

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.

EPIC5~2

Shar and the Cult of the Dragon used the Hungering Dark to recreate the Rage of Dragons from the dracorage mythal in the Far North. There the PCs discovered portals fueling a dark ritual in a Dread Realm. The portals led to several major cities under assault by dragons and dracoliches.

The PCs saved each of the cities in turn, discovering the Cult of the Dragon's plan to resurrect Sammaster and transform him into a draconic god of death. Finally, the PCs broke into Shar's Dread Realm where the Cult of the Dragon worked their ritual of apotheosis. In an epic struggle that tore asunder the dread realm then spilled into Baldur's Gate, the PCs not only slew Sammaster but saved the souls of tens of thousands.

PLAYER HANDOUT 2: DIVINE INFLUENCE

You will soon meet with many gods, some of whom may be quite interested in obtaining your services. Consider which gods you might most care about interacting with, as well as which might care most about interacting with you.

- 1) Are you a divine worshipper, Chosen, Demigod, or similar epic destiny tied with a particular deity?
- 2) What gods (other than Amaunator, Corellon, Cyric, Gruumsh, Selûne, Shar, Talona, Tiamat, or Zehir) might you be particularly able to influence through special favors and past service?
- 3) If you were to somehow become a god, what divine spheres of influence or portfolio would you govern? For example, "War", "Magic", "Protection"
- 4) If that particular sphere was already taken (such as by Tempus or Torm), what specific lesser aspect might you be interested in? For example, "Fire Spells" or "Castles" or "Surprise Attacks"

PLAYER'S HANDOUT 3A: FESTERING HATRED

Shar is goddess of quiet revenge for old slights, pain hidden but not forgotten, carefully nurtured bitterness, and never-ending feuds over the smallest offenses. Shar inflames secret hatred and distrust, magnifying old divisions and minor squabbles. Shar is the goddess of secrets and knows the dark recesses of people's minds. Shar has taken notice of you, studied you, and worked her dark magic to fuel minor gripes into violent hatred for your closest allies. The characters who have adventured with you the longest have had more time for grudges to fester, so they will be the strongest secret hatreds.

On the next page, list at least three other characters at the table and list a small offense, secret hatred or distrust, or minor squabble you have had with each listed character. These should be minor issues from long ago, and not quirks that you have already learned to accept and deal with.

If you have never adventured with the other characters before, choose something that has happened during this adventure, or come up with another reason. (For example, your character is martial and secretly despises all users of the arcane power source.)

Choose slights and offenses to enhance the fun of everyone at the table. Avoid anything of a personal nature or that would cause conflict between the players. Remember, a little conflict between characters can be fun, but player conflict is not intended or encouraged.

Do not discuss your list with other players until the conclusion of the adventure. However, during the adventure, these minor infractions grow slowly to hatred, becoming more and more overpowering. Feel free to provide clues through your roleplaying, especially as the adventure progresses. Keep it fun.

Rank the other characters listed from the one your character feels the most angst towards (1) to the least (2-5). Then, give your list to the DM.

Here are some sample reasons you might bear a grudge:

- You once did something nice for the target, and the target did not thank you.
- The target once forgot your name, or did not address you by your full title.
- The target once spent the Adventuring Company Action Point, when you wanted to use it.
- The target finished off an enemy that you had worked hard to defeat (i.e. stole your kill).
- The target stuck you with the bar tab that one time.
- The target does not worship your deity.
- The target disagreed with your opinion on one occasion.
- The target went on an adventure once and did not invite you to come along.
- The target was mean to you in your dream last night.

PLAYER'S HANDOUT 3B: FESTERING HATRED

Your character's name: _____

Other Character's Name	Reason for Grudge	Rank (1-5)

Which other character at the table do you think is most likely to bear a grudge against you?

Why?

PLAYER'S HANDOUT 3C: HATRED MANIFEST

<p>Your Nemesis: _____</p> <p>While within 5 squares of your nemesis, you take a number of penalties.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> () You cannot spend action points. () -5 to initiative at start of combat () -2 all defenses () -2 attack rolls () You are dazed and cannot remove the dazed condition. <p>As soon as you move more than 5 squares from your nemesis, the penalties end.</p>	<p>Your Nemesis: _____</p> <p>While within 5 squares of your nemesis, you take a number of penalties.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> () You cannot spend action points. () -5 to initiative at start of combat () -2 all defenses () -2 attack rolls () You are dazed and cannot remove the dazed condition. <p>As soon as you move more than 5 squares from your nemesis, the penalties end.</p>
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PLAYER'S HANDOUT 3D: NEMESIS

If you have line of effect to your nemesis at the start of your turn, you must use the listed power targeting your nemesis. After using the power, as a free action you must shift 1 square and use an effective at-will attack power or charge your nemesis (this does not provoke opportunity attacks). Then you take your turn as normal. In addition, you consider your nemesis as an enemy (not an ally) for all effects. The reverse is not true (your nemesis still considers you an ally).

FREE ACTION

Identify Weakness ♦ At-Will

Effect: Until the end of your next turn, the target takes a -5 penalty to all defenses.

FREE ACTION

Expose Vulnerability ♦ At-Will

Effect: Until the end of your next turn, the target gains vulnerable 10 all.

FREE ACTION

Distract ♦ At-Will

Effect: The target loses a minor action during its next turn.

FREE ACTION

Curse ♦ At-Will

Effect: Until the end of your next turn, all attack rolls against the target that roll an even number automatically hit.

FREE ACTION

Drain Life ♦ At-Will

Effect: Until the end of your next turn, the target cannot gain temporary hit points and regains only half hit points, rather than the full amount.

FREE ACTION

Easy Target ♦ At-Will

Effect: Until the end of your next turn, attackers can roll two dice and take the better result when attacking the target.

If one of your allies is treating you as a nemesis, you can try to end this effect by using the following power.

FREE ACTION AT THE END OF EACH ROUND

Beg Forgiveness ♦ At-Will

Requirement: You must be within 5 squares of the target and be able to communicate with the target.

Effect: You make a Diplomacy or Bluff check. You gain the check result in Forgiveness Points.

Special: When you have accumulated 50 or more Forgiveness Points, the target no longer considers you as a nemesis.

PLAYER HANDOUT 4: DIVINE ALLIES

For every personal success earned in Encounter 1A, that PC can reroll one attack roll and choose the desired result, add 20 to one damage roll, or regain 50 hit points. These benefits must be used this encounter. You can provide players one of these cards for each success to track their resources.

<p>Divine Ally During this encounter only, choose one benefit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reroll one attack roll. • Add 20 to one damage roll. • Regain 50 hit points. 	<p>Divine Ally During this encounter only, choose one benefit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reroll one attack roll. • Add 20 to one damage roll. • Regain 50 hit points. 	<p>Divine Ally During this encounter only, choose one benefit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reroll one attack roll. • Add 20 to one damage roll. • Regain 50 hit points.
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PLAYER HANDOUT 5: PILLARS

The pillars that the followers of Shar used to control Entropy can also be used to fight it. Doing so not only weakens the abomination, but also enables you to use the energy for your own benefit.

As a minor or standard action, make an Arcana or Thievery check to manipulate the pillars. If you use a standard action, you gain an additional benefit (minimum of 1 benefit even if you score less than a 23). If you score any benefits, the pillar disintegrates.

Arcana / Thievery (DC 23 or less: 1 benefit / DC 31 to 40: 2 benefits / DC 41 or more: 3 benefits)

You gain one, two, or three of the following benefits based on the check result. The same benefit can be taken multiple times.

- If you have a penalty to defenses inflicted by Entropy, reduce that penalty by up to 4 (minimum 0).
- Regain 20 hit points.
- One corrupted agent of your choice loses the insubstantial trait.
- One shard of darkness of your choice loses the *Hungering Dark adaptability* trait, allowing that shard to be killed far more easily.
- You take half damage from the shards of darkness for the rest of the encounter.

Each pillar only has enough power remaining to be used once. When all pillars have been drained of energy, the last remnants of energy flare out, empowering you to finish the job:

- Entropy can no longer use *magic consumption* (a trait which protects it from attacks).
- Shards of darkness lose *Hungering Dark adaptability* and no longer spawn from the corrupted agents.
- All corrupted agents lose the insubstantial trait.

After all the pillars have been destroyed, when you spend an action point on your turn to take an extra action, you may also do all of the following:

- Spend 1 healing surge to regain hit points equal to your bloodied value.
- Gain a +20 bonus to damage rolls against Entropy until the end of the encounter.
- Destroy one shard of darkness. This does not trigger its *death throes*.

PLAYER HANDOUT 6: CATCH A FLAILING STAR

The star is screaming and spiraling through the Astral Sea, dodging between bursts of energy and holes in reality, leaving behind a blazing turbulent trail. If you can surround it and cut off its ability to move forward, you're certain you can calm it down before it exhausts a lot of energy that would be useful against the Maelstrom.

You can use each of the following six skills once to maneuver around on the map. Once you have used all six options, the game is called.

Athletics - Strength of limb allows you to push yourself further and faster.

Bluff - With guile you outwit the star, letting you get right where you need it.

Endurance - Tiring as this chase is, you push ever onwards.

Insight - You can intuit the star's movements and more intelligently catch up to it.

Religion - Your knowledge of the Astral Sea and command of divine energy propels you.

Stealth - The star cannot avoid what it cannot detect.

<p>CHECK OFF EACH USED SKILL:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> ATHLETICS</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> BLUFF</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> ENDURANCE</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> INSIGHT</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> STEALTH</p>	<p>CHECK OFF EACH USED SKILL:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> ATHLETICS</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> BLUFF</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> ENDURANCE</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> INSIGHT</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> STEALTH</p>	<p>CHECK OFF EACH USED SKILL:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> ATHLETICS</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> BLUFF</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> ENDURANCE</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> INSIGHT</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> STEALTH</p>
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