

D&D
ADVENTURERS
LEAGUE

CHASING MADNESS



CCC-BWM-005



CHASING MADNESS

A HILLSFAR ADVENTURE



Four demon lord cults are competing for the possession and control of a crate full of mined minerals that radiate an intense amount of faerzress power. Local Emerald Enclave leader, Captain Rairdon Tanheel, hires a group of adventurers to retake the crate and get it back into safe hands and investigate why the crate has been stolen.

A Two-Hour to Four-Hour Adventure for Tier 2 Characters Optimized for APL 8.

CREDITS

Lead Designer: Jawsh Murdock

Editing: JJ Tin

Cover Art: Alan Michael Pules

Cartography: Jawsh Murdock

D&D Adventurers League Administrators: Bill Benham, Alan Patrick, Travis Woodall, Lysa Chen, Claire Hoffman, Greg Marks

Playtesters: Jia Jian Tin, Bill Kearny, Thelem Eyseir, Christine Weidenbach, and Peter Allen

Special Thanks to Peter Allen for his fun suggestions, and to the Golden Girls for all their inspiring shenanigans.

ADVENTURE PRIMER

"When the legends die, the dreams end; there is no more greatness."

-Tecumseh

BACKGROUND

Following the events of module CCC-SQC-001, "The Woodland Sage," the mine under the Glaesbury Estate has been sealed off, and the last remaining minerals tainted by the faerzress have been placed in a specially sealed crate. The local leader for the Emerald Enclave, Captain Rairdon Tanheel has been tasked with transporting the crate from Hillsfar to Elventree to be studied by the head of the Emerald Enclave, Seranolla.

EPISODES

The adventure typically takes place over one to three episodes that take approximately two hours each to play. These episodes are initially introduced by a Call to Action encounter.

If you're planning to play the entire adventure at once, you only need to introduce the Call to Action once. However, if you plan to play them over several sessions, you'll want to revisit the Call to Action each time you play.

- **Episode 1: Meeting Captain Rairdon Tanheel at the Glaesbury Estate.** The adventures are summoned to meet Captain Tanheel, Hillsfar's leader of the Emerald Enclave at the Glaesbury Estate. A crate of faerzress tainted Glaesbury minerals that were to be transported to a specialist in the Emerald Enclave has been stolen. He shows them the site of a battle where a group of cultists devoted to the Demon Lord, Fraz-Urb'Luu, have been murdered while trying to steal the crate of minerals. Their wounds appear to have been caused by the wild ripping and tearing that leads the Captain to believe that this was the work of a group of gnolls. He wants to the players to investigate a warehouse in Hillsfar where witnesses have reported seeing gnolls. This is the **Call to Action**. There is also a trail left by one of the Fraz-Urb'Luu cultists who has escaped. Following this trail leads to **Bonus Objective A**.
- **Episode 2: Yeenoghu Cult's Hideout:** After talking with a few witnesses around Hillsfar, the group discovers the warehouse where the Yeenoghu Cult is hiding. This is **Main Objective A**. Through either interrogation of the defeated

Yeenoghu Cultists or by exploring the cultist's hideout; they'll discover the group was attacked twice before. Once by a group of Drow cultists of Lolth and once by the cult of Baphomet. It is the cult of Baphomet who has stolen the crate of faerzress minerals and has taken it to the harbor of Hillsfar.

Combat: 2 **Leucrotta**, 2 **Gnoll Pack Lords**, 2 **Gnoll Fang of Yeenoghus** and 1 **Flind**.

- **Episode 3: The Baphomet Cult.** Once the adventurers reach the harbor of Hillsfar, they'll meet some bruised-up dock workers who report that the cult of Baphomet has recently stolen a ship and have sailed away onto the Moon Sea toward Mulmaster. Captain Tanheel is there and sails the party aboard his ship, the Tymora's Luck, to confront the Baphomet Cult at sea. This is **Main Objective B**.

Combat: 2 **Bargura**, 1 **Warlock of the Fiend**, 4 **Bulezau**, and 5 **Cult Fanatics**.

BONUS OBJECTIVES

This adventure includes bonus objectives that the characters can pursue if they have additional time to do so –earning additional advancement checkpoints in the process. These objectives are found in this adventure's appendices.

Bonus Objective A: Escaped Cultist. The Fraz-Urb'Luu cultist who escaped the initial battle with the Yeenoghu Cult can be tracked to an abandoned store in the market district of Hillsfar.

After finding the overturned Hillsfar prison cart, the adventurers will find the shed skin of a human left behind by the cultist and the bitten and torn body of a prison guard. After tracking the cultist to the abandoned store, they'll discover that the cultist is a Maurezhi demon who has taken over a new human host. After a short encounter with the cultist, he'll shed his skin and show his true demonic form. This bonus objective can be found in **Appendix 6**.

Combat: 1 **Guard**, which transforms into 1 **Maurezhi** after one round of battle.

Bonus Objective B: Drow Camp. One of the groups who unsuccessfully attacked the Yeenoghu cult was the Drow cultists of Lolth. They can easily be found outside of the city gates of Hillsfar, camping near a cave. After successful combat or bargaining with the drow, the cultists will reveal more details about why they want the crate of faerzress minerals. This bonus objective can be found in **Appendix 7**.

Combat: 3 Drow Elite Warriors, 1 Drow Priestess of Lolth

EPISODE SEQUENCE

Depending on your time constraints, and play style and environment, this adventure will take approximately two to four hours to play.

HOW WILL YOU PLAY?

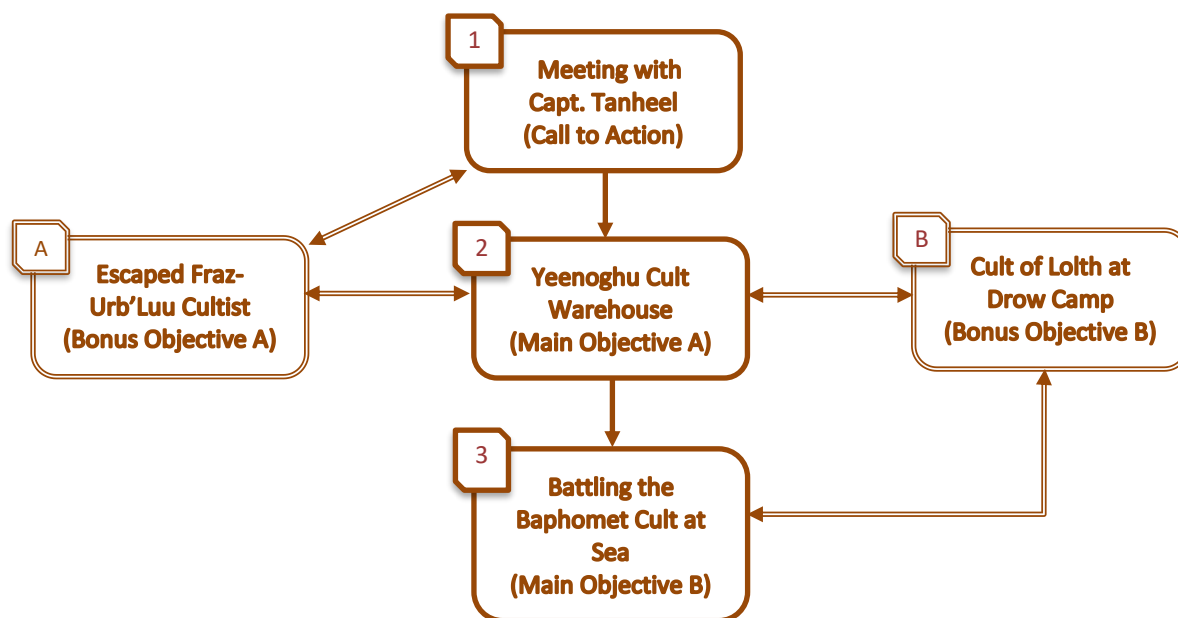
The duration of your session depends on how much of this adventure you utilize. At the very least, your session will last approximately 2 hours. However, if you wish, you can provide a longer experience for your players by pursuing the bonus objectives.

Main Objective Only. To complete the adventure's main objective, the characters participate in Episodes 1 through 3 in order, however, you may include the opportunity to pursue bonus objectives.

Bonus Objectives. You can extend this adventure by one or two hours by including opportunities for the characters to pursue the bonus objectives. Bonus Objective A can be added to episode 1 or 2 as flow allows. Bonus Objective B branches off from Episode 2 after the adventurers learn that the Yeenoghu cult was attacked by the Lolth cult, but either path will lead directly to Episode 3.

EPISODE FLOWCHART

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



EPISODE 1: MEETING CAPT. TANHEEL AT THE GLAESBURY ESTATE (CALL TO ACTION)

Estimated Duration: 30 Minutes

SCENE A. THE SCENE OF THE CRIME

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

AREA INFORMATION

This area has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The Glaesbury Estate is on a large orchard with bizarrely large crops of most every type on its vast 300 acres of land.

Lighting. It's approximately mid-day when the characters arrive at the Glaesbury Estate. The sun is directly overhead providing bright light and full visibility to the crime scene, but rain clouds appear to be rolling in from the west.

CREATURES/NPCs

Captain Rairdon Tanheel, is the leader of the Emerald Enclave for the Hillsfar area. Although he has been conducting legal shipping and trading for many years, he was once a pirate and still dresses in the style of a pirate. He feels it lends him extra credibility against those who might think to question his command of the sea. He's concerned about what could happen if the faerzress tainted minerals fell into the wrong hands. While the former Lord Culkin used the Glaesbury minerals to cause the orchard's fruits and vegetables to grow at incredible rates, he shudders to think what these cults would want with them.

Objectives/Goals. The Captain needs to have the minerals taken back from the cultists that currently have it so that he can get it to Elventree, where Seranolla, a specialist with the Emerald Enclave, so she can study the Glaesbury minerals. Seranolla believes that they may be able to find a way to counter the madness caused by the minerals and use them to help restore struggling vegetation. In the Glaesbury Estate, the previous Lord, Ulrich Culkin used the mineral to grow amazingly large and abundant crops regardless of the season. Seranolla and the Captain are both curious if that ability could be harnessed for good without causing madness to all the animals in which it comes in contact.

GLAESBURY MINERALS

The Glaesbury minerals are stored in a lead-lined crate. The minerals are tainted with demonic faerzress magic and the remnants of a colossal sleeping behemoth. As seen in the previous adventure, *The Woodland Sage*, Lord Ulrich Culkin was using the minerals to cause his crops to grow at extraordinary rates. However, he did not know that the minerals were also being sought as a way to control a massive behemoth that sleeps in a hidden location beneath Hillsfar. After Lord Culkin's demise, the Mine has been collapsed and closed down, but one remaining crate of the Glaesbury minerals have been gathered for study by the Emerald Enclave. Unfortunately, the Emerald Enclave learns a little too late that they're not the only ones who want the minerals. Several cults along with the Red Wizards of Thay are all rumored to desire the Glaesbury minerals.

CALL TO ACTION

Captain Tanheel thanks the players for responding to the summons to come to the Glaesbury Estate. He shows them a basket of various fruits and vegetables. Each example of produce appears to be abnormally large, but otherwise healthy and delicious. He tells them about the Glaesbury minerals which caused this abnormal growth. The minerals are too tainted with faerzress to be handled by human hands, so the former Lord of the estate secretly conscripted a group of svirfneblin to do the work for him against their will. Once the Culkin's secret was discovered, he was arrested, and the mine was collapsed and sealed off.

He tells the party that he kept a single crate of the minerals in a lead-lined crate to prevent the faerzress from affecting those who transported it. He and Emerald Enclave specialist, Seranolla intended on studying the minerals for ways of countering the maddening effects of the faerzress and helping to heal struggling vegetation. But before he could have the crate transported from the orchard, it was stolen by a cult who were quickly attacked by a rival cult and the minerals were stolen again.

The evidence appears to show that the Fraz-Urb'Luu cult broke into the Glaesbury Estate and first stole the crate of minerals just as it was about to be transported to Elventree, but before they were even able to get the cart carrying the Glaesbury minerals away from the estate, these cultists were attacked and torn apart.

He shows them the site of a battle where the cultists devoted to the Demon Lord, Fraz-Urb'Luu, have been murdered while trying to steal the crate of minerals. Their wounds appear to have been

caused by the wild ripping and tearing that leads the Captain to believe that this was the work of a group of gnolls.

If players would like to investigate the bodies further, they can confirm the wounds were caused by both gnolls and a leucrotta, with **Wisdom (Nature) check** of **DC 15** or higher; if the check is **DC 20** or higher, they will know the number of gnolls who attacked the Fraz-Urb'Luu cultists.

The adventurers must travel into Hillsfar in the warehouse district and talk to the witnesses around the area and find the hiding place of a gnoll, Yeenoghu Cult, who he believes has killed the Fraz-Urb'Luu cultists and stolen the Glaesbury minerals.

BONUS OBJECTIVE A

(MOST LIKELY OCCURS BEFORE EPISODE 2)

If you are running a 3 to 4-hour session, you can introduce the Bonus Objective A either before or parallel to Main Objective A. Note: The trail leading to this bonus objective is physically found between the area of Episode 1 (Glaesbury Estate) and Episode 2 (inner Hillsfar).

Captain Tanheel reports to the party that one of the Fraz-Urb'Luu Cultists barely survived the battle against the rival cult and was taken to the Hillsfar prison. The cultist appeared unconscious when a pair of Red Plume guards placed him on a cart to transport him to the Hillsfar prison for questioning. The Captain does not know this, but the cart did not make it to the prison. The maurezhi killed both prison guards and escaped in the skin of one of the guards.

The captain encourages the party to go to the Hillsfar prison and investigate the matter further, but on their way to the gates of Hillsfar, the adventurers will find the overturned Red Plume cart. Adventurers will not need to go to the Hillsfar prison. When they follow the trail of the Fraz-Urb'Luu cultist, they will find him in an abandoned toy store inside Hillsfar. (see Appendix 6, Bonus Objective A: Escaped Cultists)

EPISODE 2: FINDING THE YEENOGHU CULT (MAIN OBJECTIVE A)

Estimated Duration: 60 Minutes

THE HILLSFAR WAREHOUSE DISTRICT

The Warehouse district is filled with business people leading horse-drawn carts through the streets to carry goods from one side of the town to the next. The buildings are packed tightly together and made with barn style sliding doors and two-stories of storage. Most of the warehouse owners are too busy to speak if they're already on a cart heading away, but if they're still in their warehouse loading goods onto the cart, players will be able to interact with them.

Have the players roll a d100, and give them a 66% chance of success on the warehouse workers having witnessed the location of the Yeenoghu Cult's hideout. If they roll a 34 or higher on a d100 during a successful social encounter with a warehouse worker, the NPC will share information leading to the Yeenoghu Cult's hideout.

PREREQUISITES

The adventurers must complete the Call to Action before beginning this episode.

AREA INFORMATION

This area has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The Warehouse District is on the north eastern side of Hillsfar near the outer wall. Rows of tightly packed multistoried buildings stretch across heavily rutted dirt streets where carts travel to and from the farming and merchant areas of the city. Most citizens of Hillsfar do not travel to these small side streets and the workers view visitors with suspicion.

Lighting. It's approximately mid-day when the characters arrive at the Warehouse District. The sky is clear of clouds, and the sun is directly overhead providing bright light and full visibility to the crime scene.

OBJECTIVES

In this episode, the adventurers explore the warehouse district to find the Yeenoghu Cult's hiding place. They'll need to greet the local warehouse owners to find someone who recently witnessed the comings and goings of the Yeenoghu cult and can report where they are located.

BONUS OBJECTIVE A

If you or the adventurers choose to search the trail of the escaped Fraz-Urb'Luu cultist, that trail will lead to the merchant district in Hillsfar. They would likely reach the merchant district before getting to the warehouse district, but it can be done in either order. For this bonus objective, see **Appendix 6**.

SCENE A. APPROACHING THE WAREHOUSE WORKERS

The players will need to talk to the local warehouse workers and find a witness who can point the players in the direction of the Yeenoghu cult's hideout. Below is a list of possible options of NPC's that the characters can meet and who, with a successful dice roll, know the location of the hideout. You may use these NPCs, or create your own list of witnesses.

CREATURES/NPCs

Kwodell – A large rotund human male with a small ponytail at the nape of his neck, a bald pate, and a long, thin goatee, is loading his cart with bags of oats and grains. He will pretend not to hear the characters if they speak to him. They will need to physically touch him or interrupt his work in some way before he speaks with the players.

Zaladia – a female wood elf, is loading her small hand-drawn cart with jars of oil, incense, and potpourri. She's a lithe, reddish-skinned elf with dreaded hair. She is a scent expert and has an overwhelmingly sweet odor coming from her. She is more than willing to talk to the players, but keeps getting distracted by their smell and will try to get them each to align themselves with a scent that most fits their aura. She offers a service for 5 sp a piece to help find a scent alignment for each of them.

Maris – is a Tabaxi who has no gender identification. Maris will respond to either gender pronoun but prefers to be called by name. Maris is a bookmaker and is loading boxes of blank books onto a cart. Maris is protective of information and considers warehouse information to be confidential. Players will need to succeed in a **Charisma** (Persuasion or Intimidation) **check of 15** or higher to even find out if Maris knows anything.

Maximus – A small male halfling wears a black bandana and gray apron over his street clothes. He is a tile maker and loads crates of tiles into his cart with the help of a silent Fir Bolg assistant named Luris. The two seem to communicate with a series of hand signs, but the friendly halfling is more than eager to speak with the players but only if they give

their opinion on how well his latest tiling pattern will look in a noble woman's bathing room.

What Do They Know? When the players find a warehouse worker who knows where the Yeenoghu hideout is, they will all provide the same information.

- They've seen a group of hairy workers all wearing large burlap cloaks to hide their faces when coming and going from warehouse 734.
- Over the past couple of days, there have been sounds of battle in and around that warehouse, but no one saw the battle nor know who the victor was. Attacks at warehouses aren't uncommon, and it's usually safest to mind your own business where such things are concerned.
- On windy days the smell from that warehouse is quite rancid. It has the smell of soggy dogs at low tide.

SCENE B. INSIDE THE YEENOGHU CULT HIDEOUT

The players will find warehouse 7734 with the white numbers peeling from the top of its awning. Across the large sliding door at its front, poorly painted letters spell out "No Trez-pacing!!" There are large claw marks on one side of the door. There are also score marks looking like someone has tried to light the door on fire recently. The last plank of wood on the door looks like it was recently replaced but is already cracked along the edges as if it was attacked with a hammer or crowbar. The window above the awning has been broken and has been boarded over. These are the only apparent points of entry that can be currently seen.

AREA INFORMATION

This area has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The wooden warehouse is two stories and is 30-foot tall at its highest peak. On the inside is a disheveled storage area with a broken horse-drawn cart and an overturned carriage. Carriage wheels and woodworking tools line the wall. All the materials needed to repair and create wagons, carts, and carriages are in this warehouse, but the equipment has fallen into disrepair under its new ownership.

Lighting. With the only window boarded up, there is very little natural light in the warehouse. The gnollish Yeenoghu cultists have a small woodburning stove in the upper level of the warehouse where their sleeping pallets are. There is dim lighting in the upper level of the warehouse, but the rest of the warehouse is dark.

Entrance. Entering the warehouse without alerting the gnolls and the leucrotta will be difficult. A Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check of 17 or more is required to remove the cracked board from the door without attracting their notice. After that, they'll need to roll a Dexterity (Stealth) check of 17 or higher to enter to get inside without being seen by the two leucrotta who are on watch out. If the players are not trying to be stealthy, they break their way through the door with Strength (Athletics) check of 10 or higher.

CREATURES/NPCs

Doryc – the large heavily scarred Flind leads the pack of cultists. He is quick to anger and is eager to attack anyone who enters the warehouse. He is the only one in the cult who speaks common, but will not parlay with any player who tries to open up communication from outside the warehouse. The only response they players will get from outside the warehouse are threatening growls and whooping barks of anger.

If confronted, the Yeenoghu cult will fight until defeated. If the players come into the warehouse before the gnolls and leucrotta hear them, they'll all still be dining around the stove in the upper level. However, if they are alerted to the players' presence before they enter, they will be waiting for them on the floor level of the warehouse, using the overturned cart and carriage as coverage.

Combat: 2 Leucrotta, 2 Gnoll Pack Lords, 2 Gnoll Fang of Yeenoghus and 1 Flind.

Parlay or non-Lethal Defeat: After the second round of combat, or after the players have defeated the Yeenoghu cult (if they haven't killed them), the Yeenoghu cult will be willing to talk their way out of the battle. The Flind, Doryc, is the only one who speaks common, but if the players find creative ways to speak with the gnolls, the DM can allow it.

What they Know: Doryc and the Yeenoghu cultists believe that capturing the Glaesbury minerals will give them supernatural powers that will allow them to bring back the fear and worship of Yeenoghu to the Moonsea.

Many demon lord cults have heard the same thing, and believe this is the key to establishing prominence over the others.

- They were attacked by the drow cult of Lolth a few days ago. Doryc was very proud of their victory over the Drow cult. He has tracked them to their camp, just outside the walls of Hillsfar and has seen them there licking their wounds.

- The cult of Baphomet attacked them a day ago. They were led by a warlock and a group of human cultists who had actual demons under their control. It was these cultists who stole the crate of minerals.
- Doryc tracked the cultists of Baphomet to the harbor area of Hillsfar. He hasn't yet found their exact position.

CLUES

Inside the warehouse, there are two bodies of male, drow warriors that have been gnawed on by the leucrotta. The bodies show evidence that these drow are cultists of Lolth.

There are also clues of the second battle the gnolls had with the Baphomet cultists. While there are no bodies left by those cultists, there is a dented gold-plated helmet with a single horn and a minotaur embossed onto it. An **Intelligence (History or Religion) check of 10** or higher will allow the players to identify that the helmet belongs to a cultist of Baphomet. Signs of the battle are all around with scratched walls, broken tables and a large burned hole in the floor.

Dead Drow

There are several dead Drow cultists of Lolth on the floor. One of the drow is carrying a map to the location of their camp outside of Hillsfar. These directions lead to **Bonus Objective B**.

Hole in the Floor

Investigating the charred hole in the warehouse floor reveals a dark pathway underneath the warehouse. Following the underground, three-foot diameter tunnel leads to a hole just outside the bottom of the Hillsfar walls near the docks.

Sounds of Battle: Adventurers who are traveling 30 ft into the hole will hear shouts of terror and battle from the other side. These are sounds of the Baphomet Cult attacking the docks. The tunnel is much too long for the adventurers to arrive in time to intervene that battle, but the sound should prompt them to move quickly forward.

Once the players are outside the hole, they can see ruts in the ground that show a clear path where a cart traveled toward the Hillsfar harbor which begins **Episode 3**.

BONUS OBJECTIVE B

If time permits, the players may want to choose to follow the map to the Drow Camp outside of the Hillsfar walls toward the south. This bonus objective will give the players more information on why the drow cultists attacked the Yeenoghu cultists and why they want the minerals. This bonus quest can be completed before the last quest at the harbor. For this bonus objective, see **Appendix 7**.

DM's Note:

Time can be a factor. If this fight goes longer than the planned amount of time, and running this module in a strict 2 to 4-hour session, you can have the gnolls either surrender or succumb to their injuries from their prior battles.

Adjusting the Adventure

Here are the recommendations for adjusting this combat encounter. These are not cumulative.

- **Very weak Party:** Remove one Gnoll Fang of Yeenoghu and one Gnoll Pack Lord.
- **Weak party:** Replace Gnoll Pack Lords with Bandit Captains.
- **Strong party:** Run battle as written.
- **Very strong party:** Increase the Flind's AC to 18 and increase its HP to 150.

Playing the Pillars

COMBAT

The Yeenoghu Cult is recovering from a recent battle and are on the lookout for battle and are very eager to fight again and redeem their pride after their recent loss in a battle against the Baphomet Cult. They will fight until defeated and will be very difficult to surprise.

EXPLORATION

Players should be encouraged to get a look at all the numbered warehouses and characters of the area and choose to whom they will talk. They won't find the Yeenoghu's hideout, warehouse 734, until after they speak with at least one other warehouse worker.

SOCIAL

The players can role play as much or as little as they like with the warehouse workers as they search for the hideout.

The Yeenoghu cult will not talk until they have fought the players. After two rounds of fighting, if the players want to parlay, the cultist gnolls will listen at that point.

EPISODE 3: BATTLING THE BAPHOMET CULT (MAIN OBJECTIVE B)

Estimated Duration: 60 Minutes

THE HILLSFAR HARBOR

There are two ships currently docked at the Hillsfar Harbor. A cargo ship and Tymora's Luck are at the harbor. The cargo ship is currently being loaded with supplies that are being shipped to the refugees of Mulmaster, while the Tymora's Luck is being prepped for a quick chase out at sea.

PREREQUISITES

The adventurers must complete the Call to Action and Main Objective A before beginning this episode.

AREA INFORMATION

This area has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. Six quays protrude from the dock of Hillsfar and five smaller dock houses stand along the bay. A dirt path road leads from the docks to the nearby city gates of Hillsfar.

Lighting. The exterior lighting is that of an early evening sky. The rain has stopped and a slight mist is causing distant rainbows and prisms of color to appear over the Moonsea. Depending on how long the players spent on other areas of the module it might be brightly lit in the early evening or the dim lighting of dusk.

OBJECTIVES

In this episode, the adventurers need to board the Tymora's Luck and chase down the Baphomet cultists who have stolen the cargo ship, the Wooden Thimble. Once they chase down the cultists, they must defeat the cultists to recover the crate of faerzress minerals.

SCENE A. APPROACHING THE HARBOR

The players will come to the harbor by either following the tracks from the hole in the floor of the Yeenoghu cult's hideout, or they will travel here based on the clues given to them at the drow camp. When they arrive the sailors around the dock will be in an uproar about the cultists who stole a cargo ship called the "Wooden Thimble." The cultists were wearing hoods over their golden minotaur helmets and traveled with demons.

The players will immediately be approached by Captain Tanheel as he is investigating the report of a

stolen ship. As soon as he learns that the other cults do not have the Glaesbury minerals, he decides that Baphomet cult must have the crate. He asks the adventurers to quickly investigate the dock as he prepares his ship to help them chase after the slower cargo ship.

CREATURES/NPCs

Captain Tanheel – the wood-elf, leader of the Emerald Enclave, and the captain of the ship, Tymora's Luck is at the harbor when the characters arrive. He's checking on a recent report of a stolen ship.

Naisus – the human male, warlock is the leader of this band of Baphomet cultists. His goal is to meet up with an ally he has in Mulmaster to study the effects of the faerzress and to see if it can be used to create an explosive weapon. He has also heard rumors that the minerals can be used to control an ancient behemoth below Hillsfar. They want to control the Moonsea so that they can clear the way for Baphomet to return and have a foothold in Faerun.

Elzie the sailor – is a one-eyed human male, who is the captain of a ship called the "Wooden Thimble." Elzie and his crew were attacked earlier that day by a group of cultists and fiends. Elzie survived the attack and remains on the dock, but most of his crew are either laid up in the infirmary or lost at sea.

Crizler, the dockhand – This dwarven male, manages the docks and tracks the boats that go in and out of the harbor. He saw the cultists coming in with a horse-drawn cart and immediately attack the crew of the nearest vessel.

What Do They Know? Crizler and Elzie were the only witnesses left at the harbor who saw the cultists attack the "Wooden Thimble."

- The leader of the cult wore a single-horned, gold-plated helmet, and shouted that he was claiming the harbor for the desire of Baphomet.
- The best sailors aboard the "Wooden Thimble," were either left behind injured or killed, but there was still enough crew aboard to sail the ship.
- The cultists traveled with a group of the most disturbing goat-looking fiends that Elzie had ever seen. It is something he believes will haunt his dreams for years to come.
- The crate was not spotted, but the lead of the cult carried a satchel onto the boat that appeared to be quite heavy. He seemed very particular that the other fanatics treat it with great care.

- Captain Tanheel has measured the distance that the cultists have traveled on the Moonsea and believes that he and his crew can still catch the cultists. He encourages the adventurers to board his ship, the Tymora's Luck. The other ship is sturdy but slow and without a skilled crew.

SCENE B. ONBOARD THE WOODEN THIMBLE

Once aboard the Tymora's Luck, it only takes Captain Tanheel and his crew, 3 hours to catch up with the Wooden Thimble. The bulkier ship seems to be caught in a strong current, and the inexperienced crew is struggling to get through it. Tymora's Luck can come up to the port side of the ship, close enough for the adventurers to board.

AREA INFORMATION

This area has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The wooden cargo ship is 30-feet wide and 70-feet long. It has an upper-deck, lower-deck and a cargo hold. Once the battle begins, the remaining crew that was captured by the cultists make their way to Tymora's Luck. The cultists fight from the upper deck and allow the fiends to fight from the lower deck and up out of the cargo hold.

Lighting. The exterior lighting is a cloudy evening sky. Depending on how long the players spent on other areas of the module it might be brightly lit in the early evening or the dim lighting of dusk.

Walking the Plank. A five-foot plank of wood is extended from the starboard hull of the Tymora's Luck to the Port side hull of the Wooden Thimble, to form a walkway. This plank is sturdy enough to hold any character who walks across, but since both ships are moving in a rough current, it takes a successful **Dexterity (Acrobatics) check of 15** or higher to successfully get across without falling into the sea below. If another player assists with the player walking across, you can award advantage or make the walk across automatic if they have a particularly clever plan.

Falling into the Sea. If a player falls into the sea, they'll take 2d6 bludgeoning damage. They'll need to succeed at a **Strength (Athletics) check of 10** or higher to climb back up on either ship. The player will need a lowered rope or ladder in order to attempt the climb. The crew of the Tymora's Luck will always assist the player to climb back into that ship, but another player will need to lower their own rope as an action if the player wants to climb back on to the Wooden Thimble.

CREATURES/NPCs

Crew of the Wooden Thimble – the captured crew of the Wooden Thimble are a young group of deckhands who are still learning their craft. They will neither help nor hinder the players when they board the ship. They will immediately attempt to escape onto the Tymora's Luck by either crossing the plank or by jumping off the side and climbing up on to the ship.

Crew of the Tymora's Luck– Captain Tanheel and the crew aboard Tymora's Luck will neither help nor hinder the battle aboard the Wooden Thimble. However, if any player goes overboard, the crew will help them by throwing down a rope. If a player falls unconscious while overboard, a crewman from Tymora's Luck will jump over to rescue them.

Cultists of Baphomet– Naisus and Baphomet Cultists will not parley with the adventurers and will fight to the death to defend their crate of minerals. The cultists are too fanatical to engage in conversation with the players.

What they Know: if the adventurers engage with Naisus, he'll tell them that nothing they do will matter. He'll let them know that Baphomet will come for them no matter what. The cults of Graz'zt and Zugtmoy are already in Hillsfar and will soon be after them as well. He does not believe they'll keep the crate for long.

COMBAT

When the adventurers arrive, Naisus, **the Warlock of the Fiend**, immediately summons the 4 **Bulezau** through circular fire portals that pull them from the Abyssal Plane. The **Bulezau** roam the lower deck in the middle of the ship and attack their nearest target. On the second round of combat, Naisus summons 2 **Barlgura** from the abyss through a portal near the stairs leading to the cargo hold. The Warlock, Naisus, leads the cultists and will attack with spells at a distance from the aft upper deck starting on the third round. The five **Cult Fanatics** attack from the upper bow deck, and will try to attack from a distance.

DM's Note:

This can be a long fight depending on the party composition of your players. If you are running this module in a strict 2 to 4 -hour slot, it is highly recommended that you heavily hint that the Warlock has summoned the demons.

Optionally, if the Warlock is defeated, you can have his death trigger a contingency spell that opens portals that force the demons back into the Abyss.

If the players manage to knock the Warlock out of the boat, he doesn't know how to swim and will quickly drown if the players counterspell his attempts to teleport or misty step back onto the ship. The crew of Tymora's Luck will dive into the water and bring the Warlock back up onto the ship if he drowns. **Note:** this will be needed to complete the mission.

TREASURE & REWARDS

Players will likely search the ship, and the cargo-hold to look for the crate of Glaesbury minerals, but will not find it. It is hidden inside a **Portable Black Hole** that Naisus keeps in the pocket of his robes. In addition to finding the crate of Glaesbury minerals in the hole, they'll find a note that contains the instructions on how to build an elemental bomb with the minerals of the back of a map of Mulmaster. Naisus is also wearing a **Dark Shard Amulet**, around his neck.

Adjusting the Adventure

Here are the recommendations for adjusting this combat encounter. These are not cumulative.

- **Very weak Party:** Remove Barlgura and replace Cult Fanatics with Cultists.
- **Weak party:** Replace Cult Fanatics with Cultists.
- **Strong party:** Run battle as written.
- **Very strong party:** Add a second Barlgura.

Playing the Pillars

COMBAT

The Baphomet Cult will fight until they are defeated. The Warlocks will stay mostly to the upper-deck while the fiends will defend the lower deck of the Wooden Thimble.

EXPLORATION

Searching around the ships won't uncover many clues. However, the location of the missing crate is inside the pocket of Naisus and within a Portable Hole.

SOCIAL

The sailors on the ships aren't talkative, but Naisus has some interesting things to say about the other cults in Hillsfar.

Adventure Rewards

At the end of the session, the characters each receive rewards based upon their accomplishments. These rewards include advancement and treasure, and may include player rewards—magic item unlocks, story awards, or new downtime activities, as follows:

Advancement and Treasure Checkpoints

The characters receive **1** advancement checkpoint(s) and 1 treasure checkpoint(s) for each **story objective** **that** they complete, as follows:

- **Story Objective A:** 1 advancement checkpoint for successfully finding the Yeenoghu hideout and finding any clue to the location of the minerals.
- **Story Objective B:** 1 advancement checkpoint for intercepting the Baphomet cult at sea and finding the minerals.

The characters receive 1 advancement checkpoint(s) and 1 treasure checkpoint(s) for each **bonus objective** that they complete, as follows:

- **Bonus Objective A:** 1 advancement checkpoint for finding the Maurezhi.
- **Bonus Objective B:** 1 advancement checkpoint for finding the Drow camp and discovering any information about the location of the minerals or the activities of the cults.

Player Rewards

The characters earn the following player rewards for **completing the adventure**:

Magic Item Unlock

Characters completing the adventure unlock:

Portable Hole [BWM00601]. This fine black cloth, soft as silk, is folded up to the dimensions of a handkerchief. It unfolds into a circular sheet, 6 feet in diameter.

You can use an action to unfold a portable hole and place it on or against a solid surface, whereupon the portable hole creates an extradimensional hole 10 foot deep. The cylindrical space with the hole exists on a different plane, so it can't be used to create open passages. Any creature inside an open portable hole can exit the hole by climbing out of it. This item can be found in **Appendix 9**.

Dark Shard Amulet [BWM00602].

Wondrous Item, common (requires attunement by a warlock)

This amulet is fashioned from a single shard of resilient extraplanar material originating from the realm of your warlock patron. While you are wearing it, you gain the following benefits:

You can use the amulet as a spellcasting focus for your warlock spells.

You can try to cast a cantrip that you don't know.

The cantrip must be on the warlock spell list, and

you must make a DC 10 Intelligence (Arcana) check.

If the check succeeds, you cast the spell. If the check fails so does the spell, and the action used to cast the spell is wasted. In either case, you can't use this property again until you finish a long rest.

This item can be found in **Appendix 10**.

Story Awards

Characters playing the adventure may earn:

Captain Tanheel's Manifest. Players who manage to find the crate of minerals without it being destroyed, and return it to Captain Tanheel, are awarded a spot on his list of useful adventurers. Being on the list means that the adventurers are allowed one free ride on Captain Tanheel's ship, Tymora's Luck, anywhere along the Moonsea that sets out from the harbor of Hillsfar (during related CCC modules). This story award only applies to the CCC modules set in Hillsfar at the BWM, SQC and ELF conventions. More information can be found in **Appendix 8**.

Dungeon Master Rewards

In exchange for running this adventure, you earn **advancement and treasure checkpoints** and downtime as though you played the adventure, but none of the adventure's **player rewards**.

However, this adventure may qualify for rewards earned by completing DM Quests. See the ALDMG (*Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide*) for more information about DM Quests.

Appendix: Creature Statistics

Flind

Medium humanoid (gnoll), chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (chain mail)

Hit Points 127 (15d8 + 60)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	10 (+0)	19 (+4)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Con +8, Wis +5

Skills Intimidation +5, Perception +5

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

Languages Abyssal, Gnoll

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Aura of Blood Thirst. If the flind isn't incapacitated, any creature with the Rampage trait can make a bite attack as a bonus action while within 10 feet of the flind.

Actions

Multiattack. The flind makes three attacks: one with each of its different flail attacks or three with its longbow.

Flail of Madness. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 10 (1d10 + 5) bludgeoning damage, and the target must make a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the target must make a melee attack against a random target within its reach on its next turn. If it has no targets within its reach even after moving, it loses its action on that turn.

Flail of Pain. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 10 (1d10 + 5) bludgeoning damage plus 22 (4d10) psychic damage.

Flail of Paralysis. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 10 (1d10 + 5) bludgeoning damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed until the end of its next turn.

Longbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d8) piercing damage.

Gnoll Pack Lord

Medium humanoid (gnoll), chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (chain shirt)

Hit Points 49 (9d8 + 9)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	8 (-1)	11 (+0)	9 (-1)

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Gnoll

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

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Rampage. When the gnoll reduces a creature to 0 hit points with a melee attack on its turn, the gnoll can take a bonus action to move up to half its speed and make a bite attack.

Actions

Multiattack. The gnoll makes two attacks, either with its glaive or its longbow, and uses its Incite Rampage if it can.

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

Glaive. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 8 (1d10 + 3) slashing damage.

Longbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage.

Incite Rampage (Recharge 5-6). One creature the gnoll can see within 30 feet of it can use its reaction to make a melee attack if it can hear the gnoll and has the Rampage trait.

Gnoll Fang of Yeenoghu

Medium humanoid (gnoll), chaotic evil

Armor Class 14 (hide armor)

Hit Points 65 (10d8 + 20)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	15 (+2)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)

Saving Throws Con +4, Wis +2, Cha +3

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Abyssal, Gnoll

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Rampage. When the gnoll reduces a creature to 0 hit points with a melee attack on its turn, the gnoll can take a bonus action to move up to half its speed and make a bite attack.

Actions

Multiattack. The gnoll makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or take 7 (2d6) poison damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage.

Guard

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 16 (chain shirt, shield)

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Perception +2

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Actions

Spear. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage.

Leucrotta

Large monstrosity, chaotic evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 67 (9d10 + 18)

Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+5)	14 (+0)	19 (+4)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)

Skills Deception +2, Perception +3

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Abyssal, Gnomish

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Keen Smell. The leucrotta has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Kicking Retreat. The leucrotta attacks with its hooves, it can take the Disengage action as a bonus action.

Mimicry. The leucrotta can mimic animal sounds and humanoid voices. A creature that hears the sounds can tell they are imitations with a successful DC 14 Wisdom (Insight) check.

Rampage. When the gnoll reduces a creature to 0 hit points with a melee attack on its turn, the gnoll can take a bonus action to move up to half its speed and make a bite attack.

Actions

Multiattack. The leucrotta makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its hooves.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage. If the leucrotta scores a critical hit, it rolls the damage dice three times, instead of twice.

Hooves. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

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Drow Elite Warrior

Medium humanoid (elf), neutral evil

Armor Class 18 (studded leather, shield)

Hit Points 71 (11d8 + 22)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)

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

Skills Perception +5, Stealth +10

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages Elvish, Undercommon

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

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

Innate Spellcasting. The drow's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 12). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *dancing lights*

1/day each: *darkness*, *faerie fire*, *levitate* (self only)

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in sunlight, the drow has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Actions

Multiattack. The drow makes two shortsword attacks.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) poison damage.

Hand Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 hour. If the saving throw fails by 5 or more, the target is also unconscious while poisoned in this way. The target wakes up if it takes damage or if another creature takes an action to shake it awake.

Reactions

Parry. The drow adds 3 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, the drow must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

Drow Priestess of Lolth

Medium humanoid (elf), neutral evil

Armor Class 16 (scale mail)

Hit Points 71 (13d8 + 13)

Speed 30 ft.

STR 10 (+0) **DEX** 14 (+2) **CON** 12 (+1) **INT** 13 (+1) **WIS** 17 (+3) **CHA** 18 (+4)

Saving Throws Con +5, Wis +4, Cha +7
Skills Insight +6, Perception +6, Religion +4, Stealth +5
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 16
Languages Elvish, Undercommon
Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

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

Innate Spellcasting. The drow's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 12). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *dancing lights*
 1/day each: *darkness*, *faerie fire*, *levitate* (self only)

Spellcasting. The drow is a 10th-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Wisdom (save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). The drow has the following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): guidance, poison spray, resistance, spare the dying, thaumaturgy
 1st level (4 slots): animal friendship, cure wounds, detect poison and disease, ray of sickness
 2nd level (3 slots): lesser restoration, protection from poison, web
 3rd level (3 slots): conjure animals (2 giant spiders), dispel magic
 4th level (3 slots): divination, freedom of movement
 5th level (2 slots): insect plague, mass cure wounds

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in sunlight, the drow has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Actions

Multiattack. The drow makes two scourge attacks

Scourge. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage plus 17 (5d6) poison damage.

Summon Demon (1/Day). +The drow attempts to magically summon a yochlol with a 30 percent chance of success. If the attempt fails, the drow takes 5 (1d10) psychic damage. Otherwise, the summoned demon appears in an unoccupied summoner, and can't summon other demons. It remains for 10 minutes, until it or its summoner dies, or until its summoner dismisses it as an action.

Barlgura

Large fiend (demon), chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 68 (8d10 + 24)
Speed 30 ft.

STR **DEX** **CON** **INT** **WIS** **CHA**

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18 (+4) 15 (+2) 16 (+3) 7 (-2) 14 (+2) 9 (-1)

Saving Throws Dex +5, Con +6
Skills Perception +5, Stealth +5
Damage Resistances cold, fire, lightning
Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities poisoned
Senses blindsight 30 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 15
Languages Abyssal, telepathy 120 ft.
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. The barlgura's spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC13). The barlgura can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

1/day each: *entangle*, *phantasmal force*
 2/day each: *disguise self*, *invisibility* (self only)

Reckless. At the start of its turn, the barlgura can gain advantage on all melee weapon attack rolls it makes during that turn, but attack rolls against it have advantage until the start of its next turn.

Running Leap. The barlgura's long jump is up to 40 feet and its high jump is up to 20 feet when it has a running start.

Actions

Multiattack. The barlgura makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its fists.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage.

Fists. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 9 (1d10 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

Bulezau

Medium humanoid (gnoll), chaotic evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)
Hit Points 52 (7d8 + 21)
Speed 40 ft.

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

Damage Resistances cold, fire, lightning
Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, poisoned
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 9
Languages Abyssal, telepathy 60 ft.
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

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

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

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

Actions

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

Maurezhi

Medium fiend (demon), chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 88 (16d8 + 16)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)

Skills Deception +5
Damage Resistances cold, fire, lightning, necrotic, bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, poisoned
Senses blindsight 120 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 11
Languages Abyssal, Elvish, telepathy 120 ft.
Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Assume Form. The Maurezhi can assume the appearance of any Medium humanoid it has eaten. It remains in this form for 1d6 days, during which time the form gradually decays until, when the effect ends, the form sloughs from the demon's body.

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

Actions

Multiattack. The Maurezhi makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 14 (2d10 + 3) piercing damage. If the target is a humanoid, its Charisma score is reduced by 1d4. This reduction lasts until the target finishes a short or long rest. The target dies if this reduces its Charisma to 0. It rises 24 hours later as a ghoul, unless it has been revived or its corpse has been destroyed.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 12 (2d8 + 3) slashing damage. If the target is a creature other than an undead, it must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Raise Ghoul (Recharge 5-6). The maurezhi targets one dead ghoul or ghastr it can see within 30 feet of it. The target is revived with all its hit points.

Cult Fanatic

Medium humanoid (any race), any non-good alignment

Armor Class 13 (leather armor)
Hit Points 33 (6d8 + 6)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)

Skills Deception +4, Persuasion +4, Religion +2
Senses passive Perception 10
Languages any one language (usually Common)
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Dark Devotion. The fanatic has advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened.

Spellcasting. The fanatic is a 4th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 11, +3 to hit with spell attacks). The fanatic has the following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *light, sacred flame, thaumaturgy*
1st level (4 slots): *command, inflict wounds, shield of faith*
2nd level (3 slots): *hold person, spiritual weapon*

Actions

Multiattack. The fanatic makes two melee attacks.

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one creature. Hit: 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

Warlock of the Fiend

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)
Hit Points 78 (12d8 + 24)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Wis +4, Cha +7
Skills Arcane +4, Deception +7, Persuasion +7, Religion +4
Damage Resistances slashing damage from nonmagical attacks not made with silvered weapons
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11
Languages Any two languages (usually Abyssal or Infernal)

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. The warlock's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma. It can innately cast the following spells (spell save DC 15), requiring no material components.

At will: *alter self*, *false life*, *levitate* (self only), *mage armor* (self only), *silent image*

1/day each: *feblemind*, *finger of death*, *plane shift*

Spellcasting. The warlock is a 17th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). It regains its expended spell slots when it finishes a short or long rest. It knows the following warlock spells:

Cantrips (at will): *eldritch blast*, *fire bolt*, *friends*, *mage hand*, *minor illusion*, *prestidigitation*, *shocking grasp*

1st-5th level (4 5th level slots): *banishment*, *burning hands*, *flame strike*, *hellish rebuke*, *magic circle*, *scorching ray*, *screaming*, *stinking cloud*, *suggestion*, *wall of fire*

Dark One's Own Luck (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). When the warlock makes an ability check or saving throw, it can add a d10 to the roll. It can do this after the roll is made but before any of the roll's effect occur.

Actions

Mace. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.
Hit: 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage plus 10 (3d6) fire damage.

Appendix 1: Locations & NPCs

The following NPCs and locations feature **prominently** in this adventure.

- **Captain Rairdon Tanheel (*R-air-don Tan-heel*).**

Wood-elf and leader of the Emerald Enclave in Hillsfar. He is a former pirate and adventurer who is now a successful ship's captain who has given his life new meaning by committing himself to preserve the nature of the Moonsea.

Personality: *A playful adventurer at heart, Captain Tanheel enjoys the simple pleasures in life. He won't balk at a prosperous opportunity, but never at the cost of someone else.*

Ideal: *His roguish heart wishes to do what it wants and believes that others should be allowed to do the same.*

Bond: *His druidic parents from Elventree instilled a deep love for keeping a safe balance between the prosperity sentient creatures and the survival nature.*

Flaw: *Captain Tanheel has always loved to challenge authority and do things his own way. That's now more difficult since he's now the authority figure in the Emerald Enclave.*

- **Hillsfar.** A powerful city-state located on the southern coast of the Moonsea. The city is heavily involved in the trade in the region, acting as a hub for cities and settlements in the surrounding area. Recently, Hillsfar's change in leadership has removed the Law of Humanity which created an environment of xenophobia. With that law gone, a new dawn of diversity is blooming in the city.

Personality: *This is a city of strong financial means, but it has always lacked the empathy and diversity of other cities. There is a hope vibe that the new First Commander, Vuhm Yestral will help bring that much-needed diversity and empathy to Hillsfar.*

Ideal: *Nothing should interfere with making a good sale. Gathering your wealth to stay healthy and vibrant is the most important thing in life.*

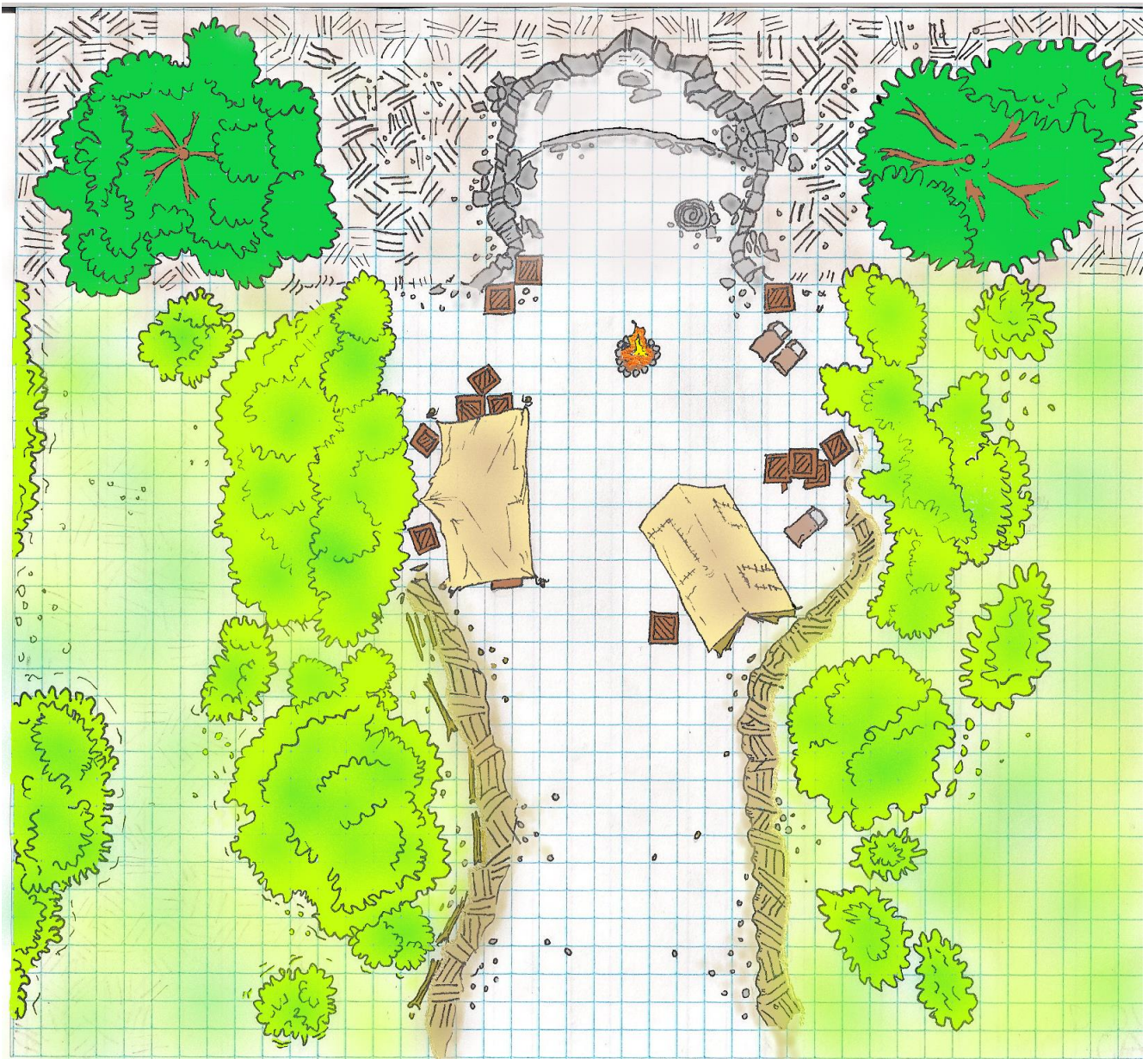
Bond: *Gain as much wealth and influence as you can. Your responsibility for making Hillsfar rich is also a responsibility of making yourself rich.*

Flaw: *Old habits die hard. The new laws make it legal for non-humans to live and thrive in Hillsfar, but some of the old-guard still struggle to include the newcomers in their private circles of influence fully.*

Appendix 2: Map of the Yeenoghu's Hideout



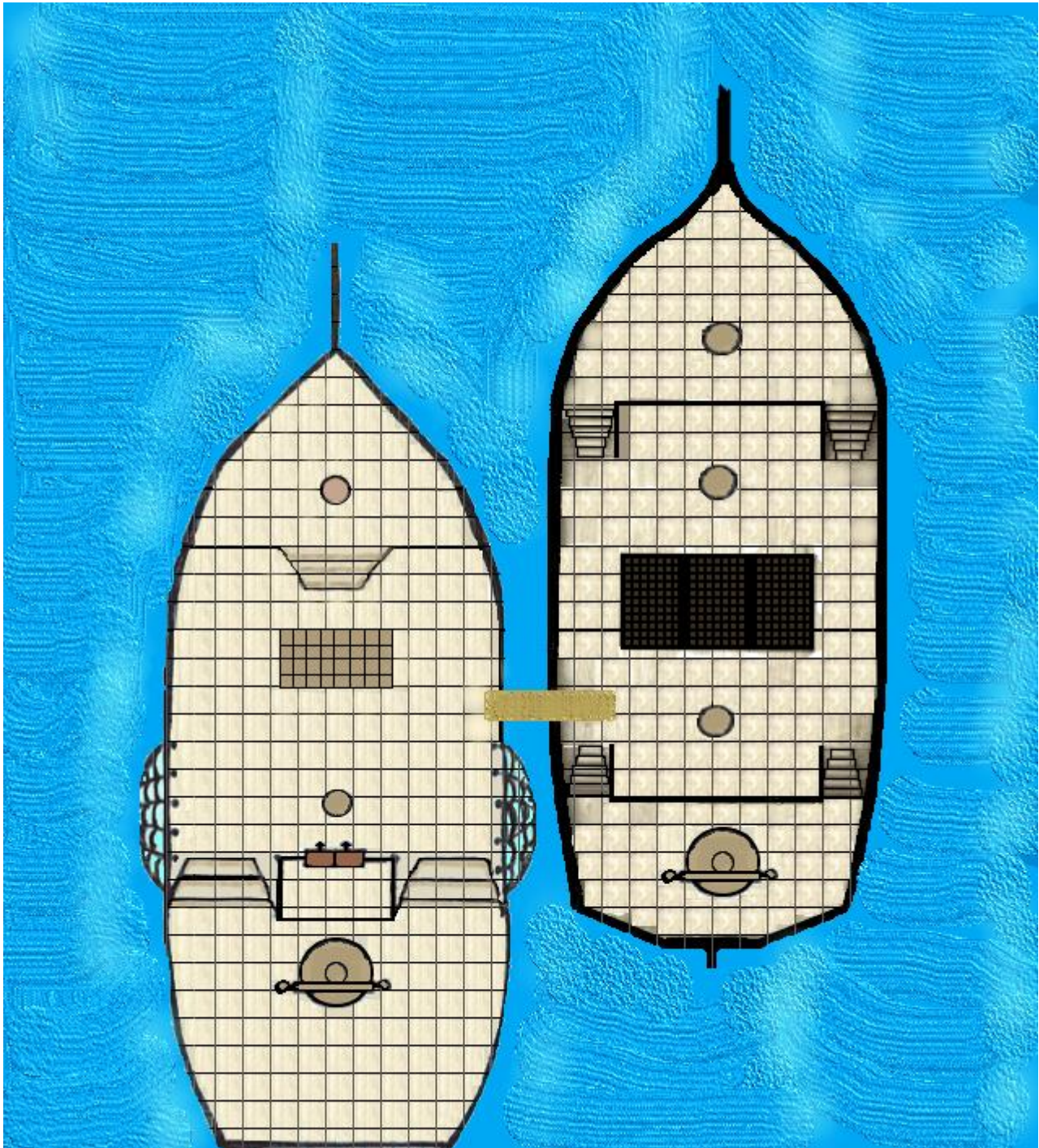
Appendix 3: Map of the Drow Camp



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Appendix 5: Map of Tymora's Luck & The Wooden Thimble



Appendix 6: Escaped Cultist (Bonus Objective A.)

SUMMARY

As the characters either leave from the Glaesbury Estate or from the Yeenoghu's hideout, they can head toward the Hillsfar Prison to investigate the one surviving Fraz-Urb'Luu. Captain Tanheel tells the players that the surviving cultist was unconscious and severely injured, but was taken in a cart back to the Hillsfar prison by a pair of Red Plume guards. When the characters leave the Glaesbury Estate and come within view of the walls of Hillsfar, they'll see that the Red Plume cart heading toward the prison has been overturned into a ditch. One prison guard is lying dead near the cart. There is no sign of the second guard, but the sloughed remains of the cultist's shed skin are nearby the torn cage on the back of the cart. A trail of blood can be traced back to an abandoned, dilapidated toy store inside Hillsfar.

PREREQUISITES

If you are running a 3 to 4-hour session, you can introduce the **Bonus Objective A** either before or parallel to **Main Objective A**. After the completion of Main Objective A, the maurezhi will have escaped from Hillsfar.

COMPLETING BONUS OBJECTIVE A

The characters will be considered to have successfully completed Bonus Objective if they either defeat the maurezhi or if they learn the reason that the Fraz-Urb'Luu Cult is pursuing the crate of Glaesbury minerals.

AREA INFORMATION

This objective takes place on the dirt roads that lead from the Glaesbury Orchard, on the outer walls of Hillsfar, leading into the city's merchant district.

Dimensions & Terrain

- The dirt roads heading from the Glaesbury Estate to the inner-city of Hillsfar are at a slight incline with uneven dips and along the way.
- 2-foot-deep ditches line both sides of the road to help keep water from gathering on the road during the rainy season and helping to direct the rainwater to the orchards outside the city.
- Trees and bushes grow thickly around the road near the Glaesbury Estate, but quickly recede to thin patches of grass as it nears the city's gates.

- It is most likely sometime between mid-morning and late afternoon (depending on when the characters decide to investigate this objective), so sunshine is likely still shining above the characters as they investigate, but it is cloudy and it appears that it will soon begin to rain. After they begin investigating, the rain will start and the sunlight will be diffused through a veil of gray mist.
- The trail of blood or fluids that lead the players from the cart to the abandoned store leads them through the gates near the merchant district and behind the stores there.
- The inside of the small dilapidated store that the trail leads to is a former toy store filled with cobwebs and old broken toys.
- The dust covered windows, and cracked roof provide dim lighting inside the abandoned store.

CREATURES/NPCs

Mal Thilnes: The body of the dead Red Plume Guard the characters find is named *Mal Thilnes*, he is a grizzled old prison guard (human, Guard) with pale skin, bald head and thick white eyebrows protruding from his brow. When the players find him, Mal's is laying on his left side in a pool of his own blood. It appears that a rough claw slashed a large hole in his neck.

Edgar Noforio: This deceased Red Plume Guard isn't found when the characters initially approach the overturned cart. He has been eaten by the maurezhi, and his body is now being used by the maurezhi. In life, Edgar was a tall, plump man with thinning brown hair and a thin stubbled beard. When the characters find him, he's a disheveled mess of a man who speaks with an unnatural lisp.

Maurezhi: this demon of the abyss has no name, but has pledged itself to the demon prince of deception, Fraz-Urb'Luu. The demon can speak common while inhabiting the body of his prey. In this case, he is inhabiting the body of the red plume guard Edgar Noforio. Unfortunately, the demon's battle with the guard left the body somewhat mangled in appearance and with a broken jaw, causing him to speak with an unnatural lisp. The husk of the demon's former body can be found next to the overturned Red Plume cart. The body is of a hairless human male monk from Calimshan.

Objective/Goals. The maurezhi is covertly working for his demon prince, Fraz-Urb'Luu, posing

as a human cultist to help the cultists to steal and take control of the Glaesbury minerals. These minerals are rumored to allow the cult to take control of a powerful monster that sleeps beneath Hillsfar. The maurezhi intends on trying to find the rival cults and infiltrate their ranks so that he can steal the Glaesbury minerals back from them.

What does the Demon Know? The demon has spied on some of the other cults in the area and has found that the minerals are coveted by the Yeenoghu Cult, the Lolth Cult, and the Baphomet Cult. He has also discovered that the Red Wizards are also trying to apprehend the Glaesbury Minerals but has heard that they have also devised an alternate method of finding and controlling the colossal behemoth beneath Hillsfar. With the fall of Mulmaster and the fractured nature of most of the other Moonsea cities, the cult that takes over Hillsfar is likely to gain rule of the Moonsea. Whoever manages to control the behemoth will have enough power to rule Hillsfar. The maurezhi will admit that the Fraz-Urb'Luu Cult underestimated the Yeenoghu Cult and were taken by surprise. He had only considered the Red Wizards a threat but now sees that he is wrong.

SCENE 4A: ROADSIDE DISTRESS

After a few minutes of travel up Glaesbury road toward Hillsfar, they notice that a cart has overturned into a ditch and a single draft horse is struggling to get free from his tethers which is holding the frantic beast down in the ditch.

Investigating the Scene

Any player investigating the general area can quickly spot the dead body of the red plume guard, *Mal Thilnes* in the grass heading away from the cart and into the woods. A **DC 12** or above, **Wisdom (Medicine)** check can determine that this guard's throat was clawed open and he's been dead for about 3 hours.

If a player investigates the cart, they can find the sloughed off husk of the Fraz-Urb'Luu cultist inside the cart. A check of **DC 15** or above using **Wisdom (Medicine)**, can determine that the flesh of the cultist once belonged to a human from Calimshan and that the flesh was worn by a monster for several days before it started to decompose.

Saving the Horse

If a player would like to cut the horse free from its binding without harming the horse, they'll need to make a **Wisdom (Animal Handling)** check of **DC 12** or higher to calm the horse enough to cut its binding. A *failed attempt* will either result in a mortal wound

that will kill the horse, or the player will be kicked by the horse for **2 bludgeoning damage**. The DM can either roll a die for a 50% chance of which will occur or use the option that best suits the situation. If the horse is saved, the players can use the horse for the remainder of the adventure.

Finding the Trail

As the players investigate the scene, dark clouds have rolled in and rain begins pouring down. While searching around the wagon, the players will discover a large pool of blood coming from the dead Red Plume guard, *Mal Thilnes*. The guard's murderer appears to be either bleeding or covered in the guard's blood. The trail leading away from the wagon is apparent to any player with a **passive perception of 10** or higher.

Continuing to track the trail of footprints and blood all the way back to Hillsfar and to the abandoned toy store will take 3 successful **Wisdom (Nature)** checks of **DC 15** or higher. Rain is pouring down, so the blood mostly washes away as the players progress, but the footprints in the mud become easier to track as they go. The trail leads to the walls of Hillsfar, behind the buildings in the market district, and finally to the abandoned toy store.

SCENE 4B: SURPRISES IN STORE

Through a back alley behind several Hillsfar business, the bloodstained knob of an old abandoned toy store shows the way into the building. There is also a front entrance to the store with a wooden sign hanging overhead that says, "Ye Wooden Knight." The knight on the sign is in full armor with an outstretched jousting lance and is atop a destrier running at full gallop. The interior of the store is dimly light through its opaque windows that have clouded white with age and rays of light shine down through a small crack in the roof.

The interior of the store is filled with cobwebs and old wooden toys. In the entryway, at the backdoor, there is a spill of blood and some badly torn clothes that the Red Plume Guard once wore. Next to those clothes is a rack of dusty and moth-eaten princess dresses that have been disturbed. The toys that players can find are: wooden soldiers, clay baby dolls, wooden rocking horses, hobby horses, wooden swords & shields, spinning tops, wooden boats, wooden snakes, fake wands, and leather troll masks. Players can feel free to choose one of these trinkets for themselves.

Opening the Door

The door isn't locked or trapped, but the maurezhi has propped loose boards, tables, and chairs against the door to keep it closed. Opening this door requires a combined **Strength (Athletics) check of 25** or higher. While it's possible that one player could achieve this, it's much more likely that it will take two more players working together to force the door open.

Parlaying with the Demon

Once the players are inside, they will find the demon trying to pull on a blue costume dress. It is standing near a puppet stage with purple velvet curtains in the southeastern corner of the toy store. It will screech in a twisted version of its current host's voice. It will demand that the players leave and let it attend to its business or they will all be marked for death by the demon prince Fraz-Urb'Luu.

If the players ask the maurezhi about the Glaesbury minerals, it will answer honestly that the last he saw of them, they were taken by the Yeenoghu cultists. However, getting the demon to cooperate and tell them his plans for the minerals will take either a **Charisma (Persuasion) check of DC 15** or higher – with a promise that they allow the maurezhi to leave unharmed – OR players can try to threaten the maurezhi with a **Charisma/Strength (Intimidation) check of DC 15** or higher. On a success, the maurezhi will tell the adventures as much as it knows.

If the maurezhi feels cornered or in true danger at any point in the conversation, it will attack the party and fight until it is dead.

Combat: 1 Guard, which transforms into **1 Maurezhi** after one round of combat, or after the cultist form is defeated.

Maurezhi's Parting Words

Just before it dies or before it runs away, the maurezhi will tell the players that nothing they do will matter once the red wizards arrive. Once they have the Glaesbury minerals, they'll use its faerzress madness to infect the entire Moonsea – both above and below. This message is left intentionally cryptic as it is a sign of things to come in future adventures.

Playing the Pillars

COMBAT

The maurezhi is still recovering from his previous battle with the Red Plume guards. His current host body was severely injured during his fight with them. He fights initially as a **Guard**, which transforms into **1 Maurezhi** after one round of combat, or after the cultist form is defeated.

EXPLORATION

Looking around the toy shop, the players will find some stolen clothes that the maurezhi has recently found, but unfortunately, they are fit for a smaller lady, so he's wearing an ill-fitting yellow dress. There are also a variety of old, faded and damaged toys made of wood, cloth, and clay.

SOCIAL

The players can bargain with maurezhi for information. Initially, the maurezhi will pretend to be his Red Plume guard host, but once his true form is known he'll bargain for his life. **Charisma (Persuasion) check** or a **Charisma/Strength (Intimidation) check of DC 15** or higher will succeed.

Appendix 7: Drow Camp (Bonus Objective B)

SCENE 4B: SURPRISES IN STORE

Bonus Objective B: Drow Camp. One of the groups who unsuccessfully attacked the Yeenoghu cult was the Drow cultists of Lolth. They can easily be found outside of the city gates of Hillsfar, camping near a cave. After successful combat or bargaining, the cultists will reveal more details about why they want the crate of faerzress minerals.

AREA INFORMATION

The area of the drow camp is in the wooded area outside of the Hillsfar area. The players can find the camp by either following the directions of the map they found in the Yeenoghu hideout, or they can ask around the warehouse district.

Dimensions & Terrain

- The Drow Camp is set up on a small flat hill. The drow warriors who are watch duty will try to keep watch from a hidden position in the trees above the camp.
- There is a large, but fairly shallow cave behind the camp. If a fight breaks out the Priestess will try to stay near the cave, and the warriors will try to draw the fight back to the cave to eliminate their disadvantage when fighting in the sunlight.
- The drow have tents around the camp as well as crates of supplies, such as simple and martial weapons around the camp along with food rations.

CREATURES/NPCs

Khaless Abbylan: This Priestess of Lolth leads this camp set next to a cave just outside of Hillsfar.

Objective/Goals.

Khaless and her drow warriors were trying to obtain the Glaesbury minerals for the great power it could hold over creatures in the Underdark. After a series of recent defeats in the Moonsea, a victory against Hillsfar would elevate house Abbylan in the drow political structure.

What do the Drow Know?

Khaless has heard of a few mines that had similar minerals and believes they are created from a

mixture of natural minerals, the night soil of the sleeping behemoth and the faerzress that tainted the Moonsea.

It is said that the minerals could be used to control the sleeping behemoth, but these other foolish cultists do not realize is that while these minerals are extremely rare, are likely not the only minerals of their type. It's likely that there are far more of these in the behemoth's hidden sleeping chamber. Controlling the behemoth with these minerals are likely to warp and mutate the beast.

The results will be highly unpredictable. She doesn't believe that idiotic Yeenoghu cult could even figure out how to use the minerals. The minerals are better off with them than with the Red Wizards who've been searching for the behemoth under the Lord Commander's nose for months now.

Khaless heard a rumor that the Baphomet cult was trying to steal the Glaesbury and take it back to Mulmaster and use it to build a weapon.

Parlay with the Drow

Khaless and her drow warriors, do not immediately fight the party. They will admit that they will not allow themselves to be pushed around by the party and will defend their camp. If the players succeed on a **Persuasion (Wisdom)** roll of DC 12 or higher, *Khaless* will offer a truthful explanation of why they attacked the Yeenoghu cult. They were trying to obtain minerals which are rumored to be able to control a gigantic beast which sleeps under Hillsfar. Controlling a beast of such power would surely elevate that status of *Khaless's* house.

If the parlay goes poorly, the drow will defend their camp. The Warriors will fight to the death to protect their Priestess, but the priestess will retreat if she feels that the battle is lost.

Combat: 3 Drow Elite Warriors, 1 Drow Priestess of Lolth

SCOUT'S REPORT

Regardless of whether the players resolve this encounter using combat or social skills, a scout will arrive before they leave to report that the dock has just been attacked by the Cult of Baphomet who are believed to be in possession of the Glaesbury Minerals. The scout prompts the adventurers to hurry and intercept them if they want to keep the minerals out of their hands.

This will lead to directly **Episode 3**.

Playing the Pillars

COMBAT

The drow do not attack immediately, but the warriors will warn the characters to stay away when they get too close. If battle breaks out, the warriors will try to draw the battle into the cave to eliminate their disadvantage. 3 **Drow Elite Warriors**, 1 **Drow Priestess of Lolth**

EXPLORATION

A search around the drow camp will find basic supplies and weapons. They have an altar inside the main tent for their rituals to the Lloth. It appears that the cave is used primarily by the Priestess.

SOCIAL

The drow in the camp have recently lost a battle against the Yeenoghu Cult and have no intention of getting into further fights for the Glaesbury minerals until they clearly have the upper hand. They are willing to tell the players what they know without a fight. A **Wisdom (Persuasion) check of DC 12** or higher will succeed in a negotiation.

Appendix 8: Captain Tanheel's Manifest (Player Handout #1)

Story Reward

Players who succeed in achieving the story reward receive the following:

CAPTAIN TANHEEL'S MANIFEST

Players who manage to find the crate of minerals without it being destroyed, and return it to Captain Tanheel, are awarded a spot on his manifest. Being on the list means that the adventurers are allowed one free ride on Captain Tanheel's ship, Tymora's Luck, anywhere along the Moonsea that sets out from the harbor of Hillsfar (during related CCC modules).

This story award only applies to the CCC modules set in Hillsfar at the BWM, SQC and ELF conventions.

Appendix 9: Magic Item (Player Handout #2)

Characters completing this adventure's objective unlock this magic item.

Portable Hole

Wondrous Item, Rare

This fine black cloth, soft as silk, is folded up to the dimensions of a handkerchief. It unfolds into a circular sheet, 6 feet in diameter.

You can use an action to unfold a portable hole and place it on or against a solid surface, whereupon the portable hole creates an extradimensional hole 10 feet deep. The cylindrical space with the hole exists on a different plane, so it can't be used to create open passages. Any creature inside an open portable hole can exit the hole by climbing out of it. This magic item is listed on **Magic Item Table D** in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Appendix 10: Common Magic Item (Player Handout #3)

Characters completing this adventure's objective unlock this magic item.

Dark Shard Amulet

Wondrous Item, common (requires attunement by a warlock)

This amulet is fashioned from a single shard of resilient extraplanar material originating from the realm of your warlock patron. While you are wearing it, you gain the following benefits:

You can use the amulet as a spellcasting focus for your warlock spells.

You can try to cast a cantrip that you don't know. The cantrip must be on the warlock spell list, and you must make a DC 10 Intelligence (Arcana) check. If the check succeeds, you cast the spell. If the check fails so does the spell, and the action used to cast the spell is wasted. In either case, you can't use this property again until you finish a long rest.

This common magic item is listed on **page 137** in *Xanathar's Guide to Everything*.

Appendix 11: Dungeon Master Tips

This adventure is designed for **three to seven 1st-4th level characters** and is optimized for **five characters with an average party level (APL) of 3**. Characters outside this level range cannot participate in this adventure.

New to D&D Adventurers League?

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

New to the Annual Storyline?

<http://dnd.wizards.com/story/waterdeep>

<http://dndadventurersleague.org/storyline-seasons/waterdeep-adventures/>

To DM an adventure, you **must** have 3 to 7 players—each with their own character whose level is within the adventure’s level range. Characters playing in a **hardcover** adventure may continue to play to but if they play a different hardcover adventure, they **can’t return** to the first one if they’re outside its level range.

Preparing the Adventure

Before you start play, consider the following:

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

Players can play an adventure they previously played as a Player or Dungeon Master, but may only play it once with a given character. Ensure each player has their character’s adventure logsheet (if not, get one from the organizer). The players fill out the adventure name, session number, date, and your name and DCI number. In addition, the player also fills in the starting values for advancement and treasure checkpoints, downtime days, and renown. These values are updated at the conclusion of the session.

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

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

Adjusting This Adventure

When combat is a possibility, the adventure will provide a sidebar that helps you to determine the best mix/number of opponents to provide them with to create an appropriate challenge. While you’re not bound to these adjustments; they’re here for your convenience and consideration.

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

Determining Party Strength

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