

March Against Thay

An adventure for characters level 3-6 (light.hardpoints.de)

Overview

A paladin of Torm has been sent on a secret mission to the land of Thay. His orders were to bring a talking skull to Red Wizard rebels in the country that fight against the supremacy of Bane. The skull knows all kinds of secrets and would have been a valuable military advisor. However, both the skull and the paladin have gone missing and the PCs are order to find them and help finish the mission.



Involving the PCs

The PCs are currently in the harbour city of Marsember when they are approached by a priest of Torm who has heard about their good deeds from a close friend (who is somebody from the PCs' past). He asks the PCs if they can perform a critical mission that should be kept as secret as possible. He gives them the following facts:

- Suka, a female paladin was sent to Thay to give the animated skull of General Tephone to Red Wizard rebels in Thay. Tephone was a great strategist and would have

greatly helped the rebels in their battle.

- Suka is missing, as is the skull. She was last seen in the Thayan Town of Duru, where she apparently damaged the tower of the local Red Wizard.

For their brave services, the priest offers the following (all in advance):

- 400gp to cover expenses
- A *Symbol of Life* +2 dedicated to Bahamut

Side Quests

Some of the less religious or righteous PCs might like to hear about the following side quests.

Undead Hunt

The Red Wizard Fiborn, a well-known trader of magic items in Marsember, has announced that he will pay a reward of 2000 gp to those who bring him the head of the Thayan vampire Eidolos, a lieutenant of the dread legion who has killed Fiborn's brother. Eidolos is the guard commander of Duru, a fact that should arouse the PCs' interest.

Black Market

A **Streetwise DC 15** lets the PCs know that certain criminal elements of a magic inclination are willing to pay 100 gp per pound of blood willow leaves, a plant that only grows on the plains of Thay near the Dread Rings.

Chapter 1: Journey to Thay

This chapter is designed for 5 level 3 characters and describes the journey to the border of Thay.

Outline

In order to travel of Thay, the PCs will have to find a captain going to a nearby port. Their journey will let them face a mighty storm and a crew of pirates who are after their hides. Meanwhile life on board is spiced up by a mysterious stranger who seems to be more interested in the PCs than he should...

After the PCs safely land on the shores of Aglarond, they have to organize a caravan that takes them to the borders of Thay.

Getting Started

In order to travel to Thay, the PCs have to find a Captain willing to brave the long journey of over 1000 miles to Aglarond. When the party goes to port, they hear rumours about increased Kraken activity as well as a coming storm – not the ideal conditions for travel. There is only one captain even willing to listen to the proposal.

Captain Fredon Gleamstone is an ancient elf with grey hair and wrinkled skin. Rumour places his age at about 250.

Perception 10: Fredon smells of cheap liquor at any time of the day.

Perception 20: Fredon has a tattoo of Bahamut on his chest, mostly hidden by his shirt. A **Religion 15** reveals that this tattoo is the symbol of a particularly daring order of paladins, the **Odem of Bahamut**.

Skill Challenge: Getting a Ship

Setup: Convincing Captain Gleamstone to go to Thay is a skill challenge. Gleamstone demands an outrageous amount of money (2000 gp) for the journey. In fact, it seems that money is the only thing that motivates him. However, he was – long ago – a heroic paladin and appealing to his sense of justice will significantly lower the price.

Complexity: The PCs need 5 successes before they have 2 failures.

Primary Skills:

- **Diplomacy (DC 16):** Any appeal to justice and honour will give a +4 bonus.
- **Intimidate (DC 20):** While intimidation might provide success, the atmosphere aboard the ship will not be pleasant.
- **Bluff (DC 18):** Anything that has to do with opportunities to money will work, everything else increases DC to 25.
- **Odem of Bahamut:** Referring to the paladin order the elf was a member of will get an immediate success.

Success: The journey costs the PCs nothing but they have to help defend the ship against threats.

Failure: The captain will ask 2000 gp, probably forcing them to sell some equipment. The PCs can try again the next day. However, for every day they loose this way, roll Streetwise+10 vs. DC 18. If the roll succeeds, an agent of Thay will also board the ship to follow their steps.

The Journey

The journey to Aglarond takes one week. Unless they decide to wait with their journey, they will encounter a mighty storm. In any case, they will be assaulted by pirates who roam the sea looking for plunder.

Skill Challenge: The Storm

Setup: A mighty storm can be seen on the horizon. The captain tells all passengers to go below deck and best tie themselves to a post. Making a good knot is a Thievery check. Have each PC take down the result divided by 5 as *knot quality*. The skill challenge is made to avoid damage.

Complexity: Each PC needs 2 successes before having *knot quality* number of failures (minimum 1).

Primary Skills:

- **Athletics (DC 20):** Cling to you post and fend off flying items. A success may be used to allow another player to reroll but then counts as a failure.
- **Endurance (DC 20):** Weather the tossing and turning as well as minor impacts.

Success: The character has a few scratches but has otherwise weathered the storm.

Failure: Each failure means more impact, before the last failure, the ropes go loose and the PC tumbles through the room, loosing a healing surge. Total failure means another lost healing surge.

Xamin Darkember

If the PCs attracted the attention of the agents of Thay, Magister Darkember will also be on board. An agent of Thay, this seeming scholar claims to have urgent business in Aglarond and jealously guards a strongbox (that is actually empty).

Darkember is tall and gaunt, looking as if he spent most of his time indoors by candlelight. He will try to avoid the PCs as much as possible, leading to several awkward situations.

Unless confronted and found out, Xamin will make his move at an opportune time, preferably when the PCs are engaged in combat against the pirates.

Pirate Attack

When the ship of the PCs passes Pirate Isle, they come to a sandbank that requires careful navigation. At this point, pirates burst forth from a ship that was up to then hidden by a nearly small island.



Fending off the piratical hordes coming on two boats is described in the encounter *Pirate Raiders*. If the PCs are willing to engage the pirate ship as well, proceed to encounter *Counterboarding* after a short rest.

Aglarond and the Roads to Thay

When the PCs arrive in Aglarond, they might want to do several things to prepare for the journey to Thay. Here are a couple of options.

Skill Challenge: News about Thay

Setup: If the PCs try to research some facts about Thay, they go into this skill challenge. They get one piece of information for each success. If they have specific questions, you might want to change the order.

Complexity: The PCs get one answer per success but will attract unwanted attention when the fail for the third time.

Primary Skills:

- **Streetwise (DC 15):** This skill represents asking questions about Thay in the streets and bars.
- **History (DC 20):** This skill represents library research and can only be used once.

Secondary Skills:

- **Streetwise (DC 20, after the first failure):** Allows finding the hideout of the Thayan agents that are looking for the PCs. A failure in this skill also counts towards the total of allowed failures. With this information, the PCs can proceed to the encounter *Thayan Spy Network*.

Success: For each success give one of the following pieces of information.

- The main gate to Thay is between Nethjet and Nethendir. An attack would be suicidal. It takes a special letter of passage to enter the undead empire.
- There are several smaller mountain passes where there are less guards

and it might be possible to fight one's way in.

- There is currently a caravan of slavers in Aglarond that will pass the main gate soon.
- Bane has recently become the patron god of Thay. As a result, an increasing number of Banites is coming to the country.

Failures: After the first failure, the PCs are told that somebody is looking for the people who ask all these questions. After the second, one of their informants has been tortured to death. The third failure will lead to an ambush as described in *Thayan Spy Network*.

Buying Equipment

All basic non-magic equipment is available at normal prices in Aglarond. Also, magic items that are typical for elves are sometimes available for sale.

Some of the items sold will be of Thayan origin. With a bit of patience the PCs can buy together a decent disguise.

Encounter: Pirate Raiders

Setup

Use a battlemat of a ship that you have. I have used Talisman Studios *Pirate Set 2*¹. The attackers arrive in boats from behind a large rock, with a pirate ship starting to peek out. The PCs ship has no guns, so a boarding action is eminent.

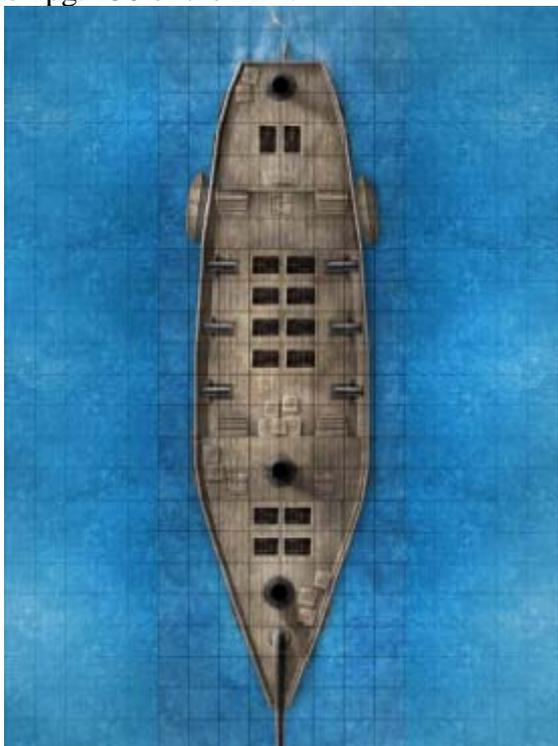
The attackers come in two boats. The first boat contains the boarding crew:

- 8 Hobgoblin Grunts (G)
- 1 Hobgoblin Solider (S)

The second boat carries archers and will come only close enough to fire onto the deck (they can reach 3 squares before the angle gives full cover):

- 2 Hobgoblin Grunts (G)
- 2 Hobgoblin Archers (A)

As the boats draw near, the PCs have time to ready themselves. Actual combat starts when the boats are two turns away (Speed 8). All monster information can be found on pg. 138 of the MM.



Tactics

The archers stay away 15 squares from the ship and fire arrows at anybody close enough to the ships side to be fired upon. If they have no targets, they will ready actions to fire at any visible enemy. Meanwhile the boarding crew will climb up to the ship and try to build a phalanx in order to crush any resistance on board.

Features of the Area

Ship's Side: Climbing up the side of the ship takes 4 squares of movement and an Athletics check of 15. A failed roll means a fall into the water.

Getting on Board: Climbing on the deck requires a free square on the deck. Otherwise, the climber has to make a bull rush at -4 to push somebody aside. Alternatively, the climber can grab a person on deck and in the next turn try to pull him down (Strength vs. Fortitude). Both combatants will fall into the water.

Treasure: The hobgoblin pirates have little of use, except for the leading soldier who has a gem hidden in his belt pocket (which he got as a reward for bravery from his captain). Out of gratitude for saving his ship, Gleamstone will give a pair of Wavestrider boots to the PCs.

¹ Map used with permission. Available for purchase at <https://www.brainradio.com/talismanshop/>

Encounter: Counterboarding

Setup

Use the ship battlemap again. The PCs might either come with boats or take their whole ship, which influences their position in combat. The pirate ship is manned by the following crew:

- 10 Hobgoblin Grunts
- 1 Hobgoblin Commander
- 4 Goblin Sailors
- 1 Dire Wolf Warbeast

The crew will wait for the PCs at the edge of the ship, the hobgoblins one square away from the edge of the ship, the goblins are up in the rigging. The hobgoblin commander stands in the middle of his troops. The wolf is on one flank, commanded by one of the grunts. All missing monster information can be found on pg. 138 of the MM.

Tactics

The goblins will start by pelting the approaching PCs with arrows as they arrive. Later on, they will stay behind the hobgoblins, waiting. If the hobgoblins seem to win, they will join the fight. Otherwise, they will jump overboard on the other side. The hobgoblins have ready actions to bull rush anybody making a jump on board of the ship. Afterwards, they will try to maintain their phalanx as good as possible.

Features of the Area

Ship's Side: Climbing up the side of the ship takes 4 squares of movement and an Athletics check of 15. A failed roll means a fall into the water.

Rigging: Climbing up the mast requires an Athletics check of 10. When fighting in the rigging, a minor action is needed to stay stable (requiring an Athletics check of 10). If the check is failed, no attack action can be performed.

Getting on Board: Climbing on the deck requires a free square on the deck.

Otherwise, the climber has to make a bull rush at -4 to push somebody aside. Alternatively, the climber can grab a person on deck and in the next turn try to pull him down (Strength vs. Fortitude). Both combatants will fall into the water.

Treasure: A chest in the captain's quarter contains a single 100 gp gem and a Cormyrian ivory statue of the god Tempus (worth 250 gp).

Goblin Sailor		Level 1 Minion	
Small natural humanoid		XP 25	
Initiative +3 Senses Perception +1, low light vision			
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.			
AC 13; Fortitude 12, Reflex 14, Will 11			
Speed 6; also see goblin tactics			
Ⓢ Dagger (standard; at-will) * Weapon			
+5 vs. AC; 4 damage.			
⚔ Short Bow (standard; at-will) * Weapon			
+5 vs. AC; 4 damage			
Goblin Tactics (immediate reaction, when missed by a melee attack)			
The goblin sailor shifts 1 square			
Alignment Evil		Languages Common, Goblin	
Skills Athletics +10 Acrobatics +6			
Str 14 (+2)		Dex 17 (+3)	
Con 15 (+2)		Wis 12 (+1)	
		Cha 8 (-1)	

Dire Wolf Wbst.		Level 5 Skirmisher	
Large Natural Beast		XP 200	
Initiative +5		Senses Perception +9	
HP 70 Bloodied 35			
AC 19; Fortitude 18, Reflex 17, Will 16			
Speed 8			
Ⓢ Bite (standard; at-will)			
+10 vs. AC; 1d8+4 damage. Secondary Attack: +6 vs. Fortitude; target falls prone			
⚔ Skewer (standard; recharge [D][D][D], target must be prone)			
+10 vs. Fortitude; 2d8+4 damage and target is dazed (save ends)			
Alignment Unaligned		Languages -	
Skills -			
Str 19 (+6)		Dex 16 (+5)	
Con 19 (+6)		Wis 14 (+4)	
		Cha 11 (+2)	

Encounter: Thayan Spy Network

Setup

There are two variants for this encounter. Either the PCs surprise the Thayan spies in their lair, or the spies attack the PCs in their room or camp. Thus, there is no battlemap for this encounter. Use any kind of room you have available to represent the PC's place and a rather ordinary dungeon room to represent the lair (a cellar under an unsuspecting farmer's house who has rented it out). The following creatures belong to the spy network:

- 1 Thayan Necromancer
- 1 Battle Wight (MM pg. 262)
- 5 Vampire Spawn Pawns

The **Thayan Necromancer** is a small fat man with beady eyes and very short hair. He speaks in a squeaky voice and constantly brags with his powers, even in combat.

The **Battle Wight** is a tall corpse in rotting bronze armor, clearly a warrior of an ancient age.

The **Vampire Spawn Pawns** are young rakish fellows who have catlike grace and like to toy with their enemies.

Tactics

The pawns will try to use their spider climb to get behind enemy lines. The battle wight positions himself to protect the necromancer who uses his spells to deal damage to as many PCs as possible.

Features of the Area

Since the area is not defined, there is little information to provide.

Treasure: The necromancer wields a Magic Wand +2 and has a potion of healing. The wight wears Gauntlets of Ogre Power.

Thayan		Level 8 Controller	
Necromancer		XP 350	
Medium natural humanoid			
Initiative +5	Senses Perception +5		
Aura of Doom: aura 5; undead minions within the aura that are destroyed get a saving throw at -5. If they succeed, they are prone but unharmed.			
HP 82; Bloodied 41			
AC 22; Fortitude 19, Reflex 19, Will 21			
Speed 6			
Ⓢ Staff (standard; at-will) * Weapon			
+8 vs. AC; 1d6 + 1 damage.			
✂ Skeleton Hands (standard; at-will) * Necrotic			
Range 15; +12 vs. Fortitude; 1d10 necrotic damage and the target is immobilized (save ends).			
⬅ Cloud of Flies (standard; recharge [☞][☞]) * Necrotic			
Close blast 5; +9 vs. Fortitude; 2d6 + 3 necrotic damage and ongoing 5 necrotic damage (save ends).			
✖ Fireball (standard; encounter) * Fire			
Area burst 3 within 20 squares; +12 vs. Reflex; 3d6+6 fire damage. Miss: Half damage.			
Alignment Evil		Languages Common	
Skills Arcana +16, Streetwise +10, Stealth +8			
Str 12 (+5)	Dex 12 (+5)	Wis 14 (+6)	
Con 10 (+4)	Int 20 (+9)	Cha 16 (+7)	

Vampire Spawn Pawn		Level 6 Minion	
Small natural humanoid (undead)		XP 63	
Initiative +7	Senses Perception +4, darkvision		
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.			
AC 21; Fortitude 18, Reflex 18, Will 17			
Speed 6; climb 4 (spider climb)			
Ⓢ Claws (standard; at-will) * Necrotic			
+12 vs. AC; 5 necrotic damage (7 against bloodied targets)			
Destroyed by Sunlight			
A pawn that begins its turn in sunlight can only take a single move action. If it ends its turn in sunlight, it is destroyed.			
Alignment Evil		Languages Common	
Skills Athletics +10			
Str 14 (+6)	Dex 16 (+7)	Wis 12 (+5)	
Con 14 (+6)	Int 10 (+4)	Cha 14 (+6)	

Chapter 2: Into the Lion's Den

This chapter is designed for 5 characters of level 4. It describes the entry into Thay and urban adventures in Duru.



Outline

In this chapter, the PCs enter Thay and try to figure out what happened to the lost paladin. They will find that the lady apparently jeopardized her mission by destroying a necromantic amplifier and was put into prison. When the PCs move in to free her, they will find that somebody has stolen the skull from the armoury of the constabulary. Ironically, the robbery was a mistake and the PCs will have to find out who stole their precious skull and what to do to get it back.

Entering Thay

There are many ways to enter Thay. The PCs can use stealth, bluffs or violence to enter the land of the undead. However, geographically, there are only two access points:

- The main gate to Thay is between Nethjet and Nethendir. It is heavily guarded. Even from far, the mighty black gate is visible to travellers.
- There are several smaller mountain passes where there are less guards and it might be possible to fight one's way in.

Assault on Thay

If the PCs decide to attack outright, use the appropriate encounter. Either *Mountain Pass* or *Final Stand* if they attack the main gate. The latter option will most likely kill them, unless they manage to break through the enemy lines and vanish in the wilderness.

Skill Challenge: Disguises and Bluff

Setup: The PCs might try to get into Thay using a bluff and/or disguises. Doing so is a skill challenge. The difficulty depends on the location. The values given are for the main gate. However, on the smaller passes, there is a lot less traffic and so the guards have a lot more time (and motivation) to look at every detail. Increase all DCs by +3.

Complexity: The PCs need 5 successes before they get 2 failures.

Primary Skills:

- **Bluff (DC 20):** The PC who talks to the guards must make this roll. He will be asked questions about his purpose and goal.
- **Arcana (DC: 18):** An arcana roll can be used to help behaving like a Red Wizard. If the PCs are disguised as Red Wizards, they can substitute this skill for Bluff.
- **Religion (DC: 17):** If the PCs disguise themselves as Banites, they may use this skill instead of Bluff.
- **Intimidate (DC 23):** This skill works best (+3) when claiming to have powerful friends within Thay.
- **Diplomacy (automatic failure):** Trying rational arguments based on the truth will not work here.

Secondary Skills:

- **Bluff (DC 10 or 15):** If the PCs have put on **disguises**, one of the PCs *must* make a Bluff check as the first skill check. If successful, the disguise look good, otherwise the guards are immediately distrustful. Disguises as Banites from far lands have DC 10, disguises as Thayans

have DC 15 (20 for exotic races such as Dragonborn).

- **Thievery (DC 15):** A single check can be made to forge a letter of passage. This will give +5 on all primary skill checks. If a genuine letter is stolen, the same bonus applies.

Success: The PCs are allowed to pass.

Failure: The guards will try to arrest the PCs most likely leading to a combat. If the PCs surrender, they will be put into a jail, awaiting a senior necromancer to judge them. The most likely penalty will be slavery until death and resurrection as a zombie.



Stealth

Using stealth can work but is a “skill challenge” of sorts for each of the PCs individually. Set up the encounter map as appropriate for the path the PCs have taken. The PCs will have to take stealth checks against the passive perception of the guards. Apply the following modifiers:

- -5 when moving more than 2 squares or climbing
- -5 when line of sight exists (the guards are not paying too much attention, so they might not look into your direction)

The first failed check per character means that somebody will move towards the noise and will check it out in more detail (unless there is no concealment, in which case the

character is detected automatically). The second failed roll will lead to detection of that character.

Travel within Thay

This part of the adventure is largely uneventful but make sure to describe the following facts to the PCs:

- The smell of death covers the land and undead work the fields and the mines.
- The few humans the PCs encounter are either very rich and travel in palanquins or are desperately poor and look at the PCs with envy.
- Tax stations are found along the roads. The PCs will spend at least 20 gp in road taxes. You should tell them that the gnolls at these stations eye them suspiciously but there is no need to act out the encounters.

The Dread Town of Duru

Even from far, the town of Duru looks uninviting. It is dominated by a great tower topped by a violet crystal that looks heavily damaged. The town people are mostly humans who try to avoid attention and are unfriendly to strangers. Patrols of undead and gnolls lead by Red Wizards dominate the streets. It is not uncommon to see a gnoll whipping a human just for fun. While there is little chance of conflict if the PCs behave, they might cross Ganborn, which leads to the encounter described in *Ganborn's Wrath*.

People of Influence

Ganborn is a paladin of Bane who was sent to Thay to oversee the building of a temple in Duru. His dominating personality and arrogance has done little to endear him to the local leader. He openly criticizes Tembril as a weakling and only his status as an emissary of the church of Bane has kept him safe so far. His followers consist of two lesser priests and wicked female fighter called the War Fury.

Neglic, the older of the priests, is a kind and polite person, whose manner belies the evil doctrine he is preaching. *Ghûley*, the other cleric, is a spiteful man, who resents his lack of power. Little is known about the *War Fury*, who speaks little and stays aloof of non-Banites.



Master Tembril is the red wizard ruling over Duru. He is working very hard at researching the secret of lichdom and is very unhappy about Gandborn turning his city upside down.



Captain Ghore is the leader of local century of the dread legion. He is a gnoll of great resourcefulness and a willing henchman of Tembril. His current task is to keep order in the city and to locate clues about the secret of lichdom.

Places of Interest

Temple of Bane: The temple of Bane, a fortress-like structure, is currently under construction. The work is overseen by Gandborn and his followers.

Tembril Tower: The personal palace of Master Tembril is a tall building of black stone, topped by a great violet crystal that has been damaged. Scaffolding surrounds

the tower and lesser wizards work at mending the crystal through magic.

The Prancing Zombie: As the only inn of Duru, the Zombie enjoys great popularity and is typically crowded in the evenings. At the moment, the place is dominated by Gandborn's Banites who are quick to pick fights with those that do not submit to them.

Questions and Answers

It takes a skill challenge (Diplomacy, Bluff or Intimidate against DC 15, 2 successes before 2 failures) to get people to talk. Only the Banites are very liberal with their opinions and will talk right away. The answers one gets to one's questions vary greatly according to the source.

Q: What happened to the tower?

Banites: A female paladin of Torm had stolen into the city and was enraged by the tower, which siphoned life energy from the locals to use in foul rituals. She destroyed the crystal but was captured and now sits in the dungeon beneath the tower.

Locals: There was an attack on the tower by a foreign woman for unknown reasons. She was captured or killed, nobody knows.

Gnolls: A cruel woman attacked the tower and killed many gnolls. Now she is in the dungeon of the tower, tortured for her crime.

Q: Who is Gandborn and why is he in the city?

Banites: Gandborn is a holy warrior charged with erecting a temple to honour Bane. The ruler of Thay has decreed that only Bane should be honoured in his lands and thus many followers have come to convert the locals. However, not everybody is ready to accept the true faith.

Locals: Gandborn is a dominant and violent follower of Bane quick to kill people he does not like. He is building a temple to his god and forces people to worship there. Master Tembril does not seem to like him but can do nothing against him.

Gnolls: Gandborn is violent and arrogant. He hates the beloved Master and must die.

His religion is stupid and his god weak in the face of the Yenoghu.

Q: What is up with Master Tembril?

Banites: Tembril is a fool, too absorbed with his studies to properly control the city. His tower was damaged and recently there was a break-in via the scaffolding. He will have to be replaced soon.

Locals: Master Tembril is a cruel lord but he is most likely the lesser evil compared to Gandborn.

Gnolls: Master Tembril is a generous ruler who gives away treasure and food for information about how to become a lich. We frequently go to far places when he has heard about a new artefact or book.

Q: Who is Ghore?

Gore is the leader of the local century of the dread legion. He is cruel and hates Gandborn, who seems to threaten his position.

Q: Has Suka been seen and where is she?

Banites: A paladin of that name infiltrated the town a while ago and attacked the tower of the old fool Tembril. She is in his dungeon beneath the tower.

Locals: We have never heard of that woman or seen her. Any paladin of Torm would be foolish to come here.

Gnolls: We torture her in the dungeon beneath the tower.

Q: Do you know a vampire called Eidolos? He is supposed to be the commander of the local guard.

Banites: The vampire? He crossed Tembril and the incompetent fool let him go. No one knows where he is now...

Locals: We are glad that the bloodsucker has left the town. We do not know why but we believe that he is planning to take revenge on his former master. The parting was not a friendly one.

Gnolls: The fool tried to replace the Master. He hunted him and still hunt for him. We will love to tear him apart!

Q: Is there a resistance movement in Duru?

Banites: There was one but they were put into prison. We don't care where but Tembril should know.

Locals: Yes, there were some Red Wizards not happy with being turned into undead. However, Eidolos, the old captain of the guard, brought them all to some terrible fate we do not know of.

Gnolls: We tore them apart! Why do you want to know, meat?

Freeing the Paladin

Setting Suka free is quite a challenge. The PCs have many enemies to face. The best way to keep the difficulty of the encounters down is to eliminate some threats before daring the tower.

Banites: The followers of Bane are only waiting for a chance to take over, so they will enter the tower as soon as there is a disturbance. They will help the dread legion to defeat the PCs in order to show their importance. A good way to keep them from doing so is to strike a deal with them. Gandborn will agree to anything that is not traceable to him and that will increase his power. However, simply telling him that his enemy will die is not enough and if he cannot be convinced, he will start attacking the PCs immediately.

Dread Legion: The dread legion provides the guard for the tower of Master Tembril. However, if Tembril becomes convinced that there is an interesting source of knowledge about lichdom, he will send out some of his forces. Getting a direct audience with the Master is impossible – all talk will be handled by Ghore.

Assault on Tembril Tower

The only way to free Lady Suka is to attack the Tembril Tower. As soon as the PCs decide to do so, proceed to the next chapter.

Encounter: Mountain Pass

This is a level 8 encounter.



Setup

The mountain pass is guarded by a *Waystation to Thay* (use the battlemat of the same name). It is guarded by a very bored necromancer and his hordes of zombie minions.

- 2 Zombie Hulks (MM pg. 275) [1]
- 10 Zombie Rotters (MM pg. 274) [2]
- 1 Thayan Necromancer [3]

Unless attacked outright, the necromancer will hail the PCs and ask them about their business. He will use mage hand to take any documents and will have his zombie brutes stand behind the newcomers. The necromancer is a fat and dirty Red Wizard with a poorly shaved head and a double chin. He is bored but grateful about being able to pull through the full procedure of examining visitors.



Tactics

The 2 **zombie hulks** will tear into the PCs immediately regardless of the damage they take. The **zombie rotters** next to the necromancer will guard their master, while the others will climb down from the wall and tower (2 move actions) to attack the PCs as a swarm (they take no damage from that). The necromancer will fire lightning at the PCs from his tower when he has a good target and use other powers otherwise. He will try to retreat once he is bloodied.

Thayan		Level 8 Controller	
Necromancer		XP 350	
Medium natural humanoid			
Initiative +5	Senses Perception +5		
Aura of Doom: aura 5; undead minions within the aura that are destroyed get a saving throw at -5. If they succeed, they are prone but unharmed.			
HP 82; Bloodied 41			
AC 22; Fortitude 19, Reflex 19, Will 21			
Speed 6			
⚔ Staff (standard; at-will) * Weapon			
+8 vs. AC; 1d6 + 1 damage.			
☠ Skeleton Hands (standard; at-will) * Necrotic			
Range 15; +12 vs. Fortitude; 1d10 necrotic damage and the target is immobilized (save ends).			
← Cloud of Flies (standard; recharge ⏳) * Necrotic			
Close blast 5; +9 vs. Fortitude; 2d6 + 3 necrotic damage and ongoing 5 necrotic damage (save ends).			
⚡ Lightning Bolt (standard; encounter) * Lightning			
Area burst 2 within 20 squares; +12 vs. Reflex; 3d6 lightning damage and target is dazed until the end of the necromancer's next turn. Miss: Half damage and no daze.			
Alignment Evil		Languages Common	
Skills Arcana +16, Streetwise +10, Stealth +8			
Str 12 (+5)	Dex 12 (+5)	Wis 14 (+6)	
Con 10 (+4)	Int 20 (+9)	Cha 16 (+7)	

Features of the Area

The **walls** require two move actions and an Athletic check (DC: 20) to mount.

The **lava pit** deals 2d10 damage to anybody who enters one of its squares or who starts his turn in the pit.

The **main gate** requires a strength check (DC: 25) to force open. It can be opened easily from the inside.

Falling down the **cliff** deals 3d10 damage. Climbing takes 4 actions and is DC 25.

Treasure: A golden statue of a dragon (250 gp), 2 potions of healing and 120 gp in confiscated silk.

Encounter: Final Stand

This is a level 11 encounter that is foolhardy at best and more likely plain suicidal.

Setup

Use a largely empty battle map and put some sort of bottleneck in the middle, representing the gate. If the PCs manage to exit on the opposite border, the combat will continue on a largely empty plain. The great gate is guarded by elite soldiers of Thay:

- 2 Skeletal Tomb Guardians (MM pg. 235)
- 10 Orc Warriors (MM pg. 203)
- 2 Gravehounds (MM pg. 274)
- 1 Thayan Necromancer

Thayan		Level 8 Controller	
Necromancer		Medium natural humanoid	
Initiative +5		Senses Perception +5	
Aura of Doom: aura 5; undead minions within the aura that are destroyed get a saving throw at -5. If they succeed, they are prone but unharmed.			
HP 82; Bloodied 41			
AC 22; Fortitude 19, Reflex 19, Will 21			
Speed 6			
Ⓢ Staff (standard; at-will) * Weapon			
+8 vs. AC; 1d6 + 1 damage.			
☞ Skeleton Hands (standard; at-will) * Necrotic			
Range 15; +12 vs. Fortitude; 1d10 necrotic damage and the target is immobilized (save ends).			
☜ Cloud of Flies (standard; recharge 2/3) * Necrotic			
Close blast 5; +9 vs. Fortitude; 2d6 + 3 necrotic damage and ongoing 5 necrotic damage (save ends).			
☼ Fireball (standard; encounter) * Fire			
Area burst 3 within 20 squares; +12 vs. Reflex; 3d6+6 fire damage. Miss: Half damage.			
Alignment Evil		Languages Common	
Skills Arcana +16, Streetwise +10, Stealth +8			
Str 12 (+5)	Dex 12 (+5)	Wis 14 (+6)	
Con 10 (+4)	Int 20 (+9)	Cha 16 (+7)	

Tactics

The orcs will swarm the PCs and try to hack the front line to pieces. The tomb guardians will be right in the middle. Meanwhile, the Necromancer will blast away at the PCs' second line, protected by the grave hounds.

Features of the Area

In the unlikely event that the PCs survive, they can find the following treasure: 2 potions of healing, 250 gp in coins, a small bag of Maztikan chillies worth 120 gp.

Encounter: Gandborn's Attack

This is a level 6 encounter.

Setup

Gandborn and his men are eager to punish the PCs for any insolence. The encounter might take place anywhere in the city (use an appropriate map) and might not involve all of the NPCs described here. Gandborn has the following forces:

- Gandborn
- 2 Dreadmasters of Bane
- War Fury of Bane

Gandborn	Level 7 Soldier
Medium natural humanoid (human)	XP 300
Initiative +6	Senses Perception +12
HP 70; Bloodied 35	
AC 23; Fortitude 18, Reflex 18, Will 20	
Speed 5	
Ⓢ Scimitar (standard; at-will) * Weapon	
+15 vs. AC; 1d8 + 4 damage. The target is marked and takes 1d6+2 thunder damage if it makes an attack that does not include Gandborn as a target. (Critical 1d8+12)	
Lay on Evil Hands (standard; at-will) * Healing	
Range 1; Gandborn inflicts 10 points of damage on a willing target and heals 10 hit points himself.	
⚡ Beckon Foe (minor; encounter) * Charm	
+12 vs. Will; the opponent is pulled up to 6 squares and takes 1d4+3 damage.	
Unholy Bodyguard (immediate reaction, when first bloodied)	
Pick an ally within 10 squares. For the rest of the encounter, the ally takes half of the damage inflicted on Gandborn. Gandborn only takes the other half. The damage inflicted on the ally cannot be reduced in any way. The effect ends when the ally dies.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common
Skills Intimidate +12 Endurance+8 Athletics+8 Religion+8	
Str 18 (+7)	Dex 12 (+4) Wis 18 (+7)
Con 13 (+4)	Int 10 (+3) Cha 10 (+3)
Equipment: Plate Mail, Great Shield, Scimitar	

Tactics

Gandborn will try to block the way between his priests and the PCs. The **War Fury** will teleport past the PCs to flank whoever is fighting Gandborn.

Meanwhile, the priests will establish their *Desecrated Ground* and use their ranged attacks to hurt the PCs as much as possible.

Morale: Gandborn will fight to the death, as will most of his followers. Only the younger of the Dreadmasters is a coward

and will retreat as soon as he is bloodied. This might prompt the older priest to attack him once or twice if the situation is not critical yet.

Dreadmaster	Level 6 Controller
Medium natural humanoid (human)	XP 250
Initiative +4	Senses Perception +8
HP 70; Bloodied 35	
AC 20; Fortitude 17, Reflex 17, Will 19	
Speed 6	
Ⓢ Mace (standard; at-will) * Weapon	
+11 vs. AC; 1d8 + 2 damage.	
⚡ Thunder Strike (standard; encounter) * Weapon	
+11 vs. Fortitude; 1d8+2 thunder damage. Target is pushed 2 squares and is knocked prone.	
⚡ Lightning Arrow (standard; at-will) * Lightning	
Range 10; +10 vs. Reflex; 1d10+4 lightning damage	
⚡ Desecrated Ground (standard; encounter) * Healing, Necrotic, Zone	
Close burst 1; enemies that start their turn within the zone take 1d6 necrotic damage. Allies within the zone heal 4 hitpoints if bloodied. The zone can be moved 3 squares with a move action. Sustain minor.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common
Skills Diplomacy+8 Religion+8	
Str 15 (+5)	Dex 12 (+4) Wis 18 (+7)
Con 13 (+4)	Int 13 (+4) Cha 10 (+3)
Equipment: Scale Mail, Mace, Robes, Unholy Symbol	

Features of the Area

Treasure: The Banites carry a wooden carving of a snake with semiprecious stone inlays from Chuul (250 gp) as well as 90 gp. The War Fury carries a Calimshite *Duellist's Dagger* +2.

War Fury	Level 5 Lurker
Medium natural humanoid (eladrin)	XP 200
Initiative +5	Senses Perception +8
HP 48; Bloodied 24	
AC 18; Fortitude 17, Reflex 18, Will 16	
Speed 6	
Ⓢ Dagger (standard; at-will) * Weapon	
+10 vs. AC; 1d4 + 2 damage.	
Duellist's Dagger (free; encounter) * Weapon	
Range 1; the War Fury gains combat advantage against the target until the end of her turn.	
Combat Advantage	
The War Fury deals +2d8 damage with combat advantage.	
Feystep (move; encounter) * Teleport	
The War Fury can teleport 5 squares.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common
Skills Intimidate +12 Endurance+8 Athletics+8	
Str 15 (+4)	Dex 17 (+5) Wis 14 (+5)
Con 12 (+3)	Int 13 (+3) Cha 10 (+2)
Equipment: Leather Armour, Duellist's Dagger	

Chapter 3: Retrieving the Skull

This chapter is designed for 5 characters of level 5. It covers the storming of Tembril Tower, a sequence of two encounters.

Towards the Tower

In the last chapter, the PCs should have found out that Suka is kept in the tower. They might have been able to divert some of the power groups in the city and now approach the tower.

Open Approach: If the PCs approach openly and during the day, the tower inhabitants will sound an alarm and auxiliary troops will be called. The PCs start with the encounter *Tembril Tower* and fight their way up to the second level to battle Tembril in *Showdown*. Afterwards they can free Suka from the dungeon (see 'Freeing Suka'). However, during the time they do that, the auxiliary troops will storm the tower and will fight the PCs on whatever level they are on – see *Auxiliary Attack*.

Stealthy Approach: The stealthy approach takes them same form but no alarm is sounded. Thus, the PCs will be able to flee before reinforcements arrive.

Audience: If the PCs ask for an audience, they will be able to talk to Ghore only, who handles unwanted visitors. They gnoll will meet the PCs in the Gnoll's chamber on the lower level of Tembril tower. He will hardly listen to their arguments and look at them bored and hungry. Only if they talk about the secrets of lichdom will he promise to speak to his master and might then be sent away to discover whatever the PCs were talking about.

Inside the Tower

The tower of Master Tembril is a place few people get to see. In fact, entering it will most likely trigger immediate combat.

Level 1

Level 1 of Tembril Tower is reserved mostly for the guards and for supplies. However, there is also the room of the

Majordomos, a jaded and vain man who has little more than ceremonial function.



1 – Majordomo's Chambers: These luxurious rooms are the home of the Majordomo. He likes to take scented baths and the whole room reeks of perfume.

2 – Gnolls' Lair: The guard gnolls live in this stinking mess. The place is barely lit and has a definite animal smell.

3 – Stairway: The stairway is a pretty normal room, except for the two-way teleporter leading to the other wing of the tower.

4 – Supply Chamber: A lot of food and other mundane goods is stored here. But there is also some treasure as described under *Tembril Tower*.

5 – Crypt: This damp and dark chamber is used to house the skeletal guardians. In the case of combat, the portcullis is pulled up and the skeleton hordes are released.

Level 2

Level 2 of Tembril Tower contains the private chambers of his Omnipotence Master Tembril. When the PCs attack, he will be in his ritual chamber, frenetically preparing for their onslaught.



1 – Stairway: The stairway connects to the ground floor of the tower. It is a lot tidier than the lower floor and has a nice stained glass window depicting a lich slaying a horde of dwarves.

2 – Audience Chamber: In the rare cases where Tembril grants an audience, he meets the petitioner in this room. The room has the atmosphere of a kitchen and the cosy smell of deep-fried food. The door to room 3 has *Arcane Lock* placed on it. Only somebody wearing the symbol of the dread legion can enter, all others find the door locked (Thievery DC 25).

3 – Ritual Chamber: In this dark room smelling heavily of incense, Tembril performs powerful rituals. This is the room where Tembril will await his attackers. Anybody passing through the green cloud might be slowed and weakened (see *Showdown*). The two prisoners in the chamber are almost dead and would have to be carried to be rescued. One is a local merchant, the other is a cultist of Cyric.

4 – Study: The study of Tembril is untidy and full of dust. Several interesting items can be found here (again, see *Showdown*). Also, there is a trap door that leads to the dungeon level on the shadowfell.

5 – Balcony: The balcony can easily be reached from the scaffold. In fact, this is an easy way for the PCs to enter. The door to the ritual chamber is typically unlocked.

Level 3

Level 3 contains an observatory that is again smaller than the previous level. It contains a lot of strange equipment but

there is nothing of value that can be carried easily.

Freeing Suka

After defeating Tembril in his chambers, the PCs might wonder where the dungeon is. When searching the study on the middle level, they find a trap door that does not make any logical sense architecture-wise. Indeed, this door does not lead to the room below but to a shaft in the Shadowfell. Climbing down the iron rungs, the PCs will arrive in a dreary room where Suka is kept.

Suka has been tortured and bitten by gnolls and is in poor shape. She can walk but cannot fight or do anything useful. She is full of anger but grateful towards the PCs. The following information can be gotten from her:

- She found out that the large crystal on the top of the tower was leeching life energy from the local people and felt she had to destroy it. This caused her capture.
- The local resistance has been wiped out by Ghore. She was about to move back home.
- The skull is in a bag together with her other stuff, which is found in a side chamber of the dungeon.

Wrapup

Indeed, the PCs will find Suka's equipment piled up neatly together with some other mundane items. When they ask her about the skull, Suka weakly points to a special bag among her equipment.

However, the skull is no longer present! Instead, the bag contains a trap placed by Eidolos (see the explosive entry of chapter 4). In any event, recovering the skull will be the core of the next chapter.

Encounter: Tembril Tower

This is a level 5 encounter, probably a bit easier due to the low level of the skeletons.

Setup

This encounter is a bit variable in its location. The battle might take place exclusively on the ground floor of Tembril Tower or might spread to the upper levels. If the PCs bypass the guards, this combat might even merge with *The Dungeon of Tembril*.



The following forces reside in the tower at all times:

- The Majordomus (1)
- 2 Gnoll Marauders (2 and 3, MM pg. 132)
- 9 Decrepit Skeletons (4 to 12, MM pg. 243)

The majordomus was just taking a bath and is completely naked. He will nevertheless join the fight and wield a beautiful elven glaive that looks like it was carved from a single piece of stone.

Tactics

The **gnolls** will ferociously defend the gate, not moving. If the PCs retreat, they will close the door to avoid ranged attacks. Meanwhile, the **majordomus** will scream orders and will attack from the second line with his glaive. The **skeletons** will pour forth and attack the PCs from behind.

If the PCs somehow bypass the guards (e.g. by climbing up the scaffolding) the gnolls and the majordomo will rush up the stairs. They will leave the skeletons to take defensive positions at the gates.

Majordomus		Level 7 Minion	
Medium natural humanoid (human)		XP 75	
Initiative +3		Senses Perception +2	
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.			
AC 15; Fortitude 19, Reflex 16, Will 16			
Speed 6			
⊕ Vicious Glaive (standard; at-will) * Weapon			
+12 vs. AC; 8 damage (8+2d12 on a critical)			
Wet and Naked			
Minion rolls +15 to free himself when grabbed.			
Alignment Evil		Languages Common	
Skills Athletics +8 Diplomacy+15 Bluff+15			
Str 16 (+6)		Dex 11 (+3) Wis 14 (+5)	
Con 14 (+5)		Int 10 (+3) Cha 15 (+5)	

Features of the Area

Outer Doors: The outer doors require a Strength check DC 30 to force open or a Thievery challenge (DC 20, 2 successes before 2 failures, on a failure, the lock is stuck).

Teleporter: The yellow energy fields are connected teleporters. When a character enters one of them, he automatically appears on the opposite station.

Scaffolding: The ladder on the outside of the tower leads to the 2nd level of the map. A single move action is sufficient to climb up or down.

Treasure: The majordomus carries a *vicious glaive* +2. In the treasure chamber, there is a halfling-sized *leather armour* +2 as well as 3 jade pieces worth 100 gp, a *potion of healing* and 70 gp. In the majordomus's room there are 280 gp in a small bag.

Encounter: The Dungeon of Tembril

This is a level 6 or 8 encounter (depending on the presence of Ghore).



Setup

This encounter will start as soon as the PCs enter the ritual chamber. They will see a hobgoblin phalanx waiting for them and (if present) Ghore behind them screaming insults and commands. Only those of passive Perception 15 or more will see Tembril lurking in the shadows, ready to strike from behind.

- Tembril (1)
- Ghore (2, unless he was sent away)
- 4 Hobgoblin Warriors (MM, pg. 138) (3-6)

Tactics

The hobgoblins will try to keep their defensive line against attacking PCs. Ghore will wait for a hole in the phalanx and will then engage one of the PCs in melee combat. Meanwhile, Tembril will use his mobility to harass the PCs as well as possible, even taking one or two opportunity attacks.

Features of the Area

Green Gas: Anybody starting in or passing through the green gas is attacked by poison. +6 vs. fortitude; target is slowed and weakened (save ends both).

Treasure: Ghore has a *Terror Great Axe* +2. The study contains *Shadowfell Gloves*,

ritual components worth 2200 gp and a *Staff of Fiery Might* +2.

Tembril		Level 5 Solo Skirmisher	
Medium natural humanoid (human)		XP 1000	
Initiative +4		Senses Perception +5	
HP 240; Bloodied 120			
AC 20; Fortitude 13, Reflex 15, Will 17			
Resist 5 necrotic; 5 fire			
Saving Throws +5			
Speed 6			
Action Points 2			
Ⓢ Touch of Death (standard; at-will) * Necrotic			
+8 vs. Fortitude; 1d10+4 necrotic damage.			
⚡ Lightning Arc (standard; at-will) * Lightning			
Range 7; +9 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 4 lightning damage, 5 ongoing lightning (save ends)			
⚡ Chain Lightning Arc (standard; at-will) * Lightning			
Tembril makes a lightning arc attack. If successful, he can make a lightning arc attack on another target within 7 squares of the original target. The chain continues until one of the attacks misses. Each enemy may be targeted only once.			
⚡ Death Blast (standard; recharge Ⓜ:Ⓜ) * Fear			
Close blast 5; +8 vs. Will; 3d10 + 2 psychic damage and target is immobilized (save ends). <i>Miss:</i> Half damage			
Mighty Leap (minor action, at will)			
Tembril shifts 4 squares.			
Triggered (immediate reaction, when first bloodied)			
Tembril makes an immediate death blast attack (even if it is not recharged).			
Alignment Evil		Languages Common, Thayan	
Skills Arcana +15			
Str 9 (+1)	Dex 16 (+5)	Wis 12 (+3)	
Con 13 (+3)	Int 18 (+6)	Cha 12 (+3)	

Ghore		Level 8 Brute	
Medium natural humanoid (gnoll)		XP 350	
Initiative +6		Senses Perception +7; low light vision	
HP 106; Bloodied 53			
AC 20; Fortitude 21, Reflex 18, Will 18			
Speed 5			
Ⓢ Terror Greataxe (standard; at-will) * Necrotic			
+13 vs. AC; 1d12+5 damage (critical 1d12+2d8+17), <i>also see Terror Attack</i>			
Terror Attack (minor; encounter) * Fear			
After a successful hit with the greataxe, Ghore can inflict a -2 penalty on all defenses of the target until the end of Ghore's next turn.			
⚡ Quick Bite (free, when Ghore hits a bloodied target with the Greataxe; at-will)			
Ghore makes a bite attack against the same target. +9 vs. AC; 1d6+5 damage			
Pack Attack			
Ghore deals 5 extra damage against enemies that have two of Ghore's allies adjacent.			
Alignment Chaotic Evil		Languages Gnoll, Common, Thayan	
Skills Intimidate +8, Stealth +10			
Str 20 (+9)	Dex 14 (+6)	Wis 12 (+5)	
Con 16 (+7)	Int 13 (+5)	Cha 15 (+6)	
Equipment: Hide Armour, Terror Great Axe +2			

Chapter 4 – The Skull

This chapter describes the chase after Eidolos through Thay and into the spellplagued Yuirwood. This is essentially a no-brainer chase that highlights a bit of the interesting landscape and provides a high degree of freedom to the PCs. It is designed for five level 6 heroes.

Summary

Eidolos has escaped the prison he was sent to by Tembril and is now looking for a way to find his ancestor Karavakos (*this is a tie-in to the Pyramid of Shadows*) who fought on the losing side in Thay's civil war a century ago. In order to do so, he has stolen the skull of Tephone which has the power to guide him.

Overview

Eidolos has left a deadly trap for his former master and now enemy. The PCs will want to recover the skull and have to hunt after the vampire. On their way, they will find numerous traces of Eidolos that send a very mixed message about his character. On the one hand he is a cruel monster, on the other he is an enemy of the oppressors that now rule Thay.

The final encounter with Eidolos's men occurs at the footsteps of the pyramid of shadows, with their master already having entered the edifice. Which leads us to the WotC adventure *Pyramid of Shadows*. As an alternate ending, the PCs can just catch Eidolos in front of a somewhat smaller extradimensional prison and free Karavakos and/or kill Eidolos.

The Parting Gift

When the PCs open the bag with the skull, they might be surprised to see a large lump of bones tied together by stripes of flayed skin. Even more surprising, the package explodes in a cloud of spores.



Round 1: Close burst 3, +15 vs. fortitude. On a hit, the target is immobilized (save ends), and on a miss the target is slowed until the end of its next turn.

Rounds 2-4: An illusionary picture of Eidolos appears who assumes that his target was Tembril. He says that he has better use for the skull than the Autarch and that the days of undead rule in Thay are numbered.

Round 5: The bag explodes in a cloud of bone shrapnel. Close burst 3, +15 vs. Reflex. 2d8+8 damage, half damage on a miss.

Countermeasures: A Thievery check vs. DC 20 or an Arcana check vs. DC 23 allow disarming the trap. A failure has no effect.

Skill Challenges – Escape from Thay

When the PCs flee from the city of Duru, they have to take part in several skill challenges that happen at the same time over a period of days. However, do not ask the players just to roll skills but base the required skill on the actions they describe.

- **Food and Shelter:** The PCs must obtain enough food to survive as well as shelter for the night. They can do this in different ways or use their endurance to deal with the hunger.
- **The Path:** The PCs might want to leave Thay straight away or to follow the trail of Eidolos. Either task requires some skill checks.

- **Dodging the Pursuers:** The PCs are pursued by the forces of the lich emperor because they killed one of his autarchs. Depending on what the PCs do, this can be easy or difficult.

Skill Challenge: Foraging Behind Enemy Lines

Travelling through the hostile land of Thay, the PCs have to find food and shelter without attracting attention.

For each day, there must be a single success per PC to avoid starvation. Only some of the “skill roll” failures count as challenge failures, i.e. those that will attract enemy attention. Those PCs not covered by a success will use a healing surge until they have an extended rest with two successes worth of food.

Complexity: Requires a number of successes equal to the number of PCs per day. Once the number of globally relevant failures has reached 4, the challenge is considered a failure. The skill challenge ends successfully once the PCs leave Thay.

Primary Skills:

- **Endurance (DC 18):** The Character making the check goes without food and sleep without any ill effect. Failure does not count against global failure total.
- **Nature (DC 23):** The character tries to forage. No easy task in the barren lands of Thay! A successful roll grants one success, for each 5 points above the DC, grant another success. Failure has no global skill challenge effect.
- **Streetwise (DC 20):** The character tries to buy things on the black market. A failure counts as a global failure. A successful skill check counts as two successes.
- **Diplomacy (DC 15):** The character tries to get support from people by begging and appealing to their good-will. This can work quite well with some people but is also likely to attract attention. Failure counts as two levels of global failure.

- **Thievery (DC 18):** Stealing food and sneaking into abandoned buildings for the night is also possible. Failure has a global effect.

Secondary Skills:

- **Streetwise or Nature (DC 20):** Streetwise or Nature can be used to cover up tracks (socially and physically). A success reduces the global failure level, a failure counts normally.
- **Intimidate (DC 18):** Intimidation can be used to delay the effect of a failed Streetwise, Diplomacy or Thievery roll for a day. I.e. the resulting rise of failure level only occurs the next day.

Success: Once the characters leave Thay, the skill challenge ends.

Failure: Failure has different levels that you should notify the PCs of.

Level 1: The PCs see black riders and possibly get warnings that agents of Szass Tamm are after them.

Level 2: People recognize the PCs from the many wanted posters that can be found everywhere.

Level 3: A patrol is waiting for them at the next town/landmark but they can easily spot and avoid it.

Level 4: A patrol of the lich emperor ambushes the PCs. (See *Patrol of the Lich Emperor*)

Trail of Eidolos

After leaving the town of Duru (probably in a hurry as the local century of the dread legion will not be happy having his Autrach killed in front of its eyes), the PCs will find the rather cold trail of Eidolos leading towards Aglarond of all places! During travel, the PCs can find out the following information (using Streetwise or just by talking to people):

- Eidolos is seen as a hero by some because he fights against the minions of the Lich Lord.

- Eidolos takes what he needs and has no respect for the weak or innocent.
- The vampire has crossed a mountain path into Aglarond, apparently searching for the legendary *Pyramid of Shadows* where one of his ancestors is imprisoned.

While you can treat this also as a key challenge, it might be better to handle the search for Eidolos informally as the PCs already have another challenge going on at the same time.

The Forests of Aglarond

Eidolos' trail leads into the depth of the Yuirwood in Aglarond. The PCs have to find the pyramid of shadows, in a stretched-out skill challenge. Each skill check takes a day and the two encounters described below will occur after day 2 and day 4 respectively. The last encounter occurs if the PCs take longer than 8 days.



Skill Challenge: Finding the Pyramid of Shadows

Use various skills to find the pyramid of shadows in the Yuirwood.

Complexity: Variable. Each success grants an additional piece of information, each successful/failed roll costs a day, leading to more encounters. PCs may use different skills on the same day if they split up but if they use the same skill, only one character

gets to roll with the others *aiding*. Note that if the group has split up, any random or scheduled encounters will have to be faced by one of the teams alone. In all fairness, it should be the stronger one.

Primary Skills:

- **Streetwise (DC 30):** There are few people to talk to in the Yuirwood, so using Streetwise is quite difficult.
- **Nature (DC 17):** The PCs are looking for traces of a supernatural pyramid in the woods.
- **Arcana (DC 22, trained only):** The PCs are looking for traces of a supernatural pyramid in the woods.
- **Notice (DC 20):** The PCs look around the haunted woods.
- **Intimidate (DC: 15, only when having captured one of Eidolos' henchmen):** The PCs question a prisoner. This will grant only one success.

Success: For each successful skill check proceed on the following table.

1	There is a part of the forest that animals avoid. It is a spellplague-riddled swamp section.
2	A larger group of soliders/mercenaries had a camp near the haunted part. There are clear traces of a hastily abandoned camp and a fight against elves. The latter fact can be gleamed from an elven arrow stuck in a tree.
3	The silhouette of a dark pyramid can be seen in the moonlight. However, its exact position cannot be determined yet. It seems to be in the haunted swamp, though.
4	The pyramid will appear soon. Near its position, on a safe island in the swamp, Eidolos and his henchmen have set up their camp (see <i>Base Camp</i>)

Failures: Failures have no detrimental effect other than advancing the timeline. On day 10, the PCs will see the fully

visible pyramid. Eidolos and his men will already be inside.

Day 2: The Elven Patrol

The PCs (or a subgroup using a specific skill) run into a group of elves hunting a troupe of gladiators. The PCs can hide and watch or pick a side. Getting into the good graces of the elves is a skill challenge described in the encounter writeup. (See *The Elven Patrol*.)

The elves are a group of cousins from one of the more reclusive clans. They have taken offence at the gladiator followers of Eidolos poaching in their woods. When the PCs stumble upon them, they are in the process of hunting Swordmaster Kane, a tall and scar-covered human wearing a bear-like costume reinforced with chainmail elements as well as his tanglefoot-bag wielding “fishermen”.



Day 4: The Evil Swamp

The PCs accidentally wander into a piece of plaguechanged swamp. In the middle of the swamp, a twisted body has half-merged with a tree glowing in a strange blue light. The trapped dwarf moans and begs to be killed. A single hit (all defences 14) will kill the poor creature. However, information can only be gained by getting close to the hoarse creature. It is mad with fear and knows little other than that the black pyramid called it in his dreams (+2 on next skill check for finding the pyramid).

In order to reach the dwarf, the PCs have to go squares into the swamp (you can use

a battlemat, I recommend *Skeleton Key Games e-Adventures Tiles Swamp*).

Each turn within the swamp deals spellplague damage to the PCs. This particular effect is treated like a disease but can only be cured with the *Remove Spellplague* ritual.

Attack: +6 vs. Fortitude

Endurance improve DC 16, maintain DC 12, worsen DC 11 or lower

Target is cured
Initial: Target has -1 on all defences and has its maximum healing surges reduced by 1. Skin starts to ripple as if something is moving beneath.
Target loses another healing surge. Its eyes glow in a faint blue light.
Final State: Target can only heal damage by divine means and is considered to be dazed.

Treasure: The dying dwarf is wearing a *Helm of Battle* and has a beautiful sava board made of ivory and mithril. Its worth is 500 gp.

Day n+7: Shadow Pyramid Guard

On each day after day 7, the PCs will run into one of the increasing number of patrols of dread lancers sent out by Szass Tamm to protect the pyramid on its arrival. If you do not want to bombard the PCs with encounters, give them a chance to avoid the patrols at first with stealth checks,

Entering the Pyramid and Finale

When the PCs find out about the place where the pyramid will appear, they will have some time to go there. The spot is right in the spellplagued swamp and they might want to avoid going to the base of the pyramid just yet.

When they enter the swamp, they will notice that Eidolos and his henchmen have set up another camp at the fringes of the tainted land. They can try to sneak by or to attack their competitors. In any of those events, run the encounter *At the Base of the Pyramid*.

The PCs might also want to negotiate, especially if they feel that they have a common cause with Eidolos. Getting the vampire to cooperate is simpler as it seems. If the PCs can show they are enemies of the Lich, he will be happy to gain them as allies. Whether they will like the style of their new “friend” in the long run, is another question. Also, what neither Eidolos nor the PCs know is that the Skull of Tephone needs life force to be sacrificed in order to free Karavakos from the pyramid.

Skill Challenge: Ally with Eidolos

If the PCs try to negotiate, Eidolos will be willing to listen as long as they do not make any hostile moves.

Complexity: 2 successes before 5 failures.

Primary Skills:

- **Diplomacy (DC 15):** If the PCs stress the mutual interest they share with Eidolos, allow them to make a diplomacy check.
- **Bluff (DC 20):** It is possible to lie to Eidolos but he has a fine nose for untruth.
- **Intimidate (DC 25):** Intimidating Eidolos into cooperation is very hard. The man has gone through hell and lived to tell the tale.

Success: On a success, Eidolos will work together with the PCs. His goal is to enter the pyramid and free his father at any cost. The PCs are little more than cannon fodder for him.

Eidolos

Eidolos is a fanatical Thayan patriot who believes that the old days were the best. He passionately hates undead but does not seem to have a problem with being one himself or using his powers. He treats non-Thayans as second-class beings and has no problem with using them.

Finale

The game should end with a cliffhanger as the PCs enter the pyramid of shadows. If you do not have this adventure, use another

dungeon and place a tiefling wizard into its heart.

Encounter: Patrol of the Lich Emperor

This is a level 8 encounter that can occur at any time the PCs fail their roles to stay undetected in Thay

Setup

Chose a battlemap appropriate for the terrain the encounter occurs in. Place the PCs near one corner and the patrol near the other.

The patrol consists of:

- 2 Wargs (MM pg. 265)
- 2 Dread Lancers mounted on the wargs.

Tactics

The patrol will try to attack the PCs and bring them down. The riders are undead and will fight to the death. However, their mounts will retreat when below 10 hit points.

Features of the Area

The features of the area can vary widely, depending on where the encounter occurs.

Treasure: The patrol has little of value other than its equipment.

Dread Lancer	Level 10 Soldier
Medium natural humanoid (undead)	XP 500
Initiative +9	Senses Perception +6; darkvision
HP 106; Bloodied 53	
AC 24; Fortitude 23, Reflex 20, Will 21	
Immune disease, poison Resist 10 necrotic Vulnerable 5 radiant	
Speed 5	
Ⓢ Longspear (standard; at-will) * Weapon	
+15 vs. AC; 1d10 + 5 damage. Reach	
⚔ Necrotic Blast (standard; at-will) * Necrotic	
Range 10; +12 vs. AC; 3d6 + 5 necrotic damage.	
⚔ Deadly Stare (standard; encounter) * Psychic, Fear	
Range 10; +11 vs. Will; 3d10 + 2 psychic damage and target is immobilized (save ends).	
Rideby Attack (minor action; at will)	
When taking two move actions in a turn, the dread lancer can use a minor action to make a standard attack at any point along its path of movement.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Thayan
Skills Athletics +15, Intimidate +14	
Str 21 (+10)	Dex 15 (+7) Wis 12 (+6)
Con 18 (+9)	Int 10 (+5) Cha 15 (+8)
Equipment: Scale armor, longspear	

Encounter: Elven Patrol

This encounter's level is variable. If the PCs manage to side with the elves, it is level 0. If the PCs battle the elves, it is level 7.

Setup

Use a generic forest battlemat for this encounter. Treat all squares under a tree crown as difficult terrain (undergrowth).

The following two parties are in a fight when the PCs encounter them. The gladiators are running from the elves. How well the PCs are prepared depends on their highest **passive Perception** value:

13 or less: The PCs are surprised when the gladiators run into them.

16 or less: The PCs are not surprised but have no time to prepare

17 or more: The PCs can set themselves up on the map anywhere they want.

Elven Hunters (Level 7)

The elven patrol consists of the following warriors.

- 4 elven bowmasters
- 2 unicorns (MM, pg. 257)

Elven Bowmaster		Level 4 Artillery
Medium natural humanoid		XP 175
Initiative +7	Senses Perception +12; low light	
HP 44; Bloodied 22		
AC 17; Fortitude 14, Reflex 18, Will 15		
Speed 7		
⊕ Longsword (standard; at-will) * Weapon		
+8 vs. AC; 1d8 + 3 damage		
↘ Longbow (standard; at-will) * Weapon		
Range 10/40; +9 vs. AC; 1d10 + 5 necrotic damage.		
Archer's Mobility		
If the elven bowmaster moves at least 4 squares on its turn, it gets a +2 to ranged attack rolls.		
Elven Accuracy (free action; encounter)		
An elf can reroll an attack roll but must use the new result.		
Wild Step		
Elves ignore difficult terrain when they shift		
Alignment	Unaligned	Languages Common, Elven
Skills Athletics +15, Intimidate +14		
Str 21 (+10)	Dex 15 (+7)	Wis 12 (+6)
Con 18 (+9)	Int 10 (+5)	Cha 15 (+8)

Gladiators (Level 7)

The gladiator henchmen of Eidolos will try to overrun any obstacle in their way and are not very keen on negotiation.

- Swordmaster Kane
- Water Genasi Chainfighter
- 8 Water Genasi "Fishermen"

Skill Challenge: Alliance

In order to ally with the elves, the PCs have to talk with them over the combat. In the meantime, the PCs will suffer attacks as assumed allies of the gladiators.

Complexity: 4 successes before 2 failures.

Primary Skills:

- **Diplomacy (DC: 18):** Non-elves or eladrin have a -2 penalty on their roll.
- **Bluff (DC: 18):** The PCs can use lies to appease the elves but this will lead to conflict later when the lies are found out.
- **Intimidate (DC: 20):** The PCs can cow the elves into stopping their attack but the elves will be hostile afterwards, possibly returning with reinforcements.

Success: The elves will stop attacking the PCs and concentrate solely on the gladiators. On a failure (and before success) the elves will attack the PCs as if they were allies of the gladiators.



Tactics

The elves hunt the gladiators who try to retreat with their poached game. The elves will try to stay in the undergrowth as much as possible, with the unicorns moving to their opponents' rears and attacking on and off.

The gladiators on the other hand try to reach the edge of the map and will simply concentrate on crushing anything in their way.

Features of the Area

The terrain is a generic forest map with lots of undergrowth. Make sure to have a lot of difficult terrain.

Treasure: 10 tanglefoot bags (level 7), Safewing Amulet +2 (worn by Kane).

Swordmaster Kane		Level 7 Elite Soldier	
Medium natural humanoid (human)		XP 600	
Initiative +6	Senses Perception +12		
HP 140; Bloodied 70			
AC 25; Fortitude 20, Reflex 18, Will 20			
Saving Throws +2			
Action Points 1			
Speed 5			
Ⓢ Doublesword (standard; at-will) * Weapon			
+15 vs. AC; 1d8 + 4 damage. The target is marked. (Critical on a 19 or 20.)			
Ⓡ Twin Strike (standard; encounter) * Weapon			
+15 vs. AC; 2d8 + 8 damage. The target is knocked prone. (Critical on a 19 or 20.)			
Team Tactics			
Kane and his allies deal an extra 1d6 damage to targets that Kane flanks.			
Inspiring Strike (immediate reaction, when scoring a critical hit) * Healing			
When Kane strikes a critical hit, all allies within 5 squares heal 4 hit points.			
You shall not pass			
When a marked target shifts away from Kane, he can make an immediate standard melee attack. If he hits, the target is knocked prone.			
Alignment Unaligned		Languages Common	
Skills Intimidate+12 Endurance+15 Athletics+8			
Str 18 (+7)	Dex 12 (+4)	Wis 18 (+7)	
Con 13 (+4)	Int 10 (+3)	Cha 10 (+3)	
Equipment: Chain mail, double sword			

Water Genasi „Fisherman“		Level 8 Minion	
Medium elemental humanoid		XP 88	
Initiative +7	Senses Perception +5		
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.			
AC 22; Fortitude 20, Reflex 18, Will 18			
Speed 6			
Ⓢ Trident (standard; at-will) * Weapon			
+10 vs. AC; 6 damage.			
Tanglefoot Bag (standard; encounter)			
Range 5/10; +10 vs. reflex; target is immobilized for one round and then slowed for one round.			
Swiftcurrent (move; encounter)			
The fisherman can shift up to 6 squares, ignoring difficult terrain, occupied squares over any solid or liquid surface.			
Alignment Unaligned		Languages Common	
Skills Acrobatics +10			
Str 19 (+7)	Dex 18 (+7)	Wis 14 (+5)	
Con 15 (+5)	Int 11 (+3)	Cha 15 (+5)	

Water Genasi Chainfighter		Level 4 Controller	
Medium elemental humanoid		XP 175	
Initiative +5	Senses Perception +12; low light		
HP 44; Bloodied 22			
AC 19; Fortitude 16, Reflex 16, Will 15			
Speed 5			
Ⓢ Ball & Chain (standard; at-will) * Weapon			
+8 vs. AC; 1d6 + 3 damage; can slide target 1 square			
Ⓡ Legbreaker (standard; encounter) * Weapon			
+8 vs. Fortitude; 1d10 + 5 damage and target is immobilized until the end of its next turn.			
Swiftcurrent (move; encounter)			
The fisherman can shift up to 6 squares, ignoring difficult terrain, occupied squares over any solid or liquid surface.			
Alignment Evil		Languages Common	
Skills Athletics +15, Intimidate +14			
Str 21 (+10)	Dex 15 (+7)	Wis 12 (+6)	
Con 18 (+9)	Int 10 (+5)	Cha 15 (+8)	
Equipment: Chain mail, ball & chain			



Encounter: Shadow Pyramid Guard

This is a level 8 encounter that occurs when the PCs take too long in finding the pyramid. It represents henchmen of Szass Tamm who were ordered to the area to protect the pyramid on its arrival in the real world.

Setup

Choose a battlemat appropriate for the terrain the encounter occurs in. Place the PCs near one corner and the patrol near the other.

The patrol consists of:

- 2 Wargs (MM pg. 265)
- 2 Dread Lancers mounted on the wargs.

Tactics

The patrol will try to attack the PCs and bring them down. The riders are undead and will fight to the death. However, their mounts will retreat when below 10 hit points.

Features of the Area

The features of the area can vary widely, depending on where the encounter occurs.

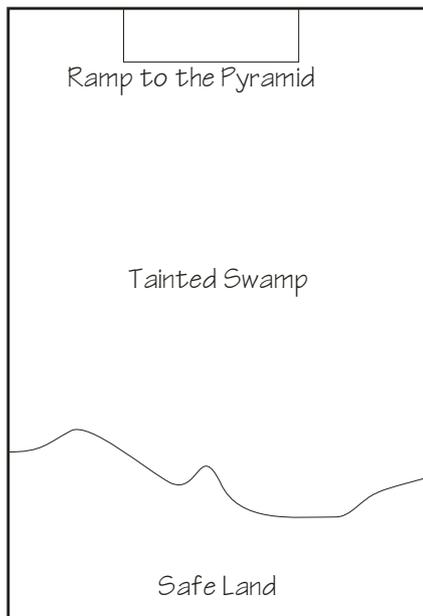
Treasure: The patrol has little of value other than its equipment. The total loot is 150gp worth in silver rings.

Dread Lancer		Level 10 Soldier	
Medium natural humanoid (undead)		XP 500	
Initiative +9	Senses Perception +6; darkvision		
HP 106; Bloodied 53			
AC 24; Fortitude 23, Reflex 20, Will 21			
Immune disease, poison Resist 10 necrotic Vulnerable 5 radiant			
Speed 5			
Ⓢ Longspear (standard; at-will) * Weapon +15 vs. AC; 1d10 + 5 damage. Reach			
⚔ Necrotic Blast (standard; at-will) * Necrotic Range 10; +12 vs. AC; 3d6 + 5 necrotic damage.			
⚔ Deadly Stare (standard; encounter) * Psychic, Fear Range 10; +11 vs. Will; 3d10 + 2 psychic damage and target is immobilized (save ends).			
Rideby Attack (minor action; at will) When taking two move actions in a turn, the dread lancer can use a minor action to make a standard attack at any point along its path of movement.			
Alignment Evil	Languages	Common,	
	Thayan		
Skills Athletics +15, Intimidate +14			
Str 21 (+10)	Dex 15 (+7)	Wis 12 (+6)	
Con 18 (+9)	Int 10 (+5)	Cha 15 (+8)	
Equipment: Scale armor, longspear			

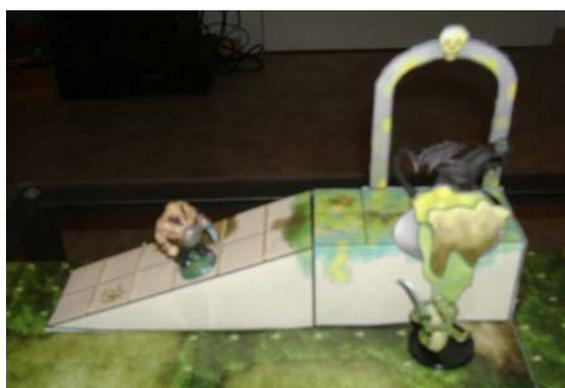
Encounter: At the base of the Pyramid

This is a level 10 encounter that takes place at the fringe of the haunted swamp in the Yuirwood. Note that the PCs might want to negotiate.

Setup



The map above shows the general setup of the area. Place Eidolos and his camp somewhere on the safe land. For the ramp to the pyramid, you can use the papercraft model on my web site called "Stone Gallery".



Eidolos's team consists of the following troops:

- Eidolos
- 2 Mezzodemons (MM, pg 58)
- 4 Water Genasi "Fishermen"

Tactics

Eidolos will tell his henchmen to attack and will himself join the fray, proceeding to the rear in swarm form, with the Skull of Tephone screaming wild encouragement at all sides of the battle. As soon as he is bloodied, Eidolos will go for the pyramid, again in swarm form.

Features of the Area

Each turn within the swamp deals spellplague damage to the PCs. This particular effect is treated like a disease but can only be cured with the *Remove Spellplague* ritual.

Attack: +6 vs. Fortitude

Endurance improve DC 16, maintain DC 12, worsen DC 11 or lower

Target is cured
Initial: Target has -1 on all defences and has its maximum healing surges reduced by 1. Skin starts to ripple as if something is moving beneath.
Target loses another healing surge. Its eyes glow in a faint blue light.
Final State: Target can only heal damage by divine means and is considered to be dazed.

Treasure: Eidolos carries a treasure chest with him that he will leave unattended during battle. It contains the following:

- An eldadrin tapestry depicting the victory of Correlon over Gruumsh. Possibly manufactured in ancient Myth Drannor and worth 1000 gp
- 3 statues of elven kings made of blue jade worth 300gp each.
- 700gp
- Bloodthread Red Wizard's Robes +2 (cloth armour)
- Brooch of Shielding +2 (Adv. Vault, lv 8 item)

Water Genasi „Fisherman“		Level 8
		Minion
Medium elemental humanoid		XP 88
Initiative +7		Senses Perception +5
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.		
AC 22; Fortitude 20, Reflex 18, Will 18		
Speed 6		
⊕ Trident (standard; at-will) * Weapon		
+10 vs. AC; 6 damage.		
Tanglefoot Bag (standard; encounter)		
Range 5/10; +10 vs. reflex; target is immobilized for one round and then slowed for one round.		
Swiftcurrent (move; encounter)		
The fisherman can shift up to 6 squares, ignoring difficult terrain, occupied squares over any solid or liquid surface.		
Alignment Unaligned		Languages Common
Skills Acrobatics +10		
Str 19 (+7)	Dex 18 (+7)	Wis 14 (+5)
Con 15 (+5)	Int 11 (+3)	Cha 15 (+5)

Eidolos		Level 10 Elite Soldier
Medium natural humanoid (undead)		XP 1200
Initiative +10		Senses Perception +12; darkvision
HP 200; Bloodied 100		
Regeneration 10 (does not work in a round where Eidolos has taken radiant damage, damage from a meteor metal weapon or when in direct sunlight)		
Immune disease, poison		
Resist 10 necrotic Vulnerable radiant 10		
AC 23; Fortitude 30, Reflex 22, Will 25		
Saving Throws +3		
Speed 4; climb 4 (spider climb)		
Action Points 1		
⊕ Battleaxe (standard; at-will) * Weapon		
+16 vs. AC; 1d12 + 8 damage. (1d12+20 critical) Also see <i>Infernal Wrath</i>		
⊖ Reckless Strike (standard; encounter) * Weapon		
+14 vs. AC; 3d12 + 8 (1d12+44 critical) Also see <i>Infernal Wrath</i>		
Combat Superiority		
When an opponent shifts from a square next to Eidolos, he can make an immediate basic attack		
Swarm of Butterflies Form (minor; at-will)		
Gains fly speed 12, cannot make attacks. Gains the swarm keyword (half damage from ranged and melee attacks) and is vulnerable 10 to close and area attacks. The effect lasts until dropped as a minor action. Does not provoke opportunity attacks when moving.		
Infernal Wrath		
+1 attack roll against an enemy that hit Eidolos since the last turn, increase damage by 3.		
Blood Drain (standard, encounter) * Healing		
Target must be grabbed, +13 vs Fortitude, 2d10 damage and Eidolos heals the same amount. Attack can be sustained as a minor action aslong as the target remains grabbed.		
Alignment Evil		Languages Common
Skills Athletics +6		
Str 13 (+1)	Dex 12 (+1)	Wis 14 (+2)
Con 11 (+0)	Int 10 (+0)	Cha 15 (+2)