

PLAYER HANDOUT 1: THE STORY SO FAR...

EPIC3~1, EPIC3~2, AND EPIC3~3

Two years ago, the flow of abominations from Carceri to Arvandor increased dramatically. Many of the abominations appearing in Arvandor were tainted with a virulent poison capable of corrupting mortals and immortals alike. Arvandor had become so overwhelmed by these incursions that many of them spread beyond Arvandor into Faerûn itself. Fearing that these incursions were too much for the exalted of Arvandor to handle, Corellon sent for aid from the fey kingdoms of Faerûn.

Adventurers traveled to Arvandor and joined the Glorious Hunt. Through their heroics, they cleansed Corellon and his *ruesti* of the poison that threatened their very existence and destroyed the abominations that carried it. After their victory, Corellon set the adventurers on a quest to travel into Carceri, discover the source of the poison and increased flow of abominations, and put a stop to it.

Lolth had taken control over the metaphysical funnel that links Carceri's isle of Agathys to Arvandor through use of a powerful ritual. Understanding that a direct assault upon Arvandor would prove to be fruitless, she employed Sinmaker with crafting a poison powerful enough to bring certain death to Corellon. Her plan to increase the flow of abominations into Arvandor and infuse them with Sinmaker's virulent poison was working perfectly until the PCs interceded. Her plan foiled, Lolth retreated back to the Demonweb, leaving a number of powerful servants within Agathys to maintain control over the funnel. Typical of her nature, she did not hold up her end of the bargain with Sinmaker before taking her leave.

The adventurers followed Lolth's treachery into Carceri and, with Sinmaker's aid, managed to defeat the forces that maintained Lolth's hold over the funnel. With the denizens of Carceri bearing down on them, the adventurers managed to escape the prison plane through a portal to the Demonweb that Lolth's forces had planned to use for their own escape. Corellon then requested that the PCs assist him once more by seeking out Lolth as his emissaries.

Tsien Chiang, a Shou sorceress of immeasurable power and knowledge, devised a scheme to distract Lolth long enough to siphon energy from the Demonweb for her evil schemes. Disguised as a young priestess of Lolth, she manipulated a drow matron, Zarylene, into discovering the means by which Lolth could corrupt Corellon and his realm of Arvandor. Zarylene prayed to the Spider Queen with her new apprentice's scheme. Lolth heard her prayers and launched her campaign against Arvandor shortly thereafter. Following Lolth's departure, Tsien disappeared into the depths of the Demonweb Pits bearing the shard of an ancient artifact. She planted the artifact and quickly fled the Demonweb before Lolth's return. Once planted, the artifact began to siphon power from the Demonweb and channel it through a planar conduit to Tsien.

Shortly after Tsien's disappearance, the Demonweb began to unravel, erupting into chaos as entire sections dissolved and long-imprisoned demons escaped into Faerûn. Lolth returned to her realm severely weakened and furious that she had allowed herself to be tricked. All of her power bent on keeping the Demonweb together, Lolth was in need of help.

The PCs navigated their way through the dissolving Demonweb to Lolth's throne, where she negotiated several concessions in exchange for destruction, or removal, of the shard. The PCs defeated the shard, thus bringing stability back to the Demonweb.

EPIC4~1, EPIC4~2, AND EPIC4~3

Having stolen power from Corellon and Lolth, Tsien Chiang made plans to drain power from Sehanine. Following her trail, the PCs stopped Candlekeep from burning to the ground and made their way to Myth Dyraalis, where several of Sehanine's most devout followers had been petrified while holding a vestige of the goddess' power.

The PCs interrupted Tsien's attempt before she could completely drain Sehanine's power, but were unable to defeat the sorceress, due in large part to enchanted gems; the hearts that originally freed Tsien to return to Faerûn. Tsien took the power she had drained and stole the Mistress of the Night, heading to another plane to work further on her ritual.

PLAYER HANDOUT 1: THE STORY SO FAR... (CONTINUED)

It was then that Sehanine offered her assistance to the PCs, aiding them to muster an army to attack at I'Cath, Tsien's stronghold, while the sorceress was out. The PCs quickly gathered armies from all over Faerûn and assaulted the island, fought their way into the Palace of Bones and overcame Tsien's generals and daughters. They then learned that the corrupted angel Karadrach, last seen orchestrating Corellon's poisoning, was an ally of Tsien who had aided her in creating her magic defenses, and knew a way to defeat them.

The PCs traveled through a portal to a strange land where ancient divine defenders had been misled by Karadrach and another evil angel who called up demons to face the PCs and used some strange magic to alter the flow of time around the heroes.

Karadrach used a powerful magic, called Words of Destruction - perversions of the Words of Creation the gods used to create the world - to strip the PCs of their defenses, but they still prevailed against him, and secured the research about the words which would allow them to remove the defenses of Tsien's hearts the next time they fought.

The PCs returned to the Palace of Bone through the portal, only to find that many years had passed since they stepped through hours ago. Unbeknownst to them, they had actually entered the Barrens, a duplicitous layer of the abyss that is actually a post-apocalyptic version of reality. Its Demon Lord, Oublivae, Angel of the Everlasting Void, appeared as a misguided angel. She attempted to inflict supernatural despair against the PCs and delay them from stopping Tsien's ritual in time.

The PCs traveled for an indeterminate time in the Barrens, slaying all manner of evil and shadowy creatures, while witnessing allies tortured and destroyed. Everywhere they went, the PCs saw the effects of Tsien having successfully summoned the Hungering Dark out from Carceri and taken control of it.

The PCs threw off the effects of Oublivae's despair, and struck back at the most dreadful forces she could muster against them. Bit by bit, they proved themselves stronger than her power, kindling a force of Hope to strike back against her magic.

Eventually, the demon monarch confronted the PCs in a final showdown. In a final fight over a bottomless pit down into the Abyss, the PCs defeated Oublivae and managed to escape her realm back to reality.

There, the PCs hurried to gather information and resources necessary to stop Tsien Chiang's ritual to summon and control the Hungering Dark.

Across four locations in and above Faerûn, the PCs fought against Tsien Chiang, liberating the power of the gods Auril, Corellon, Lolth, and Sehanine that she'd stolen, destroying her magic hearts, then finally defeating the sorceress moments before the Hungering Dark arrived in Faerûn.

Though Tsien Chiang was stopped, the Hungering Dark was freed from Carceri and lost somewhere between the planes.

EPIC5~1

The PCs embarked on a daring plan to re-imprison the Hungering Dark. Powering the Calimemnon crystal using the djinn Calim and efreet Memnon, and firing a bolt of chaotic spellplague energy at the Hungering Dark using the Pandemonium Stone, the PCs were able to weaken the Hungering Dark and gain its attention.

Before they could fully imprison it, however, Oublivae (who had only staged her previous death) interfered. She had been secretly using holes in the plaguelands to turn pieces of Faerûn into the Barrens layer of the Abyss. The Demon Queen met her final end at the PC's hands, which forced Shar to reveal her guiding hand upon events. She struck directly at the prison, scattering the weakened Hungering Dark in shreds across the nations, then fled away.

PLAYER HANDOUT 2: DRACORAGE MYTHAL

Nearly 30,000 years ago, the dragons attempted to conquer all of Faerûn. After millennia of strife, the eladrin crafted a mythal to disrupt the dragons' rule.

The mythal was tied to the King-Killer Star. The regular arrival of the comet drove the dragons into insanity, removing their ability to plan and driving them to attack anything, including each other.

Unfortunately, one hundred and ten years ago, the dracorage mythal was subverted. Sammaster, the lich founder of the Cult of the Dragon, drove the dragons into the Rage off schedule. He used the chaos to recruit an army of dragons to the cult's service with promises to protect the dragons from insanity.

Sammaster's plot was thwarted by a coalition of good dragons and heroes led by a song dragon named Karasendrieth. They discovered that Sammaster turned the dracorage mythal into his own phylactery. They had no choice but to destroy it. This act destroyed Sammaster forever, and should have prevented the dracorage from ever occurring again.

The dracorage mythal was carefully hidden in the Great Glacier. The site is warded against divination and travel magic, except through a portal located within an abandoned elven waystation located elsewhere in the Great Glacier.

PLAYER HANDOUT 3: FOR CORMYR!

The city of Suzail is threatened by undead monsters dredged up from the sea and rampaging hordes of wraiths. Unfortunately, most of its military might is away attending to problems of a Netherese nature.

Each round, the wraiths will kill many people, spawning even more wraiths to come and attack you. For every success (DC 30+) achieved in the skill challenge, you will reduce the number of wraiths that spawn at the end of round by 1. If you manage to score a DC 40+, then you are so successful that you rally the people of Suzail to your aid and may choose some way for the city to assist you in the first three rounds of combat.

All benefits trigger at the end of each round, only for the first three rounds of combat.

ARTILLERY

You have allowed the city's mighty ballista, catapults, and war wizard fireballs to join the fray.

Benefit: Choose one enemy to take 50 damage.

FIRST AID

The city's clerics and paladins move up to support you, adding prayers for healing for their saviors.

Benefit: Choose one PC to regain 25 hit points.

REINFORCEMENTS

There is always a dozen hands, from a squad of soldiers, crew of sailors, or your personal guard, to assist any step you take in Suzail.

Benefit: Choose one PC to shift its speed, stand up from prone, or make an escape check.

VOLLEY

Whether from a hail of arrows, flurry of magic missiles, or even a collective hurling of bottles and bricks, you have inspired the people of Cormyr to fight back against the wraith horde.

Benefit: Choose two wraiths to destroy. Doing so does not trigger *scattering shadows*. This may be used to effectively prevent new wraiths from spawning.

PLAYER HANDOUT 4: STORM OF DEATH

You and the dragonborn of Djerad Thymar are assailed by arcs of deadly lightning. Until this problem is solved, it will be more hazardous to slay the dragon attackers, and the dragonborn will not be able to assist you as easily.

Alasklerbanbastos, the Great Bone Wyrms has animated the dragon skulls mounted on the walls of the throne room, using Tymanthor's most prized trophies as the focal point for a ritual to destroy it.

Until the hazard is overcome, you face the following difficulties:

- You gain vulnerable lightning equal to the number of successes still needed.
- Whenever you end your turn and are not adjacent to a dragon skull, Alasklerbanbastos, or Jaxanaedegor, and did not make an Endurance check to disable a skull, you take 30 lightning and necrotic damage. You may use make an Acrobatics check to reduce the damage taken by your check result, but doing so uses your immediate action for the round.
- Alasklerbanbastos (and only he) gains resistance to all damage equal to the number of successes still needed.
- At the end of each round, both Alasklerbanbastos and Jaxanaedegor heal 10 * the number of successes still needed.

The hazard can be disabled by destroying either the skulls or Alasklerbanbastos.

The dragon skulls are protected by a magic field so only an adjacent PC can work on disabling a skull, either through skill checks or attacks. Each skull requires two successes to disable.

You may make an Athletics, Religion, or Thievery skill check as a minor action.

DC 30-39: you gain one success.

DC 40+: you gain two successes, disabling the skull.

If you end your turn adjacent to a skull, you may make an Endurance check as a free action. Doing so deals 30 lightning and necrotic damage to you. You do not also take damage from the hazard this turn.

DC 30-39: you gain one success.

DC 40+: you gain two successes, disabling the skull.

VANQUISHER TARHUN AND THE LANCE DEFENDERS

The dragonborn are fully committed to destroying the undead dragons. At the end of each round, they will deal 50 damage to one of the dragons.

Should you defeat the deathstorm hazard, then the bat-riding lance defenders will no longer need to spend the majority of their time dodging lightning and follow your command into battle. Each PC may, at the end of their turn, make a free action Diplomacy or Intimidate check to command the dragonborn, dealing their check result to a dragon of their choice.

You gain a +10 bonus to this roll if you are a member of the Platinum Cadre, Lance Defenders, or have two or more influential story awards for the Tymanthor region (such as a necklace from house Jalt).

PLAYER HANDOUT 5: SO. MANY. DRAGONS.

Almraiven is threatened by dozens of dragons. These dragons have been corrupted by the Hungering Dark and influenced by the rage, forced to rampage through and destroy the city. If you do not assist it, Almraiven will be destroyed within a couple rounds or less.

At the end of each round, all of the young dragons throughout the city will attempt to destroy everything nearby. The city is partially demolished once it's taken 20 damage and completely annihilated once it's taken 40 damage. At the end of each round, it takes one point of damage for each young dragon still out in the city (not on your map). It may already be damaged, depending how long it took you to arrive.

Several dragons will come to investigate and attack you each round in the normal course of events, but you'll need to really get the dragons' attention if you want to entice enough of them to come attack you to keep the city free from damage.

Protect the City: At the start of your turn, you may choose to forsake your own defenses in order to help save the city. This leaves your character free to focus on saving the city and also draws the attention of the dragons and Hungering Dark elsewhere in the city to attack you.

Until the Almraiven encounter ends, the following effects apply:

- You take a -3 penalty to all defenses.
- Reduce all damage the city takes each round by 2.
- At the end of each round, an additional two dragons move to your map to attack.
- You gain a +5 bonus to the end of round skill check (below).

Arcana, Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate, or Nature (Free Action):

At the end of each round, each PC should make a skill check as a free action to snap the dragons out of their enchantment. Total the check results of the table, adding 40 for the WeavePasha's contribution to the ritual. This has two effects.

- (1) For every cumulative 20 points of your total check results (combined), the PCs can either bloody or remove one bloodied minion. This can be done twice to the same minion to effectively remove an unbloodied minion. Any fraction of 20 points (remainder below 20) is lost for this purpose.
- (2) In addition, each PC may apply the entire value of his or her individual check result as damage to a single non-minion dragon of the player's choice. Whenever enough damage is dealt to reduce a non-minion dragon to 0 hit points, apply any remaining damage to the next non-minion dragon until all damage is used up.

Any dragons bloodied in this manner will not use *bloodied breath*.

Any dragon reduced to 0 hit points or removed in this manner has its enchantment removed instead of dying.

Story Awards: If you have CALI07 Tarik's Gratitude (CALI3-3), or is a Pasha of Calimshan (CALI10, CALI17, CALI30, or CALI35), you gain a +5 bonus to this skill check.

End of Round Order:

- 1) Skill checks (Remove Hungering Dark influence from dragons on map)
- 2) Move dragons (Dragons equal to the # of PCs, plus dragons lured by the PCs, move onto the map)
- 3) Apply damage (City takes damage based on the number of dragons remaining off map)

PLAYER HANDOUT 6: SOUL EMPOWERED

Every time you bloody or defeat any of Sammaster's servants, you can reclaim some of the souls they have stolen. This saves the souls from destruction and they happily contribute any remaining power they have to you before they leave.

You can use the following power once for every enemy that you bloody and/or reduce to 0 hit points for the remainder of the adventure.

Soul Empowered (Healing) ♦ Consumable

This power is gained once for each of Sammaster's servants you bloody or reduce to 0 hp.

Trigger: You end your turn

Effect (Free Action): Close burst 10 (one ally in the burst); the target can either regain hit points as if it had spent a healing surge or recharge one expended encounter power.

Special: Any encounter power recharged by this effect cannot be recharged again (in any manner) until the party takes a short rest.

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PLAYER HANDOUT 7: DOWNING THE DRAGON

Careful and Steady: At the start of each round, you should decide whether your PC is being very careful and steady while riding the dragon. If you do, you may now use Athletics (instead of just Acrobatics) to avoid being dislodged from the dragon, and gain a +10 bonus to Acrobatics or Athletics checks to stay on the dragon. You will also take a -2 penalty to your defenses this round.

If you do not take that benefit, when you hit with a melee attack on your turn, you may choose to leave your weapon (or fist) partially embedded in the dragon in order to gain the *careful and steady* benefit. Instead of taking a -2 penalty to all defenses, you instead take a -5 penalty to attack rolls until the start of your next turn.

Some parts of the dragon are less stable than the main body, giving you a penalty to all checks to avoid being dislodged:

- On the wings: -5 penalty
- On the tail, neck, or head: -10 penalty

Steering the Dragon: Sammaster flies directly above the most populated part of Baldur's Gate, drawing in the feast of souls presented by the city. The massive dragon is still protected by the ritual and healing rapidly by devouring those souls.

You must get Sammaster away from this ready supply of souls or he will be impossible to destroy. The most effective way to do so is to steer his flight to a less populated area of Baldur's Gate and crash him into the ground. It might be possible to crash him earlier than that, by focusing all damage on his wings, but doing so might still land him in an area surrounded by people.

When you damage the dragon, only damage focused on the head, wings, and/or tail, will truly hinder it. You may choose any of those areas to be particularly damaged by the attack and receive any conditions, as long as that body part was in range of the attack. There are special benefits for dealing enough damage to each area (eventually crippling that area).

The dragon's body is effectively invulnerable and immune to all effects this combat. You must focus any harmful effects on an area of the dragon, which may have a limited (or extra) effect depending on the effect and area chosen. The second page of this Handout describes how normal conditions interact with each area of the dragon.

Work with your DM to describe how your effect might impair the dragon's ability to function effectively if it is not listed and the DM is unsure how to translate its impact upon the dragon and skill challenge.

PLAYER HANDOUT 7: DOWNING THE DRAGON (CONT)

Influencing Movement

Your attacks and inflicted conditions can slow the dragon and steer it away from populated areas, hindering its mass gathering of souls from Baldur's Gate.

Whenever you do any of the following, you reduce the amount of souls Sammaster gathers:

- Damage - 10 souls per point of damage
- Forced movement - 500 souls per square of forced movement
- Dazed on Head - 1000 souls
- Prone or Slowed on Wings - 1000 souls
- Blinded, Petrified, Stunned, or Unconscious on Head - 2000 souls
- Immobilized, Petrified, Restrained on Wings or Tail - 2000 souls
- Dominated or Removed from Play on the Head - 3000 souls

In addition, at the end of every round, everyone who can take free actions may make a Perception or Streetwise check to guide the dragon's fall to a safer location. Multiply your check result by 50 to represent souls saved.

Head - The dragon uses its head to bite nearby enemies, use its breath weapon, and guide its search for more souls to devour.

- Dominated*, Petrified*, Stunned*, Unconscious*, Removed from Play* - Grants combat advantage, does not gain a standard action on its next turn, and you can influence the dragon's movements.
- Blinded*, Dazed*, Marked, Weakened - Modifies the head's attacks, functioning normally.

Wings - The dragon uses its wings to perform aerial maneuvers to escape or jettison the PCs, as well as to move enough distance to get near to more souls.

- Immobilized, Petrified, Prone, Restrained, Slowed - Instead lets you influence dragon's movements

Tail - The dragon's tail is its most effective weapon for dislodging assailants and also aids it to steer its flight.

- Immobilized*, Petrified*, Restrained* - Grants combat advantage, does not gain a standard action on its next turn, and you can influence the dragon's movements.
- Marked, Weakened - Modifies the tail's attacks, functioning normally.

* All of these conditions let you influence the dragon's movements.

PLAYER HANDOUT 8: DEATH

Having failed sufficient death saves or taken enough damage, your PC should now die and have your soul devoured by Sammaster. It is possible you or your allies have a means of preventing that fate, such as a *potion of life* or *blessed brooch*. If you don't, read onward.

Avoiding Death Saves: If you have any abilities which attempt to prevent death (Ex: "Once per day, when you die"), but don't necessarily work against failed death saves (and that's how you died), you may use them to avoid death for a round and are treated as having failed one fewer death save.

Some abilities only work when reduced to negative bloodied hit points or 0 hit points, but are still intended to prevent death. If such an ability is daily, an immediate interrupt or no action, and would restore you to at least your bloodied value, then it can be expended to negate one failed death save.

Fighting Back: If you have died, you have a couple options you may now take.

- 1) If you have any uses of soul empowered remaining, you may expend all of them now to assist your allies (but not yourself).
- 2) Your soul may continue fighting, potentially saving your allies or destroying Sammaster from within. You will take permanent damage in doing so. Refer to the Soul Sacrifice section below, should you choose to make this choice.
- 3) You may instead hide from Sammaster's attention in the sea of souls he has devoured. As long as your allies defeat Sammaster, they will be able to resurrect you later, but your participation in this adventure may be over.

Soul Sacrifice:

Once each round, you may do one of the following actions. Note the permanent cost associated with each option. That cost cannot be removed by any means and will apply to your PC until the end of the campaign.

Benefit	Permanent cost to you
Remove one failed death save from an ally	-1 penalty to saves
An ally regains hit points equal to their bloodied value.	-10 penalty to your healing surge value
Deal 50 damage to Sammaster	-1 penalty to defenses