

Hellturel

An expansion for *Baldur's Gate: Descent into Avernus*

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Introduction

High above the River Styx, Elturel experiences catastrophe. Undead, fiends, and cultists prowl the streets as the city's citizens wait to have their fates sealed in the waters of the river. Though many of Elturel's citizens are dead or damned, the characters can still save thousands if they find a way to free the city!

Helltural provides four new adventure locations you can add to the fallen city of Elturel detailed in chapter 2 of *Baldur's Gate: Descent into Avernus*. These new locations hold challenges, rewards, and expand the city's story for characters who want to further defend Elturel from the evil of Avernus. The characters can visit one or more of these locations as they explore the city upon their arrival or if they return to Elturel while adventuring in Avernus.

Each location is marked on the map of Elturel included with your purchase of this product. The locations contain challenges appropriate for characters of levels 5 and 6, which you should feel free to adjust as necessary.

Overview

This supplement has the following sections:

- **Chapter 1: A Pair of Black Antlers.** This famous tavern in Elturel was once the unofficial headquarters of the Order of the Gauntlet. The forces of Baphomet have been trapped inside by devils, but a *holy avenger* hidden within could be a great boon to the characters.
- **Chapter 2: Helm's Shieldhall.** This temple of Helm doubles as a fortress. A resistance led by a warrior named Ontharr Frume stays here, battling devils.
- **Chapter 3: Dragoneye Dock House.** Elturel's dock house, formerly on the River Chointhar, hides special weapons made to combat fiends. Too bad a vengeful undead warlock now occupies it.
- **Chapter 4: Owlbear Butcher Shop.** Once a butcher shop run by a retired adventurer, this

place now serves as a meeting place for the cultists of Zariel.

- **Appendix A: Monster & NPC Statistics.** Statistics for creatures used in the locations not found in the *Monster Manual*.
- **Appendix B: Magic Items.** Descriptions for magic items found in the locations not found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Using the Locations

To use the locations in *Helltural*, you need the D&D fifth edition core rulebooks: *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and *Monster Manual*. You also need a copy of *Baldur's Gate: Descent into Avernus*, though with adjustment, you could use these locations as part of another adventure. You may also want to add encounters from the DM's Guild Adepts product, *Encounters in Avernus*, which contains an entire chapter devoted to new encounters in Elturel.

The *Monster Manual* contains stat blocks for most of the creatures found in this product. All the necessary stat blocks are included there or in appendix A. When a creature's name appears in **bold** type, that's a visual cue for you to look up the creature's stat block in the *Monster Manual*, unless the text instead refers you to the monster appendix in this book.

Spells and equipment mentioned in the text are described in the *Player's Handbook*. Magic items are described in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, unless the adventure's text directs you to an item's description in appendix B.

Text that appears in a box like this is meant to be read aloud or paraphrased for the players when their characters first arrive at a location or under a specific circumstance, as described in the text.

Descriptive Bullet Points

This product uses descriptive bullet points to help DMs parse information the first time the players enter a new area.

- *Text that is in italics like this can be read aloud or paraphrased to the players.*
- (Text in parentheses like this contains information that is likely hidden from the characters when they first enter the area.)

Abbreviations

The following abbreviations appear in this book:

- AC = Armor Class
- DC = Difficulty Class
- XP = experience points
- pp = platinum piece(s)
- gp = gold piece(s)
- sp = silver piece(s)
- cp = copper piece(s)
- NPC = nonplayer character
- DM = Dungeon Master

Map of Eturel

The map of Eturel in this product shows each location.

- The location marked “A” is A Pair of Black Antlers (see chapter 1).
- The location marked “M” is Helm’s Shieldhall (see chapter 2).
- The location marked “Y” is Dragoneye Dock House (see chapter 3).
- The location marked “O” is Owlbear Butcher Shop (see chapter 4).

Unlabeled Buildings

If the characters explore a building not labeled on the Eturel map or detailed in *Baldur’s Gate: Descent into Avernus*, roll on the Occupants of Buildings in Eturel table to determine the building’s occupants.

When the characters try to enter one of these buildings, there is a 50 percent chance the door is locked. The doors to these buildings are wood

and each has AC 15, 18 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. A successful DC 15 Dexterity check made with thieves’ tools picks a door’s lock, and a successful DC 18 Strength (Athletics) check forces a locked door open.

Occupants of Buildings in Eturel

d20	Occupants
1–9	None
10–18	1d12 citizens of Eturel (commoners)
19	1d4 + 1 cult fanatics of Zariel
20	1d3 sleeping vampire spawn

Citizens of Eturel

Citizens of Eturel are hostile toward characters that enter their residences uninvited. The citizens demand the characters leave, and if the characters refuse, the citizens attack. A successful DC 10 Charisma (Persuasion) check convinces a citizen the characters mean no harm and the citizens allow the characters to stay in the residence.

Cult Fanatics

The cult fanatics are praying to Zariel when the characters enter. If the fanatics notice the characters, they preach the word of Zariel to them, offering shelter if the characters agree to join the cult.

If the characters refuse to join the cult, the fanatics continue to preach to them. A successful DC 13 Charisma (Intimidation) check scares the fanatics off. If the characters attack the cult fanatics or any of their allies, the fanatics fight until half their number fall then flee.

If the characters agree to join the cult, they are told to see Lora Zurag at the shrine to Zariel in Owlbear Butcher Shop (see chapter 4).

Vampire Spawn

Spurnyte Mal, an undead warlock staying in the Dragoneye Dock House (see chapter 3), created these vampire spawn. A successful DC 13 group Dexterity (Stealth) check moves through the building without waking any of the vampire spawn. If the vampire spawn wake and notice the characters, they attack. Each vampire spawn fights until reduced to 10 hit points then flees.

Chapter 1: A Pair of Black Antlers

Before the fall of Elturel A Pair of Black Antlers was a rowdy tavern and the city's unofficial headquarters of the Order of the Gauntlet, an organization of holy warriors that fights evil. When the city was pulled into Avernus, the Order of the Gauntlet moved into Helm's Shieldhall (see chapter 2).

When Baphomet's forces came to Avernus, a contingent of minotaurs and demons attacked Elturel. This contingent is cornered by the forces of Zariel in the tavern and fights for a way out.

Story Hooks

The characters could come to A Pair of Black Antlers for the following reasons:

- The characters hear the sounds of battle erupting from the area.
- Ontharr Frume (see chapter 2) tells the characters about the *holy avenger* hidden in the tavern.
- Lephit Ezim (see area A9) sends a magic message to the characters, begging for them to come free him at the tavern.

Approaching the Tavern

When the characters first see A Pair of Black Antlers, read or paraphrase the following boxed text:

A large brown building with a sign that reads "A Pair of Black Antlers" is the backdrop for a battle in Elturel's streets. A sneering bone devil commands a squad of skeletons and zombies against four roaring minotaurs.

Tyligillus, a **barbed devil** of Zariel, leads three **bearded devils** in the fight against four of Baphomet's **minotaurs**. Characters with a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 12 or higher notice ten **spined devils** perched on the roofs of buildings around the tavern watching the battle, but not joining in. If attacked, these fiends flee to higher ground. The spined devils

have a role to play when the characters exit the tavern (see "Leaving the Tavern").

When the characters approach, the barbed and bearded devils are winning the battle. If the characters join the fray and only attack one side of the battle, the opposing side does not attack the characters.

If the characters help the devils win the battle, Tyligillus proposes a deal (see appendix A of *Baldur's Gate: Descent into Avernus*). If the characters help the devils oust Baphomet's forces from the tavern, Tyligillus allows the characters to keep any treasure they find in the place.

If the characters help the minotaurs win the battle, the minotaurs offer to escort them to Corowek, their powerful minotaur leader for a reward (in area A2). As long as these minotaurs escort the characters, the forces of Baphomet in the tavern do not attack them.

Tavern Features

The tavern has the following features:

- A Pair of Black Antlers is a two-story structure, with the top level 15 feet higher than the ground level. Rooms are 10 feet high, with 8-foot-high doorways connecting them.
- Climbing the outside walls of the tavern without equipment requires a successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check.
- The walls and doors of the tavern are made of wood. Doors have AC 15, 27 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage.
- The tavern's windows are shuttered and latched from within and swing outward on iron hinges. A successful DC 15 Dexterity check with thieves' tools opens a window from the outside.
- The forces of Baphomet let the lanterns in the tavern go out. Unless otherwise noted in an area's description, the rooms of the tavern are dark.

Tavern Areas

The following encounter locations are keyed to the A Pair of Black Antlers map.

A1. Common Room

The forces of Baphomet that inhabit the tavern destroyed the common room.

- *Broken furniture, glass, demon ichor, and the remains of devils cover the floor and walls of the room.*
- *A 5-foot-square empty brass plaque hangs over the bar.*
- *Loud snores reveal three minotaurs are passed out behind the bar next to empty kegs of ale and drained spirits bottles.*

Empty Plaque

A character who examines the plaque notices the vague dust outline of two massive antlers. Corowek (see area A2) removed the tavern's namesake antlers.

Ichor-Covered Debris

The floor of the common room is difficult terrain. Any creature that is knocked prone in the common room takes 2 (1d4) piercing damage. If the creature is not a demon or minotaur, it must also succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or gain a random form of short-term madness (see "Madness" in chapter 8, "Running the Game," of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*).

Minotaurs

Three **minotaurs** drank themselves into a stupor. A successful DC 10 group Dexterity (Stealth) check gets past the minotaurs without waking them. If the minotaurs wake, they attack characters not escorted by servants of Baphomet, fighting to the death. The minotaurs are drunk (poisoned) when the characters first encounter them and remain that way for the next 8 hours. Combat in this area draws the attention of the barlgura in area A3.

A2. Private Meeting Room

This area was a private room used by the Order of the Gauntlet to hold meetings. The forces of Baphomet redecorated.

- *Reeking humanoid bodies with bloody mazes carved into their chests litter the floor of this room.*
- *A minotaur wearing black plate armor that has attached two black antlers to his horns with bloody sinew sits on a mound of devil corpses at the center of the room.*
- *A snarling barlgura demon with blood-spattered orange fur stands beside the seated minotaur.*

Corowek

The minotaur is Corowek, the leader of the Abyssal forces in the tavern and a favored champion of Baphomet. He has the statistic of a **minotaur** with the following changes:

- Corowek wears plate armor, which makes his AC 18.
- Corowek has 107 hit points and his Intelligence score is 12.
- Corowek can speak, read, and write Abyssal and Common.

Corowek is a proud and savage warrior who abhors sanctity and law. The lieutenant of Baphomet values one attribute in others: prowess in battle.

Corowek idolizes Baphomet. In an effort to look more like his master, Corowek stole the tavern's namesake antlers (see "Empty Plaque" in area A1) and tied them to his horns using the sinew of devils.

If the characters are not escorted by servants of Baphomet, Corowek attacks them, fighting to the death. If the characters are escorted by servants of Baphomet who vouch for the characters' prowess in battle, Corowek proposes an agreement.

The minotaur knows spined devil soldiers of Zariel encircle the tavern, waiting for the minotaurs and demons to make a move. Corowek's force is too small to take on Zariel's minions, but with the characters' help the

soldiers of Baphomet stand a chance. If the characters agree to help Corowek's force escape Elturel (see "Leaving the Tavern"), Corowek offers the characters a magic sword "most powerful and foul with holy light" that he found in the tavern (see "Treasure").

Sucho

Sucho the **barlgura** follows Corowek around like a faithful hound and is willing to die defending or avenging the minotaur.

Treasure

Beneath Corowek's mound of chain devil corpses, the minotaur hides a *holy avenger* he found in Ontharr Frume's room (area A8) and a sack containing two carnelians (50 gp each), a silver chalice decorated with blue quartz (100 gp), 453 cp, 231 sp, and 56 gp. Corowek gives the characters the sword if they agree to help his forces escape Elturel.

A3. Kitchen

Minotaurs and demons ransacked the kitchen.

- *Cutlery, broken plates, smashed glasses, and food waste cover the floor.*
- *All the kitchen's shelves, cabinets, stoves, and ovens on the walls are empty.*
- *A barlgura lets out a loud, pungent belch as it guzzles a barrel of warm brine labeled "PICKLES."*
- (Jaspo, an invisible quasit, sleeps in a half-empty mug of ale on the ground.)

Barlgura

The hungry **barlgura** attacks characters without a servant of Baphomet escorting them. The demon fights until destroyed or until Jaspo intervenes (see "Jaspo").

Jaspo

Any loud noise, such as combat, wakes up Jaspo. The **quasit** is sneaky, cowardly, and desperate for escape from Elturel.

If the characters are battling the barlgura, Jaspo seizes opportunity. While remaining invisible, it asks the characters if they'd be willing to help

the servants of Baphomet leave Elturel. If the characters agree, Jaspo becomes visible, convinces the barlgura to stop attacking, and escorts the characters to area A2 so they can meet with Corowek. During the meeting with Corowek, Jaspo attests to the characters' prowess in battle (whether it witnessed any or not).

If the characters attack Jaspo, the quasit flees.

A4. Privy

This privy is ignored by the demons in favor of the floor.

- *The privy is filled with dim red light and smells of sulfur and volcanic gas.*
- *The privy has an 18-inch-diameter opening that leads 20 feet down to lava.*

Lava

Creatures and objects that move into the lava or start their turns in it take 22 (4d10) fire damage.

A5. Cellar

Minotaurs and demons consumed the food stored here. Debris from broken crates and barrels covers the ground.

Secret Door

A successful DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) check notices the outline of a secret door in the shape of a raised gauntlet, like Torm's holy symbol, hidden behind a tattered banner of the Order of the Gauntlet. A creature that has been made aware of the secret door by Ontharr Frume (see chapter 2) can find it without needing to make a check.

A *detect magic* spell reveals that the door radiates an aura of evocation magic. Written on the inside of the door is a prayer to Torm carved in Celestial that the characters notice when the door is opened. The prayer reads:

"For those with good hearts, speak my word.
The path of Torm defends the weak,
And gives justice to those who seek.
But if this promise stays unspoken,
Then the righteous path is broken."

So speak my word for all to hear,
And your heart and mind stay clear.”

The long underground hall behind the secret door leads to a simple 8-foot-square stone chamber decorated with a banner of the Order of the Gauntlet. See “Treasure” below for the contents of the room.

If a creature does not finish reciting the prayer on the door 1 minute or sooner before entering the tunnel from this area, the tunnel collapses. Creatures in the tunnel when it collapses must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw, taking 22 (4d10) bludgeoning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. Creatures reduced to 0 hit points by this damage are killed in the collapse. Creatures with hit points remaining manage to make it back into the tavern’s cellar before the tunnel completely collapses. The collapsed tunnel is impassable without magic or several days of work clearing rubble.

Treasure. There is a silvered version of every weapon and fifty silvered pieces of every kind of ammunition found in chapter 5, “Equipment,” in the *Player’s Handbook* on the walls of the chamber behind the secret door.

A character looking at the weapons notices that there are two greataxes. A successful DC 11 Intelligence (Investigation) reveals one greataxe is actually a disguised musket (see “Firearms” in chapter 9 of the *Dungeon Master’s Guide*). The thick blades used to disguise the musket are hollow and hold 50 silver bullets and enough powder for as many shots.

A6. Empty Room

The rooms previously rented to the tavern’s patrons were torn apart by the minotaurs and demons.

A7. Minotaur Room

This ruined room is occupied by a **minotaur** that attacks the characters and fights to the death if they are not escorted by servants of Baphomet. If combat breaks out in this room, it attracts the attention of all the other minotaurs on this floor.

A8. Ontharr Frume’s Room

Ontharr Frume had a special room in the tavern.

- *Snores come from a horned vrock sleeping on a torn-up mattress that sits on the splinters of a broken bed frame.*
- *A marble altar carved with Torm’s gauntleted holy symbol is cracked in half near the north wall.*
- *An overturned oak desk sits near a mess of scattered books and papers against the east wall.*

Altar

If a character examines both halves of the altar, they notice a message carved in Celestial beneath the symbol of Torm. The message reads, “Torm’s word leads the way from the cellar of our souls to the highest of his halls.” This is a reminder and clue about the secret door in the tavern’s cellar (area A5).

Bed

Ontharr Frume kept a loose floorboard beneath his bed where he stored his treasure. If the bed is moved, a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check notices the loose board. While Ontharr Frume’s treasure was found and taken by Corowek (see area A2), Ungla stores new treasure in the floor (see “Treasure”).

Ungla

Ungla the **vrock** is sleeping. A successful DC 15 Dexterity (Stealth) check allows a character to move by the demon without waking it. If Ungla wakes and notices characters not escorted by a servant of Baphomet, it fights until destroyed. If combat breaks out in this room, it attracts the attention of all the minotaurs in areas A7.

Treasure

The papers and books are mostly destroyed, but a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check made to search through the pile finds two *scrolls of protection* (one for fiends and the other for undead).

The area beneath the loose floorboard (see “Bed”) holds five pounds of venison jerky and a

bloodstained pouch that contains a *potion of diminution* and a *potion of growth*.

A9. Lephit Ezim's Room

This ruined room has contains a hiding mage.

- *The floor is covered in broken furniture and debris except for a curious 6-foot-long, 2-foot-wide cleared area next to the bed.*
- *A coil of hempen rope and small pouch are next to the cleared area near the ruined bed.*
- (Lephit Ezim, a female Mulan human in her twenties, watches from an extradimensional space created by a *rope trick* spell with an entrance 8 feet in the air above a ruined bed.)

Lephit Ezim

Lephit Ezim is a citizen of Elturel who stayed in the tavern after burning down her home in an attempt to research a new spell. The accident-prone wizard is curious and reckless, especially when it comes to magic.

Lephit has the statistics of a **mage** with the following changes:

- Lephit's alignment is chaotic good.
- Lephit has the *rope trick* spell prepared instead of the *misty step* spell and has used one of her 2nd level spell slots.
- Lephit can read, speak, and write Abyssal, Celestial, Common, and Draconic.

Lephit retreats to her extradimensional space when the characters come into the room, but she pokes her head out to glance at them. A passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 14 or higher notices Lephit's upside down head momentarily appear in thin air. If the characters are not escorted by any fiends, minotaurs, or undead and do not look like cultists of Zariel, Lephit lowers down her rope and invites them to join her in her extradimensional space.

Lephit tells the characters she evacuated to Helm's Shieldhall (see chapter 2) when Elturel was pulled into Avernus, but returned to the tavern when she realized she left her spellbook behind. She got trapped in the tavern when the forces of Baphomet arrived, and uses the *rope trick* spell to hide whenever a minotaur or

demon enters her room. She asks the characters to escort her back to Helm's Shieldhall. If the characters agree, she tells them about the secret tunnel under the tavern, where it leads, and how to avoid collapsing it (see area A5). Ontharr Frume told Lephit about the tunnel's secrets after she found it and started asking questions.

If the characters attack Lephit, she flees.

Pouch

The pouch contains powdered corn extract and a twisted loop of parchment. Wizard characters who have the *rope trick* spell in their spellbooks or who succeed on a DC 12 Intelligence (Arcana) check know these items are the material components for the *rope trick* spell.

Rope

A successful DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check finds one end of the 42-foot-long rope is frayed as if hastily cut.

Treasure

In addition to her equipment, Lephit Ezim carries her spellbook, which contains all the spells she has prepared.

Leaving the Tavern

When the characters leave the tavern, they could face an extra encounter depending on which other creatures exit with them.

If the characters exit onto the street, the ten **spined devils** that were there when the characters approached remain (see "Approaching the Tavern"). If combat breaks out, the devils fight until five remain then flee.

- **Street Alone.** If the characters exit onto the street by themselves, the spined devils take little interest in them, as they are more concerned with the forces of Baphomet. They only fight the characters if the characters attack first.
- **Street with Corowek.** If the characters agreed to help Corowek exit Elturel (see area A2), Corowek gathers his forces and exits into the streets with the characters where the spined devils attack. The spined devils use their tail spikes to attack and fly above their enemies

out of the reach of melee weapons. When a devil runs out of tail spines, it engages its enemies in melee. The forces of Baphomet fight until destroyed, climbing and leaping off buildings and hurling anything they can (including each other) at their foes. If the forces of Baphomet win, they thank the characters and run off.

- ***Street with Tyligillus.*** The spined devils do not attack if the characters exit the tavern with Tyligillus. If the characters made a deal with the Tyligillus and destroyed the forces of Baphomet, all the devils take their leave of the characters, warning them to get inside and wait for the River Styx to take them.

Chapter 2: Helm's Shieldhall

Helm's Shieldhall is a temple to its namesake deity and a fortress. When the city is at peace, the citizens of Elturel go to the shieldhall to pray to Helm, and the Hellriders train and hold meetings there.

When monsters or war threaten Elturel, the shieldhall is a safe place for the citizens to wait out the fighting. While some citizens managed to make it to Helm's Shieldhall when the city was pulled into Avernus, Zariel anticipated his people's decision to flock to the building en masse and had it surrounded by devils and undead. Most citizens were turned back to their homes, and Zariel's minions laid siege to the shieldhall.

When the characters arrive at Helm's Shieldhall, Zariel's forces have broken through the wall and fought their way inside the shieldhall.

Story Hooks

The characters could come to Helm's Shieldhall for the following reasons:

- When the characters arrive, they notice smoke coming from the area.
- If the characters desire the Hellriders' help in Avernus, they can find it at the shieldhall.
- The characters might escort citizens of Elturel looking for safety, like Lephit Ezim (see chapter 1), to the shieldhall at their request.

Approaching the Shieldhall

When the characters can see Helm's Shieldhall, read or paraphrase the following boxed text:

Smoke and screams billow up from behind a white stone wall surrounding a large temple peeking above the barrier. Iconography of a watchful eye on a steel gauntlet is painted on the wall and stitched on banners that hang from the building.

The structure is encircled with an army of moaning undead and shouting devils stepping on deceased allies and enemies in the streets. Atop the wall, archers curse as they fire their arrows into the mob. The monsters push through broken gates passed the wall and into the courtyard of Helm's Shieldhall.

Helm's Shieldhall has a square wall with three gates on its south, east, and west sides. Each gate is broken.

Each gate has fifteen **skeletons** and fifteen **zombies** crowding their way in from the outside with a **barbed devil** bringing up the rear. Hellriders, one **knight** and three **scouts**, stand on the wall over each gate door, using ranged attacks to take down the undead. The Hellriders use silvered weapons and ammunition.

Speeding Up Combat

Instead of rolling attacks and damage for the knight and scouts and the undead battling them, each round on initiative count 20, roll a d4 to determine how many skeletons the Hellriders kill.

On initiative count 0, roll a d12. On an odd roll the forces of Zariel kill a scout, and on a roll of 12, they kill a knight.

If the devils or undead notice the characters, both devils and the zombies attack the characters while the skeletons attack the knight and scouts, fighting to the death. If the knight or any of the scouts are alive at the end of the fighting, they shout to the characters that more devils made their way inside the shieldhall (see "Allies in Helm's Shieldhall").

Wall

A 30-foot-high, 5-foot-thick stone wall surrounds Helm's Shieldhall. Climbing the wall without equipment requires a successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check.

Allies in the Shieldhall

As the characters fight their way through Helm's Shieldhall, they meet Hellriders defending the building. In battle the Hellriders fight to the death. When not in combat, the Hellriders head to the courtyard (area M1) to secure the gate and prevent further enemy incursions. They encourage the characters to push further into the hall and head for the hold (see area M20) to protect the innocent people within. A successful DC 12 Charisma (Persuasion) check convinces a Hellrider to accompany the characters instead of rushing back to the courtyard.

The Hellriders use silvered weapons and ammunition.

The Hellriders know the following information:

- Only a fraction of the Hellriders are in Helm's Shieldhall protecting the one hundred or so citizens who managed to make it to the temple before the forces of Zariel arrived.
- Ontharr Frume leads the people in Helm's Shieldhall. He took some Hellriders with him to defend the hold (area M20), where the defenseless citizens of Elturel who made it to the shieldhall are staying.
- The only way to get to the hold is by way of a secret stair in the priest's study on the third floor.
- The devils and undead surrounded Helm's Shieldhall after the city was pulled into Avernus, preventing people from getting into or leaving the building.
- The Hellriders in the building struck back at Zariel's minions from the walls, and a days-long battle began.
- The gates held until a few hours ago when the devils teleported an infernal war machine into the city and used it to break through the gates. The machine then crashed into the temple, breaking open the front doors and creating a smoldering wreck.
- A bone devil led the charge through the gates ordering everyone in the shieldhall be killed as it pressed towards the hold.

Enemies in the Shieldhall

Yaltezzicma, a bone devil killed by Ontharr Frume years ago on the Material Plane, leads the forces of Zariel storming the shieldhall.

Yaltezzicma has orders to kill everyone in Helm's Shieldhall. The devil leads the invasion, leaving devils and undead behind to delay Hellriders who give chase. The bone devil plans to force Ontharr Frume to watch it kill the innocent citizens in the hold (area M20) before burning the temple to the ground.

The devils and undead are loyal to Yaltezzicma. Unless noted otherwise, they give their lives to stop or delay the characters and their allies.

Shieldhall Features

Helm's Shieldhall has the following features:

- Helm's Shieldhall is a three-story structure, each level 20 feet higher than the one below it. Unless otherwise noted in an area's description, rooms are 15 feet high, with 8-foot-high doorways connecting them.
- Climbing the outside walls of the shieldhall without equipment requires a successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check.
- The walls and doors of the shieldhall are made of stone. Doors have AC 17, 27 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. If a door in the shieldhall is locked, a successful DC 15 Dexterity check with thieves' tools picks its lock, and a successful DC 20 Strength (Athletics) check forces the door open. Ontharr Frume (see area M19) holds a master key to the locked doors.
- The shieldhall's windows are latched from within and swing outward on iron hinges. A successful DC 15 Dexterity check with thieves' tools opens a window from the outside. Small creatures must squeeze to get through a window. Medium and larger creatures cannot fit through the windows.
- Areas of the shieldhall are brightly lit by *continual flame* spells cast on wall sconces.

Areas of the Shieldhall

The following encounter locations are keyed to the Helm's Shieldhall map.

M1. Shieldhall Courtyard

The courtyard of Helm's Shieldhall is under attack by devils and undead when the characters arrive.

- *The smoldering wreck of an infernal war machine is smashed to pieces in front of the bashed-in temple front door.*
- *Three bearded devils, ten skeletons, and ten zombies battle three exhausted, flame-scarred Hellrider knights in the courtyard.*
- *Another three Hellrider knights and nine Hellrider scouts stand on the wall above the gates using ranged attacks to keep the monsters outside the wall at bay (see "Approaching the Shieldhall").*

Devils and Undead

If the three **bearded devils**, ten **skeletons**, and ten **zombies** notice the characters, two devils and half the undead attack the characters and the rest engage the **knights** and **scouts**.

Each round on initiative count 10, another five skeletons or zombies come through a gate you choose, attacking the characters. The reinforcements stop appearing when all the devils are killed.

Speeding Up Combat. Instead of rolling attacks and damage for the Hellriders and their foes, each round on initiative count 20, roll a d12 to determine how many skeletons and zombies the knights and scouts kill. On the result of a 12, they also kill a bearded devil.

On initiative count 0, roll a d10. On an odd number, the forces of Zariel kill a scout, and on a 10, they kill a knight.

M2. Stable Ruins

The devils set fire to the stables when they broke through the gate. All that remains is ruin and the corpses of warhorses.

M3. Outhouse Ruins

The devils set fire to the outhouse when they broke through the gate. What remains lies in ash.

M4. Entrance Hall

Most of the entrance hall was destroyed by the infernal war machine that crashed into it.

- *Rubble and the corpses of three Hellriders smolder in the freshly destroyed entrance hall.*
- *A weak groan comes from injured woman in plate armor buried under a pile of rubble.*

Estra Felder

Estra Felder (lawful good female Illuskan human **knight** with 1 hit point remaining) leads the Hellriders that defend the shieldhall wall. She tried to stop the infernal war machine that crashed into the temple's front door and lies injured among the rubble. As the characters pass through this area she calls for help. It takes 1 minute of work to clear away the rubble pinning down Estra.

Because of her wounds, Estra is struggling to stay lucid. If the characters restore any number of hit points to Estra, the strong warrior is able to provide the details found in "Allies in Helm's Shieldhall."

Estra is determined and gruff. She would die before abandoning her post at the wall. With the gates broken, she insists on staying and working to rebuild the defenses while keeping any evil at bay.

M5. Chapel of Helm

Many Hellriders made a stand against Zariel's forces in the chapel and lost.

- *A green-skinned barbed devil sits atop an altar on a raised stage, its claws at the neck of a grimacing, battered old man covered in blood-stained clothes.*
- *The remains of scores of Hellriders, undead, and devils litter the blood-soaked floor.*
- *Wall tapestries depict Helm as a warrior in full plate armor standing in the sky guarding*

staircases made of clouds and looking onto Faerûn below.

- *Eight rows of wooden pews sit before the stage.*

Ander Yernoa

Ander Yernoa (lawful good male Rashemi human **commoner**) is a fiery caretaker of Helm's Shieldhall in his eighties. He was cleaning the temple and got captured by Elequa when the devils invaded.

Ander is a devout worshipper of Helm and would rather die than see the characters make a deal with Elequa. When the devil proposes a deal (see "Elequa"), Ander demands the characters kill the fiend and let him die.

Elequa

Yaltezzicma left Elequa the **barbed devil** behind with orders to delay any enemies who enter the temple. Elequa plans to follow the order, but does not think burning down Helm's Shieldhall is worth dying over. Instead of fighting, the fiend proposes a deal to the characters (see appendix A of *Baldur's Gate: Descent into Avernus*). If the characters agree to leave Helm's Shieldhall and not come back for 24 hours, it agrees to let them take Ander with them. The consequence for breaking this deal is that Elequa gets one of the characters' souls. If the characters take the deal, Helm's Shieldhall burns to the ground and all the humanoids inside are killed 2d6 hours after they leave the hall.

If the characters attack Elequa, it kills Ander then attacks the characters. The devil fights until reduced to 50 hit points then flees.

M6. Storage

This room holds incense, candles, prayer books, and wooden holy symbols of Torm used during services in the temple.

M7. Armory

The door to this area is locked (see "Shieldhall Features") and has a glaive wedged between the door and doorframe. The corpse of a bearded devil cut in half lays in front of the door.

Door Trap

A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check notices a thin horizontal slit at a height of 3 feet across the door. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals the nature of the door's trap.

When a creature attacks the door or attempts to pick the door's lock or force the door open and fails, a silver circular saw blade pops out of the slit in the door and makes an attack roll with a +9 bonus against any creature within 5 feet of the front of the door before retracting. The blade deals 22 (4d10) damage on a hit.

A successful DC 15 Dexterity check made with thieves' tools disables the saw blade. A failed attempt to disable the blade results in triggering the trap.

Ontharr Frume (see area M19) and Usni Lao (see area M9) hold keys to the door.

Treasure

The armory has fifty silvered greatswords, twenty silvered shortswords, ten silvered lances, ten silvered halberds, and one silvered version of every other weapon and three hundred silvered pieces of every kind of ammunition found in chapter 5 of the *Player's Handbook*. There are ten suits of plate armor, twenty suits of chainmail, twenty suits of leather armor, and twenty shields.

In addition, the armory has fifty flasks of holy water, twenty flasks of alchemist's fire, twenty flasks of acid, and five silver bombs, which function like fragmentation grenades (see "Explosives" in chapter 9 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*), except that they count as a silvered weapon when they deal damage.

M8. Feast Hall

The Hellriders and clergy of Helm that stay in the shieldhall gather in this room for meals, victory celebrations, and holidays.

- *Eight ghouls tear the flesh from the corpses of ten Hellriders and a scullery maid with horrible, wet sounds.*
- *Benches are set along eight wooden dining tables.*

- *A fresco of two gauntleted hands clasped together, one branded with the watchful eye of Helm, is painted on the ceiling.*
- (A trail of blood on the floor leads to area M9).

Ghouls

Eight **ghouls** were part of the initial incursion into the temple led by Yaltezzicma. If they notice the characters, they attack.

Trail of Blood

A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) check reveals that whatever was bleeding dragged itself into the kitchen.

M9. Kitchen

The temple's kitchen has so far been untouched by the forces of Zariel.

- *The smell of burning meat from one of the kitchen's wall ovens fills the room.*
- *Shelves on the walls are stocked with food.*
- *A blood trail leads from the door to behind five 500-pound water barrels.*
- (A wounded Hellrider named Usni Lao hides behind the barrels.)

Usni Lao

Usni Lao (lawful good female Shou human **knight** with 10 hit points remaining) is the wounded quartermaster of the Hellriders. She is fastidious, practical, and a battle-hardened warrior in her forties. If the characters find her, she begs for help.

If the characters heal Usni, she gives them her key to the armory (area M7) as thanks and tells them they can take whatever they like as long as they help defend Helm's Shieldhall.

M10. Second Floor Hall

The second-floor hall contains the following features:

- *The remains of Hellriders, devils, and undead are all over the hall.*
- *Blood spatter, burns, and scratches cover the floor, ceiling, and walls.*

- *The sounds of battle and cries for help come from echo from other rooms down the hall.*
- (Uxalorix, a barbed devil, waits by the east stairs.)

Uxalorix

Uxalorix watches the hall. If the fiend notices the characters, the **barbed devil** attacks and calls out, a signal to the specters waiting in the meeting room (area M11) to join the battle.

M11. Meeting Room

The Hellriders use the meeting room in Helm's Shieldhall for private discussions.

- *A 15-foot-long stone table is set with eight cushioned chairs.*
- *A map of the city of Elturel hangs on the wall.*
- (Four specters hide in this room.)

Map

A character who studies the map notices a tunnel beneath a tavern called A Pair of Black Antlers leads to a secret chamber (see chapter 1).

Specters

Four **specters** are waiting for Uxalorix (see area M10) to call for them. If they notice the characters, they attack.

M12. Hellrider Room

Most of the Hellriders in the city have residences elsewhere in Elturel, but a few stay in Helm's Shieldhall to maintain the temple. Each room has a bed, a small chest for clothes, a small table, a chair, and a stand for armor.

When the characters enter one of these rooms, roll a d10. On a result of 1 to 6, the room has no occupants. On a result of 7 to 10, there is a dead Hellrider in the room.

M13. Triad Shrine

The Hellriders have a shrine to three gods known as the Triad: Tyr, the god of justice; Torm, the god of courage and self-sacrifice; and Ilmater, the god of endurance in the face of suffering.

- *A Hellrider yells in defiant rage as he battles two wraiths with long claws made of wispy black shadow.*
- *Three stone altars, each carved with the symbol of a god of the Triad, are placed in alcoves in the walls.*
- *Woven straw prayer mats lie on the floor.*

Altar to Torm

The altar of Torm has a secret drawer hidden in the side of the altar that faces the wall. A successful DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check notices the drawer (see “Treasure”).

Raemon Iscara

If Raemon Iscara (lawful good male Turami human **knight** with 30 hit points remaining) notices the characters, he asks them for help.

Raemon is in his thirties and the caretaker of the shrine. He is pious, humorless, and quick to anger. If the characters rescue him, he thanks them with the potion hidden in the secret drawer in the altar to Torm (see “Treasure”).

Wraiths

Two **wraiths** are winning their battle against Raemon. If the characters enter this room, one of the wraiths attacks the characters while the other continues to fight Raemon.

Treasure

The secret drawer inside the altar to Torm contains an *elixir of health*.

M14. Gymnasium

The Hellriders train for battle in a gymnasium.

- *A thin chain devil cackles with wild glee as three humans hang from chains attached to the ceiling above an enormous bonfire made from gymnasium equipment.*
- *Several barbells and weights are placed around the fire to keep it contained.*

Bonfire

The bonfire is made from straw practice dummies and wooden equipment that was hanging from the ceiling. The ring of weights and

barbells contains the fire. A creature that moves into or starts its turn in the fire takes 11 (2d10) fire damage.

Hellriders

Lesheda Kalwat (lawful good human female Calishite human **knight**) is a Hellrider in her fifties and her twin sons, Dalmed and Farrio (lawful good male Calishite human **scouts**), are in their twenties. Each Hellrider is restrained by a chain animated by the chain devil’s Animate Chains feature 10 feet above the fire. The chains held gym equipment that was taken down to fuel the fire (see “Bonfire”). Relizzinor stops the chains from harming the Hellriders.

Relizzinor is forcing Lesheda to choose which of her sons gets to die while the other lives (see “Relizzinor”). She has made no decision and each of her sons shouts that he should be the one to die so the other lives. If any of the Hellriders notice the characters they stay quiet, hoping the characters are there to help.

Relizzinor

Relizzinor the **chain devil** delights in torturing and playing games with mortals. When the characters enter, the fiend asks Lesheda to pick one of her sons to die, promising to free the other or kill both if she does not choose. If the characters remain unnoticed by the devil and Hellriders and do not intervene, 1 minute after they enter this room, Lesheda chooses Dalmed, and Relizzinor drops Dalmed into the fire (see “Bonfire”).

If Relizzinor notices the characters, the devil screams in rage, drops all three of the Hellriders into the fire then attacks.

M15. Third Floor Hall

The remains of priests of Helm, devils, and undead lay in this hall.

M16. Priests’ Quarters

The door to this room is locked (see “Shieldhall Features”). A successful DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check convinces Nara Kosk to open the door from the other side (see “Nara Kosk”).

The priests of Helm sleep in this room that overlooks the city. It contains the following features:

- *Eight beds, each near an end table and a footlocker, stand in two rows of four.*
- (Nara Kosk cowers behind a bed at the back of the room.)

Nara Kosk

Nara Kosk (lawful neutral female Damaran human **priest**) is in her early twenties. She saw many of her friends get torn apart by devils and undead when the forces of Zariel arrived. Terrified, she locked herself in her room.

Nara is panicking and unsure of where to go or what to do. She does not want to leave her room and begs the characters not to go if they start to leave without her. A successful DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check calms Nara and convinces her to follow the characters or go help defend the courtyard (area M1). When Nara is calmed, she offers to heal the characters with her *cure wounds* spell.

M17. High Priest's Quarters

The high priest of Helm has a private room that overlooks the city.

- *The bloated, strangled corpse of a halfling in his fifties lies at the center of the room with the symbol of Zariel carved into his chest.*
- *A small bed stands against the wall next to a dresser.*
- *A desk and chair sit on a bloodstained rug embroidered with the holy symbol of Helm.*

Corpse

Yaltezzicma killed Darro Voat, the high priest of Helm in Elturel. The bone devil carved a symbol of Zariel into the high priest's body and placed a bead from a *necklace of fireballs* into the wound. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check finds the bead. Any creature that touches the body or tries to remove the bead must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity check or the bead detonates.

Treasure

A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check made to search the desk finds a hidden drawer built into the underside of the desk. The drawer holds a *spell scroll* of *revivify*. Darro's corpse holds a single bead from a *necklace of fireballs* (see "Corpse").

M18. Study

The priests of Helm prepare sermons, hold private meetings, relax, and do research in this study, which also hides the secret entrance to the hold that shelters the city's citizens in catastrophic times.

- *The remains of dead priests of Helm, devils, and undead are splattered around the room.*
- *High bookshelves are built into the walls and stand in rows at the room's center.*
- *A section of bookshelf on the wall is turned, revealing a circular staircase that descends.*
- *Five wood tables set with four chairs each are placed throughout the room.*

M19. Cave Entrance

A cave beneath Helm's Shieldhall protects citizens of Elturel who were able to make it to the building before Zariel's forces arrived.

- *A bone devil hisses orders as it leads two bearded devils in battle against a bald, middle-aged man in plate armor and two Hellrider knights.*
- *Adamantine double doors engraved with the holy symbols of Helm and Torm close off the rest of the cave from this area.*
- *The ceiling of the cave is 20 feet high.*

Bearded Devils

Two **bearded devils** engage the Hellriders. They attack the characters if their other enemies fall, Yaltezzicma orders it, or the characters attack first.

Doors

The adamantine doors that lead to area M20 have AC 23, 200 hit points, a damage threshold

of 15, and immunity to psychic, poison, and fire damage. These doors are barred from the inside and can be forced opened with a successful DC 23 Strength check.

A *detect magic* spell reveals that the doors radiate auras of evocation magic. Whenever a creature that has not signed the Elturel Creed Resolute touches or attacks the doors, the doors unleash a wave of radiant energy. Each creature within 10 feet of the doors in area M19 must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 16 (3d10) radiant damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. A *dispel magic* spell suppresses the door's magic for 1 hour.

The citizens of Elturel in the hold (area M20) unbar and open the door for Ontharr Frume or any Hellrider.

Hellriders

The Hellrider **knights** attack the bearded devils and help the characters battle Yaltezzicma once their enemies fall.

Ontharr Frume

Ontharr (lawful good male Illuskan human **war priest** in appendix A) is a member of the Order of the Gauntlet who sometimes aids the Hellriders. He has become the unofficial leader of the people in Helm's Shieldhall. Ontharr is in his fifties and is ready to lay down his life to protect the people inside the hold. When the characters arrive, he has 50 hit points and no spell slots remaining. He is a bombastic, kind, and determined paladin of Torm. If the characters help him defeat Yaltezzicma, he aids them in saving the city (see "Development").

Ontharr Frume carries a master key to Helm's Shieldhall.

Yaltezzicma

Yaltezzicma wants Ontharr to suffer by watching his friends die. When the characters enter, the **bone devil** thinks they are allies of Ontharr and attacks them, taunting Ontharr.

M20. The Hold

The hold is a large cave beneath Helm's Shieldhall that contains one hundred

commoners and one hundred children (noncombatants). These citizens of Elturel wait in the hold for someone to take back their city.

The ceiling of the hold is 20 feet high.

Development

If the characters kill Yaltezzicma, they give the Hellriders enough time to secure the shieldhall's defenses. The grateful people of the Helm's Shieldhall offer the temple as a place to rest whenever the characters need it and allow the characters to take any items from the armory (area M7). With Helm's Shieldhall secure more citizens of Elturel and Hellriders travel to the complex for protection.

Ontharr Frume (or a Hellrider if he dies), offers the characters the following information:

- Ontharr is a member of the Order of the Gauntlet and the unofficial leader of the shieldhall.
- Ontharr keeps a room in a tavern called A Pair of Black Antlers. He kept a fallen comrade's *holy avenger* beneath the floorboards under his bed in his room (see chapter 1). He left the item behind when he fled to the shieldhall, but the sword could be a powerful boon in the fight against Zariel if wielded by a paladin. If the characters recover the weapon, Ontharr lets them keep it.
- A secret tunnel in the cellar of A Pair of Black Antlers leads to a stockpile of silvered weapons, including a smokepowder musket. It is hidden behind an Order of the Gauntlet banner. A map showing the tunnel can be found in the meeting room (area M11).
- The Hellriders kept a secret stock of devil-fighting weapons hidden in Dragoneye Dock House (see chapter 3). These items would be useful in the characters' quest.
- Cultists of Zariel have created a shrine to the archdevil in the Owlbear Butcher Shop (see chapter 4). The characters could steal cloaks and branding irons from the cult and use those items to infiltrate other places secured by Zariel.

Chapter 3: Dragoneye Dock House

The Dragoneye Dock House was the estate of Marisima Rathanda, a Hellrider and the harbormaster who ran Elturel's Dragoneye Docks on the River Chointhar. When the city was pulled into Avernus, Zariel turned the spirit of Spurnyte Mal, an evil warlock who served the archdevil and was slain by Marisima, into a deathlock, a powerful undead spellcaster. The deathlock chose the dock house as his new home and turned the Rathanda family into his undead spawn.

Spurnyte Mal

In life Spurnyte Mal hunted and killed those who might oppose Zariel in Elturel. He assassinated many ranking Hellriders in the months leading up to Elturel's demise, but was eventually slain by Marisima Rathanda. With his dying breath, Spurnyte promised vengeance on the entire Rathanda family.

Returned to undeath by Zariel, Spurnyte is grateful to the archdevil and sated his need for vengeance by turning the Rathanda family into vampire spawn through dark rituals.

Roleplaying Spurnyte

Spurnyte grew up poor on the streets of Baldur's Gate and made a pact with Zariel at a young age so he could defend himself. He believes his undeath and connection to Zariel are gifts that make him a superior being. In Spurnyte's mind Zariel is generous, and others should serve her to get access to the same gifts. Those who do not are foolish and no better than ants.

If the characters claim to serve Zariel and succeed on a Charisma (Deception) check contested by Spurnyte's Wisdom (Insight) check, the deathlock allows them to remove the devil-fighting weapons from the dock house (area Y9). If the characters fail their check or make no such claim, Spurnyte attacks.

Story Hooks

The characters could come to the Dragoneye Dock House for the following reasons:

- Ontharr Frume or another Hellrider tells the characters there is a hidden supply of devil-fighting weapons in the dock house (see chapter 2).
- A Hellrider the characters meet asks the characters to investigate the disappearance of fellow Hellriders, Dunmar Axeshine and Niri Whistlewood, who went to the Dock House to retrieve weapons.
- Havsu and Yalayah Rathanda (see area Y2) have an **imp** deliver an invitation, clearly constructed by a child, to the characters to come have a tea party at the dock house. The imp was instructed to give the letter to the first able-bodied warriors it saw.

Approaching the House

When the characters get close to the graveyard, read or paraphrase:

Elturel's dock district is quiet and still aside from the distant sounds of the Blood War raging below the city. Though the city's famous Dragoneye Docks were torn asunder when Elturel was dragged into Avernus, most of the nearby buildings remain intact. A two-story home stands among warehouses and boatyards on a dirt road. A carved wood sign labeled, "Dragoneye Dock House," hangs from the front of the shuttered building.

Dock House Features

The Dragoneye Dock House has the following features:

- The dock house is a two-story structure, with the second level 10 feet higher than the first. Rooms are 8 feet high, with 7-foot-high doorways connecting them.

- Climbing the outside walls of the dock house without equipment requires a successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check.
- The walls and doors of the dock house are made of wood. Doors have AC 15, 27 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. If a door in the dock house is locked, a successful DC 15 Dexterity check with thieves' tools picks its lock and a successful DC 18 Strength check forces the door open. Spurnyte holds a master key to all of the doors in the house.
- The house's windows are latched from within and swing outward on iron hinges. A successful DC 12 Dexterity check with thieves' tools opens a window from the outside.
- Areas of the dock house are dimly lit by candlelight.

Areas of the Dock House

The following encounter locations are keyed to the Dragoneye Dock House map.

Y1. Entrance Hall

The door to the dock house is locked (see "Dock House Features"). If the characters attack or force open the door, Havsu and Yalayah Rathanda (see area Y2) investigate.

The entrance hall has the following features:

- *The corpse of a male dwarf Hellrider in plate armor with his throat torn out lies on the floor in the pool of his own blood.*
- *Painted portraits of Elturel's past and present harbormasters hang on the wall.*

Corpse

If Reya Mantlemorn (or another Hellrider) is with the characters, she can identify the corpse as Dunmar Axeshine, a Hellrider who guarded the devil-fighting weapons kept in the office (area Y9). A successful DC 12 Wisdom (Medicine) check reveals the corpse has been drained of most of its blood.

Y2. Playroom

The harbormaster's children played together in this room where they now torture victims.

- *Twin half-elf girls of about eight years of age in matching, bloody, pink dresses sit at a child-sized wood table and pretend to have tea with a gagged and bound human Hellrider with wide, terrified eyes.*
- *Slumped in the corner are two blood-covered human corpses are with their throats torn out.*
- *Wooden swords, ragdolls, toy ships, and miniature sailors are scattered across the floor.*

Havsu and Yalayah

Havsu and Yalayah Rathanda are size Small **vampire spawn**. The twins became sadistic when Spurnyte turned them into undead. The girls enjoy torturing their captives and draining their blood over the course of hours. They matter-of-factly discuss their plans for torturing Niri to death in front of the Hellrider.

If the twins notice the characters, the girls invite the characters to sit down and play with them, happy to discuss their future plans for Niri with the characters. If the characters try to leave the room or suggest freeing Niri, the girls scream and attack, fighting to until destroyed. Combat with the twins draws Marisima and Lorimir from the master bedroom (area Y7).

Niri Whistlewood

Niri Whistlewood (lawful good female Tethyrian human **scout**) came to the dock house with Dunmar Axeshine (see area Y1) to recover the devil-fighting weapons in the office (area Y9). The undead within the house overpowered the duo and killed Dunmar. The twins bound Niri's ankles and wrists with rope and gagged her with a rag (see "Havsu and Yalayah"). A character can remove the ropes and gag as an action, freeing Niri.

Niri is terrified. If the characters free her, she tries to flee, screaming for help and running into the streets, which attracts the attention of a 1d4 patrolling **bearded devils**. A successful DC 13 Charisma (Persuasion) check made as an action convinces Niri to stay with the characters and remain calm. A character makes this check with advantage if Reya Mantlemorn or another Hellrider is with the characters.

If the characters calm Niri, she travels with them and requests to be escorted to Helm's Shieldhall (see chapter 2).

Y3. Dining Room

The Rathanda family ate their meals in this room, which was the scene of their showdown with Spurnyte.

- *A buffet stands at one end of the room, rotting food atop it attracting buzzing insects.*
- *An overturned kitchen table sits next to a pile of broken dishes, rotting scraps, and discarded utensils.*
- *Four chairs are haphazardly thrown about the room.*
- *Bloodstains cover the floor and walls.*

Y4. Kitchen

The dock house kitchen hasn't been used in days.

- *A half-eaten blueberry pie rots on the counter.*
- *An oven stands near steps that lead to the cellar (area Y5).*
- *Cabinets line the walls of this silent room.*

Y5. Pantry

Food-laden shelves line the walls of the pantry. Buckle, the Rathanda family **cat**, hides on the bottom shelves behind a stack of dried fish.

Any character with a passive Wisdom (Perception) score higher than Buckle's Dexterity (Stealth) check notices the cat. A successful DC 12 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check allows a character to handle and carry Buckle. Buckle flees from any character who fails this check and tries to handle her.

If Niri is with the characters, Buckle approaches the Hellrider and the cat allows the Hellrider to handle her. Both Reya and Niri know the secret the cat hides on her neck (see "Treasure").

Buckle's Secret

A character handling Buckle notices she has a small gold key on her collar. This key opens the iron chest in the office (area Y9).

Y6. Cellar

The door to the cellar is locked (see "Dock House Features"). If the characters attack or force open the door, Havsu and Yalayah Rathanda (see area Y2) investigate.

- *A stack of wooden boxes goes from floor to ceiling across the center of the room.*
- *The dirt floor is covered in footprints and scrape marks.*
- *(A wood coffin rests on the ground behind the boxes.)*

Boxes

The boxes contain the Rathanda family's old clothes and personal items and form a wall between the stairs down to the cellar and Spurnyte's coffin. A successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check notices the boxes are covered in a layer of dust, but all have handprints in the dust, indicating they were moved recently.

Coffin

The coffin is Spurnyte's resting place. If he fears he is losing a battle (see area Y9) he retreats here to rest by casting the *dimension door* spell.

Dirt Floor

A successful DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check deduces that the odd pattern in the dirt floor was created by dragging the boxes, which were previously scattered about the cellar, toward the center of the room.

Y7. Master Bedroom

The harbormaster and her husband sleep in this room.

- *Six mutilated human corpses cover a blood-soaked king-sized bed that smells of rot.*
- *A nearby wardrobe is splattered with blood.*
- *Two end tables, each on either side of the bed, hold prayer books.*
- *(Marisima and Lorimir Rathanda, vampire spawn, sleep hidden under the corpses.)*

Marisima and Lorimir

Once devout servants of Torm and loving parents, Marisima, a human in her thirties, and Lorimir, a sun elf in his eighties, are disgusted with their former selves. They worship Spurnyte for the gifts he bestowed upon them.

Both **vampire spawn** sleep with bodies of their victims and are difficult to notice among the carnage. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check notices the vampire spawn among the corpses.

A successful DC 13 Dexterity (Stealth) check sneaks into the room without waking the vampire spawn. If the vampire spawn wake and notice the characters, they attack and fight to the death. If combat breaks out, Havsu and Yalayah Rathanda (see area Y2) investigate.

Y8. Twins' Room

When Havsu and Yalayah Rathanda rest, they do so in this room that contains a set of bunk beds and two dressers.

Y9. Office

The door to the dock house office is locked (see “Dock House Features”). If the characters attack or force open the door, Marisima and Lorimir Rathanda (see area Y7) investigate.

The harbormaster's office has been taken over by Spurnyte and contains the following:

- *A white haired, grey skinned man with a sword symbol carved into his forehead whispers a prayer in Infernal as he burns incense atop a wood desk.*
- *A 210-foot-long iron chest stands next to the desk.*
- *Charts showing shipping routes and schedules along the River Chointhar hang on the walls.*

Chest

This chest contains the Hellriders' supply of devil-fighting weapons (see “Treasure”) and was guarded by Marisima Rathanda.

The chest is locked. The key to the chest is held on the collar of Buckle, the Rathanda family cat hiding in the pantry (area Y5). A successful DC

20 Dexterity check with thieves' tools picks the trap's lock and a successful DC 22 Strength check forces the chest open. The chest has AC 19, 50 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. The chest is enchanted with a magic trap that used to deposit those who triggered it a fixed direction and distance from the chest into the River Chointhar, but that target location has changed to 500 feet above the River Styx since Elturel's arrival in Avernus. Reya and Niri know about this trap and warn the characters if they are with them.

A *detect magic* spell reveals the chest radiates an aura of conjuration magic. Whenever a creature fails an attempt to pick the chest's lock or touches or attacks the chest while it is locked, the chest's trap is triggered. The creature that triggered the trap must succeed on a DC 15 Charisma saving throw or be transported to an open area next to Elturel and fall into the River Styx (see chapter 3 of *Baldur's Gate: Descent into Avernus*). A *dispel magic* spell renders the chest's trap inert for 1 hour.

Spurnyte Mal

Spurnyte, a **deathlock mastermind** (see appendix A) spends most of his time in the office, praying to Zariel. He acts as described in “Roleplaying Spurnyte.” If combat breaks out, Marisima and Lorimir in the master bedroom (area Y2) investigate.

Spurnyte holds a master key to all the doors in the dock house.

Treasure

The chest contains three bags of *celestial caltrops*, a *devil catcher*, two *devil traps*, three *potions of fiendish pain*, and two *silver branding irons* (descriptions of all these items can be found in appendix B).

Spurnyte Mal carries two *soul coins* (see appendix C of *Baldur's Gate: Descent into Avernus*).

Chapter 4: Owlbear Butcher Shop

Cultists of Zariel created a shrine to the archdevil in Owlbear Butcher Shop, an exotic meat store owned by one of Elturel's most beloved figures.

Lora Zurag

Lora Zurag is a beloved community figure in Elturel. An adventurer and butcher, Lora would go out into the wild and come back with the meat of exotic animals and monsters for her patrons to experience. Pancake, her pet owlbear, is always at her side and became the namesake for her shop in Elturel. As the legend of Owlbear Butcher Shop grew, people all over the city came to try Lora's meats and hear tales of adventure.

When Lora grew older, her health prevented her from adventuring. The citizens respected her no less, but she desired to battle monsters again. Zariel seized on this desire. She made a deal with Lora to restore the woman's youth in exchange for the leader starting a cult to the archdevil. Lora started the cult in secret months ago and Zariel fulfilled her end of the deal when Elturel was pulled into Avernus. The same deal also changed Pancake from a tired, old owlbear into a fiendish version of his former self.

Roleplaying Lora

Lora is fanatical in her belief of Zariel's power. The archdevil delivered Lora her lost youth and guaranteed the butcher a place on the frontline of Blood War once Elturel is secure on the River Styx. Lora's love for Zariel cannot be changed and she uses her influence to help other citizens of Elturel embrace the archdevil.

When Lora notices the characters, she preaches the power of Zariel, using her own gift of youth as an example, and asks if they'd like to join the cult (see "Joining the Cult"). If the characters refuse, she attacks them, fighting to the death.

Joining the Cult

When the characters enter the butcher shop, the cultists within ask them if they want to join the

cult. If the characters agree to join, Lora brands their foreheads with a sword symbol using a branding iron (see area O3). The characters are then given gold and red cloaks. Characters who join the guild can rest at Owlbear Butcher Shop.

Branded characters can walk the streets of Elturel without being attacked by Zariel's forces, unless they do something to raise suspicion. Branded characters have advantage on Charisma (Deception) checks made to convince Zariel's servants they are part of the cult and disadvantage on Charisma checks made to influence Zariel's enemies.

Cultists

When cultists notice the characters, they ask what business the characters have at Owlbear Butcher Shop. A successful DC 11 Charisma (Deception or Persuasion) check convinces the cultists the characters are there to join the cult, in which case the cultists direct the characters to Lora Zurag in area O2. If the characters fail their check or don't give the cultists a good reason for coming to the shop, the cultists attack, each fighting until reduced to 10 hit points then fleeing.

If a character talks to a cultist without any other cultists around, a successful DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check gets that cultist to rethink their decision about joining the cult. This cultist leaves the butcher shop and goes somewhere else in the city to wait out the violence.

Story Hooks

The characters can come to Owlbear Butcher Shop for one of the following reasons:

- The characters learn the cultists are keeping prisoners in the butcher shop.
- The characters want cloaks and brands to disguise themselves as cultists to deceive the forces of Zariel.

- The characters want to destroy the cult of Zariel.

Approaching the Butcher Shop

When the characters approach Owlbear Butcher Shop, read or paraphrase:

A long one-story building painted blue is adorned with faded cartoonish paintings of an owlbear. The goofy images are covered in smears of blood and gore. Within that blood the phrases, “Heretics unwelcome,” and, “Praise Zariel,” are written in Common. A sign hanging over the door reads, “Owlbear Butcher Shop.” Three human women in gold and red cloaks stand outside the door, singing a terrible, discordant song:

“All praise be to Zariel,
Our courageous winged protector.
She adores old Elturel,
Our city and our sector.
To her hammer demons fall.
She goes pow, bam, and crunch!
Smash Baphomet on a wall.
Eat Yeenoghu for lunch!”

Gyraya, Shevna, and Ravarra (lawful evil female Rashemi human **cult fanatics**) stand outside the door to the butcher shop guarding the entrance. While they keep watch, the sisters in their twenties practice a hymn they wrote about Zariel. They are bad singers but believe they are the best in the city. Each has a brand of a sword on her forehead.

If the characters fight these cultists, the cultists retreat into area O1 of the shop and use the defenses within against the characters.

Butcher Shop Features

Owlbear Butcher Shop has the following features:

- Owlbear Butcher Shop is a single-story, 12-foot-tall structure. Rooms are 10 feet high, with 8-foot-high doorways connecting them.
- Climbing the outside walls of the shop without equipment requires a successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check.

- The walls and doors of the shop are made of wood. Doors have AC 15, 27 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage.
- Lanterns hanging from the ceiling brightly light areas in the shop.

Areas of the Shop

The following encounter locations are keyed to the Owlbear Butcher Shop map.

01. Shrine

Where Lora once displayed meat and traded goods and tales with customers, there stands a gruesome shrine to Zariel.

- *Two cultists with swords branded onto their foreheads pray at a wooden altar painted with red burning angel wings.*
- *A steel statue made to look like Zariel stands behind the counter perfectly still.*
- *Bubbling, black demon ichor, humanoid body parts, and melee weapons fill a display case.*
- *The head of a black dragon with its maw open hangs above the altar by a rope attached to a pulley and secured behind the display case.*

Cal and Rhem

Cal and Rhem Furrowbrow (lawful evil male Chondathan human **cult fanatics**) pray at the shrine before going out into the city to preach the word of Zariel. The married couple is in their thirties and ran a tailor business in the city. They make the cloaks the cultists wear.

If the characters fight with Cal and Rhem, the cultists use the dragon head (see “Dragon Head”) to harm the characters. The cultists in area O2 come to help their allies at the start of the second round of combat.

Display Case

The cultists filled the display case with the remains of Zariel’s enemies as a tribute to the archdevil.

Dragon Head

The dragon head contains a large flask of acid and is supported by a rope that has AC 11, 5 hit

points, immunity to poison and psychic damage, and vulnerability to fire and slashing damage. If the rope is destroyed, the dragon head crashes down, destroying the altar (see “Zariel’s Altar”). Any creatures within 10 feet of the altar when the head crashes down must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage and 14 (4d6) acid damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Statue

The golem was a gift from Zariel to Lora Zurag for starting the cult. If the characters attack the cultists in this room or the sacrifice room (area O2), the statue animates and has the statistics of a **helmed horror** that attacks the characters, fighting to until destroyed.

Zariel’s Altar

Zariel blessed the crude altar in the shop. A *detect magic* spell reveals the altar radiates an aura of evocation magic. The altar has AC 15, 18 hit points, immunity to poison and psychic damage, and vulnerability to fire damage. When the altar is destroyed, it explodes in a flash of brilliant light that fills the room. Each creature in the room not allied with Zariel must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or it is blinded for 1 minute.

02. Sacrifice Room

The room where Lora used to butcher exotic animals has become a place to sacrifice victims to Zariel.

- *Prayers uttered by a young woman in gold and red robes are answered by two older women wearing similar clothes. All have a sword brand on their foreheads.*
- *The women surround a thrashing, bruised gnoll is tied to stone table at the center of the room, snarling and snapping.*
- *Infernal runes carved into the floor glow red.*

Imgor

Imgor the **gnoll pack lord** is a servant of Yeenoghu that led a band of gnolls into Elturel.

The cultists defeated the gnolls and are sacrificing Imgor to Zariel. If Imgor notices the characters, he begs them for help. If the characters free Imgor, the gnoll helps the characters kill the cultists then flees the city.

Infernal Runes

A *detect magic* spell reveals that the runes on the floor radiate an aura of enchantment magic. Any creature with Zariel’s brand in this room gains the benefits of the *bless* spell. A *dispel magic* spell suppresses the runes’ magic for 1 hour.

Lora Zurag

The young woman is Lora Zurag (lawful evil female Damaran human **veteran**). If the characters do not interrupt Lora, she kills Imgor. She acts as described in “Roleplaying Lora.”

Solfrey and Gretchen

Solfrey and Gretchen (lawful evil female Illuskan **cult fanatics**) are women in their sixties and Lora’s best friends. They were the first to join Lora’s cult and do anything the woman asks.

03. Prisoner Room

Lora used to store her meat in this room, but now she keeps prisoners here instead.

- *Orange eyes burn in the giant head of an enormous owlbear covered in black fur and red feathers, standing on its back legs, roaring.*
- *Twelve moaning, glassy-eyed prisoners bound with chains hang 2 feet off the floor from meat hooks in the ceiling that pierce their shoulders.*
- *A fire hisses in a brazier, warming a branding iron.*
- *Twenty gold and red cloaks sit folded on a table.*
- (A 1-foot-square loose panel in the wall hides a 1-foot-cubic compartment that contains a dirty burlap sack.)

Brand

The branding iron in the brazier is the one Lora uses to brand the foreheads of cultists (see “Joining the Cult”). When a creature receives a brand from the iron, it takes 1 fire damage.

Cloaks

The cloaks on the table are the ones Lora gives to new cultists (see “Joining the Cult”).

Pancake

Pancake is covered in red and black feathers and his eyes glow orange. He has the statistics of an **owlbear** with the following changes:

- Pancake is a fiend and his alignment is lawful evil.
- Pancake has 100 hit points and immunity to fire and poison damage.
- Pancake’s weapon attacks are magical and deal an extra 7 (2d6) fire damage on a hit.

Pancake attacks any creature that enters the area that isn’t escorted by Lora. Pancake fights to the death.

Prisoners

The prisoners are Hellriders captured by the cult to sacrifice. The prisoners are **scouts** of various races. All of the prisoners have no equipment, AC 12, and 1 hit point remaining.

Each prisoner is bound in locked chains that have AC 19, 10 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. A successful DC 15 Dexterity check with thieves’ tools picks the lock on a set of chains, and a successful DC 20 Strength check breaks a set of chains.

As an action, a character can remove a prisoner from a meat hook.

Secret Compartment

A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check notices the loose panel. Removing the panel reveals the sack inside that holds Lora’s treasure (see “Treasure”).

Treasure

The sack in the secret compartment holds a *potion of fire breath* and 250 gp.

Development

If the characters free the prisoners, the Hellriders ask the characters for an escort to Helm’s Shieldhall (see chapter 2).

Appendix A: Creatures

The following creatures appear in this product.

Deathlock Mastermind

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 13 (16 with *mage armor*)

Hit Points 110 (20d8 + 20)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Int +5, Cha +6

Skills Arcana +5, History +5, Perception +4

Damage Resistances necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't silvered

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft. (including magical darkness), passive Perception 14

Languages the languages it knew in life

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. The deathlock's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 14). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *detect magic, disguise self, mage armor*

Spellcasting. The deathlock is a 10th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). It regains its expended spell slots when it finishes a short or long rest. It knows the following warlock spells:

Cantrips (at will): *chill touch, mage hand, minor illusion, poison spray*

1st–5th level (2 5th-level slots): *arms of Hadar, blight, counterspell, crown of madness, darkness, dimension door, dispel magic, fly, hold monster, invisibility*

Turn Resistance. The deathlock has advantage on saving throws against any effect that turns undead.

Actions

Deathly Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (3d6 + 3 necrotic damage).

Grave Bolts. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +6 to hit, range 120 ft., one or two targets. *Hit:* 18 (4d8) necrotic damage. If the target is Large or smaller, it must succeed on a DC 16

Strength saving throw or become restrained as shadowy tendrils wrap around it for 1 minute. A restrained target can use its action to repeat the saving throw, ending the effect on itself on a success.

War Priest

Medium humanoid, any alignment

Armor Class 18 (plate)

Hit Points 117 (18d8 + 36)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	17 (+3)	13 (+1)

Saving Throws Con +6, Wis +7

Skills Intimidation +5, Religion +4

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages any two languages

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Spellcasting. The priest is a 9th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). It has the following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *light, mending, sacred flame, spare the dying*

1st level (4 slots): *divine favor, guiding bolt, healing word, shield of faith*

2nd level (3 slots): *lesser restoration, magic weapon, prayer of healing, silence, spiritual weapon*

3rd level (3 slots): *beacon of hope, crusader's mantle, dispel magic, revivify, spirit guardians, water walk*

4th level (3 slots): *banishment, freedom of movement, guardian of faith, stoneskin*

5th level (1 slot): *flame strike, mass cure wounds, hold monster*

Actions

Multiattack. The priest makes two melee attacks.

Maul. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

Actions

Guided Strike (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest).

The priest grants a +10 bonus to an attack roll made by itself or another creature within 30 feet of it. The priest can make this choice after the roll is made but before it hits or misses.

Appendix B. Magic Items

The following magic items appear in this product.

Celestial Caltrops

Wondrous item, rare

A blue silk bag holds these shards of silver engraved with Celestial runes that were crafted by angels in Mount Celestia. These caltrops are used as those described in chapter 5 of the *Player's Handbook*. While a fiend touches one of these caltrops, it gains vulnerability to radiant damage.

Devil Catcher

Wondrous item, rare

This 10-foot-long adamantine staff is carved with Celestial runes and has a silver spiked semicircle at one end and a handle with a trigger at the other. When the trigger is squeezed, the spiked end contracts.

As an action while you hold the *devil catcher* with both hands, you can try to trap a Large or smaller creature within 10 feet of you with the device. That creature must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or become restrained while you are conscious and holding onto the pole with both hands. As an action, the creature can repeat the saving throw on its turns, ending the restrained condition on a success. Devils have disadvantage on Dexterity saving throws made to avoid and break free of the device.

While a devil is restrained by this device, you can use your action to deal 4d10 piercing damage to the devil.

Devil Trap

Wondrous item, rare

A devil trap consists of four silver 1-foot-long stakes carved with Celestial runes. As an action, you can drive a stake into any solid, nonmetal ground. You can use another action to remove a stake from the ground. When all four stakes are driven into the ground in the individual corners of a square area not larger than 10 feet square, they form an invisible barrier around that area that is 10 feet high. Devils can pass through the

barrier from the outside, but cannot pass through it from the inside.

If the devil tries to use teleportation or interplanar travel to leave the area inside the barrier, it must first make a DC 17 Charisma saving throw. On a success, the creature can use that magic to exit the area. On a failure, the creature can't exit the area and wastes the use of the spell or effect.

Potion of Fiendish Pain

Potion, very rare

This black potion smells of ash and smokes when uncapped. For 1 hour after you drink this potion, whenever a fiend deals damage to you, the fiend takes an amount of psychic damage equal to one-quarter of the damage it dealt to you (rounded down).

Silver Branding Iron

Wondrous item, rare

This branding iron is 3-feet-long and ends in a silver head with the Celestial rune for pain. You have proficiency with the brand. As an action, you can make a melee weapon attack against a fiend within 5 feet of you with the brand. If the attack hits, the fiend loses all its damage immunities and resistances for 1 hour.