWSKE,  
JAMES WNOROWSKI, LORI ANDERSON, MARCO LAMMERS, MARK KNOBBE,  
MIKE MURPHY, RENOUT VAN RIJN, TJALLING SPAANS AND YANNICK BRAAT

Few realms have greater need of the Crying God's followers than Impiltur, a once strong and peaceful nation now in rapid decline. When the suffering of lost souls is too great for even the painbearers to endure, will you help share the burden? A *Living Forgotten Realms* adventure set in Impiltur for characters levels 7-10.

Based on the original DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® rules created by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson and the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game designed by Andy Collins, Rob Heinsoo, and James Wyatt.

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## PREPARING FOR PLAY

In order to play this adventure, you'll need copies of the following D&D 4th Edition rulebooks: *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*. Any other rules referenced in this adventure will be noted in the **New Rules Items** section at the end of the adventure.

Throughout this adventure, text in bold italics provides player information for you to paraphrase or read aloud when appropriate. Information on nonplayer characters (NPCs) and monsters appear in abbreviated form in the adventure text.

Along with this adventure, you'll find a RPGA Session Tracking sheet. If you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, complete and turn in this sheet to your Senior GM directly after play.

## READING MONSTER STAT BLOCKS

Most of the information should be easy to understand, as it mirrors the information presented in the *Monster Manual*. Attacks have a letter next to them designating the type: M for melee, R for ranged, C for close, and A for area. A lower-case letter (used only in some melee and ranged attacks) denotes that the attack can be used as a basic attack.

## IMPORTANT DM INFORMATION

As the DM of the session, you have the most important role in facilitating the enjoyment of the game for the players. You take the words on these pages and make them come alive. The outcome of a fun game session often creates stories that live well beyond the play at the table. Always follow this golden rule when you DM for a group:

**Make decisions and adjudications that enhance the fun of the adventure when possible.**

To reinforce this golden rule, keep in mind the following:

- **You are empowered to make adjustments to the adventure and make decisions about how the group interacts with the world of this adventure.** This is especially important and applicable outside of combat encounters, but feel free to use the "scaling the encounter" advice (usually for adjusting to different-sized groups) to adjust combat encounters for groups that are having too easy or too hard of a time in an adventure.
- **Don't make the adventure too easy or too difficult for a group.** Never being challenged makes for a boring game, and being overwhelmed makes for a frustrating game. Gauge the experience of the players (not the characters) with the game, try to feel out (or ask) what they like in a game, and attempt to give each of them the experience they're after when they play D&D. Give everyone a "chance to shine."
- **Be mindful of pacing, and keep the game session moving along appropriately.** Watch for stalling, as play loses momentum when this happens. At the same time, make sure that the players don't finish the adventure too early; provide them with a full play experience. *Living Forgotten Realms* adventures are designed to be

played within 3.5 - 4 hours; try to be very aware of running long or short. Adjust the pacing accordingly.

- **Give the players appropriate hints so they can make informed choices about how to interact with their environment.** Players should always know when enemies are affected by conditions and are bloodied. They should be given clues about how to interact with their surroundings so they can tackle skill challenges, combats, and puzzles without getting too frustrated over lack of information. This helps to encourage immersion in the adventure and gives players “little victories” for figuring out a good choice from a clue.

In short, being the DM for a *Living Forgotten Realms* adventure isn't about following every word on the page; it's about creating a fun, challenging game environment for the players. A great deal of good information on being a DM for a D&D game can be found in Chapters 1-2 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

## APPROPRIATE CHARACTER LEVELS

This adventure is designed for player characters (PCs) levels 7 - 10. Characters that fall outside of the level range may not participate in the adventure. Make certain to check the levels of the PCs before beginning play to ensure that they are the proper level.

Each adventure has a low-level version and a high-level version. The low level is meant for a group whose levels, on average, fall in the first two levels of the adventure's level spread. The high level is meant for a group whose levels, on average, fall in the last two levels of the adventure's level spread.

A group may decide to play riskier and play the high level when their levels are more suited to the low level if everyone in the group is in agreement to do so; however, some of the rewards may not be available to them. Conversely, a group may decide to play the low level when their levels are more suited to the high level if everyone in the group is in agreement to do so; however, some of the rewards may be less than what they'd ideally want from the adventure.

**Reading the Numbers:** Each encounter will have a level and other values (such as XP or sometimes skill checks) listed with two numbers divided by a slash. The number before the slash is always the value for the low-level version of the adventure; the number after the slash is the value for the high-level version of the adventure.

## FAILING TO DEFEAT AN ENCOUNTER

If a group fails to defeat an encounter - that is, if they have to flee from a combat because it's too tough or they reach the predetermined number of failures in a skill challenge before reaching success - they are only awarded half experience points (round down) for the encounter. If they manage to tackle the encounter later on and defeat it, award them the other half of the experience points for the encounter.

## CHARACTER DEATH

If a PC dies during the course of the adventure, the player of that character and the rest of the group have two options, provided that they have access to the Raise Dead ritual (either a PC has it and can use it or the characters return back to civilization), they have access to the body, and it is possible to return the dead PC to life.

- **Pay the component cost for the ritual.** If the group chooses this option, the cost should be divided evenly amongst the group (500 gp for heroic tier, 5,000 gp for paragon tier, and 50,000 gp for epic tier). Using a source outside the group to cast the ritual costs 20% more than the component cost. Total cost when using an outside source is 600 gp for heroic tier, 6,000 gp for paragon tier, and 60,000 gp for epic tier. A PC that dies and chooses this method of return gains full (or half, if the party was defeated) experience points from the encounter in which the character died, but no experience points for any encounters that were missed while the character was dead. If there's still more of the adventure remaining, the PC continues to earn experience as normal, and receives a normal cut of the rewards at the end of the adventure.
- **Invoke the Death Charity clause.** If the group cannot afford to pay for the ritual (or doesn't desire to do so), the PC can choose to return back to life at the end of the adventure. Doing so forfeits all rewards (including treasure and story rewards) earned for the adventure except experience points gained prior to the character's death (the character receives the experience point award for the encounter in which they died). The PC cannot participate in the same adventure a second time.

## MILESTONES

No matter if the characters succeed or fail in an encounter, they reach a milestone if it is the second encounter they've had since the start of the adventure or their last extended rest. Encounters that do not give out experience points do not count for purposes of reaching a milestone. Make certain to mention this information to the players when applicable, as it gives each PC another action point and affects how some magic item powers are used.

## ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

When Mystra's weave failed, many of the demons bound by the ancient Nar were released and now roam free in Impiltur. Over time, a number of demon cults sprang up in the dying nation, the largest of which is the Fraternity of Tharos.

Some time ago, a cultist named Pelgor came across an ancient Nar artifact hidden beneath the streets of New Sarshel - a demonic altar that captured the souls of any who died near it and condemned them to an eternity of torment by the demon Marlug imprisoned within. When Bor, one of Pelgor's underlings, defected and converted to the path of the Crying God, Pelgor sought to punish his disloyal servant and the meddling priest that interfered. Fearful that Bor might cause him unwanted attention, Pelgor summoned a cadre of demons to deal with him.

With the help of Brother Sollus, the priest of Ilmater that converted him, Bor has gone into hiding. The demons summoned by Pelgor have been attacking and tormenting the priests at the temple of Ilmater daily, trying to discover Bor's whereabouts.

## PLAYER'S INTRODUCTION

This adventure takes place in the city of New Sarshel and assumes that the PCs are already together and in New Sarshel, seeking adventure. Feel free to either use the hook provided below or content from outside of this adventure to help explain the PCs' presence in New Sarshel:

The Grand Council of New Sarshel has long had a tradition of hiring adventurers to serve as swordpoints; mercenaries organized to combat monstrous threats and enforce the laws of the land. The practice continues to this day, but corruption and decadence make such service uncertain. The PCs have arrived in New Sarshel only to discover that they have been tasked with patrolling the poor district and seeking out cult activity.

This may be an appropriate time for the players to introduce their PCs to one another. When ready, read or paraphrase the following:

*Many call New Sarshel the Last Light of Impiltur, the only metropolis that seems to have avoided the nation's inexorable decay. Having only been in the city for a few days, it is apparent that the "last light" of which many speak glows dimly indeed and, judging by the conditions within New Sarshel's poor district, may have already burned out.*

*The poor district is nothing more than a cesspool of poverty and disease. Sewage flows freely through the streets and beggars litter every street corner, pleading for spare copper, some more insistent than others. Amongst the withered and reeking beggars, a small child dressed in rags sits slouched against the crumbling stone wall of a building. She looks up at you with hopeless eyes, still wet from the tears that have left streaks in her grime-encrusted cheeks.*

Cadie is a seven-year-old orphan that lives on the streets of the poor district. For years, she found a home at the temple of Ilmater but since the attacks on the temple began, she had no choice but to flee and resume her life on the streets. If the PCs show any kindness to Cadie, she leads them to the temple, hoping that they might be able to help. It may be necessary to adjust this interaction to ensure that the PCs follow Cadie to the temple.

## DM'S INTRODUCTION

Before you start the adventure check whether or not any of the PCs played *IMPI1-1 Alone* and/or *IMPI1-2 Breaking Point*. PCs with story award *IMPI02* from *IMPI1-1* can use it to their benefit in Encounter 3. PCs that began the major quest "Plight of Lost Souls" (*IMPI03*) in *IMPI1-2* have the chance to conclude that major quest in this adventure.

The adventure begins at the temple of Ilmater in the poor district of New Sarshel where Brother Sollus and a number of his clergy are under attack by Pelgor's demons.

After fighting off the demons and learning of the events that have transpired, the PCs convince Brother Sollus to help them find Bor before it is too late. Bor, who has gone mad with guilt, breaks down when he is found and reveals the location of the altar to the PCs.

The PCs confront Pelgor and his servants before discovering the truth behind the altar: that it is in fact a pocket dimension through which souls may travel to feed a far greater evil. Through great sacrifice, the PCs

find the means to travel into pocket dimension, defeat its guardian, and destroy the altar from within, freeing all of the souls that had been sent there by Pelgor.

## ENCOUNTER 1: MASSACRE AT NEW SARSHEL

### ENCOUNTER LEVEL 7 / 9 (1,500 / 2,000 XP)

#### SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures.

**2 Kalaka (K)**

**4 Cultist Minion (M)** (human lackey)

**1 Vrock (V)**

As Cadie leads the PCs closer to the temple, it becomes audibly apparent that the temple is under attack. Read or paraphrase the following:

*As the gray stone pillars of the temple of Ilmater come into view, shouts of terror and screams of pain can be heard coming from within.*

When the PCs arrive, a group of demons is tormenting the priests of Ilmater, seeking the whereabouts of Bor. Read or paraphrase the following when the PCs enter the temple:

*The temple doors open to reveal a scene of utter carnage. Bloated demons wielding glaives accompanied by human cultists run rampant throughout the temple interior, slashing and stabbing at the resident priests, a number of which already lie motionless on the floor in pools of freshly spilled blood.*

*A large, bird-like demon sits on its haunches before the altar with its back turned to you, cackling and chattering at a priest lying prostrate before it. "Hand over the worm and this will all be over. Tell us where he is and we won't have to return. Your death will be quick, old priest, and perhaps we will spare some of your followers."*

The bloated demons with glaives are the kalakas (source: Dragon 369).

#### FEATURES OF THE AREA

The temple of Ilmater has the following features of note:

**Illumination:** The temple is well-lit by sconces that line the walls.

**Pews:** Rows of pews line the center of the temple. If a PC attempts to jump over a pew, add 5 to the DC of

the Athletics check made to determine distance. Failure results in the PC falling prone upon the pew. PCs may stand on the pews but grant combat advantage to all opponents unless they succeed at a DC 15 Acrobatics check. Failure by 5 or more results in the PC falling prone.

**Stairs:** The stairs leading up to the altar and down to the east and west wings are considered difficult terrain.

**Statues:** The statues in the corners of the temple are considered blocking terrain.

**Ceiling:** The temple's ceiling is 15 feet high. Due to the vrock's size, the PCs can reach it while it is flying, even without reach.

**Innocents:** The bodies of unconscious and dead innocents (acolytes and locals) are scattered throughout the temple. A DC 19 Perception check identifies a person as alive or dead. Any of these people caught in an area attack that deals damage die instantly. PCs who kill them carelessly receive angry looks from Brother Sollus but their actions have no direct impact on the rest of the adventure. Dead bodies are marked on the map with the letter "D" and unconscious innocents are marked on the map with the letter "U." Brother Sollus is marked with an "S."

#### TACTICS

The kalakas prefer to keep pews in between them and the PCs when attacking, forcing PCs to walk around or risk tripping over the pews. When the right opportunity presents itself, they will use *unexpected reinforcements* in an attempt to take down a PC (or slide him more than one square).

The vrock uses flyby attacks primarily, choosing to make itself difficult to reach with melee attacks whenever possible. It uses *stunning screech* when it can catch multiple PCs in the burst. It has a pair of *blood-soaked bracers* and uses them when it becomes bloodied.

In addition to the clubs, the cultist minions are armed with 5 javelins. They focus on PCs engaged by the kalakas with ranged attacks, switching to melee only when engaged or after running out of javelins. Add the following attack power to their stats:

<b>r Javelin</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>
Ranged 10/20; +14 / +15 vs. AC; 5 damage.

All of the demons fight to the death and provide no information if captured.

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

Make the following adjustments to the combat based on the number of PCs present.

**Four PCs:** Remove one kalaka.

**Six PCs:** Add one kalaka.

## ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Once the PCs defeat the demons, they can speak with Brother Sollus and the other priests. Proceed to the next encounter once the players are ready.

## EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs receive 300 / 400 experience points each for defeating the demons.

## TREASURE

The vrock has a pair of *blood-soaked bracers* and a small sack of assorted gems in his possession worth 60 / 80 gp per PC.

# ENCOUNTER 1: MASSACRE AT NEW SarsHEL STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

Vrock (Level 9)	Level 9 Skirmisher
Large elemental humanoid (demon)	XP 400
<b>Initiative</b> +10 <b>Senses</b> Perception +11; darkvision <b>HP</b> 100; <b>Bloodied</b> 50; see also <i>spores of madness</i> <b>AC</b> 23; <b>Fortitude</b> 21, <b>Reflex</b> 19, <b>Will</b> 19 <b>Resist</b> 10 variable (2/encounter) <b>Speed</b> 6, fly 8; see also <i>flyby attack</i>	
<b>m Claw</b> (standard; at-will) Reach 2; +14 vs. AC; 2d8 + 4 damage.	
<b>M Flyby Attack</b> (standard; at-will) The vrock flies up to 8 squares and makes a claw attack at any point during that movement. The vrock doesn't provoke opportunity attacks when moving away from the target of the attack.	
<b>C Stunning Screech</b> (standard; recharge 6) Close burst 3; deafened creatures are immune; +13 vs. Fortitude; the target is stunned until the end of the vrock's next turn.	
<b>C Spores of Madness</b> (free, when first bloodied; encounter) ♦ <b>Poison</b> Close burst 2; demons are immune; +12 vs. Will; 1d10 + 2 poison damage, and the target is dazed (save ends).	
<b>Alignment</b> Chaotic Evil	<b>Languages</b> Abyssal
<b>Skills</b> Bluff +13, Insight +11	
<b>Str</b> 23 (+10)	<b>Dex</b> 19 (+8) <b>Wis</b> 15 (+6)
<b>Con</b> 20 (+9)	<b>Int</b> 12 (+5) <b>Cha</b> 19 (+8)

Kalaka (Level 7)	Level 7 Soldier
Medium elemental humanoid (demon)	XP 300
<b>Initiative</b> +7 <b>Senses</b> Perception +5; truesight 5 <b>HP</b> 92; <b>Bloodied</b> 46 <b>AC</b> 23; <b>Fortitude</b> 21, <b>Reflex</b> 18, <b>Will</b> 18 <b>Resist</b> 10 variable (1/encounter) <b>Speed</b> 5	
<b>m Glaive</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b> Reach 2; +14 vs. AC; 2d4 + 5 damage, and slide the target 1 square.	
<b>R Unexpected Reinforcements</b> (standard; encounter) ♦ <b>Conjuration, Weapon</b> Ranged 5; the kalaka conjures up to four duplicates of itself, which appear in four unoccupied squares in range. The kalaka and each duplicate make a melee basic attack. At the end of the kalaka's turn, choose a duplicate or the original kalaka to remain. Remove the rest from play.	
<b>C Spewing Death</b> (when reduced to 0 hit points) ♦ <b>Acid</b> Close burst 1; +14 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 3 acid damage, and the target is blinded until the end of its next turn. <i>Miss</i> : Half damage and the target is not blinded.	
<b>Flawed Creation</b> (while bloodied) The kalaka takes ongoing 5 damage.	
<b>Alignment</b> Chaotic Evil	<b>Languages</b> Abyssal, Common
<b>Skills</b> Athletics +13, Endurance +12	
<b>Str</b> 20 (+8)	<b>Dex</b> 14 (+5) <b>Wis</b> 15 (+5)
<b>Con</b> 18 (+7)	<b>Int</b> 9 (+2) <b>Cha</b> 11 (+3)

Human Lackey (level 10)	Level 10 Minion
Medium natural humanoid	XP 125
<b>Initiative</b> +4 <b>Senses</b> Perception +5 <b>HP</b> 1; a missed attack never damages a minion. <b>AC</b> 22; <b>Fortitude</b> 20; <b>Reflex</b> 17; <b>Will</b> 18; see also <i>mob rule</i> <b>Speed</b> 6	
<b>m Club</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b> +16 vs. AC; 6 damage.	
<b>Mob Rule</b> The human lackey gains a +2 power bonus to all defenses while at least two other human lackeys are within 5 squares of it.	
<b>Alignment</b> Any	<b>Languages</b> Common
<b>Str</b> 16 (+7)	<b>Dex</b> 11 (+4) <b>Wis</b> 12 (+5)
<b>Con</b> 14 (+8)	<b>Int</b> 10 (+4) <b>Cha</b> 13 (+5)
<b>Equipment</b> leather armor, club	



# ENCOUNTER 1: MASSACRE AT NEW SARSHEL STATISTICS (HIGH LEVEL)

Vrock (Level 11)	Level 11 Skirmisher
Large elemental humanoid (demon)	XP 600
<b>Initiative</b> +11 <b>Senses</b> Perception +12; darkvision	
<b>HP</b> 116; <b>Bloodied</b> 58; see also <i>spores of madness</i>	
<b>AC</b> 25; <b>Fortitude</b> 23, <b>Reflex</b> 21, <b>Will</b> 21	
<b>Resist</b> 10 variable (2/encounter)	
<b>Speed</b> 6, fly 8; see also <i>flyby attack</i>	
m <b>Claw</b> (standard; at-will)	
Reach 2; +16 vs. AC; 2d8 + 5 damage.	
M <b>Flyby Attack</b> (standard; at-will)	
The vrock flies up to 8 squares and makes a claw attack at any point during that movement. The vrock doesn't provoke opportunity attacks when moving away from the target of the attack.	
C <b>Stunning Screech</b> (standard; recharge 6)	
Close burst 3; deafened creatures are immune; +15 vs. Fortitude; the target is stunned until the end of the vrock's next turn.	
C <b>Spores of Madness</b> (free, when first bloodied; encounter) ♦	
<b>Poison</b>	
Close burst 2; demons are immune; +14 vs. Will; 1d10 + 3 poison damage, and the target is dazed (save ends).	
<b>Alignment</b> Chaotic Evil	<b>Languages</b> Abyssal, Common
<b>Skills</b> Bluff +14, Insight +12	
<b>Str</b> 23 (+10)	<b>Dex</b> 19 (+10) <b>Wis</b> 15 (+8)
<b>Con</b> 20 (+9)	<b>Int</b> 12 (+7) <b>Cha</b> 19 (+10)

Kalaka	Level 9 Soldier
Medium elemental humanoid (demon)	XP 300
<b>Initiative</b> +8 <b>Senses</b> Perception +6; truesight 5	
<b>HP</b> 108; <b>Bloodied</b> 54	
<b>AC</b> 25; <b>Fortitude</b> 23, <b>Reflex</b> 20, <b>Will</b> 20	
<b>Resist</b> 10 variable (1/encounter)	
<b>Speed</b> 5	
m <b>Glaive</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
Reach 2; +16 vs. AC; 2d4 + 6 damage, and slide the target 1 square.	
R <b>Unexpected Reinforcements</b> (standard; encounter) ♦	
<b>Conjuration, Weapon</b>	
Ranged 5; the kalaka conjures up to four duplicates of itself, which appear in four unoccupied squares in range. The kalaka and each duplicate make a melee basic attack. At the end of the kalaka's turn, choose a duplicate or the original kalaka to remain. Remove the rest from play.	
C <b>Spewing Death</b> (when reduced to 0 hit points) ♦ <b>Acid</b>	
Close burst 1; +16 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 4 acid damage, and the target is blinded until the end of its next turn. <i>Miss</i> : Half damage and the target is not blinded.	
<b>Flawed Creation</b> (while bloodied)	
The kalaka takes ongoing 5 damage.	
<b>Alignment</b> Chaotic Evil	<b>Languages</b> Abyssal, Common
<b>Skills</b> Athletics +14, Endurance +13	
<b>Str</b> 20 (+9)	<b>Dex</b> 14 (+6) <b>Wis</b> 15 (+6)
<b>Con</b> 18 (+8)	<b>Int</b> 9 (+3) <b>Cha</b> 11 (+4)

Human Lackey (level 11)	Level 10 Minion
Medium natural humanoid	XP 155
<b>Initiative</b> +5 <b>Senses</b> Perception +6	
<b>HP</b> 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.	
<b>AC</b> 23; <b>Fortitude</b> 21; <b>Reflex</b> 18; <b>Will</b> 19; see also <i>mob rule</i>	
<b>Speed</b> 6	
m <b>Club</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
+17 vs. AC; 7 damage.	
<b>Mob Rule</b>	
The human lackey gains a +2 power bonus to all defenses while at least two other human lackeys are within 5 squares of it.	
<b>Alignment</b> Any	<b>Languages</b> Common
<b>Str</b> 16 (+8)	<b>Dex</b> 11 (+5) <b>Wis</b> 12 (+6)
<b>Con</b> 14 (+9)	<b>Int</b> 10 (+5) <b>Cha</b> 13 (+7)
<b>Equipment</b> leather armor, club	

# ENCOUNTER 1: MASSACRE AT NEW SarsHEL MAP

## DUNGEON TILES

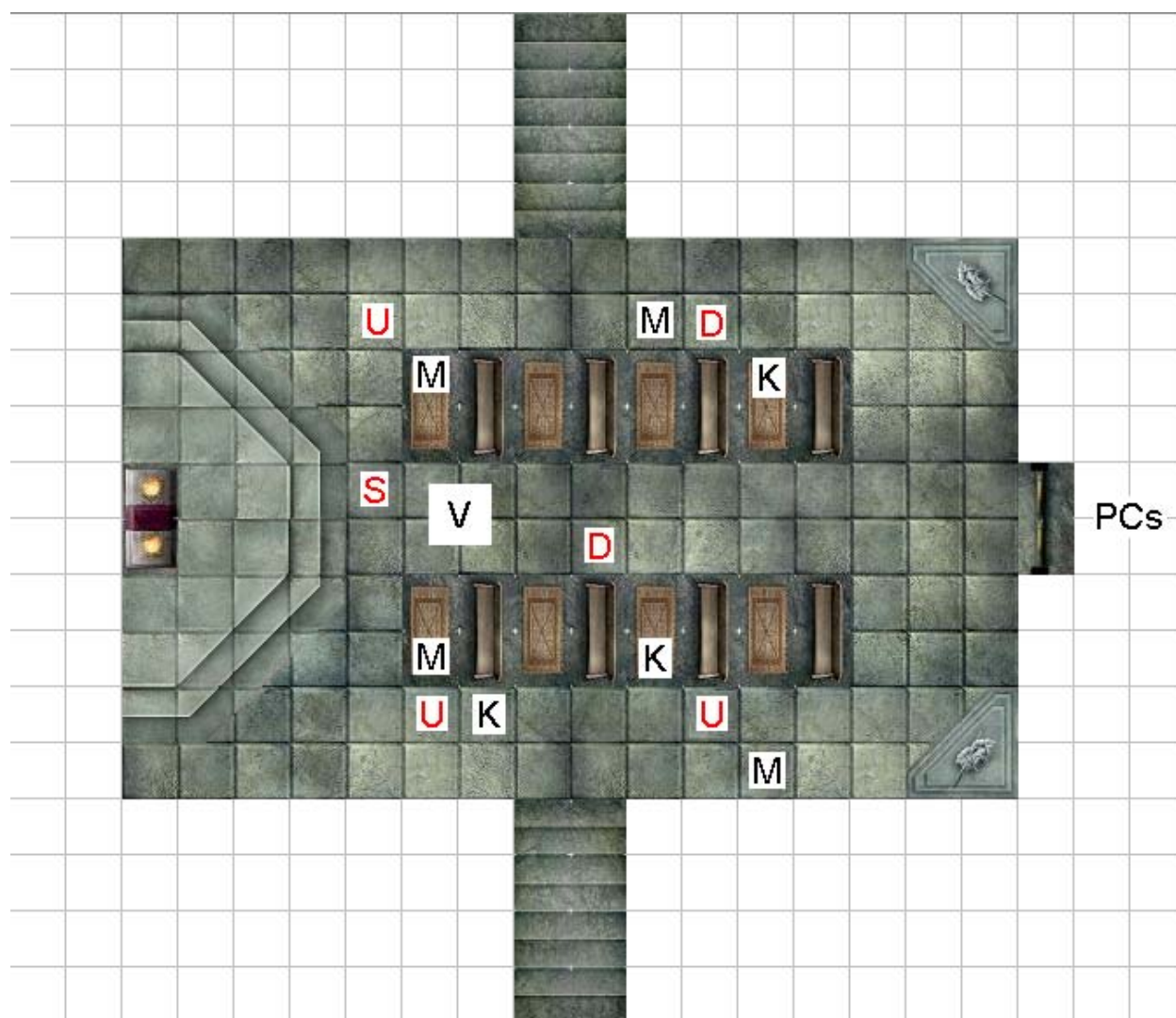
Floor	8x10	x2
Double Doors	2x1	x1

## ARCANE CORRIDORS

Altar	1x2	x1
Couches	8x2	x2
Stairs	4x2	x2

## FORGOTTEN CRYPTS

Steps	4x4d	x2
Statue w/ Shield	2x2d	x2



## ENCOUNTER 2: UNLIKELY SALVATION

### SETUP

#### Important NPCs:

**Brother Sollus**, male human priest of Ilmater.

This is a non-challenge encounter. While the first encounter lured the PCs into the adventure, this encounter is designed to hook them. Encourage the players to role-play a conversation with Brother Sollus (pronounced “Solace”) in order to learn more about what has transpired.

*As the final demon falls, you notice that the priests have already spread out, tending to the wounded. Some intone prayers to the Crying God over the fallen while others begin cleaning up the temple. One of the priests greets you warmly. “You are truly brave to join a fight that was not yours. You have saved many lives this day and for that I am thankful. My name is Brother Sollus and if there is anything I can do for you, please do not hesitate to ask it of me.”*

Brother Sollus is willing to answer any of the PCs’ questions. Some potential questions and answers are provided below, but feel free to improvise based on Brother Sollus’ motivations (also provided below).

### BROTHER SOLLUS

Male human; head priest of Ilmater

**Personality:** Brother Sollus is a genuinely compassionate man of strong faith. He believes that it is his duty to bear the pain of the innocent upon his shoulders.

**Useful Knowledge:** Brother Sollus knows why the demons have been attacking and can provide the PCs with a place to begin their search for Bor. He can also provide the PCs with Bor’s description.

**Goals:** Brother Sollus desires to save the city of New Sarshel from corruption. In particular, he believes that the redemption of lost souls (such as Bor’s) is a rarity that must be treasured and may very well be the key to saving the realm.

Relate the following information through conversation with the PCs:

- One of Brother Sollus’s disciples, a recent convert named Bor, belonged to a cult of demon worshippers before he saw the error of his ways

and found a new path. His former master, a cultist named Pelgor, has been trying to hunt him down.

- Brother Sollus believes that the demons have been summoned by Pelgor to find Bor and to punish Brother Sollus for interfering and converting him.
- Bor spoke of an altar – an item of great evil that had come into the possession of his former master – that he had seen used to perform terrible acts. Brother Sollus suspects his former master wishes this altar to remain a secret. Bor would not say what the altar did; he would weep at the very mention of it.
- The first demon attack occurred five days ago and the attacks have continued every day since. Brother Sollus helped Bor escape during the first attack and sent him into hiding. He does not know where he is but prays that he is not found. He believes that Bor’s faith is not yet strong enough for him to walk the path of a painbearer.
- Brother Sollus believes that he has no choice but to endure the attacks. He does not want to appear hopeless in front of his priests or his followers – what hope can he give to the hopeless if he appears to be hopeless himself?
- Brother Sollus believes that the PCs’ arrival was pre-ordained – a blessing from Ilmater for his unflinching faith and that Bor is destined to be an example for the many in this city that have strayed from the right path.
- Brother Sollus knows nothing of Bor’s former life, nor does he care to. He can, however, provide the PCs with directions to Bor’s old home.
- If the PCs agree to help stop Pelgor, Brother Sollus offers to reward them each with an item stored in the temple vault (see Conclusion A for the items).

When the PCs are finished asking questions, it should be clear to them that they must locate Bor and discover where Bor’s former master and the altar can be found if they wish to save the priests and ultimately, all of New Sarshel. If the PCs have somehow failed to arrive at this conclusion, feel free to give them a slight push in the right direction through Brother Sollus. Before the PCs leave, Brother Sollus leaves them with the following words:

**“Please do not delay in finding Bor. He cannot fall into his former master’s hands – he is the key to this city’s salvation. May Ilmater protect you on your path.”**

## ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

PCs that capture and question any of the cultists quickly realize that they know nothing except for the name of their boss (Pelgor) and that they have been sent to kill Bor. They know nothing of an altar, let alone its location.

Once the PCs are finished speaking with Brother Sollus, go to the next encounter. If the PCs are not interested in finding Bor or helping the priests with the attacks, then the adventure is over for them.

## ENCOUNTER 3: MANHUNT

**SKILL CHALLENGE LEVEL 7 / 9,  
COMPLEXITY 1 (300 / 400 XP)**

### SETUP

**Number of Successes:** 4

**Number of Failures:** 3

**Primary Skills:** Bluff, Diplomacy, Insight, Intimidate, Perception, Streetwise.

In addition to the demons that have been attacking the priests, Pelgor has dispatched an assassin to find Bor himself. While this assassin does not appear in the adventure, the PCs find themselves in a race against the clock to find Bor before Pelgor's hired assassin finds him.

### SKILL CHALLENGE

This skill challenge is broken up into multiple locations, each with its own set of skills relevant to that particular location. If the PCs come up with a creative alternative at any time during the skill challenge, grant them one or more successes at your best discretion.

#### SCENE 1: BOR'S HOME

*Following the instructions provided by Brother Sollus, you arrive at what could best be described as a hovel. Its door appears to have been ripped from its hinges. Clearly, you are not the first to have been here.*

**Perception (DC 19 / 20):** Searching through the remnants of Bor's belongings, the PCs find two items of interest. The first is a dice cup with a pair of loaded dice. The second is a note indicating that Bor owed money to a number of people. The only name still legible reads "Haldar - Rangdor's." Only one success may be garnered during this scene. Any number of PCs may assist one PC on this particular skill check. This check may be attempted multiple times. For each failure, inform the PCs that their progress searching the home is slow and that there is still much to be searched.

#### SCENE 2: WORD ON THE STREET

**Important NPCs:**

**Haldar**, male halfling store owner and adventurer.

The PCs may ask around to discover the location of Rangdor's, the shop owned by Haldar.

Haldar is a curious and friendly retired adventurer who knows runs his father's old shop. When the PCs inquire about Bor, he immediately asks the PCs why they're looking for him. If the PCs mention demons, Haldar admits that he'd like nothing more than to help battle the demons scourging these lands, but is reluctant to help for fear of bringing "unwanted" attention to his shop. If the PCs mention money, Haldar admits he is reluctant to help for fear that Bor owes the PCs money as well and might pay them back before him.

**Story Reward: Favor of Haldar (IMPI02):** If a PC has the Favor of Haldar from *IMPI1-1 Alone*, the group gains one automatic success in this scene of the skill challenge as the halfling recognizes the PC when the person walks into the store.

Alternatively, inquisitive PCs may find either one of Bor's old acquaintances or a perceptive bum on the streets to answer their questions. Select an appropriate skill based on the players' descriptions of their attempts. Remember, some coin in the palm will loosen almost anyone's tongue in the poor district. Award a +2 circumstance bonus to any PC that hands out a bribe.

**Diplomacy or Intimidate (DC 19 / 20):** Haldar (or one of the bums in the poor district) admits to sometimes seeing Bor entering or leaving one of three taverns: the Last Drop, The Stars' Retreat, and The Salty Sailor.

**Third Success:** The last time he saw a man matching Bor's description, he was hurrying into the Stars' Retreat.

**Streetwise (DC 14 / 15):** The PC manages to find one of Bor's old acquaintances. Although he hasn't seen Bor in years, he admits that Bor had a serious gambling addiction. Bor's favorite joints were The Last Drop Tavern, The Stars' Retreat, and The Salty Sailor.

**Third Success:** If memory serves, Bor always claimed to have had the best luck at The Stars' Retreat.

#### SCENE 3: THE STARS' RETREAT

*Had you not been told about The Stars' Retreat, you may have never noticed the small tavern nestled into the side of a red brick building honeycombed with private residences in the poor district.*

*Sailors occupying the right side of the tavern look up from their dice game as you enter but then quickly pick up where they left off. A muscled man standing beside the door gingerly places his hand on the cudgel at his side before giving you a slight nod. The proprietor eyes you warily while drying off a mug with his apron.*

Bor gave his life's savings to Sven (meager as it may have been), the proprietor of The Stars' Retreat, as payment for using a secret room built into the side of the tavern's cellar to lay low. He has been there for five days now. Although Sven promised to keep Bor's presence a secret, times are hard and he can certainly be persuaded. While the PCs wouldn't have any trouble getting past Sven if they wanted to, finding the secret chamber in the cellar without any help proves to be quite time-consuming.

If the PCs have already failed the skill challenge, the assassin's unnoticed arrival at Bor's hiding place can be explained by the use of a *passwall* ritual. Feel free to describe Bor's screaming coming from the cellar in gory detail if the PCs earn their third failure while inside the tavern.

**Bluff or Diplomacy (DC 19 / 20):** The PCs manage to loosen Sven's tongue, who takes them to the secret room where Bor is hiding. The way in which they do this depends entirely on their choice of words or strategy.

**Insight (DC 19 / 20):** The PC notices that at the mention of Bor, Sven gives off numerous nonverbal cues that indicate he's lying. If this is the PCs' fourth success, Sven breaks down and admits to Bor's whereabouts but begs the PCs not to harm him.

**Intimidate (DC 14 / 15):** An old man and one bouncer won't be enough to stop four/five/six heavily armed adventurers! Sven admits that Bor is hiding in the cellar but begs the PCs not to harm him.

## ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Completing the skill challenge takes the PCs a few hours.

If the PCs succeed at the skill challenge, they find Bor alive in a secret room in the basement of the Stars' Retreat. Proceed to Encounter 4.

If the PCs fail, they find Bor's body lying on the floor of a secret room in the basement of the Stars' Retreat. Proceed to Encounter 4. You will need to modify the encounter appropriately.

## EXPERIENCE POINTS

The characters receive 60 / 80 experience points for successfully completing the skill challenge.

## ENCOUNTER 4: A BROKEN MAN

### SETUP

#### Important NPCs:

**Bor**, male human ex-cultist.

The way in which this encounter is presented to the PCs depends on whether or not they succeeded in the skill challenge in the previous encounter.

#### BOR IS ALIVE

If the PCs succeeded in the skill challenge in the previous encounter, they have managed to find Bor in time, hiding in a secret room in the cellar of The Stars' Retreat.

*The false stone wall gives way easily and the sounds of a man weeping become immediately audible. Under the dim torch light, you can make out the form of an emaciated man huddled in the corner of the chamber. "Ha-have you c-come to k-k-kill me?" As he looks up, you can tell by his face that he has been crying for days.*

Bor knows that he is no match for any assassin that Pelgor may have sent and has thus given up. While hesitant at first, Bor is willing to answer any of the PCs' questions, hoping that they may be able to stand up to Pelgor and save his life. Some potential questions and answers are provided below, but feel free to improvise based on Bor's motivations (also provided below).

#### BOR

Male human; former cultist, acolyte of Ilmater

**Personality:** Bor is a weak-minded man who has gone mad with guilt. He feels responsible for (what he believes to be) the death of the only man to ever have been kind to him, Brother Sollus. He is skittish and the very mention of cultists makes him shake with fear. Bor is not an educated man and his speech should reflect this.

**Goals:** Bor's only goal is to survive because it was the last wish of Brother Sollus. When he finds out that Brother Sollus is still alive, he feels obligated to help protect him in any way he can (in this case, by providing information).

Relate the following information through conversation with the PCs.

- Bor's former master, Pelgor, used to be a thug in the Fraternity of Tharos just like Bor. However,

when he found the altar he somehow became more powerful. He can do things that normal men can't do, and he can summon demons.

- The altar is a terrible stone table with fiery scribbles in another language all over it. It looks old and it smells like something awful.
- The PCs must succeed in a DC 19 Diplomacy check to convince Bor to talk about what the altar can do. If the PCs succeed, Bor says that it sucks up peoples' souls when they die near it. The fiery letters flare up and the smell gets even worse. If the PCs fail the Diplomacy check, Bor merely breaks down into tears and refuses to speak of it.
- Pelgor moved the altar to an old mausoleum beneath the hospital - right underneath the dying so he can suck up all those souls! He never leaves that place now. The altar made him mad, even madder than he was before.
- Bor provides the PCs with directions to the secret entrance into the mausoleum located behind the hospital.

Once the PCs are finished asking their questions, read or paraphrase the following:

*The thin man's bones creak and he lets out a groan as he stands up from the cold stone floor. He wipes the remaining tears from his eyes. "Would you take me to see Brother Sollus before you go to find Pelgor?"*

#### BOR IS DEAD

If the PCs failed the skill challenge in the previous encounter, they have arrived too late, finding Bor's body lying in a secret room in the cellar of The Stars' Retreat.

*The false stone wall gives way easily. Under the dim torch light, you can make out Bor's emaciated body lying face up on the floor. His throat appears to have been cut.*

Fortunately for the PCs, Bor put up enough of a fight that the assassin did not have sufficient time to escape and carry Bor's body with him.

The PCs have to use a Speak with Dead ritual to get the information that they need. If they do not have access to this ritual, they may bring Bor's body back to the temple of Ilmater where Brother Sollus can cast the ritual for them, though the PCs must provide the component cost themselves. After asking their final question, Bor's spirit asks them to bring his body to Brother Sollus so that he may have a proper burial (if the PCs did not already do so).

## ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Once the PCs are finished speaking with Bor, go to the next encounter.



## ENCOUNTER 5: BENEATH THE DYING

### ENCOUNTER LEVEL 7 / 10 (1,500 / 2,300 XP)

#### SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures.

1 Pelgor (P)

3 Tharos Enforcer (Knight of the Horned King) (E)

As the PCs enter the mausoleum through a hidden entrance behind the hospital, read or paraphrase the following:

*Night has fallen as you reach the graveyard behind the hospital. The mausoleum doors described by Bor stand firmly ahead.*

Pelgor keeps the mausoleum doors locked with an Arcane Lock ritual. In order to open the doors, the PCs will need to succeed at a DC 25 Strength check to pry the doors open, or a DC 25 Thievery check to unlock them. Alternatively, they may perform a successful Knock ritual to open the doors.

If the PCs succeed in opening the mausoleum doors on the first round, grant them a surprise round in the combat encounter. If the PCs are able to enter the mausoleum within three rounds of reaching the door, reduce Pelgor's AC by 2 as he is unable to retrieve his armor in time for the combat. Neither side is awarded a surprise round. Read or paraphrase the following when the PCs enter the mausoleum:

*Wide, stone stairs lead down into a dimly lit passageway before you. Broad scratches in the stone indicate that something hard and heavy was dragged down the stairs not long ago.*

Read or paraphrase the following when the PCs proceed down the stairs (adjustments may be necessary depending on how easily the PCs unlocked the doors):

*The stale odor of human sweat and the metallic tang of human blood fill your nostrils as you reach the bottom of the stairs. Ahead, amidst crumbling sarcophagi, men wearing red robes kneel on the cold stone floor while a number of armored enforcers stand facing you, brandishing battleaxes eagerly. They wear horned*

*helmets that grant them the appearance of some combination of man and beast.*

*On a ledge beyond them stands a gaunt man wearing a black robe, his face contorted in a hateful sneer. The altar described by Bor sits behind him, bathing him in a fiery glow.*

The horned warriors have the stats of a knight of the horned king (source: Dragon 369). These are cultists of Tharos that have been granted some small amount of infernal power. They do not worship Baphomet.

#### FEATURES OF THE AREA

The crypt has the following features of note:

**Illumination:** The mausoleum is dimly-lit by torchlight.

**Sarcophagi:** The four sarcophagi are blocking terrain. If a PC attempts to jump over a sarcophagus, add 5 to the DC of the Athletics check made to determine distance. Failure results in the PC falling prone upon the sarcophagus.

**Stairs:** The stairs leading up to the altar are considered difficult terrain for ascending characters only (not descending).

**Acid Pit:** Any character that enters the acid pit (normally used for corpse disposal) takes 2d6 + 5 acid damage and gains ongoing 5 acid damage. Characters may not save against this ongoing damage for as long as they remain in the pit. Characters can pull themselves out of the pit on the floor side with a DC 10 Athletics check.

**Ledge:** The ledge upon which Pelgor and the altar stand is 10 feet above the floor of the chamber where the sarcophagi are located.

**Altar:** The altar is blocking terrain. Whenever a creature dies in this encounter, the fiery runes inscribed upon the altar ignite in a blast of flames and remain lit for 5 rounds (although the PCs do not know this yet, this represents the soul of the dying traveling through the altar to Marlug's demesne).

#### TACTICS

Pelgor uses his *hellish rebuke* attack primarily. He uses *howl of doom* to push PCs into the acid pit. He waits for a PC to be hit with a *mark of the beast* attack from one of his enforcers before using *summons of Marlug* to teleport the PC into the acid pit and then continues to torment the PC for as long as he can sustain the power.

The cultists attack single-mindedly, focusing on marking their targets and keeping them away from Pelgor. They prefer to wait until one more PCs are

under the effects of a *mark of the beast* attack before using *maze of madness*.

As PCs prepare to land their final blows upon the cultists, the cultists beg the PCs not to kill them.

## PC DEATH AND THE ALTAR

Due to the properties of the altar, the death of a PC in this encounter poses an interesting situation. If a PC dies in the mausoleum, the altar behaves as normal, flaring up and transporting the PC's soul within. That PC cannot be raised during this module while his soul is within the altar.

In the following encounter, when the PCs are speaking with Brother Sollus, he includes the dead PC's body in his ritual and instructs them to bring the body (and possessions) of their fallen into the dimension with them and perhaps they might be able to rejoin spirit and body.

After the skill challenge in Encounter 7, the PCs should be able to find the dead PC's soul floating above the prison and will be able to essentially bring the dead PC(s) "back to life" by reconnecting it with the PC's body. The PC still needs to be raised as normal after the adventure.

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

Make the following adjustments to the combat based on the number of PCs present.

**Four PCs:** Remove one fraternity cultist.

**Six PCs:** Add one fraternity cultist.

## ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Once the PCs defeat Pelgor and the cultists, Brother Sollus (and Bor if he is alive) enter the chamber. Proceed to the next encounter once the players are ready.

## EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs receive 300 / 460 experience points each for defeating the demons.

## TREASURE

Pelgor has a *ritual candle* in his possessions as well as a small chest of coins, jewelry and assorted gems stashed behind the altar worth 90 / 120 gp for each PC.

## ENCOUNTER 5: BENEATH THE DYING STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

Pelgor	Level 11 Artillery (Controller)	
Medium natural humanoid, human	XP 600	
Initiative +6	Senses Perception +10	
HP 92; Bloodied 46		
AC 25; Fortitude 24, Reflex 23, Will 24; see also <i>shielding shades</i>		
Speed 6		
m Barbed Rod (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+14 vs. AC; 1d8 + 2 damage, and ongoing 5 damage (save ends).		
r Hellish Rebuke (standard; at-will) ♦ Arcane, Fire		
Ranged 10; +16 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 8 fire damage. If Pelgor takes damage before the end of his next turn, the target takes an extra 1d6 + 5 fire damage.		
C Howl of Doom (standard; recharge 5-6) ♦ Arcane, Fear, Thunder		
Close blast 5; +16 vs. Fortitude; 2d6 + 8 thunder damage, and the target is pushed 5 squares.		
R Summons of Marlug (standard; encounter) ♦ Arcane, Psychic, Teleportation		
Ranged 10; +16 vs. Will; 2d10 + 8 psychic damage, and Pelgor teleports the target to an unoccupied square within 3 squares of him. <i>Sustain Minor</i> : +16 vs. Will; Pelgor teleports the target to an unoccupied square within 3 squares of him. On a miss, the effect ends.		
Shielding Shades (immediate reaction, when hit by an attack; daily)		
♦ Arcane		
Reduce the damage from the attack to 0.		
Soulbound		
If Pelgor is ever more than 3 squares away from the altar, his powers deal -2 damage and he cannot use his <i>summons of Marlug</i> power.		
Alignment Evil	Languages Abyssal, Common	
Skills Arcana +13, Religion +13		
Str 13 (+5)	Dex 12 (+7)	Wis 11 (+5)
Con 20 (+9)	Int 17 (+8)	Cha 15 (+7)
Equipment leather armor, barbed rod		

Knight of the Horned King (Level 7)		Level 7 Soldier
Medium natural humanoid, human		XP 300
Initiative +5      Senses Perception +3		
HP 80; Bloodied 40		
AC 23; Fortitude 21, Reflex 17, Will 19		
Speed 5		
m Battleaxe (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+14 vs. AC; 1d10 + 5 damage and the target is marked until the end of the knight's next turn.		
M Mark of the Beast (free; when target marked by the knight moves or makes an attack that does not include the knight; at-will)		
♦ Fear, Weapon		
+14 vs. AC; the triggering creature; 1d10 + 3 damage, and the target takes a -4 penalty to Will and the knight can slide the target 1 square as a free action at the start of the target's turn (save ends).		
C Maze of Madness (standard; encounter) ♦ Fear, Psychic		
Two targets; close blast 3; +12 vs. Will; the target is stunned (save ends).		
Alignment Chaotic Evil		Languages Common
Skills Arcana +8, Intimidate +9		
Str 21 (+8)	Dex 15 (+7)	Wis 10 (+3)
Con 16 (+6)	Int 10 (+3)	Cha 18 (+7)
Equipment plate armor, heavy shield, battleaxe		

## ENCOUNTER 5: BENEATH THE DYING STATISTICS (HIGH LEVEL)

Pelgor (Level 13)		Level 13 Artillery (Controller)	
Medium natural humanoid, human		XP 800	
Initiative +7		Senses Perception +11	
HP 108; Bloodied 54			
AC 27; Fortitude 26, Reflex 25, Will 26; see also <i>shielding shades</i>			
Speed 6			
m Barbed Rod (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon			
+16 vs. AC; 1d8 + 3 damage, and ongoing 5 damage (save ends).			
r Hellish Rebuke (standard; at-will) ♦ Arcane, Fire			
Ranged 10; +18 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 9 fire damage. If Pelgor takes damage before the end of his next turn, the target takes an extra 1d6 + 5 fire damage.			
C Howl of Doom (standard; recharge 5-6) ♦ Arcane, Fear, Thunder			
Close blast 5; +18 vs. Fortitude; 2d6 + 9 thunder damage, and the target is pushed 5 squares.			
R Summons of Marlug (standard; encounter) ♦ Arcane, Psychic, Teleportation			
Ranged 10; +18 vs. Will; 2d10 + 9 psychic damage, and Pelgor teleports the target to an unoccupied square within 3 squares of him. <i>Sustain Minor</i> : +18 vs. Will; Pelgor teleports the target to an unoccupied square within 3 squares of him. On a miss, the effect ends.			
Shielding Shades (immediate reaction, when hit by an attack daily) ♦ Arcane			
Reduce the damage from the attack to 0.			
Soulbound			
If Pelgor is ever more than 3 squares away from the altar, his powers deal -2 damage and he cannot use his <i>summons of Marlug</i> power.			
Alignment Evil		Languages Abyssal, Common	
Skills Arcana +14, Religion +14			
Str 13 (+5)	Dex 12 (+7)	Wis 11 (+5)	
Con 20 (+9)	Int 17 (+8)	Cha 15 (+7)	
Equipment leather armor, barbed rod			

Knight of the Horned King (Level 10)		Level 10 Soldier
Medium natural humanoid, human		XP 500
Initiative +7		Senses Perception +5
HP 104; Bloodied 52		
AC 26; Fortitude 24, Reflex 20, Will 22		
Speed 5		
m Battleaxe (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+17 vs. AC; 1d10 + 7 damage and the target is marked until the end of the knight's next turn.		
M Mark of the Beast (free; when target marked by the knight moves or makes an attack that does not include the knight; at-will) ♦ Fear, Weapon		
+17 vs. AC; the triggering creature; 1d10 + 5 damage, and the target takes a -4 penalty to Will and the knight can slide the target 1 square as a free action at the start of the target's turn (save ends).		
C Maze of Madness (standard; encounter) ♦ Fear, Psychic		
Two targets; close blast 3; +15 vs. Will; the target is stunned (save ends).		
Alignment Chaotic Evil		Languages Common
Skills Arcana +10, Intimidate +11		
Str 21 (+10)	Dex 15 (+9)	Wis 10 (+5)
Con 16 (+8)	Int 10 (+5)	Cha 18 (+9)
Equipment plate armor, heavy shield, battleaxe		

## ENCOUNTER 5: BENEATH THE DYING MAP

## DUNGEON TILES

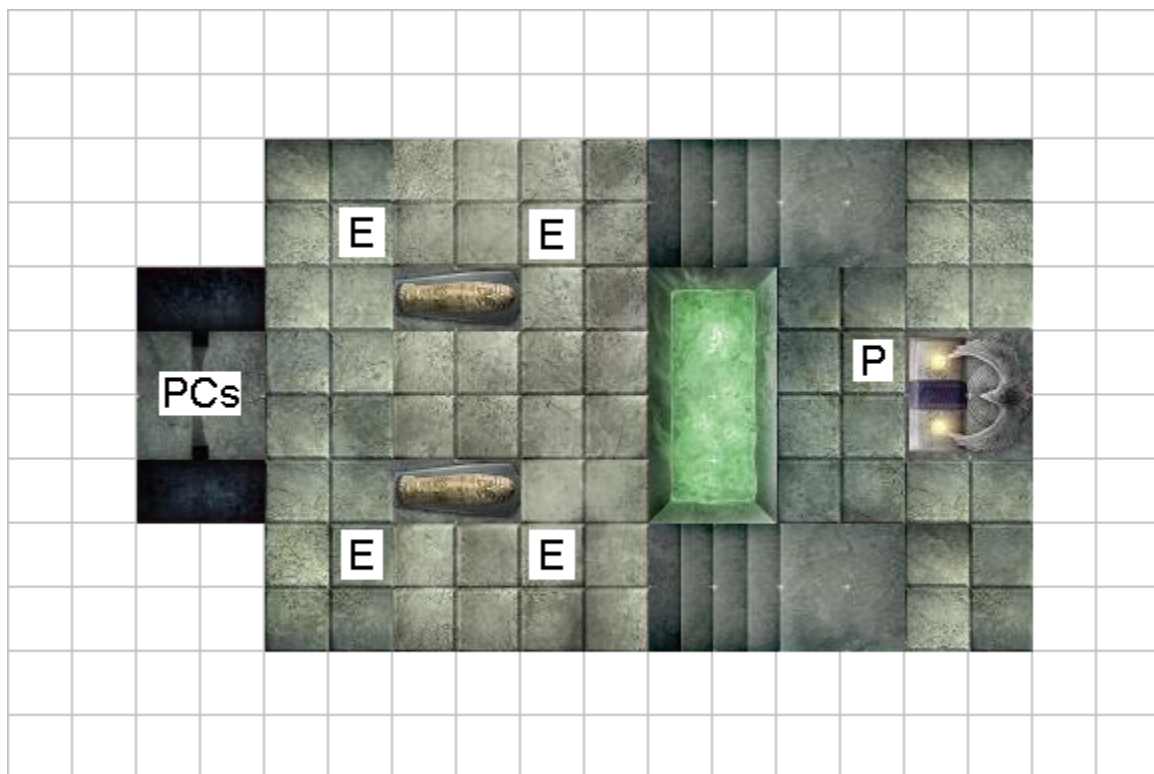
Stairs Landing	4x2	x2
Floor	8x2	x1
Floor	4x8	x1

## ARCANE CORRIDORS

Floor	2x4	x1
Floor	8x2	x1

## FORGOTTEN CRYPTS

Acid Pit	2x4	x1
Statue w/ Altar	2x2	x1
Hall Arch	4x2	x1
Sarcophagus	2x1	x2



## ENCOUNTER 6: THE SACRIFICE

### SETUP

This is a non-challenge encounter. As the PCs defeat their opponents, Brother Sollus arrives at the chamber. If Bor survived, he accompanies him. The PCs question Pelgor (if they kept him alive), call upon their own knowledge, and speak with Brother Sollus when he arrives to discover information pertaining to the altar. This encounter is broken up into sections that cover each way in which information can be obtained. If the PCs appear to take an action to destroy the altar, proceed to the “Speaking with Brother Sollus” section immediately.

### INTERROGATING PELGOR

In order to convince Pelgor to disclose any information, the PCs must succeed on a DC 19 / 20 Intimidate check. If the PCs threaten to kill Pelgor, give them a +5 circumstance bonus to the check as Pelgor is terrified of having his soul trapped within the altar.

Some potential questions and answers are provided below, but feel free to improvise based on Pelgor’s motivations (also provided below). Pelgor will try to lie to the PCs whenever possible. If pressed, he will reveal the real answers. Note that the answers provided below are the real answers.

### PELGOR

Male human; cultist

**Personality:** Pelgor is a cruel and selfish individual, hungry for power and driven by greed.

**Useful Knowledge:** Pelgor knows that there is more to the altar than it may seem. He believes that a powerful demon dwells within the altar. At first, he believed that the demon served him but he has slowly come to realize that it is he who serves the demon. He has accepted his servitude in return for his new-found power.

**Goals:** Pelgor’s goals are wealth, power, and survival. Having been defeated, he desires only to be spared, believing that he will find a way to escape with the power bestowed upon him by Marlug.

Relate the following information through conversation with the PCs. Pelgor regards the PCs with utter disdain:

- The altar consumes the souls of the dying and feeds them to Pelgor’s master, Marlug the soul harvester. Filth like [the PCs] cannot begin to comprehend his power. When Marlug is feeling

generous, he releases a soul upon Pelgor’s humble request.

- The altar has already sucked up hundreds of souls, maybe thousands. Pelgor does not know what happens to them once they travel through, but those that he hasn’t already consumed are bound within for as long as his master lives.
- When Pelgor first found the altar, he thought it was merely a powerful “storage device” entirely under his control. Now, it is too late. Marlug has given Pelgor incredible power in return for his service.
- Pelgor does not believe that the PCs could free the souls stored within – the only way in is by dying.

When the PCs are finished interrogating Pelgor, he begs them to set him free.

### PC KNOWLEDGE

PCs may use Arcana or History to uncover information regarding the altar. Provide information as appropriate based on the checks rolled by the PCs and the DCs beaten:

#### Arcana

**DC 15** - The altar radiates strong psychic and teleportation magic.

**DC 20** - The altar appears to contain a mechanism that opens a gateway to another dimension.

#### History

**DC 15** - This altar appears to be a relic of the ancient Nar, a powerful evil empire that dominated the region roughly 2,000 years ago.

**DC 20** - Many powerful wizards of the ancient Nar were called “Demonbinders” because they learned to bind demons in a variety of ways.

Additional information may be provided at your discretion depending on various skills used by the PCs and the check results of those skills.

### SPEAKING WITH BROTHER SOLLUS

After the PCs have exhausted their own knowledge resources and have questioned Pelgor, OR if any PC prepares to take an action to destroy the altar, read or paraphrase the following:

*Hurried footsteps echo down the passageway behind you. Turning, you see Brother Sollus running towards you, holding up his priestly garments with one hand to*

**keep himself from tripping over them. “Thank the Crying God I am not too late,” claims Brother Sollus breathlessly. “You must not destroy that altar.”**

Brother Sollus has discovered the location of the altar through speaking with Bor (either alive or dead). Based on what Bor said, Brother Sollus has learned a few things about the altar. Through research, he has learned that the altar is more than a mere object. It is a gateway to another place; a dimension where souls are kept. Destroying the altar would not free the souls trapped within but rather, would destroy the only means by which the PCs could save those souls. Make it clear to the players that Brother Sollus is very much against the physical destruction of the altar and will try to dissuade them from attempting to do so.

Brother Sollus believes that the altar opens a gateway to this dimension when a nearby creature dies. He informs the PCs that he can prepare a ritual that will enable them to enter a spirit form that could pass through the gateway created by the altar.

If Brother Sollus is asked about how the gateway could be opened, read or paraphrase the following:

**Brother Sollus sighs and looks deep into your eyes. “Sometimes, a great sacrifice is necessary to protect the innocent. This is the true path of a painbearer. With great regret, I cannot walk this path today: my purpose is to focus my energy on keeping you alive and in spirit form. If my concentration is broken, you will all surely perish.” Brother Sollus pauses solemnly. “One of you must walk this path and give yourself up to the One Who Endures. To do this means to place your trust in His divinity.”**

Brother Sollus is asking one of the PCs to sacrifice himself in order to open the gateway. He truly believes that this is Ilmater’s will and asks the PCs to have faith. He assures the PC that he will raise him (or her) after this is over at no cost. If the PCs ask what would happen if they were to sacrifice someone else (like a cultist or Pelgor, for example), Brother Sollus admits that while it would probably work, it would set the PCs on a dangerous moral path.

When Brother Sollus completes his ritual, read or paraphrase the following:

**Brother Sollus’ hands begin to glow as he mutters in another tongue. You feel the sensation of falling upward followed by a sudden wave of vertigo. Although you haven’t moved, you feel as though you are somehow distant from your surroundings, which now appear strangely muted.**

From a mechanical perspective, the PCs are no different in their spirit forms than in their regular forms. It is merely a story element. When the sacrificed PC (or victim) dies, read or paraphrase the following:

**As <insert name of dying character> lets out his/her dying breath, the altar bursts into flame and the letters inscribed on its surface glow fiercely. Suddenly, a yawning red portal spirals open in front of the altar.**

If a PC sacrificed himself, hand that player Player’s Handout 1.

## ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Once the PCs enter the portal, go to the next encounter. If the PCs insisted on destroying the altar from the outside, you need to improvise. After the first few strokes, the soul husks rush outside causing a maelstrom of life draining souls in the crypt. The PCs can try to duck these in a manner similar to the skill challenge described in Encounter 7, albeit with a -5 penalty on their checks. These husks are gone in mere minutes, leaving the flameskulls and a manifestation of Marlug behind as described in Encounter 8, but no dark heart (instead, have the altar function as the dark heart trap).

If the PCs destroy the altar from the outside, proceed to Conclusion B. Due to the carnage caused by the released spirit husks upon the city, the priests of Illmater do not award the PCs. The PCs do not receive any further treasure bundles or story awards and do not finish the major quest.

## ENCOUNTER 7: WADING THROUGH SOULS

**SKILL CHALLENGE LEVEL 7 / 9,  
COMPLEXITY 2 (600 / 800 XP)**

### SETUP

**Number of Successes:** 6

**Number of Failures:** 3

**Primary Skills:** Acrobatics, Arcana, Athletics, Endurance, Religion, Stealth.

After passing through the portal, the PCs find themselves in another dimension; one that closely resembles a popular depiction of “Hell.”

#### What is this place?

Centuries ago, a Nar demonbinder imprisoned Marlug the Soul Harvester within this dimension. When Pelgor found the altar, Marlug remained silent, freeing souls upon Pelgor’s request in order to encourage him to continue using the altar. Now that Marlug has a constant supply of souls from which to feed on, he has made his presence known to Pelgor and only releases souls when he is feeling particularly kind.

Only a sea of wretched spirit-husks remains of the consumed souls, forever washing across the blasted landscape in a state of torment, hungrily seeking what was taken from them. The souls not yet consumed float above them in perdition. Marlug dwells in a prison at the dimension’s center.

*As you enter the portal, a breath of hot air washes over your face and suddenly the dank mausoleum is gone.*

*A barren landscape stretches before you, flat stone plains etched with narrow gullies tinged with red. Dark clouds roil overhead. Undulating across the ground is a sea of writhing spirit-husks, reaching for you mindlessly with expressions of rage and anguish.*

*Standing a quarter mile ahead beyond the spirits is a cyclopean stone structure encircled by a ring of cleared ground, as though the spirits know to avoid it. Above the structure, hundreds of souls not yet consumed float freely in a state of false perdition.*

If one of the PCs sacrificed himself, he emerges through the portal behind the party in his new form, blessed by Ilmater for his sacrifice. The PC is treated as though they were raised and had an extended rest, and does not

suffer the death penalty. Allow the player to describe the appearance of his new PC as he sees fit based on what he read in Player’s Handout 1.

The PCs must find a way past (or more likely through) the tormented souls in order to reach Marlug’s prison.

### SKILL CHALLENGE

Every PC must participate in this skill challenge and demonstrate how he makes his way past the tormented souls. If a PC fails, he loses a healing surge as the spirit-husks hungrily consume some of his essence. Then, that PC may either try again or a PC that has already succeeded may perform another check to “rescue” his ally. In the case where there are fewer than six PCs at the table, some PCs will have to make multiple checks.

Despite the relatively simple setup of the skill challenge, encourage the players to come up with creative methods for making their way through and reward uniquely relevant ideas and creative thinking appropriately.

**Acrobatics (DC 19 / 20):** With deft maneuvering, the PC manages to avoid the attacks of the tormented spirits.

**Arcana (DC 19 / 20):** The PC surrounds himself with arcane wards that keep the spirits at bay.

**Athletics (DC 19 / 20):** Through sheer strength, the PC forces his way through the spirits, barreling through them before they are able to harm him.

**Endurance (DC 19 / 20):** Through sheer determination, the PC withstands the spirits’ assault as he makes his way through them.

**Religion (DC 19 / 20):** Cloaking himself in his own faith, the PC protects himself with divine energy.

**Stealth (DC 19 / 20):** The PC escapes notice in the narrow gullies below, making his way to the structure unseen and unheard by the spirits.

### MAJOR QUEST: PLIGHT OF LOST SOULS

Once they reach the prison, any PCs that have begun this major quest make a connection with Tarana Marsk’s soul: they suddenly hear her calling out to them, saying things such as “I can feel your presence” and “You do not belong here.” If they try to respond, she floats down from amongst the souls floating above them to speak with them. Read or paraphrase the following:



*From amongst the spirits above, the apparition of a human woman floats down and gazes upon you as though she recognizes you.*

Tarana's spirit speaks briefly with the PCs. She remembers very little, but she does know that the "keeper" of this place dwells within the stone structure immediately beneath her, and that he is some sort of a demon. She can also relay to the PCs that the spirits on the ground are what remain of souls that are consumed by him.

If the PCs manage to kill Marlug and destroy the Dark Heart of the Altar in the next encounter, they set all of the souls not yet consumed free (including Tarana's) and thus conclude this quest.

## ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Completing the skill challenge takes the PCs about 30 minutes. Whether or not the PCs succeed at the challenge, they manage to make it to the prison where Marlug is bound. What's important is how many resources they lose making their way there.

**Success:** The PCs manage to make their way through the corrupted souls and reach Marlug's prison without further harm.

**Failure:** The PCs are nearly overwhelmed by the corrupt souls pulling at them on their journey. They each lose a healing surge helping one another through (in addition to healing surges lost due to individual failures).

In either case, go to the next encounter.

## EXPERIENCE POINTS

The characters receive 120 / 160 experience points for successfully completing the skill challenge.

## ENCOUNTER 8: DARK HEART OF THE ALTAR

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 8 / 10 (1,700 / 2,500 XP)

### SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures.

1 **Marlug, the soul harvester** (M)

2 **Flameskull** (F)

1 **Dark Heart of the Altar** (T)

As the PCs enter Marlug's prison, draw out the two potential entrances to his chamber (or lay out the appropriate tiles) and allow the players to position their PCs accordingly. Once the PCs are in place, draw (or lay) out the remainder of the map and read or paraphrase the following:

*A short passageway leads to an immense cave-like chamber. Sweat beads your forehead as a wave of oppressive heat washes over you. A hulking, bipedal demon with enormous tusks rises from his stone throne and grins as you enter, exposing rows of jagged yellow teeth. Beside him on a pedestal sits a black heart the size of a human head, throbbing with energy. Arcane runes encircle its surface. Two disembodied human skulls wreathed in green flames float above him, bathing the chamber in an eerie, flickering green glow. "It has been centuries since the living have stood before me. I will enjoy consuming your souls while you still live to feel it."*

### DARK HEART OF THE ALTAR

The beating heart on the pedestal serves two purposes in this encounter. First, it is a magical trap that defends the chamber. Second and more importantly, it is Marlug's own heart - removed from his chest by the demonbinder that bound him to this dimension. Destroying the heart (in addition to killing Marlug) is the only way to destroy the dimension and thus, free the souls trapped within. Furthermore, until the heart is destroyed, Marlug cannot truly be killed - he will keep coming back with a portion of his remaining life force.

The PCs should be able to recognize the fact that the heart is guarded with arcane wards and could be carefully disabled via Thievery or Arcana as easily as it could be smashed to pieces (if not more easily).

### FEATURES OF THE AREA

The room has the following features of note:

**Illumination:** The cave is well-lit by pits of fire throughout its interior.

**Ceiling:** The ceiling of this chamber is 20 feet high.

**Lava:** Lava flows freely in a number of areas of the chamber. Squares containing lava are considered difficult terrain and any character that enters the lava takes 1d10 fire damage and gains ongoing 10 fire damage (save ends). A character cannot save from this effect while standing in the lava.

**Ledge:** The ledge is 10 feet above the ground. A DC 20 Athletics check is required to climb it. PCs may use this ledge as a jumping-off point in order to better reach the flameskulls.

**Pillars:** Two pillars run floor to ceiling in this chamber. They are considered blocking terrain. PCs may climb these pillars with a DC 20 Athletics check (and may need to do so in order to reach the flameskulls). Allow the PCs to leap outward from the pillars to reach flameskulls as needed.

**Throne:** Climbing up on the throne requires an extra square of movement, but PCs may leap off of the throne in order to attempt to reach the flameskulls. Alternatively, the throne may be used as cover.

### TACTICS

Marlug opens combat with *soul heave*, attempting to leave PCs standing in the lava while adjacent to him and then uses *throat grab* on the PC least likely to be able to escape. He uses *devour soul* whenever possible and *soul heave* as soon as it recharges.

The flameskulls focus their attacks on the PCs most likely to be able to attack them and use *fireball* when the PCs group together.

### SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

Make the following adjustments to the combat based on the number of PCs present.

**Four PCs:** Remove one flameskull.

**Six PCs:** Add one flameskull.

### ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

When the Dark Heart of the Altar is destroyed and Marlug is killed, the dimension begins to collapse. Read or paraphrase the following:

*A tremor reverberates throughout the chamber and rips in the very fabric of this dimension begin to open all around you. Like a sudden whirlwind, waves of souls*

***rush past you, exiting the chamber through the dimensional tears.***

While the PCs have no time limit to escape, do not share this detail with them – let them make their escape in heroic fashion. When the PCs pass through the portal, proceed to Conclusion A.

### **EXPERIENCE POINTS**

The PCs receive 340 / 500 experience points each for defeating the demons.

### **CONCLUSION A – DESTROYED THE ALTAR FROM WITHIN**

***Brother Sollus stands over you, smiling as are you are deposited back in the dank mausoleum. The once dreadul altar is now a mere ruin. During the walk back to the temple of Ilmater where your well-deserved rewards await, a light drizzle begins to fall over the city. Is it your imagination, or do the rain drops carry a hint of saltiness – as though they were tears?***

Brother Sollus rewards the PCs with their choice of a symbol of victory +2, a suit of armor of sacrifice +2, a ritual book containing Raise Dead, or a ritual scroll of Consult Mystic Sages (high-level only).

All of the PCs receive the following story award: IMPI05. If any PC sacrificed himself to open the altar, that PC receives IMPI06 as well.

PCs that had the Plight of the Lost Souls major quest story award from *IMPI1-2 Breaking Point*, receive an additional 350 / 500 XP as outlined in the experience rewards. Sergor Marsk admits that it will take some time to rebuild his supplies before he can begin crafting weapons once again, but thanks the PCs by offering them one of a number of pieces of magic jewelry that he had tucked away for a special occasion (see treasure rewards).

### **CONCLUSION B – DESTROYED THE ALTAR FROM THE OUTSIDE**

***With Pelgor gone and the altar destroyed, you part ways with the priests of Ilmater on uncertain terms. You have cleansed the city of a great evil this day, but at what cost?***

The PCs receive no story awards or treasure bundles other than the ones they have already received and any PC that had the Plight of the Lost Souls major quest story award from *IMPI1-2 Breaking Point* has failed the major quest.

## ENCOUNTER 8: DARK HEART OF THE ALTAR STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

Marlug	Level 9 Elite Controller
Large elemental magical beast (demon)	XP 800
<b>Initiative</b> +10 <b>Senses</b> Perception +10; low-light vision	
<b>HP</b> 198; <b>Bloodied</b> 99; see also <i>soul shock</i>	
<b>AC</b> 25; <b>Fortitude</b> 24, <b>Reflex</b> 22, <b>Will</b> 23	
<b>Resist</b> 10 fire, 10 variable (1/encounter)	
<b>Saving Throws</b> +2	
<b>Speed</b> 6	
<b>Action Points</b> 1; see also <i>demonic vigor</i>	
m <b>Withering Slam</b> (standard; at-will)	
Reach 2; +14 vs. AC; 2d8 + 5 damage and the target is slowed and takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls (save ends both).	
M <b>Throat Grab</b> (standard; at-will)	
Reach 2; +14 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 5 damage, and the target is grabbed. Marlug can grab only one creature at a time.	
M <b>Devour Soul</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Healing, Psychic</b>	
Reach 2; Affects immobilized target only; +14 vs. Fortitude; 3d8 + 5 psychic damage, and Marlug regains 10 hit points.	
C <b>Soul Heave</b> (minor; recharge 5-6) ♦ <b>Necrotic</b>	
Close blast 5; targets enemies; +12 vs. Will; 2d6 + 5 psychic damage and the target is pulled into an unoccupied space adjacent to Marlug.	
<b>Demonic Vigor</b>	
Marlug gains 1 action point whenever he reduces a foe to 0 hit points or less with his <i>devour soul</i> attack.	
<b>Lifebound</b>	
When reduced to 0 hit points or less, Marlug returns to life at 9 hit points after two rounds unless the Dark Heart of the Altar is destroyed.	
<b>Alignment</b> Chaotic Evil	<b>Languages</b> Abyssal, Common
<b>Skills</b> Arcana +10, Athletics +14, Stealth +12, Thievery +12	
<b>Str</b> 20 (+9)	<b>Dex</b> 16 (+7) <b>Wis</b> 12 (+5)
<b>Con</b> 18 (+8)	<b>Int</b> 12 (+5) <b>Cha</b> 18 (+8)

Flameskull (Level 7)	Level 7 Artillery
Tiny natural animate (undead)	XP 300
<b>Initiative</b> +7 <b>Senses</b> Perception +11	
<b>HP</b> 64; <b>Bloodied</b> 32	
<b>Regeneration</b> 5	
<b>AC</b> 20; <b>Fortitude</b> 17, <b>Reflex</b> 22, <b>Will</b> 20	
<b>Immune</b> disease, poison; <b>Resist</b> 10 fire, 5 necrotic; <b>Vulnerable</b> 5 radiant	
<b>Speed</b> fly 10 (hover)	
m <b>Fiery Bite</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Fire</b>	
Reach 0; +9 vs. AC; 1 damage plus 1d8 fire damage.	
R <b>Flame Ray</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Fire</b>	
+11 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 6 fire damage.	
R <b>Double Attack</b> (standard; encounter) ♦ <b>Fire</b>	
Area burst 3 within 20; +11 vs. Reflex; 3d6 + 6 fire damage. <i>Miss</i> : Half damage. The flameskull can exclude two allies from the effect.	
<b>Mage Hand</b> (minor; at-will) ♦ <b>Conjuration</b>	
As the wizard power <i>mage hand</i> ( <i>Player's Handbook</i> 158).	
<b>Illumination</b>	
The flameskull sheds bright light out to 5 squares, but it can reduce its brightness to dim light out to 2 squares as a free action.	
<b>Alignment</b> Unaligned	<b>Languages</b> Abyssal, Common
<b>Skills</b> Stealth +11	
<b>Str</b> 5 (+1)	<b>Dex</b> 16 (+7) <b>Wis</b> 14 (+6)
<b>Con</b> 16 (+7)	<b>Int</b> 22 (+10) <b>Cha</b> 20 (+9)

Dark Heart of the Altar	Level 7 Blaster
Trap	XP 300
<b>Trap</b> : A beating, black heart positioned on a pedestal in the center of the chamber draws the life force from nearby intruders.	
<b>Perception</b>	
♦DC 24: The character notices that the black heart is beating faintly.	
<b>Initiative</b> +2	
<b>Trigger</b>	
The heart is triggered and rolls initiative when an intruder enters its chamber.	
<b>Attack</b>	
<b>Standard Action</b>	<b>Close burst</b> 10
<b>Targets</b> : The two intruders closest to the heart at the start of its turn. It magically distinguishes intruders from the demons.	
<b>Attack</b> : +12 vs. Fortitude	
<b>Hit</b> : 2d8 + 5 necrotic damage and followup	
<i>Followup</i> : +12 vs. Will	
<b>Hit</b> : The target is immobilized (save ends).	
<b>Countermeasures</b>	
♦A character that is hit by the heart's effect can minimize the damage with a DC 27 Endurance check made as an immediate reaction. With a successful check, the character takes half damage.	
♦One or more characters can engage in a skill challenge to destroy the heart. DC 18 Arcana or Thievery. Each successful Arcana check deals 5 damage to the trap and prevents the trap from making followup attacks on the round following the success. Each successful Thievery check deals 5 damage to the trap and reduces the number of creatures targeted by the trap from 2 to 1 on the round following the success. Complexity 2 (6 successes before 3 failures). Success disables the trap. Failure causes the heart to pulse (close burst 10, 2d10 + 4 necrotic damage to all intruders in burst) and the trap remains active until all intruders leave the chamber.	
♦A character can attack the heart (AC 10, all other defenses 8; hp 80; resist 10 all). Destroying the heart disables the entire trap.	

## ENCOUNTER 8: DARK HEART OF THE ALTAR STATISTICS (HIGH LEVEL)

Marlug (level 11)	Level 11 Elite Controller
Large elemental magical beast (demon)	XP 1,200
<b>Initiative</b> +11 <b>Senses</b> Perception +11; low-light vision	
<b>HP</b> 230; <b>Bloodied</b> 165; see also <i>soul shock</i>	
<b>AC</b> 27; <b>Fortitude</b> 26, <b>Reflex</b> 24, <b>Will</b> 25	
<b>Resist</b> 10 fire, 10 variable (2/encounter)	
<b>Saving Throws</b> +2	
<b>Speed</b> 6	
<b>Action Points</b> 1; see also <i>demonic vigor</i>	
<b>m Withering Slam</b> (standard; at-will)	
Reach 2; +16 vs. AC; 2d8 + 6 damage and the target is slowed and takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls (save ends both).	
<b>M Throat Grab</b> (standard; at-will)	
Reach 2; +16 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 6 damage, and the target is grabbed. Marlug can grab only one creature at a time.	
<b>M Devour Soul</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Healing, Psychic</b>	
Reach 2; Affects immobilized target only; +16 vs. Fortitude; 3d8 + 6 psychic damage, and Marlug regains 15 hit points.	
<b>C Soul Heave</b> (minor; recharge 5-6) ♦ <b>Necrotic</b>	
Close blast 5; targets enemies; +14 vs. Will; 2d6 + 6 psychic damage and the target is pulled into an unoccupied space adjacent to Marlug.	
<b>Demonic Vigor</b>	
Marlug gains 1 action point whenever he reduces a foe to 0 hit points or less with his <i>devour soul</i> attack.	
<b>Lifebound</b>	
When reduced to 0 hit points or less, Marlug returns to life at 82 hit points after two rounds unless the Dark Heart of the Altar is destroyed.	
<b>Alignment</b> Chaotic Evil	<b>Languages</b> Abyssal, Common
<b>Skills</b> Arcana +11, Athletics +15, Stealth +13, Thievery +13	
<b>Str</b> 21 (+10)	<b>Dex</b> 17 (+8) <b>Wis</b> 13 (+6)
<b>Con</b> 19 (+9)	<b>Int</b> 13 (+6) <b>Cha</b> 19 (+9)

Flameskull (Level 9)	Level 9 Artillery
Tiny natural animate (undead)	XP 400
<b>Initiative</b> +8 <b>Senses</b> Perception +12	
<b>HP</b> 76; <b>Bloodied</b> 38	
<b>Regeneration</b> 5	
<b>AC</b> 22; <b>Fortitude</b> 19, <b>Reflex</b> 24, <b>Will</b> 22	
<b>Immune</b> disease, poison; <b>Resist</b> 10 fire, 5 necrotic; <b>Vulnerable</b> 5 radiant	
<b>Speed</b> fly 10 (hover)	
<b>m Fiery Bite</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Fire</b>	
Reach 0; +11 vs. AC; 1 damage plus 1d8 + 1 fire damage.	
<b>R Flame Ray</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Fire</b>	
+13 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 7 fire damage.	
<b>R Double Attack</b> (standard; encounter) ♦ <b>Fire</b>	
Area burst 3 within 20; +13 vs. Reflex; 3d6 + 7 fire damage.	
<i>Miss:</i> Half damage. The flameskull can exclude two allies from the effect.	
<b>Mage Hand</b> (minor; at-will) ♦ <b>Conjuration</b>	
As the wizard power <i>mage hand</i> ( <i>Player's Handbook</i> 158).	
<b>Illumination</b>	
The flameskull sheds bright light out to 5 squares, but it can reduce its brightness to dim light out to 2 squares as a free action.	
<b>Alignment</b> Unaligned	<b>Languages</b> Abyssal, Common
<b>Skills</b> Stealth +12	
<b>Str</b> 5 (+0)	<b>Dex</b> 16 (+7) <b>Wis</b> 14 (+6)
<b>Con</b> 16 (+6)	<b>Int</b> 22 (+10) <b>Cha</b> 20 (+9)

Dark Heart of the Altar	Level 10 Blaster
Trap	XP 500
<b>Trap:</b> A beating, black heart positioned on a pedestal in the center of the chamber draws the life force from nearby intruders.	
<b>Perception</b>	
♦DC 24: The character notices that the black heart is beating faintly.	
<b>Trigger</b>	
The heart is triggered and rolls initiative when an intruder enters its chamber.	
<b>Initiative</b> +4	
<b>Attack</b>	
<b>Standard Action</b>	<b>Close burst</b> 10
<b>Targets:</b> The two intruders closest to the heart at the start of its turn. It magically distinguishes intruders from the demons.	
<b>Attack:</b> +15 vs. Fortitude	
<b>Hit:</b> 2d8 + 7 necrotic damage and followup	
<i>Followup:</i> +15 vs. Will	
<b>Hit:</b> The target is immobilized (save ends).	
<b>Countermeasures</b>	
♦A character that is hit by the heart's effect can minimize the damage with a DC 29 Endurance check made as an immediate reaction. With a successful check, the character takes half damage.	
♦One or more characters can engage in a skill challenge to destroy	
the heart. DC 20 Arcana or Thievery. Each successful Arcana check deals 6 damage to the trap and prevents the trap from making followup attacks on the round following the success. Each successful Thievery check deals 6 damage to the trap and reduces the number of creatures targeted by the trap from 2 to 1 on the round following the success. Complexity 2 (6 successes before 3 failures). Success disables the trap. Failure causes the heart to pulse (close burst 10, 2d10 + 6 necrotic damage to all intruders in burst) and the trap remains active until all intruders leave the chamber.	
♦A character can attack the heart (AC 10, all other defenses 8; hp 95; resist 10 all). Destroying the heart disables the entire trap.	

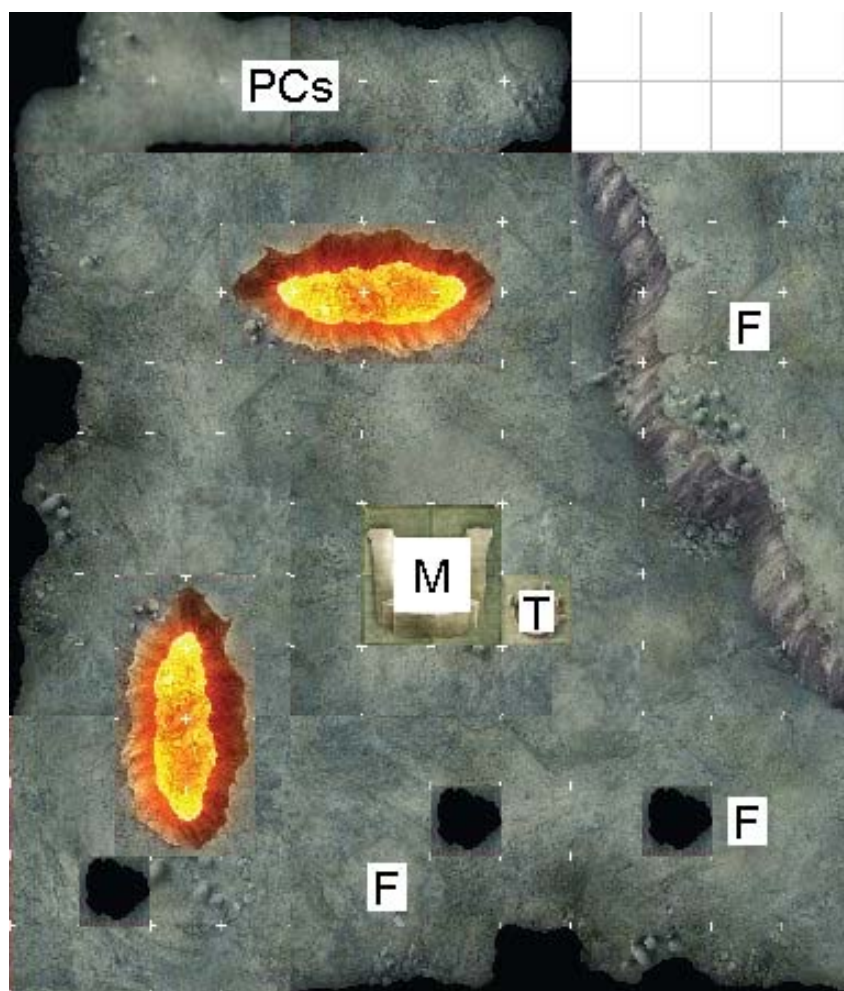
## ENCOUNTER 8: DARK HEART OF THE ALTAR MAP

### LOST CAVERNS OF THE UNDERDARK

Cave Wall	4x2	x1
Tunnel End	4x2	x1
Lava	4x2	x2
Floor	4x8	x1
Cave Pillar	1x1	x3
Cave Wall	4x8	x2
Cave Floor	4x4	x1

### FANE OF THE FORGOTTEN GODS

Statue	1x1	x1
Stone Throne	2x2	x1



## REWARDS SUMMARY

At the conclusion of the adventure, the PCs earn experience points, treasure, and possibly story awards. All totals listed here are per PC. A number before the slash is the low-level value; after the slash is the high-level value.

## IMPORTANT DM INFORMATION

It is critical that you enter the PC rewards accurately on the tracking form, and ensure that the information is reported and entered online in a timely manner. While players will be able to track their character's information on paper, the online information serves as an important backup and verification of play. Ask the players for their RPGA numbers and character numbers (usually a single digit) when you begin to fill out the tracking form.

## EXPERIENCE POINTS

Give PCs a full award for each encounter they successfully completed, and a half award if they were unsuccessful. Give no award if the characters did not play the encounter at all.

**Encounter 1: Massacre at New Sarshel**  
300 / 400 XP

**Encounter 3: Manhunt**  
60 / 80 XP

**Encounter 5: Beneath the Dying**  
300 / 460 XP

**Encounter 7: Wading Through Souls**  
120 / 160 XP

**Encounter 8: Dark Heart of the Altar**  
340 / 500 XP

**Major Quest: Plight of the Lost Souls**  
350 / 500 XP

**Total Possible Experience**  
1,470 / 2,100 XP

## TREASURE

Each PC receives treasure in the form of gold pieces as well as one share from a treasure bundle. The treasure bundle may give the PC more gold, a magic item, or some other item of value. Each player makes one selection for their character; players may choose the same treasure bundle. Mark the one-letter bundle ID on the tracking form next to any character that selects a bundle; note that it is possible (and likely) that some

characters will not select a bundle for each session of play.

If characters buy or sell magic items or other gear during the adventure (or pay for services) add or subtract that amount from the total gold the PC receives at the end of the adventure. If a player selects an option that gives their character more gold, add that to the gold all characters receive, and ensure you enter the total amount of gold gained (minus any expenditures) online. You can have a negative number and enter that negative online. PCs receive 20% of a magic item's purchase price for any item they sell. If a player selects a magic weapon or suit of armor for their PC that is not specific on the type of item listed, they must select the exact item at the time they choose that bundle. For example, if a *duelist's weapon +1* is listed as a choice in a bundle, a player selects the form of the weapon amongst the choices possible for that magic item (light blades). If the player selects the item as a *+1 duelist's dagger*, the player writes that information down on the PC's adventure log and the item is forever after that specific weapon.

An asterisk next to a magic item means that it is an item that appears in the **New Rules** section.

### Gold Per PC

150 / 200 gp

(Encounter 1: 60 / 80 gp, Encounter 5: 90 / 120 gp)

### EACH PC SELECTS ONE OF THE FOLLOWING

**Bundle A:** *amulet of false life* +2 (level 9) (low-level version only)

Found in Encounter 8 - Major quest reward only

**Bundle B:** *blood-soaked bracers*\* (level 10)

Found in Encounter 1

**Bundle C:** *armor of sacrifice* +2\* (level 10)

Found in Encounter 8 (reward)

**Bundle D:** *symbol of victory* +2 (level 9)

Found in Encounter 8 (reward)

**Bundle E:** *ritual candle* (level 11)

Found in Encounter 5

**Bundle F:** *steadfast amulet* +3\* (level 13) (high-level version only)

Found in Encounter 8 - Major quest reward only

**Bundle G:** ritual book containing Raise Dead

Found in Encounter 8 (reward)

**Bundle H:** ritual scroll of Consult Mystic Sages (high-level version only)

Found in Encounter 8 (reward)

**Potion Plus Gold:** If a player doesn't want to select one of the bundles listed above for their character, they can choose to add a *potion of vigor*\* (level 9) plus 190 / 340 gp to their total gold per PC. The player should write the potion gained on their adventure log.

**More Gold:** If a player doesn't want to select one of the bundles listed above for their character, they can choose to add 350 / 500 gp to their total gold per PC.

## STORY AWARDS

Award these if the PC completes the condition for the award in the adventure. Pass out certificates to the players for their story awards. If a PC earns three awards, they may only have 2 of them and must pick which two they want before ending the session. Make sure to mark the story award codes next to each character that earned them on the tracking form.

### IMPI05 Savior of Lost Souls

Through courage and steadfastness, you freed countless souls from demonic clutches. By doing so, you have earned the gratitude of not only the poor of New Sarshel and their Ilmatari protectors, but also the local Kelemvorites. They are not likely to forget this deed.

### IMPI06 Blessed By Ilmater

In return for your sacrifice, the Crying God has blessed you. A tattoo of a small blue tear has appeared in the corner of your left eye, the exact effects of which remain a mystery for now. Ilmatari and those versed in religious matters instantly recognize the symbol as a blessing from Ilmater. People who look favorably upon Ilmater's teachings treat you with the utmost respect. Others may pity, fear or respect you depending on their predilections and values. Unless otherwise specified in the adventure, the exact impact of this at any given time is up to your DM. You can hide the tattoo with makeup.

## ADVENTURE QUESTIONS

Mark the answers to the following adventure questions on the tracking form.

### 1. How did the PCs enter the altar?

- a. A PC willingly sacrificed himself/herself.
- b. The PCs sacrificed a cultist.
- c. The PCs sacrificed Pelgor.
- d. The PCs sacrificed another character.

e. The PCs did not enter the altar.

### 2. Did the PCs save Sergor's wife?

- a. Yes.
- b. No, they never destroyed the altar.
- c. No, they destroyed the altar on the outside.
- d. Nobody had the major quest.

### 3. Did the PCs destroy the altar from within?

- a. Yes.
- b. No.
- c. They never destroyed the altar.

### 4. Did Bor survive?

- a. Yes.
- b. No.

### 5. What was the fate of Pelgor?

- a. The PCs never met him.
- b. The PCs killed him in a fight.
- c. The PCs killed him after questioning (whether or not to get into the altar).
- d. The PCs handed Pelgor over to the authorities.
- e. Pelgor escaped.



## NEW RULES

Bloodsoaked Bracers		Level 10+	
<i>Your spilled blood causes these studded leather bracers to tremble with power.</i>			
Lvl 10	5,000 gp	Lvl 30	3,125,000 gp
Lvl 20	125,000 gp		
Item Slot: Arms			
<b>Power (Daily):</b> Minor Action. Use this power while you are bloodied. Gain a +5 power bonus to melee damage rolls until the end of the encounter or until you are no longer bloodied, whichever comes first.			
Level 20: +10 power bonus.			
Level 30: +15 power bonus.			

Adventurer's Vault, page 114.

Steadfast Amulet				Level 8+	
<i>The crystal set in this amulet helps to focus your mind.</i>					
Lvl 8	+2	3,400 gp	Lvl 23	+5	425,000 gp
Lvl 13	+3	17,000 gp	Lvl 28	+6	2,125,000 gp
Lvl 18	+4	85,000 gp			
Item Slot: Neck					
Enhancement: Fortitude, Reflex, and Will					
<b>Power (Daily):</b> Immediate Interrupt. Use this power when you are dazed or stunned by an attack. Make a saving throw against the condition. On a failure, you don't expend the use of this power and no daily use of a magic item power occurs.					

Adventurer's Vault, page 154.

Armor of Sacrifice

Level 5+

These plain robes offer no apparent defensive value, yet they aid your allies when they suffer.

Lvl 5	+1	1,000 gp	Lvl 20	+4	125,000 gp
Lvl 10	+2	5,000 gp	Lvl 25	+5	625,000 gp
Lvl 15	+3	25,000 gp	Lvl 30	+6	3,125,000 gp

Armor: Chain, Scale, Plate

Enhancement: AC.

Power (At-Will): Minor Action. Use this power when you are adjacent to an ally who is subject to an effect that a save can end. The ally is no longer affected, and you now have the effect. You cannot make a saving throw against this effect until the end of your next turn.

Power (Daily + Healing): Minor Action. Spend a healing surge. One ally within 5 squares of you regains hit points as though he or she had spent a healing surge.

Adventurer's Vault, page 41.

Potion of Vigor		Level 9+	
<i>This vermillion liquid invigorates you, at least temporarily.</i>			
Lvl 9	160 gp	Lvl 29	105,000 gp
Lvl 19	4,200 gp		
Potion			
<b>Power (Consumable):</b> Minor Action. Drink this potion and spend a healing surge. You do not gain hit points as normal. Instead, gain 15 temporary hit points.			
Level 19: Gain 25 temporary hit points.			
Level 29: Gain 35 temporary hit points.			

Adventurer's Vault, page 189.

## PLAYER HANDOUT 1

*As you rush uncontrollably towards the yawning red portal, an unimaginable force stops you for the briefest of moments. You feel the warm embrace of the divine and are instilled with purpose; you must endure and protect.*

*You emerge on the other side of the portal, surrounded by a divine, white glow.*