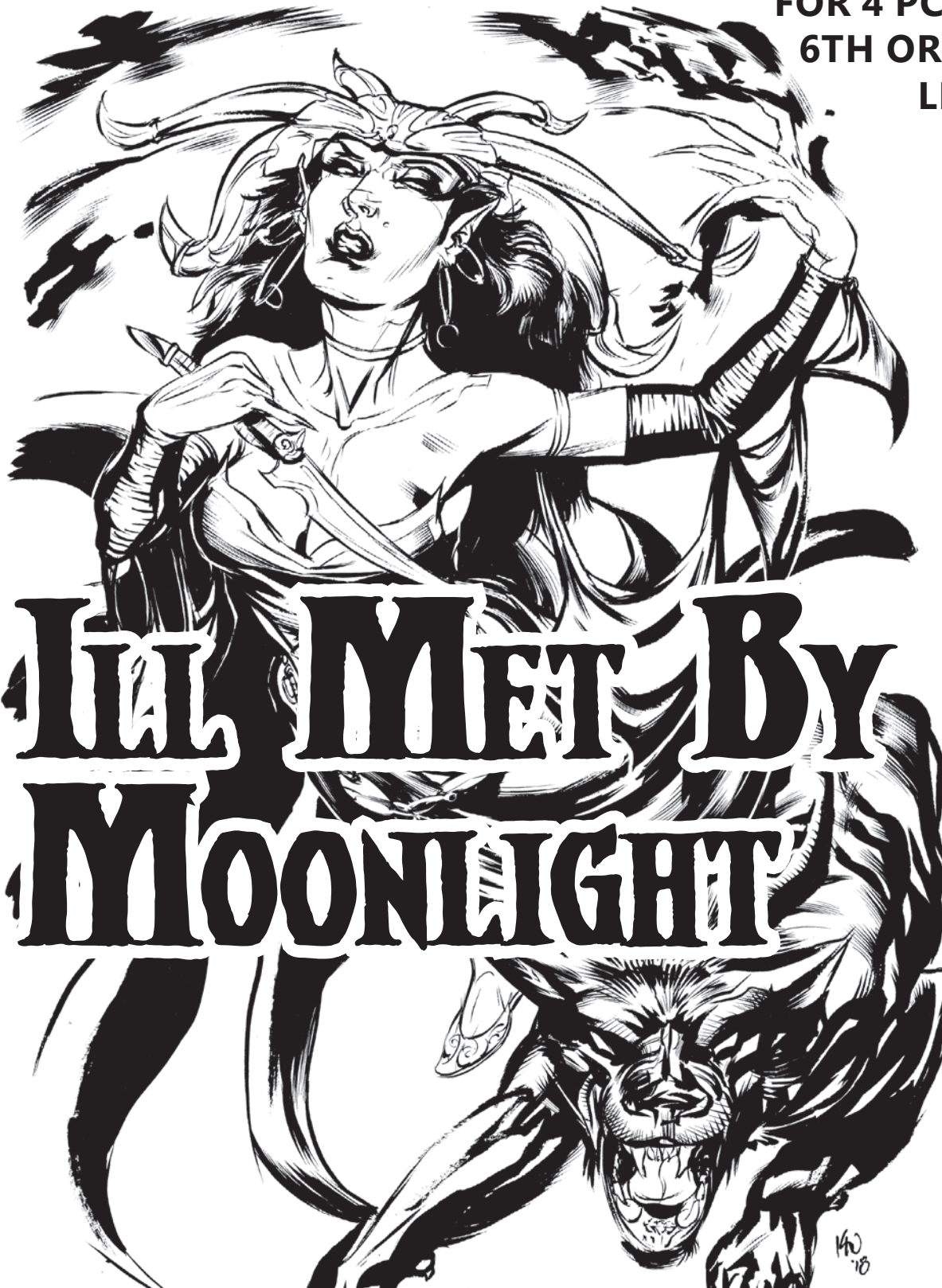


FOR 4 PCS OF
6TH OR 7TH
LEVEL



HAL MET BY MOONLIGHT

A 5E WARLOCK ADVENTURE
BY CARLOS OVALLE AND HOLLY OVALLE

ILL MET BY MOONLIGHT

GM Note: When a creature, item, or trap name appears in **bold**, that's a cue that its stat block or detail appears in the *System Reference Document*, 5.1. If the stat block appears in the *Tome of Beasts*, it is noted as such. Other items that appearing the *Midgard Heroes Handbook* are also noted as such.

Background

A gateway to the Shadow Realm, lost during the Black Sorceress' Revolt, has returned to Midgard. The gateway reveals a fragment of the shadow road and its missing watchhouse, once used by the Courts of the Shadow Fey. This reappearance is not yet well known in the Courts, and certain individuals are taking advantage of its return.

The esteemed Lady Madaera D'Faucon fell into disfavor with the Queen due to her transmutation research, too similar to the twisted magic of Her Majesty's husband and rival, the Moonlit King. The Demon Lord Akyishigal heard of the conflict and sought to sew further discontent

between the Queen and her Lady. Akyshigal informed Madaera of the watchhouse and the vulnerable mortals living nearby. Madaera fled the Courts in anger to continue her research on kidnapped Dornish citizens living near Keep Aunun.

Hooks

Keep Aunun is the seat of a domain in the Grand Duchy of Dornig that borders the eastern Arbonesse Forest. It is well known for its farmland, cattle, and horses. The keep itself marks the western edge of the small town of approximately 2,000 citizens. The Dornish are distressed by nightly kidnappings that have resulted in over a dozen people missing. Lord Roth Cereck Aunun, ruler of the area, has offered a reward of 2,500 gp to anyone who can end the abductions.

Design: Carlos Ovalle and Holly Ovalle

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Cover Art: Karl Waller

Interior Art: Karl Waller

Cartography: Dyson Logos

Publisher: Wolfgang Baur

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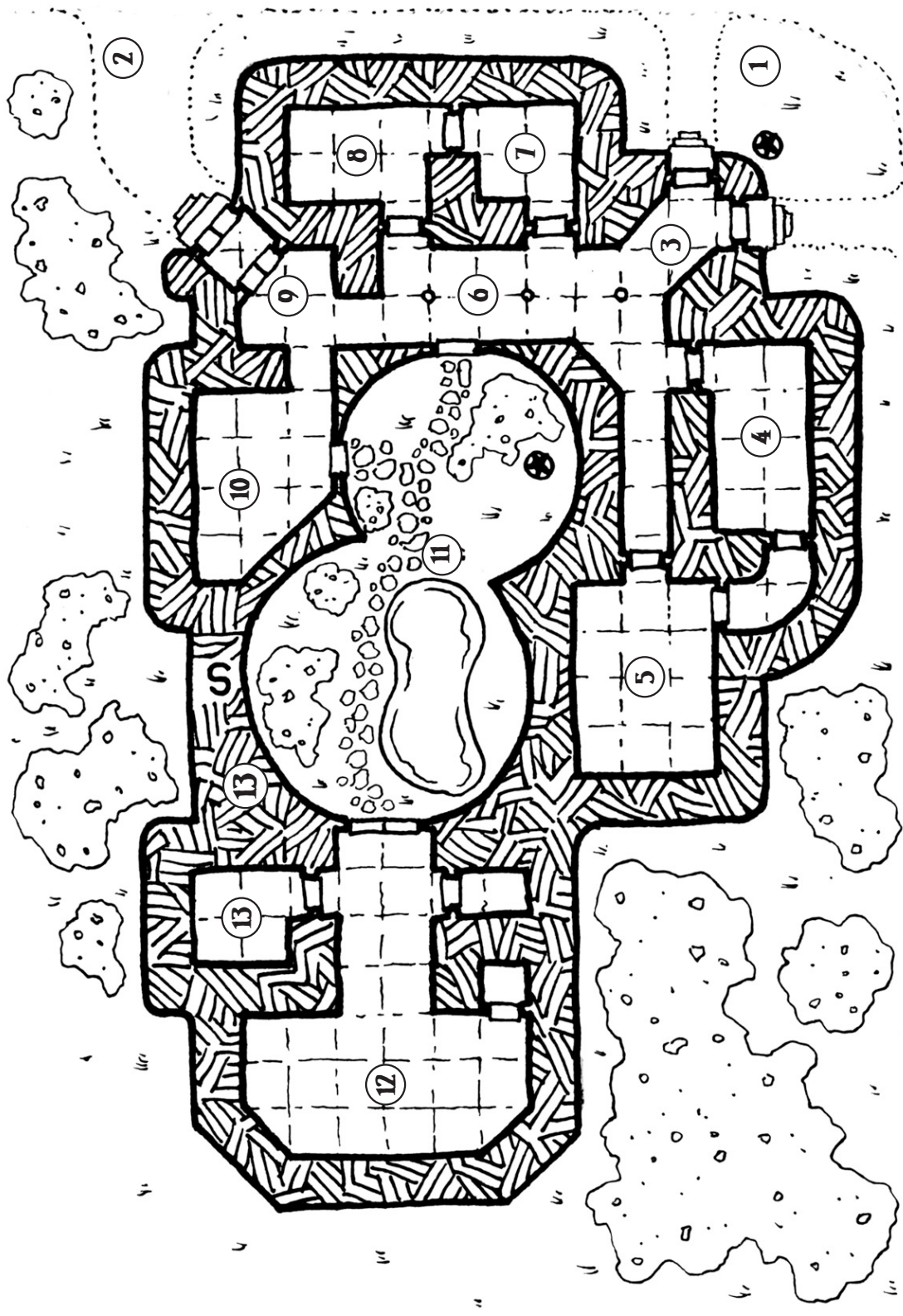
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Arrival

Entering town, the adventurers hear the angry voices of a mob of humans and halflings surrounding an athletic shadow fey dressed in stylish clothing. If the PCs investigate, they learn that **shadow fey** (*TOB*, p. 171) *were seen in the area just prior to the kidnappings. The mob is convinced that the fey, Aspera, is hiding something. Aspera insists that she is not involved and appears amused by the furious mortals.*

If the PCs intervene, the crowd can be dispersed with a successful DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check. Grateful, Aspera then requests to speak with the PCs privately, and cryptically offers to share information if the PCs meet her in the forest at midnight. If the PCs do not intervene, Aspera turns invisible and escapes. She later sends Coban, a **stryx** (*TOB*, p. 369), with this meeting request.

The Shadow Road

If the PCs approach the forest at midnight, Aspera and Coban emerge from the trees to greet them. Aspera informs the party that she is an agent of the **Queen of Night and Magic** (*TOB*, p. 192) and has been sent to investigate a rogue member of the Court acting against Her Majesty's wishes. Aspera shares her suspicion that although Lady Madaera is likely behind these kidnappings, another faction of the Courts may be acting against the Queen in this matter. Aspera explains calmly that together with the PCs, they may be able to rescue the mortals. She offers to show the party how to enter the Shadow Realm and find the watchhouse while she continues her investigation in the mortal realm. Aspera suggests sending the stryx, Coban, along to report to her if help is needed. Although smiling, Aspera's manner is cool. A successful DC 20 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals that she does not care about the mortals.

If the PCs agree, Aspera describes a hidden shadow road southwest of Keep Aunun, accessible only under moonlight. She informs them that blood must be spilled to open the Road; each individual must endure 5 HP of damage. Upon this action, the environment changes—the moon and stars fade away, and a broken road leads west into the forest. In the distance, a structure looms, indistinct in the mist. A DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) or Wisdom (Survival) check reveals trails of blood that can be followed to the structure's southeast entrance.

Unknown to the PCs, Aspera is not interested in investigating the mortal realm and follows the PCs at a distance. She waits outside for Coban to report on their progress, hoping they will clear the building so she may investigate the watchhouse safely after their probable deaths. Although the stryx is a serious investigator, he babbles jovially and feigns clumsiness. Coban monitors the party and affects cowardice when the party is confronted by danger.

Watchhouse Exterior

The watchhouse lies just to the west of the Shadow Road. The building is a forbidding structure of black stone with two clear glass domes on the roof. The southeast and northeast entrances are visible. There are no windows. A character searching the exterior walls for secret doors can discover a door along the north wall that leads directly to the Gardens (area 11) with a successful DC 25 Wisdom (Perception) check.

Illumination. All rooms are unlit except where noted.

Sounds. Sounds do not travel well through the black stone. Perception checks based on sound have disadvantage.

Players will be able to take a short rest in most rooms, as the creatures do not leave their rooms unless indicated in the room descriptions.

1. SOUTHEAST ENTRANCE

Two short stairs lead to doors separated by the southeast corner of the watchhouse. A statue of a shadow fey woman carved of black obsidian stands between the stairs, its arms broken off. A successful DC 10 Intelligence (Religion) check identifies the statue as the Queen of Night and Magic. The eyes of the statue appear to follow the adventurers as they move. A successful DC 16 Dexterity check using thieves' tools will unlock either door.

2. NORTHEAST ENTRANCE

The northeast stairs lead to a set of massive double doors that are barred from the inside. The doors can be forced open with a successful DC 20 Strength check, which reveals a small vestibule with similarly barred doors that lead into the keep.

3. SOUTHEAST ENTRANCE INTERIOR

A pressure plate just inside the doors triggers a **poison darts trap**. Setting off the trap summons the two shadow fey guardians to Area 6.

4. LIBRARY

Largely empty bookshelves are inset into the southern walls. A **rug of smothering** sits in the middle of this room, and it attacks the first non-fiend or non-shadow fey creature that steps on it. A **shadow fey guardian** (*TOB*, p. 174) rests in the room unless called to Area 6 by the party's actions. A successful DC 15 Wisdom Intelligence (Investigation) check finds an intact scroll of *call shadow mastiff* (*Midgard Heroes Handbook*, p. 155) on the shelves.

5. BEDROOM

Cockroaches, centipedes, and other insects crawl over the rotting beds. A **spawn of Akyishigal** (*TOB*, p. 83) and two **roachling lords** (*TOB*, p. 329) inhabit this room and will defend it to their deaths. PCs see an unholy symbol

displayed on a dresser. A successful DC 15 (Religion) or (History) check reveals the symbol belongs to **Akyishigal, the Demon Lord of Cockroaches** (TOB, p.82).

6. INTERIOR HALLWAY

Two **shadow fey guardians** (TOB, p. 174) are summoned to this location (from areas 4 and 10) if the adventurers set off the trap in area 3 or engaged the gnarljak in area 9. They will immediately attack intruders. The two doors to the east and the door to the west are locked. A successful DC 15 Dexterity check using thieves' tools will unlock each door.

7. SCRYING CHAMBER

A large basin of clear water, radiating divination magic, is set into the floor. If studied, an image of the shadow road outside the watchhouse appears as if using the *scrying* spell. If a character further examines the image, they experience the sensor moving as if they were running down the Shadow Road. This experience is draining; a character who views the image must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or receive one level of exhaustion.

8. ARMORY

Largely empty weapon racks and armor stands fill the room. A breastplate and shield of dark metal sit on one stand. A massive ornamental boomerang is the only weapon that remains on a rack.

9. THE NORTHEAST ENTRANCE INTERIOR

A rusted **gnarljak** (TOB, p. 229) is chained to the floor next to the inner set of doors, and it cannot move further than 10 feet from this position. Engaging the gnarljak summons the two shadow fey guardians to Area 6. The poor condition of the gnarljak changes the creature stat block as follows: **AC:** 14. **Gnaw:** The gnarljak makes one immediate attack when knocking an opponent prone rather than three. **Challenge** 5 (1,800 XP).

10. ZENO'S APOTHECARY

A **shadow fey guardian** (TOB, p. 174) is found in this room unless earlier called to Area 6 by the party's actions. A large immovable cabinet covers the northern wall, with drawers of herbs harvested from the adjacent garden. The cabinet radiates transmutation magic, and each drawer has multiple compartments and false bottoms.

A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals a random alchemical item: a dose of poison, alchemist's fire, or acid. The first search takes fifteen minutes. Each successful successive search by an individual reveals another item, but it takes twice as long as the previous search. An audible magical alarm sounds throughout the keep after three successful searches in a single day. The cabinet can be used as an herbalism or alchemical kit.

11. GARDENS

The twilight sky of the Shadow Realm is visible through the two large glass domes, illuminating the overgrown foliage and pond of steaming black waters that heat the room. A **chimera** guards this area, attacking any creature that enters without Madaera. An **eala** (TOB, p. 163) swims lazily, calm unless attacked first. If any creature steps within 5 feet of the locked western doors, an *alarm* spell silently notifies Madaera and the eala grows audibly agitated. The eala attacks the following round unless a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check is made, allowing the adventurers to pass into area 12 without violence. A successful DC 10 Dexterity check with thieves' tools will unlock the door to area 12.

12. LABORATORY

At the far wall, a nobly dressed woman stands at a table covered gruesomely with various bloody creature limbs. Madaera wears a **brooch of shielding**, and if notified by an alarm, she prepares by casting *mage armor* and *false life*. Madaera begins combat by commanding a hybrid manbear, the result of her latest experiment, to attack the party. (Use the statistics for a **polar bear**, except a medium-sized monstrosity with darkvision to 60 feet.) Overconfident, Madaera attempts to incapacitate the party so she can use them in her research later. Madaera will cast *polymorph* and *telekinesis* on party members when possible. The door to the area 13 prison is locked with *arcane lock*. A successful DC 25 Dexterity check is required to pick the lock, or a successful DC 25 strength check is needed to break the door open. Otherwise, the party must destroy the door to free the prisoners.

13. PRISON

This room, once used for storage, currently imprisons nine terrified humanoids: five humans and four halflings survived. Upon being released from their bonds, they are excited and relieved to return to their homes on the outskirts of Aunun.

Conclusion

If the PCs safely exit the watchhouse, they are stopped by a pleasantly surprised Aspera. If the PCs end Madaera's research and report the Akyishigal symbol to Aspera, they will have the gratitude of the Queen and receive a +1 to their Status with fey. Upon learning that his plan was discovered, the Demon Lord will hold a grudge against the party. If the PCs saved the citizens, they receive the gratitude of the Duke and his people. They receive +1 to their Status in Dornig with their reward money.

LADY MAEDERA D'FAUCON THE CHIMERIC MAGE

Medium humanoid (shadow fey)

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)

Hit Points 55 (10d8+10)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)

Saving Throws Int +7, Wis +5

Skills Arcana +7, History +7

Senses Passive Perception 11

Languages Common, Elvish, Infernal, Umbral

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Fey Ancestry. The shadow fey has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put it to sleep.

Chimeric Magic. Madaera can grant another creature within 30 feet one of the following benefits when she casts a transmutation spell.

- The creature's arms elongate for their next attack, granting them an additional 5 ft. reach.
- The creature's legs strengthen, granting them an additional 10 ft. of movement for one round.

Innate Spellcasting. The shadow fey's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma. It can cast the following spells innately, requiring no material components.

3/day: *misty step* (when in shadows, dim light, or darkness only)

Spellcasting. Madaera is a 10th-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 14, +7 to hit with spell attacks). Madaera has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at

will): *light*, *mending*, *prestidigitation*, *ray of frost*

1st level (4 slots): *false life**, *mage armor*, *magic missile*

2nd level (3 slots): *arcane lock*, *enhance ability***, *hold person*

3rd level (3 slots): *blink**, *fireball*, *slow**

4th level (3 slots): *polymorph**, *stoneskin*

5th level (2 slots): *modify memory*, *telekinesis**

*Transmutation spell of 1st level or higher

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in sunlight, the shadow fey has disadvantage on attack rolls and on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Traveler in Darkness. The shadow fey has advantage on Intelligence (Arcana) checks made to know about shadow roads and shadow magic spells or items.

ACTIONS

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 (1d4 – 1) piercing damage



CALL SHADOW MASTIFF

3rd-level conjuration (shadow)

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 60 feet

Components: V, S, M (a dog's tooth)

Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute

You conjure a shadow mastiff from the Shadow Realm. This creature obeys your verbal commands to aid you in battle or to seek out a specific creature.

The mastiff is friendly to you and your companions. Roll initiative for the mastiff; it acts on its own turn. It obeys simple, verbal commands from you (giving a command takes no action on your part), within its ability to act.

The mastiff disappears when it drops to 0 hit points or when the spell ends.

HOUND OF THE NIGHT

Large monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 16 (*natural armor*)

Hit Points 112 (*15d10 + 30*)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	9 (–1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws *Dex +6, Con +5, Wis +5*

Skills *Intimidation + 3, Perception +5, Stealth +6*

Damage Immunities *cold*

Damage Vulnerabilities *fire*

Senses *darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15*

Languages *understands Elvish and Umbral but can't speak*

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Blood Scent. *A hound of the night can follow a scent through phase shifts, ethereal movement, dimension door, and fey steps of any kind. Teleport and plane shift are beyond their ability to follow.*

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

At will: *dimension door*

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack: +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 21 (3d10 + 5) piercing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.*

Frost Breath (Recharge 5–6). *The hound exhales a 15-foot cone of frost. Those in the area of effect take 44 (8d10) cold damage, or half damage with a successful DC 13 Dexterity saving throw.*

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