



# DRUMS OF THE DEAD: BOOK 1

A ritual to destroy Chult's undead has backfired and unleashed an undead plague! The components needed to concoct an antidote have been identified, but need to be scavenged from the jungle. Meanwhile, Valindra Shadowmantle and Szass Tam are rallying the infected to conduct a massive assault on Port Nyanzaru. If they succeed, the results will be catastrophic.

*A 3-Hour D&D Epics™ Adventure for 1st-20th Level Characters*



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**DDEP7-02 *Drums of the Dead: Book 1 (Event Overview)***

## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to *Drums of the Dead*, a D&D Adventurers League™ adventure, part of the official D&D Adventurers League™ organized play system and the *Tomb of Annihilation*™ storyline season.

This is a special D&D Epics™ three-hour interactive adventure, designed for **four or more groups playing together**. Each table must seat **three to seven players** from one of the following tiers:

- 1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> level characters (tier 1, optimized for average party level 3).
- 5<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> level characters (tier 2, optimized for average party level 8).
- 11<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> level characters (tier 3, optimized for average party level 13).
- 17<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> level characters (tier 4, optimized for average party level 18).

**There must be at least one group from tier 1 or 2, and one group from tier 3 or 4.** Guidelines for coordinating this event appear later in this booklet.

*Drums of the Dead* is set in the jungle peninsula of Chult. To win the day, the players must find a cure for the undead plague and repel the zombie horde closing on Port Nyanzaru. The adventure

takes place after the events of the *Tomb of Annihilation* hardcover adventure.

## ADVENTURE BOOKLETS

*Drums of the Dead* is the first D&D Epics™ event to challenge all four tiers of play! As such, it is a large and complex event. To simplify things, the adventure material is separated into three booklets.

- **Book 1: Event Overview.** The event overview explains the rules of the adventure and provides guidance on how to administrate the event. All DMs should read this guide!
- **Book 2: Find the Antidote (tier 1 & 2).** This book provides everything you need to run the adventure for tier 1 or 2 characters. If you're not running these tiers, you don't need to read this.
- **Book 3: Destroy the Crawling Palace (tier 3 & 4).** This book provides everything you need to run the adventure for tier 3 or 4 characters. If you're not running these tiers, you don't need to read this.

To reduce prep time, each book shares the same quests between its tiers, with rules for scaling encounters per tier. Encounter locations are also shared between both tiers. If possible, event organizers should use online registration to let the DMs know which tier they are running ahead of time.

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## EVENT OVERVIEW

*"When there's no more room in hell, the dead will walk the earth."*

- Dawn of the Dead (1978)

## ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

At a secret jungle laboratory, clerics from the Order of the Gauntlet join forces with Lords' Alliance alchemists to develop a magical plague that will wipe out all Chult's undead. The ritual backfires and the plague spreads to the living: transforming them into contagious, fast-moving zombies. Now the zombie plague tears through the jungle tribes, infecting the living and the undead alike.

With the Soulmonger destroyed, Szass Tam of the Red Wizards of Thay turns his forces to the conquest of Chult. His chief agent in the field, Valindra Shadowmantle, discovers that certain esoteric rhythms can control the infected undead. Under Szass Tam's guidance, she raises the Crawling Palace of Ras Nsi from its resting place in the Nsi Wastes. Thayan drummers now beat the rhythm of war from the palace's minarets, driving the undead horde towards Port Nyanzaru!

As the dead rush closer, an exhausted messenger from the jungle laboratory stumbles into Port Nyanzaru. With Volo's help, the factions devise a way to concoct an antidote for the zombie plague. Unfortunately, the rarest ingredients lie deep inside the most infected area of the jungle – and the zombie horde is storming closer by the minute!

### LOCATION AND NPC SUMMARY

The following NPCs and locations feature prominently in this adventure.

**Port Nyanzaru (NIE-ann-ZAH-roo).** Bustling city port on the northern coast of the Chultan peninsula.

**Szass Tam.** Undead zulkir of necromancy from the magocracy of Thay. Considered the one true overlord of the Red Wizards of Thay.

**Valindra Shadowmantle.** Notoriously greedy elf wizard who became a lich and later joined the Red Wizards of Thay. Sent to Chult by Szass Tam to recover the Soulmonger.

**Volothamp Geddarm (VOH-lo-thamp geh-DARM).** Legendary explorer visiting the port to deliver signed copies of his latest book, *Volo's Guide to Monsters*, to the merchant princes.

## OBJECTIVES OF PLAY

*Drums of the Dead* plays out like a normal adventure, but the characters' actions affect other tables.

### TIER 1 & 2: FIND THE ANTIDOTE

In these tiers, players choose quests from a **jungle map** handout, with each quest taking their characters to a different location in the jungle. There are four locations to explore, with one or two quests for each location. Before play begins, familiarize yourself with the quests on offer and prepare the adventure locations. You won't know which quests your players will choose, so be ready for anything!

Every hour, the administrators deliver a "battle report" of what's happening in the jungle. Interactive events are sometimes introduced during these short interludes.

Your players aren't expected to complete all the quests. To find the antidote, each group must complete an average of three quests. At the end of the event, the administrators announce the success or failure of this mission.

### TIER 3 & 4: DESTROY THE CRAWLING PALACE

In these tiers, the heroes fight to destroy the Crawling Palace of Ras Nsi and silence the drums of the dead. Players choose quests from a **palace map** handout, with each quest taking them to a different location in the palace. There are up to three locations to explore, each with one or more quests to tackle. Players explore the locations in sequence, choosing one quest during each phase (if they have time!). To repel the undead, at least half the groups must win their final battle. At the end of the event, the administrators announce the results.

### WINNING THE EVENT

To win the event, the majority of tier 3 and 4 players must kill their tier villain, and the tier 1 and 2 players must source the antidote for the zombie plague. If either section fails, the event is a partial success. Failure from both sections results in the complete failure of the event.

### SPECIAL PREPARATIONS

Some Dungeon Masters enjoy preparing showpiece 3D terrain for D&D Epics™ adventures. If you choose to scratch build one of the adventure locations, you can insist that your players begin with a quest from that sector!

## SPECIAL RESTRICTIONS

The following restrictions apply throughout this D&D Epics™ event (these rules are also summarized on the player handouts for each tier).

### SHORT AND LONG RESTS

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The battle plays out in just a few hours of game time. Players can't afford to take long rests, and can take only **one short rest**. Opportunities to earn additional short rests occur during play.

### PLAYER SPELLCASTING

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The alliance must act quickly to turn back the zombie horde!

- There is no time to cast spells with a casting time of longer than 5 minutes before the event begins. Spells that require downtime days to cast are also prohibited.
- Spells with a casting time of longer than 5 minutes can only be cast during the event if the group uses their short rest.
- Spells with a casting time of longer than 1 hour can't be cast during the event at all.
- Spells that affect areas over 200 feet in radius (e.g. *control weather*) can affect other groups in the same location at the administrators' discretion. Inform the administrators if one of your players casts a spell with such a range.

### SPELLCASTING SERVICES

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Volo wanders the event, offering the spellcasting services listed in the *Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide*. Players must pay for these spells using their character's gold. Once purchased, the spells are cast instantly and without the requirement to spend downtime days.

#### THE DEATH CURSE

*Drums of the Dead* premieres in February 2018, so Adventurers League™ characters are unaffected by the Season 7 death curse if they die during the adventure. The Soulmonger is no more, and its necromantic curse has lifted from Chult.

## QUESTS

*Drums of the Dead* is built around **quests**. Players choose which quests to play from special map handouts. When they're done with a quest, they just choose another and continue playing.

- At tier 1 & 2, there are 7 quests staged across 4 locations. Players can explore the quests in any order.
- At tier 3 & 4, the players explore 3 locations in sequence, choosing a different quest in each location. If they have time left at the end, they can go back to the start and pick quests they didn't play on their first pass.

Before play begins, familiarize yourself with the quests on offer for your tier and prepare the adventure locations. You won't know which quests your players will choose, so be ready for anything!

## PILLARS OF ADVENTURE

*Drums of the Dead* lets players tailor the adventure to their preference. Each quest has an icon which represents one of D&D's three "pillars of play":



**Combat:** This quest features deadly battles and fast action.



**Exploration:** This quest features puzzle-solving, stealth or tests of skill.



**Social Interaction:** This quest features information-gathering, persuasion, and other social challenges.

Most quests feature other pillars to lesser degrees. Encourage your players to choose quests that match their preferred playstyle and the specialties of their characters.

## VICTORY BOONS

Whenever a group completes a quest, they earn a **victory boon** that aids another group in the event. These boons double as victory points for the administrators running the event.

## REPORTING VICTORIES

- Whenever your group completes a quest, ask a player to deliver the victory boon for that quest to the administrators (see Appendix 4 of your adventure booklet).

- **Reporting victories is vital to the success of the event – so don't forget it!**
- When the administrators receive the victory boon, they log the victory in their records and assign the boon to another group.

## ACQUIRING VICTORY BOONS

- If your group receives a victory boon, they can choose to activate it immediately or wait for an opportune moment.
- There's no limit to the number of victory boons a group can receive or hold at a time.
- Victory boons don't require an action to activate.

## TREASURE

At the end of each quest, the players receive a magic item and a fixed amount of gold (see 'Rewards' in the adventure booklet for your tier).

## THE ZOMBIE PLAGUE

Characters infected by the plague transform into ravenous zombie-like creatures that roam from table-to-table spreading the disease. These transformations come in fits: after each bout, the character briefly returns to normal. The zombie plague affects the living and the undead alike.

### UNDEAD CARRIERS

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Undead creatures infected by the plague have the following modifications:

- If the undead creature's Speed is more than 0 and less than 30 ft., it increases to 30 ft.
- The undead creature can't be turned or harmed using Turn Undead or Destroy Undead.
- The undead creature's melee weapon attacks are infectious (see "Becoming Infected", below).

For your convenience, these changes are already incorporated into the monster stat blocks in both adventure books.

### INFECTED CHARACTERS

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It's highly likely that one or more of your group members will contract the zombie plague during play.

#### BECOMING INFECTED

Most undead creatures in this adventure carry the zombie plague. NPCs and player characters infected by the plague are also infectious.

- When an infected creature deals damage with a melee weapon attack, its target must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or become infected themselves. Some creatures have other means of infection, as specified in their stat block.

#### TRACKING THE INFECTION

If a player character becomes infected, give them a *random infection card* handout (see Appendix 5 of your adventure booklet).

- The player places the infection card in front of them with the 'I'm Infected!' side facing outwards.
- When the player receives their card, ask them to write a time in the 'zombie transformation' box that is **30 minutes away**. If a character is infected for the first time when fewer than 30 minutes remain in the event, the character transforms immediately.

- Each time a new player character is infected, **inform the administrators** so they can track the spread of the plague.

### ZOMBIE TRANSFORMATION

When an infected character's 'zombie transformation' time arrives, the player flips their infection card over to the 'I'm a Zombie!' side.

- Zombie players must seek out a table in the same section (i.e. tier 1 & 2, or tier 3 & 4) and conduct the attack listed on their infection card.
- When the player arrives at the table, the DM pauses any encounters in progress while the zombie player makes their attack listed on their infection card.
- After the zombie player has attacked, every other player on that table can take one action to fight back. Players resolve these actions in any order. The zombie player must keep track of their zombie character's hit points.
- If the zombie character survives, the zombie player moves to another table and repeats the attack. They do not regain lost hit points between attacks.

### ENDING THE TRANSFORMATION

If the zombie character dies, the zombie player returns to their table and resumes play with their character. The transformation is over, and their character is back to how they were (for now!).

- When the zombie player returns to their table, they flip their infection card over to the 'I'm Infected' side and write a new time in the 'transformation timeout' box. As time passes, infected characters transform more frequently!
- If fewer than 30 minutes remain when the character returns, they do not transform again during the event.

### THE ANTIDOTE

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As the tier 1 & 2 players complete quests, they generate doses of antidote that can cure characters infected by the zombie plague.

#### MAKING THE ANTIDOTE

The tier 1 and 2 players concoct 1 dose of antidote for every two quests their section completes. The administrators keep track of how many doses are available.

#### ADMINISTERING THE ANTIDOTE

The administrators handle the antidote.

- As each dose is created, the administrators use the plague tracker to assign it to a group containing one or more infected characters. If no characters are infected, the administrators “bank” the antidote until the infection spreads.
- When an infected group is chosen, an administrator seeks out that table and writes “cured” on the infection card of one infected character of the players’ choice.
- When a character receives the antidote, they’re cured of the zombie plague and are immune to further infection during this adventure. The administrator returns to HQ and marks the “cured” character on the plague tracker.

## PERMANENT INFECTION

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Characters who remain infected at the end of the event transform permanently into zombies. Only a *wish* or *true resurrection* spell can return these characters to life.

- **If the tier 1 & 2 section succeed in their mission, all infected characters are cured at the end of the event!**



## INTERACTIVE EVENTS

*Drums of the Dead* has interactive features that are designed to make it feel like a shared experience.

### SIEGE DAMAGE (TIER 3 & 4)

If your group receives siege damage, each player must roll on the following table and apply the result immediately.

#### Siege Damage Table

| d100  | Effect                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 01    | <b>Immolated.</b> Explosions ripple around you. You must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 27 (5d10) fire damage per tier on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. If you drop to 0 hit points because of this damage, the heat reduces you to a pile of ash. |
| 02-03 | <b>Aflame.</b> Burning oil ignites your clothing and hair. While you remain on fire, you take 5 (1d10) fire damage per tier at the start of each of your turns. At the end of each of your turns, you can make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw to quell the flames.                        |
| 04-06 | <b>Aftershock.</b> All creatures standing on the ground must succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or fall prone.                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 07-09 | <b>Blasted.</b> An explosion blasts your space. All creatures within a 10-foot-radius of you must make a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw, taking 11 (2d10) fire damage per tier on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.                                                   |
| 10-11 | <b>Blinded.</b> Dust washes over you. You must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or be blinded until the end of your next turn.                                                                                                                                                   |
| 12-16 | <b>Bludgeoned.</b> Wreckage slams into you, dealing 5 (1d10) bludgeoning damage per tier.                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 17-18 | <b>Buried.</b> A pile of wreckage buries you beneath it. Until freed, you are prone, restrained and blinded. To break free, you or an adjacent ally must take an action and succeed on a DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check. The wreckage counts as difficult terrain.                         |
| 19-20 | <b>Collapse.</b> The balcony or gantry you're standing on collapses. If you're not standing on one, the structure nearest to you collapses. All creatures standing on or below the structure take 11 (2d10) bludgeoning damage per tier and count as buried (see above).                     |
| 21-22 | <b>Confused.</b> A chunk of wreckage strikes you in the back of the head, dealing 5 (1d10) bludgeoning damage per tier. At the start of your next turn, you move half your speed in a random direction.                                                                                      |

|       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|-------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 23-24 | <b>Coughing.</b> Dust chokes you. Until the end of your next turn, you can't talk or cast spells with the verbal component.                                                                                                                    |
| 25-29 | <b>Deafened.</b> An explosion deafens you until the end of your next turn.                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 30-34 | <b>Impaled.</b> A spear of shrapnel plunges into you, dealing 5 (1d10) piercing damage per tier.                                                                                                                                               |
| 35-36 | <b>Inferno.</b> Burning oil spills in a 10-foot-radius around you. Any creature that enters the area for the first time on a turn or starts its turn inside it must succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or take 11 (2d10) fire damage.   |
| 37-39 | <b>Mutilated.</b> Jagged shrapnel hits you, dealing 16 (3d10) slashing damage per tier and inflicting a random lingering injury (see "Injuries" in chapter 9 of the <i>Dungeon Master's Guide</i> ).                                           |
| 40-46 | <b>Pinned.</b> A falling beam or pillar pins you beneath it. Until freed, you are prone and restrained. To break free, you or an adjacent ally must take an action and succeed on a DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check.                          |
| 47-54 | <b>Rubble.</b> Rubble clatters over the you, creating difficult terrain in a 10-foot-radius around you.                                                                                                                                        |
| 55-59 | <b>Severely Bludgeoned.</b> Wreckage hits you, dealing 11 (2d10) bludgeoning damage per tier.                                                                                                                                                  |
| 60-64 | <b>Severely Impaled.</b> A spear of shrapnel plunges into you, dealing 11 (2d10) piercing damage per tier.                                                                                                                                     |
| 65-69 | <b>Severely Slashed.</b> Shrapnel tears into you, dealing 11 (2d10) slashing damage per tier.                                                                                                                                                  |
| 70-74 | <b>Slashed.</b> Shrapnel tears into you, dealing 6 (1d10) slashing damage per tier.                                                                                                                                                            |
| 75-76 | <b>Slowed.</b> A chunk of wreckage cracks into your knee, reducing your speed by half until the end of your next turn.                                                                                                                         |
| 77-78 | <b>Smoke.</b> A 20-foot-radius sphere of thick smoke swirls up around you, heavily obscuring the area. The cloud persists until a wind of moderate or greater speed (at least 10 miles per hour) disperses it.                                 |
| 79-80 | <b>Stunned.</b> Debris strikes you in the head, dealing 5 (1d10) bludgeoning damage per tier and stunning you until the end of your next turn.                                                                                                 |
| 81-86 | <b>Tangled.</b> Wreckage entangles you. Until freed, your speed is halved and you take disadvantage on attacks and ability checks. To free you, you or an adjacent ally must take an action and succeed on a DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check. |
| 87-95 | <b>Tripped.</b> A shockwave knocks you prone, along with any creatures within 5 feet of you.                                                                                                                                                   |
| 96-97 | <b>Unconscious.</b> A chunk of wreckage thuds into your head and you drop to 0 hit points.                                                                                                                                                     |
| 98-99 | <b>Double damage.</b> Roll twice on this table and apply both results (ignoring rolls of 98-00).                                                                                                                                               |
| 00    | <b>Triple damage.</b> Roll three times on this table and apply all results (ignoring rolls of 98-00).                                                                                                                                          |



## ROAMING NPCs (ALL TIERS)

The administrators can dress up as famous NPCs to add theater to the event.

- If a roaming NPC arrives at your table, immediately pause any encounter in progress.
- Resolve any interactions between the roaming character and the players.
- Resume the encounter when the roaming character leaves.

Roaming NPCs are detailed further in the Administrator Guide, below.

## VICTORY EVENTS (TIER 3 & 4)

**At Tier 3 & 4, the first group to complete each quest triggers a victory event that aids their allies.** When the administrators receive a new victory boon for the first time, they announce the associated victory event. Victory events modify encounters in progress – so listen out for them if you’re playing at these tiers!

### Victory Event Table

| Victory boon                    | Victory Event                                                                    |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1A: Destroy the Death Gods      | Dispels the enchantment on the captives in Quest 1C.                             |
| 1B: Infiltrate the Red Wizards  | Destroys the soul cannons targeting characters in Quests 1A.                     |
| 1C: Free the Captives           | Diverts guards away from Quest 1B.                                               |
| 2A: Destroy the Antimagic Field | Removes the antimagic field from Quest 2B.                                       |
| 2B: Silence the Guardians       | Disables the screaming gargoyles from Quest 2C.                                  |
| 2C: Disarm the Doomsday Device  | Arms annihilators in Quest 2A.                                                   |
| 3: Slay the Liches              | None (at least half the groups must complete this quest for the section to win). |

## ADMINISTRATOR GUIDE

The section provides guidance on running *Drums of the Dead* as a D&D Epics™ event for your game day or convention.

### PARTICIPANTS

The adventure requires the following participants to run smoothly.

#### 4 OR MORE GROUPS

A minimum of four groups is needed to run the adventure.

- Each group requires 3-7 players. All players in a group must belong to the same tier (i.e. level 1-4 at tier 1, level 5-10 at tier 2, level 11-16 at tier 3, and level 17-20 at tier 4).
- There's no limit to how many groups can participate.
- At least two groups must represent each section (i.e. tier 1 & 2, or tier 3 & 4).

#### DUNGEON MASTERS (ONE PER GROUP)

Each table has one dungeon master.

- Dungeon masters should read their tier 1 & 2 or tier 3 & 4 adventure booklet beforehand and prepare the locations for their section.

#### 2 TIER COMMANDERS

Each section has a tier commander who adjudicates interactive events and answers questions posed by DMs.

- Tier commanders can also assume the role of wandering NPCs: Volo, Valindra Shadowmantle or Szass Tam. It's recommended that administrators dress up for these roles!
- Tier commanders liaise between tables to adjudicate interactive events.

#### 1 GENERAL

The general oversees the event. In *Drums of the Dead*, it's vital that players can hear the general's announcements.

- The general tracks the number of completed quests for each section (i.e. Tier 1 & 2, and Tier 3 & 4)
- Every hour, the general announces important events in the ongoing battle.

## SETUP

The following steps are important for ensuring the event runs smoothly.

### STEP 1. PREPARE HEADQUARTERS

Headquarters (or "HQ") is an area set aside for the administrative staff.

- The general needs the **victory tracker** from Appendix 1 of this booklet, a pen or pencil, and at least one copy of this adventure.
- The general also needs the **plague tracker** from Appendix 1 of this booklet. As the infection spreads, the general uses this form to track the casualties.

### STEP 2. PREPARE TABLES

One table is required for each group.

- Each table must have a table number displayed **prominently** on its surface, so administrators can locate specific tables during the event.
- All tables need a good view of HQ so they can see and hear the general's updates.

### STEP 3. MUSTER GROUPS

During muster, players are assigned to dungeon masters.

### STEP 4. COUNT GROUPS

To calculate victories, the administrators need to know how many groups are playing within each section (see "Tracking Victories", below). Before the event begins, the administrators must count the groups and log them on the general's victory tracker.

### STEP 5. PLAY!

When play begins, the general reads the briefing aloud to the assembled players (see "Announcements", below).

## TRACKING VICTORIES

The general uses the **victory tracker** to log victories across the event. Victory conditions for each section depend on the number of groups participating. When the event begins, the general notes down the victory targets on their victory tracker.

### TIER 1 & 2 VICTORY TARGETS

For this section to succeed, each group must beat an average of **three** quests. Therefore, the number

of groups in the section determines how many completed quests are required to win.

### Victory Targets (Tier 1 & 2)

| Victories required to win at each report |                     |          |          |
|------------------------------------------|---------------------|----------|----------|
| Groups                                   | Report 1            | Report 2 | Report 3 |
| 4                                        | 4                   | 8        | 12       |
| 5                                        | 5                   | 10       | 15       |
| 6                                        | 6                   | 12       | 18       |
| 7                                        | 7                   | 14       | 21       |
| 8                                        | 8                   | 16       | 24       |
| 9                                        | 9                   | 18       | 27       |
| 10                                       | 10                  | 20       | 30       |
| 11+                                      | Round up fractions! |          |          |

- Whenever a group from tier 1 & 2 delivers a victory boon to HQ, the general adds one victory point to the victory tracker.
- When the general makes their hourly battle report, they check to see if the tier 1 & 2 section is winning or losing before making the appropriate announcement (see Announcements, below).

### Tier 3 & 4 Victory Targets

For this section to succeed, at least half of the groups must triumph in their final battles (Quest 3 in the adventure booklet). The section succeeds if the result is tied.

- Whenever a group from tier 3 & 4 delivers a “Quest 3” victory boon to HQ, the general adds one victory point to the victory tracker.

### Victory Events

When a tier 3 & 4 quest is received for the **first time**, the general announces the associated victory event (see Announcements, below).

### Tracking the Plague

The administrators record the spread of the plague on the plague tracker and administer antidotes as they are concocted.

- When a player reports an infection, the general notes down the table on the plague tracker.
- For every two victory points the Tier 1 & 2 players accrue, the administrators concoct one dose of antidote and can cure one player on a table of their choosing.
- When a player is cured, the general notes down the table on the plague tracker.

### Playing Roaming NPCs

The administrators can choose to dress up as the following NPCs. None of these roles are vital, but they make the event feel more special when they’re present.

#### Szass Tam (Tier 3 & 4)

The infamous zulkir of necromancy drains magic from his enemies. Szass Tam only moves between tier 3 and 4 tables, and **does not attack tables playing quest 3**. When he stops at a table, he challenges one spellcasting character to an arcane duel. That character must make an opposed Intelligence (Arcana) check against Szass Tam’s own bonus of +18. If the character succeeds, they force Szass Tam away for at least 30 minutes. If they fail, they lose unspent spell slots equal to their tier of play. To determine the level of each unspent spell slot, Szass Tam rolls a d8. In addition, he blasts the area with magic and all characters on this table AND all adjacent tables suffer siege damage (see “Interactive Events”). Szass Tam can’t duel the same character more than once during the event.

#### Cosplaying Szass Tam

To cosplay Szass Tam, dress in red robes and carry a black wizard’s staff. Use makeup to appear undead. Shave all your bodily hair off (or wear a painted swimming cap). You are the dread lord of Thay: merciless, scheming, shockingly intelligent. Everyone else is subservient to you. Ensure you loudly boss Valindra about whenever you cross paths with her.

#### Valindra Shadowmantle (Tier 1 & 2)

This arrogant elf lich stalks between tables, cursing her enemies and challenging groups to beat her in a test of wits. Valindra only moves between tier 1 and 2 tables. When Valindra stops at a table, she mocks her enemies for a while, and then slams her sand-timer down and hisses one of the following riddles:

*“In each of you I do reside, a sight you’d rather keep inside. As I am now, so shall you be. Your life begins and ends with me. What am I?”*

**Answer:** “A skeleton”

*“My name’s not mine and you’ll ignore me in your prime. Soon your friends will weep at my sight, and you’ll stay with me day and night.”*

**Answer:** “A tombstone”

If the players can't answer Valindra's riddle before the sand-timer expires, she curses the group: all characters take necrotic damage equal to half their maximum hit points and have disadvantage on their next meaningful attack or ability check. In addition, she summons 4 **zombies** per tier to fight the characters (if they are able). If they succeed, Valindra is forced away for at least 30 minutes.

### COSPLAYING VALINDRA SHADOWMANTLE

To cosplay Valindra Shadowmantle, dress as an evil elf princess in black, gothic finery and wear a black crown bearing five jagged points. Your hair should cascade in blonde tresses. Use makeup to appear undead. You're playing a scheming lich who only respects herself, and who has allied with the Red Wizards for power alone. Take every opportunity to mock Szass Tam and assert your own authority. Practice your evil laugh: it should tinkle sweetly, and then strike fear in all who hear it.

### VOLOTHAMP GEDDARM (ALL TIERS)

The famed explorer "Volo" wanders the event in costume, offering words of encouragement. Each table can call upon Volo's aid once during a short rest. If he's available, he can offer the players various enchantments – for the right price.

Volo can provide any of the services listed on the **volo's services** handout (see Appendix 1 of this booklet). Players must cover the component costs for these spells, which are cast instantly and without the requirement to spend downtime days. In addition, Volo sells potions and scrolls at the prices listed. Each player in the group can only purchase one service from Volo's list. Some items can only be purchased once per group. If a player can't afford their desired item, they can seek out players from other tables to cover the cost.

### COSPLAYING VOLOTHAMP GEDDARM

To cosplay Volothamp Geddarm, dress as a flamboyant nobleman in tights, puffy breeches and a velvet tunic. Above all things, ensure your hat is as magnificent as possible and your moustache and beard are neatly waxed. Volo is unwittingly arrogant and wildly optimistic. He's easily distracted with banter, but quickly snaps back to attention when sidetracked, reminding his allies that good work must be done!

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

The event plays out over three phases, each lasting roughly one hour. After each phase, the general delivers a battle update to the assembled players.

## INTRODUCTION TO PLAY

Read the following aloud at the start of the event:

The Soulmonger is no more, and Acererak's death curse has been lifted from Toril! Tonight, adventurers from far and wide gather in Port Nyanzaru to celebrate their victories. Alas, no sooner has one threat perished, another bubbles up to threaten the poor folk of Chult.

Earlier today, a messenger stumbled into town from a secret laboratory in the jungle. He revealed that alchemists from the Lords' Alliance had colluded with Order of the Gauntlet clerics to weave a powerful spell over the jungle. Their intention was to destroy Chult's undead, but the spell backfired to create a zombie plague that infects both the living and the undead. As we speak, an undead horde rushes toward Port Nyanzaru! These zombies are fast! They cannot be turned! One bite or scratch infects their victims with the zombie plague!

Worse, our seers have revealed that the archlich Szass Tam has found a way to command the zombies, and has raised the Crawling Palace of Ras Nsi – a castle carried on the backs of twelve skeletal tortoises. Led by the lich Valindra Shadowmantle, Tam's drummers beat out a rhythm that controls the infected and drives them towards our city!

Volo and the Merchant Princes have worked together to brew an antidote for the zombie plague, but the components are hidden deep in the jungle. We need volunteers to search for these components, while the greatest among you strike against the Crawling Palace to silence the drums of the dead! You're the best that this land can offer: heroes forged in the crucible of adventure!

Are you with me?

### VICTORY EVENT: QUEST 1A COMPLETE

Read the following aloud when the first group destroys one of the 'death gods' in Quest 1A:

Excellent work! The first of the Crawling Palace's death gods has fallen to the heroes from [table number]! Throughout the palace, captives awoken from their necromantic trances and gasp for life. Adventurers playing Quest 1C can now issue orders to captives in their area!

### VICTORY EVENT: QUEST 1B COMPLETE

Read the following aloud when the first group destroys a soul cannon in Quest 1B:

Boom! An explosion rocks the Crawling Palace as [table number] destroys the first of the soul cannons! Adventurers playing Quest 1A no longer need to roll for siege damage at the end of their turns!

### **VICTORY EVENT: QUEST 1C COMPLETE**

Read the following aloud when the first group frees their slaves:

With a roar, captives rush for the portals as [table number] frees the first batch of slaves from the Crawling Palace! Adventurers playing Quest 1B no longer face elite guards, as they've all left to respond to the prison break!

### **VICTORY EVENT: QUEST 2A COMPLETE**

Read the following aloud when the first group activates an 'annihilator':

Silence please! An adventurer from [table number] has made the ultimate sacrifice, activating a Thayan "annihilator" by hand to blast a hole in the antimagic field surrounding the Crawling Palace. Adventurers playing Quest 2B can now cast spells!

### **VICTORY EVENT: QUEST 2B COMPLETE**

Read the following aloud when the first group disables an all-seeing guardian:

Good work! Heroes from [table number] have disabled the first of the guardians that watch over the Crawling Palace. The screaming guardians in Quest 2C are now disabled!

### **VICTORY EVENT: QUEST 2C COMPLETE**

Read the following aloud when the first group disarms a 'doomsday device':

Rejoice! One of the Crawling Palace's doomsday devices has been disabled by the heroes from [table number]. Adventurers playing Quest 2A can now activate their Thayan annihilators!

### **1ST BATTLE REPORT (1 HR. INTO PLAY)**

Read the following aloud:

Look! Birds and pterosaurs take to the air as the undead horde thrashes through the jungles toward Port Nyanzaru! Their numbers are uncountable, and they leave a trail of destruction in their wake!

If the tier 1 & 2 section is winning, read:

But wait! Word has reached us that the heroes searching for the antidote are on track! The first doses of a cure are now being tested! Everyone gains the benefit of an *aid* spell.

If the tier 1 & 2 section is losing, read:

Alas! Word has reached us that the heroes searching for the antidote are struggling! At this rate, we won't be able to concoct the cure in time! Everyone gains a level of exhaustion.

### **2ND BATTLE REPORT (2 HRS. INTO PLAY)**

Read the following aloud:

Listen! Can you hear the coming of the dead? The beat of the drums? The Crawling Palace draws ever closer to Port Nyanzaru, bringing death and horror with it!

If the tier 1 & 2 section is winning, read:

They shall not triumph! The heroes searching for the antidote are doing well, and are on track for victory! Everyone gains another use of a short rest!

If the tier 1 & 2 section is losing, read:

City-folk start to flee to the boats as word spreads that the cure is still a distant hope! Each of you loses unspent hit dice equal to half your level, gaining a level of exhaustion if you have none left!

### **15 MINUTE WARNING! (2.45 HRS. INTO PLAY)**

Read the following aloud:

Do you hear it? From his perch at the top of the Crawling Palace, Szass Tam screams a warning to those who defy him! There are only 15 minutes remaining! Heroes: do everything you can to complete your quests!

### **FINAL BATTLE REPORT (3 HRS. INTO PLAY)**

Read the following aloud:

The dead are at the gates! An undead horde pours from the jungle, hidden behind a buzzing cloud of flies. Behind them, the Crawling Palace heaves into view, driven on by the beating of the drums of the dead! The end has come to Port Nyanzaru!

Now reveal how the Tier 3 & 4 players fared:

**If the Tier 3 & 4 players were victorious, read:**

But wait! Suddenly the drums fall silent! Strangled screams emanate from the Crawling Palace as Szass Tam – lord of the Red Wizards – is cut down by the heroes of Chult! Then, one-by-one, the zombies start to fall, spreading out from the palace in a great wave of collapsing bodies. In just moments, the zombie horde is no more! Well done! All players at tier 3 & 4 gain the ‘Lich Slayer’ story award.

**If the Tier 3 & 4 players failed, read:**

The heroes in the Crawling Palace have failed! The zombies pour over the city walls and rampage through the streets of Port Nyanzaru. In the harbor, ships jostle to escape the doomed city. For those left on the streets, there is only death!

Now reveal how the Tier 1 & 2 players fared:

**If the Tier 1 & 2 players were victorious, read:**

Thankfully, the heroes searching for the antidote were successful! All infected characters are now cured! The people of Chult pass the antidote from village to village, ensuring that the undead plague can spread no further! Well done! All players at tier 1 & 2 gain the ‘Plague Buster’ story award.

**If the Tier 1 & 2 players failed, read:**

Alas, the heroes searching for the antidote failed to secure a cure for zombie cure. Any characters still infected transform permanently into zombies, and can only be cured with a *wish* or *true resurrection* spell! The jungles of Chult are more dangerous now than ever before.

**Now summarize the overall success or failure of the event:**

**If the event was a complete success, read:**

Rejoice! Your mission was a total success, and your names will be recorded forever in the annals of Chultan history! Thank you for playing, and give yourselves a cheer!

**If the event was a partial success, read:**

This day didn’t bring the perfect outcome you desired, but you were still victorious! You fought valiantly, and saved the lives of thousands of Chultans. Thank you for playing, and give yourselves a cheer!

**If the event was a total failure, read:**

You have failed, and the people of Chult will live on in horror. Yet you should not despair! Today, luck was with the enemy, but you fought valiantly. Next time, you won’t fail so easily. Thank you for playing, and give yourselves a cheer!

In the event of a total failure, the commander should report back to the D&D Adventurers League™ organized play administrators. If enough events fail, this could affect the ongoing storyline of the shared campaign!

## HANDOUTS

### VICTORY TRACKER

| VICTORY TRACKER               |                                     |                                     |                                     |                      |                      |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Tier 1 & 2                    |                                     |                                     |                                     |                      |                      |
| <input type="text"/>          | <input type="text"/>                | <input type="text"/>                | <input type="text"/>                | <input type="text"/> |                      |
| NUMBER OF GROUPS              | VICTORIES NEEDED TO WIN AT REPORT 1 | VICTORIES NEEDED TO WIN AT REPORT 2 | VICTORIES NEEDED TO WIN AT REPORT 3 | CURRENT VICTORIES    |                      |
| Tier 3 & 4                    |                                     |                                     |                                     |                      |                      |
| <input type="text"/>          | <input type="text"/>                | <input type="text"/>                |                                     |                      |                      |
| NUMBER OF GROUPS              | QUEST 3 VICTORIES REQUIRED TO WIN   | CURRENT QUEST 3 VICTORIES           |                                     |                      |                      |
| Schedule of Announcements     |                                     |                                     |                                     |                      |                      |
| Intro Speech                  | <input type="text"/>                |                                     |                                     |                      |                      |
|                               | START TIME                          |                                     |                                     |                      |                      |
| Battle Report 1               | <input type="text"/>                |                                     |                                     |                      |                      |
|                               | + 1 HR                              |                                     |                                     |                      |                      |
| Battle Report 2               | <input type="text"/>                |                                     |                                     |                      |                      |
|                               | + 2 HRS                             |                                     |                                     |                      |                      |
| 15 Minute Alert               | <input type="text"/>                |                                     |                                     |                      |                      |
|                               | + 2 HRS 45 MINS                     |                                     |                                     |                      |                      |
| Battle Report 3               | <input type="text"/>                |                                     |                                     |                      |                      |
|                               | + 3 HRS                             |                                     |                                     |                      |                      |
| Tier 3 & 4 Interactive Events |                                     |                                     |                                     |                      |                      |
| <input type="text"/>          | <input type="text"/>                | <input type="text"/>                | <input type="text"/>                | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| QUEST 1A COMPLETE             | QUEST 1B COMPLETE                   | QUEST 1C COMPLETE                   | QUEST 2A COMPLETE                   | QUEST 2B COMPLETE    | QUEST 2C COMPLETE    |



## PLAGUE TRACKER (PRINT AS MANY AS NEEDED)

### PLAGUE TRACKER

Table Number:

| CHARACTER NAME | TIME INFECTED CURED? |  |
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## VOLO'S WONDROUS SERVICES

### Spells Arcane & Divine

*"A wise man has many friends, no? I find the best friends can cast fireballs."*

|                                           |        |
|-------------------------------------------|--------|
| Cure Wounds (1 <sup>st</sup> Level)       | 10 gp  |
| Identify                                  | 20 gp  |
| Lesser restoration                        | 40 gp  |
| Prayer of Healing (2 <sup>nd</sup> Level) | 40 gp  |
| Dispel Magic                              | 40 gp  |
| Remove curse                              | 90 gp  |
| Speak with dead                           | 90 gp  |
| Divination                                | 210 gp |
| Greater Restoration                       | 450 gp |

### Potions & Scrolls Marvellous and Bizarre

*"A good potion is like a good wine. Best to let it improve with age, but don't leave it until you're dead."*

|                              |              |
|------------------------------|--------------|
| Potion of Healing            | 50 gp        |
| * Potion of Greater Healing  | 250 gp       |
| * Potion of Heroism          | 250 gp       |
| * Spell Scroll (Level 1)     | 50 gp        |
| * Spell Scroll (Level 2 & 3) | 100 gp/level |
| * Spell Scroll (Level 3 & 4) | 200 gp/level |

Each character may only purchase one item per visit. Material component costs for scrolls are not included in the price and must also be expended. Each group may only purchase items marked with an asterisk (\*) once during the event. Volo accepts no responsibility for clients who die as a direct or indirect result of fireballs.