

DUNGEON DELVE

Level 4

THE RAIDER'S HIDEOUT

BACKGROUND

While in the village, the sun is eclipsed by the moon. A series of dark, pulsating blackish purple lights can be seen on a nearby hill, shooting high into the sky. Villagers begin to panic. They insist their druid investigate. The sun remains eclipsed for some time.

The hill is a large burial cairn surrounded by stones. This cairn has been used for many centuries to store the bones of the villagers. It's their graveyard. A narrow stone entranceway leads inside, requiring PCs to squeeze to get in. Pulsating purple light forms a "portal" in the entranceway.



The gateway is a **crossing** to the **Shadowfell**. Once going through the portal, the PC's find themselves stepping *outside* the cairn in darkness, a bright moon overhead. In the Shadowfell, it's unusually bright, as the moon is full and closer to the planet than it has been in 500 years. Shadowfell **Gloom** is temporarily eased. The wind howls off the

desert.

Dead Gnolls and Demons. 3 dead gnolls and 2 red skinned (evistro) demons creatures lie dead outside the circle. Black helical fletched (raven) poisoned arrows with stone heads stick from their bodies. Later the villagers can explain that the **Zamar-sha** raiders were likely defending their territory, and that they would as likely killed them too! The gnolls were guarding the portal, while the shaman attempts to find the key.

EVISTRO DESCRIPTION: Though it walks on two legs, this creature is more beast than biped. Its arms are too large for its body, and they end in enormous claws. Sharp tusks jut from its lower jaw, and unholy fire burns in its eyes. Its skin is an angry shade of crimson.

EVISTRO LORE (DC 15 Arcana): Rituals known to demon-worshipping cultists and certain depraved wizards can summon evistros. They are notoriously difficult to control – usually, and the best their summoner can accomplish is to send them out to wreak havoc.

The party finds themselves in almost **unbearable heat**, about 125 degrees, and on a scrubby hill. They can see a **village** off from where they came, along the shore of a black, bubbling lake (necromantic seepage). Beyond the hill in the other direction are endless sand dunes. Off on **another** hillside, where the ruined tower would normally be located, is the tip of a pyramid.

The Village

The Shadar-kai village is has roughly the same composition as the prime material village. Everyone seems cowed and meek, with the men heading off to dig out the pyramid with shovels and digging tools.

The villagers are dejected, as they have been subjugated by a gang of gnolls. The gnolls killed their village leader, a haughty **shadar kai witch (Majinn)**. Her head is stuck on a pole in the middle of the village (head shaved



along the sides with a red ponytail). Now the villagers dig out the pyramid, as the gnolls believe they have found a land to conquer. The gnolls know the standing stones is a portal and to where, but they lack the portal key, which they believe is in the pyramid.

The gnolls are scouts for a very large tribe of desert gnolls.

Human sacrifices! The gnolls have not only demanded labor, but have required the village to give up their unmarried women (virgins) for some sort of religious rite in the pyramid. The gnolls promise the women will not be harmed, but even the witch was known to perform a sacrifice on occasion to keep the dead from rising from the lake. The arrival of the PCs and the bright moon is a sign that the gods are angry and the gnolls must be stopped. The PC's are given advice and information to assist the villagers. The PC's must kill the gnolls and seal up the temple.



The reality: The grell is allowing the gnolls to use the throne room provided it is kept fed. The gnolls have used the chair in the Throne Chamber to see the PC's world and plan an invasion. The vision from the throne shows the person in the chair holding a magical staff with an ankh on it. The gnolls believe the staff is buried with the ancient king, in a chamber below. They need the villagers to clear the sand away to gain access. The work has been going on for two weeks and is almost complete; probably in another day or two.

Conclusion: Once the gnolls are killed, the conditions that kept the portal open immediately begin to change. The moon begins to dim. The black light of the portal begins to fade. The PC's must rush to avoid getting trapped in the Shadowfell (they make it, of course). **The hostages are in a chamber under the sarcophagus.**

Shadar-kai Physical Qualities

Shadar-kai are humanlike, but the weight of existence in the Shadowfell has shaped them to be slightly shorter and much thinner than their human counterparts. A shadar-kai has a colorless complexion that varies from alabaster to dark gray. Shadar-kai hair is similarly drab or raven black. Pale hair might have a hint of color within the range of human norms. The eyes are lustrous and black, lacking any white or clear pupil. Shadows near a shadar-kai sometimes seem to reach out or deepen, especially when the shadar-kai is angry.

Although drab in natural appearance, shadar-kai are quite elaborate and idiosyncratic in personal adornment. They like dark and exotic clothing, jewelry, and weapons, often decorated with swatches of bright color. Hair is similarly ornate and often dyed. All shadar-kai embellish their skin with tattoos, scars, and piercings

Rendra, Gnoll Shaman

Level 8 Controller (Leader)

Medium Natural Humanoid

XP 350


Initiative +6 **Senses Perception** +7; low-light vision

Leader of the Pack aura 5: allies in the area get a +1 bonus to attack rolls. While the creature is bloodied, the bonus increases to +2.

HP 86; **Bloodied** 43

AC 22; **Fortitude** 24, **Reflex** 21, **Will** 23 **Resistances:** 5 fire

Speed 6

 **Caustic Touch** (standard; at-will) * **fire**

+12 vs Reflex; 1d8 + 5 damage or 1d8+7 while bloodied.

 **Blastback** (standard; encounter) * **fire**

+13 vs Reflex; 3d8 + 5 damage and the target is pushed 6 squares. 3d8+7 when bloodied.

Pack Attack

A gnoll with demonic scourge does 5 extra damage on melee attacks against an enemy that has two or more of the demonic scourge's allies adjacent to it.

 **Chaos Bolt** (standard; at-will) * **fire**

Ranged 5; +12 vs Reflex; 1d8 + 5 damage and the target is slowed until the end of her next turn.

Shun the Nonbeliever (Immediate Reaction, When an enemy moves adjacent; at-will.)

The target slides 3 squares.

 **Vortex of Chaos** (standard; encounter) * **fire, psychic**

Area burst 1 within 10; +10 vs Reflex; 3d8 + 5 damage and target takes ongoing 5 psychic damage and is dazed (save ends both).

Alignment: Chaotic Evil **Languages:** Abyssal, Common

Skills: Insight, Intimidate, Religion

Str 20 (+9) **Dex** 14 (+6) **Wis** 18 (+8)

Con 14 (+6) **Int** 14 (+6) **Cha** 17 (+7)

Equipment: hide armor, heavy flail, **ritual of shadow passage**, **Jar of Steam**

JAR OF STEAM

This clay jar is warm to the touch. When opened, it creates a cloud of steam that fills the area around it.

Level: 7

Price: 2600 gp

Wondrous Item

Power (Daily • Zone): Standard Action. When you pull the lid off the jar, hot steam fills a close burst 1 until the end of your next turn. This zone of steam provides concealment to all creatures within it. Any creature other than you that starts its turn within the zone takes 1d6 fire damage. Sustain minor; you must be within 10 squares of the zone.

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ENCOUNTER UPGRADES FOR 6 CHARACTERS OF 4TH LEVEL:

4-1 Chamber of Sand

(1175 XP, Standard)

- **4** Gnoll Claw Fighters
- 1 Sand Cascade Trap

4-2 Throne Chamber

(1325 XP, Standard)

- 1 Gnoll Huntmaster
- **3** Gnoll Marauders
 - 3 Hyenas

4-3 Well of the Hungry One

(XP, 1950, Hard)

- **1 Gnoll Shaman**
- **5** Gnoll Huntmasters
 - 1 Grell