



THE DM TOOL CHEST

GOL'OG'S THRONE

HEIR OF SHADOW

FIFTH EDITION ADVENTURE

A DARK POWER IS RISING IN THE PLANE OF SHADOW



THE HEIR OF SHADOW

Gol'Og, Heir of Shadow, is a Fifth Edition villain designed to serve as a campaign-level threat for 1st- to 5th-level characters. After Gol'Og, an orc shaman, found his prayers for power answered by an entity from the Plane of Shadow, he must balance his own ambitions against those of the spirit that now lives in his head.

In this document, GMs will find information that details Gol'Og's backstory, his lieutenants, his goals, and the resources and means he has available to pursue those goals. This document also includes Gol'Og's Throne, an adventure optimized for 5th-level characters where adventurers can confront Gol'Og directly in his lair within the Plane of Shadow. GMs can use this document to craft a whole Tier 1 campaign arc centered around Gol'Og and his cult of loyal followers, or simply take bits and pieces to create a shorter side quest or single-session adventure. Gol'Og and his cult can be placed in any campaign world that features orcs and a Plane of Shadow or a similar alternative.

GOL'OG'S STORY

Gol'Og could speak to spirits from a young age. In his dreams or quiet moments alone, they would call out to him, and he would listen, learning to weave magic through their words. As

Gol'Og refined his abilities, he found that given any connection with a particular spirit, be it a personal item, a shared location, or the blood of a relative, he could summon forth that spirit for communion. This capability quickly brought him power and prestige within the Thunderfel Clan to which he belonged, and he eventually secured for himself a position on the clan's elder council as well as the title of "Spiritspeaker." While out on a hunt during the night of the full moon, Gol'Og and his hunting party stumbled upon a crumbling tower in the woods that they were sure had not been there before. Perplexed, Gol'Og and his party investigated, but the tower held nothing but moving shadows and indecipherable whispers—it was empty. Gol'Og and his party retreated to camp with plans to return to the tower in the morning, but when they did, it had disappeared. What Gol'Og and the other orcs did not know was that they had stumbled into a naturally occurring, momentary tear in the planar fabric of reality that had led them briefly into the Plane of Shadow. Unable to explain this phenomenon, the other orcs were content to attribute the experience to dark magic better left forgotten about. But Gol'Og could not forget; since witnessing the tower, he had begun to hear a new voice in his head—a voice that called itself Sionn, Prince of Oblivion.

Gol'Og was receptive to the voice. It explained that the Thunderfel Orcs were a chosen people, and that their lands were holy, and that it was Gol'Og who would lead the clan to greatness and recognize its potential. It told Gol'Og that his destiny was to consecrate these lands in the name of Sionn, Prince of Oblivion, in order to right an ancient wrong. Initially, Gol'Og was hesitant. Why him? Why his people? Why these lands? But those questions slowly faded the more that Sionn whispered within his head, as Gol'Og found that the more he listened, the more power he could draw from Sionn's essence. The reasons why became unimportant to Gol'Og; all that mattered was that he wanted more of the magic that coursed through him, and Sionn was happy to accommodate this for as long as Gol'Og carried out his will. Sionn's instructions for Gol'Og were simple: spread his influence across the Thunderfel Clan, build a gate to the Plane of Shadow, and restore Sionn, Prince of Oblivion, to his former glory.

The Thunderfel Clan leadership was not receptive to Gol'Og's new fascination with this dark religion. Over the following months, as Gol'Og spread the word of Sionn throughout the clan, promising dark gifts to worthy adherents, a power struggle ensued. Gol'Og could not ultimately bring the rest of the clan's leadership to heel, and he was sentenced to permanent exile. Though banished from the Thunderfel, Gol'Og was not alone—dozens of other clan members chose to follow him, hungry for the power he promised them. Gol'Og and his followers raised a new banner and named themselves the Shadowclaw in worship to their new master. Now, the Shadowclaw works with the forces of evil to bring a permanent darkness into the Material Plane.

A BALANCE OF POWER

Sionn is more than a voice in Gol'Og's head—the dark force has partially possessed the shaman, and Gol'Og now shares his mind with the soul of the Prince of Oblivion. At any given moment, one of the personalities may temporarily subsume the other as they vie for primary control of the vessel they inhabit. Gol'Og is not fully aware of this and has increasing difficulty delineating Sionn's thoughts from his own.

Sionn is witty and cleverly sadistic and prefers to act calm and calculated in carrying out his will on the Material Plane. Gol'Og is brash and aggressive; characteristics only enforced as he fights subconsciously to retain his own sanity. He will not hesitate to act quickly and with great force to achieve his goals. Depending on who currently holds power over Gol'Og's body, the means through which the Shadowclaw clan work to accomplish its goals vary.

GOL'OG SCHEMES

These are just a few of the schemes that Gol'Og and the Shadowclaw clan could be working on:

- Gol'Og and the Shadowclaw clan are gathering materials and preparing rituals for the construction of a shadow gate, which would allow free movement between the Plane of Shadow and the Material Plane.
- Gol'Og and the Shadowclaw clan are searching for an ancient burial ground rumored to be within the region. They plan to raise all of the corpses it holds as undead servants who can carry out Gol'Og's bidding.
- Gol'Og and the Shadowclaw clan seek to abduct and then murder a powerful elven noble so that they may use the body as a host for Sionn's resurrection.
- Gol'Og and the Shadowclaw clan seek to summon a powerful monstrosity from the Plane of Shadow, which they can unleash onto unsuspecting villages. The increased ambient pain and suffering in the region would be beneficial for future dark rituals.
- Gol'Og and the Shadowclaw clan are preparing for a full-scale assault on a nearby village so that they may gather slaves for their fortress.
- Gol'Og and the Shadowclaw clan aim to destroy the Thunderfel clan entirely as revenge for Gol'Og's banishment.

ACTS

Gol'Og and the Shadowclaw clan work relentlessly in pursuit of their goals. If you aren't sure what to do in any given session, you can

consult the following table to generate something violent.

1d4	Gol'Og Acts
1	Ritual Abductions
2	Consuming Shadows
3	Scouting Parties
4	Raised Dead

Ritual Abductions. Gol'Og orders his clan members to perform raids of the local villages in order to abduct innocents for the purposes of ritual sacrifice. In the middle of the night, small bands of clan members sneak into the streets and break down doors, dragging inhabitants kicking and screaming into the darkness.

Consuming Shadows. Gol'Og derives great pleasure from witnessing the fear of others. Drawing power from Sionn and the Plane of Shadow, Gol'Og summons forth shadows, wraiths, and other creatures of the night to harass local villages and instill an ambient fear in the populace.

Scouting Parties. Gol'Og and the Shadowclaw clan send scouting parties into the region to search for other existing Plane of Shadow portals, locations of interest, or magical items. The scouting parties are often quick to attack any travelers they encounter, as Gol'Og is always eager for more sacrifices.

Raised Dead. Gol'Og protects the lands claimed by the Shadowclaw clan with hordes of undead servants. Adventurers may unwittingly wander into Shadowclaw territory and be confronted by shambling undead servants who fight ruthlessly against trespassers until they are destroyed.

THE SHADOWCLAW CLAN

The Shadowclaw Clan is approximately eighty members strong. Orcs make up the bulk of Gol'Og's forces, but the beckoning of dark powers has brought a scattering of goblinoids, ogres, and even a few of the mortal races into his ranks. Adventures involving Gol'Og and the Shadowclaw clan may include any foes from the Shadowclaw Clan Members table.

CR	Shadowclaw Clan
1/4	Acolyte
1/4	Goblin
1/4	Skeleton
1/4	Wolf
1/4	Zombie
1/2	Orc
1/2	Shadow
1	Bugbear
1	Dire Wolf
2	Ogre
2	Ogre Zombie
2	Priest

THE DARK GIFTS

Gol'Og grows the Shadowclaw clan and keeps his influence by promising power to the worthiest of adherents. Through the force of Sionn, Prince of Oblivion from the Plane of Shadow, Gol'Og can bestow a dark gift onto those of his followers that he deems worthy. These dark gifts come in two varieties—a *lesser dark gift* for lower-ranking members of the clan, and a *greater dark gift*, for Gol'Og's most trusted allies. GMs can use the provided dark gift templates below to quickly modify creature stat blocks to make them unique to the Shadowclaw clan.

LESSER DARK GIFTS

Perfect Darkvision. The creature suffers no vision impairment from magical or non-magical darkness.

New Action: Shadow Form (Recharges after a Long rest). The creature can use its action to surround its form with shadow, making it harder to hit and increasing its AC by 1.

New Reaction: Shadow Warp (Recharges after a Short or Long rest). When the creature takes damage, it teleports up to 30 feet to an unoccupied space it can see.

New Trait: Innate Spellcasting. The creature can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

1/day each: *darkness*

GREATER DARK GIFT

Perfect Darkvision. The creature suffers no vision impairment from magical or non-magical darkness.

New Action: Shadow Form (Recharges after a Long rest). The creature can use its action to surround its form with shadow, making it harder to hit and increasing its AC by 2.

New Reaction: Shadow Warp (Recharges after a Short or Long rest). When the creature takes damage, it teleports up to 60 feet to an unoccupied space it can see.

New Trait: Innate Spellcasting. The creature can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

1/day each: *darkness, greater invisibility*

LIEUTENANTS

Gol'Og works diligently to maintain his power over the Shadowclaw, promising each of its members the potential of earning a dark gift, but only ever delivering this gift to his most trusted and worthy of adherents. Should Gol'Og bestow dark gifts too freely, he would risk arming a usurper, though his relationship with Sionn instills fear and respect in his followers that makes any internal challenge to his leadership unlikely. Nasus the Whisperer and Zhurga "Blackcleaver" Azuk are Gol'Og's most trusted lieutenants and act as his left and right hands in the operation of the Shadowclaw clan.

NASUS THE WHISPERER.

Nasus the Whisperer is the only human member of the Shadowclaw clan. Nasus was a skilled wizard who grew frustrated with his studies and appealed to the gods for power. Sionn heard his plea and instructed him to bring his only son into the foothills, slaughter him, then deliver his corpse to the one known as Gol'Og in a declaration of servitude. In return, he would receive a dark gift that would surpass his half-lifetime of arcane study. A cruel psychopath, Nasus obliged, murdering his wife and taking his son into the foothills for slaughter. After days of searching, he found Gol'Og, who knew he was coming. Gol'Og bestowed the dark gift unto Nasus, and the two quickly became trusted allies under the guidance of the Prince of Oblivion. As a human, Nasus can work to advance the goals of

the Shadowclaw from within "civilized" settlements in a way that other clan members cannot. Using his radiating charisma and cunning wit, he works in plain sight to gather information for the Shadowclaw as well as to slowly identify converts to their cause. His abilities as a spy earned him the title "the Whisperer."

Nasus uses **mage** statistics with the **greater dark gift** template.

ZHURGA "BLACKCLEAVER" AZUK.

Zhurga Azuk is simply known as "Blackcleaver" by the Shadowclaw. A close friend of Gol'Og since childhood and a member of the hunting party that found the original tower in the woods, Zhurga was the first orc that Gol'Og confided in regarding the voice in his head. The bond between Zhurga and Gol'Og only grew stronger, and Zhurga became the first follower of Gol'Og to be blessed with the dark gift. Zhurga was already a fearsome warrior, and the dark gift only increased her capabilities, earning her the title of Blackcleaver within the clan. Blackcleaver is the iron fist of the Shadowclaw, leading its troops into raids or eliminating key targets herself as necessary. The rest of the clan fears and respects her, knowing she would be quick to tear malefactors limb from limb at the slightest provocation.

Zhurga uses **gladiator** statistics with the **greater dark gift** template.

GOL'OG IN YOUR CAMPAIGN

Gol'Og and the Shadowclaw clan work best as a regional-level campaign threat in the first tier of play from 1st to 5th level. The size of the clan itself as well as the varying challenge ratings of its potential members allow for a range of threats that can be suited to the party's level as they advance. If the GM is looking to build an entire campaign arc around this villain, a good start includes small "side quests" that have become available as a result of Shadowclaw disturbance in the region.

For example, from 1st to 3rd level, orc ambushes along the roads have become more frequent, so caravans are looking to hire protection for their routes. Or, hill giants or ogres are assaulting small homesteads or

villages in increasing frequency because they have been pushed out by the expanding Shadowclaw territories.

Between 3rd and 4th level, the party may begin to encounter the Shadowclaw clan directly. Maybe they fight off a raid led by Blackcleaver, who manages to retreat into the woods after a narrow defeat. Maybe they discover clues that lead them to Nasus the Whisperer, slowly tearing apart a local village from the inside. Through confronting Gol'Og's lieutenants directly, the party can learn the history and motivations of the Shadowclaw clan and prepare an assault on Gol'Og directly.

Depending on how the campaign's events progress, the clan may be successful in building a gate to the Plane of Shadow—which the party will have to travel through for a final confrontation with Gol'Og. Alternatively, maybe they confront Gol'Og and halt the gate's construction just in time, preventing an onslaught of shadow beasts pouring into the material plane.

Gol'Og and the Shadowclaw clan can also be dropped into existing campaigns as an ambient threat or quick one- or two-session adventure. The characters may be made aware of the existing Shadowclaw threat upfront by worried magistrates, and may be offered a hefty sum to immediately confront Gol'Og directly in his lair to put an end to the evil. In this case, the included adventure Gol'Og's Throne can be run as written, with the GM modifying the adventure to suit the needs of their campaign. Alternatively, the party may encounter and defeat one of the Shadowclaw lieutenants in a single-session adventure, either Nasus the

Whisperer in an urban adventure or Blackcleaver out in the wilderness. This way, the Shadowclaw can be presented as a minor threat with the potential to resurface later if the GM chooses.

GOL'OG, HEIR OF SHADOW

Medium humanoid (orc), chaotic evil

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)

Hit Points 91 (14d8 + 28)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Wis +4, Cha +7

Skills Arcana +4, History +4

Damage Resistances psychic

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Orcish

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. Gol'Og's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma. He can innately cast the following spells (spell save DC 15), requiring no material components:

At will: *detect magic*, *jump*, *levitate*, *mage armor (self only)*, *speak with dead*, *darkness*

1/day: *true seeing*, *dimension door*

Spellcasting. Gol'Og is a 14th-level spellcaster. His spell casting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). He regains his expended spell slots when he finishes a short or long rest. He knows the following warlock spells:

Cantrips (at will): *chill touch*, *eldritch blast*, *guidance*, *mage hand*, *minor illusion*, *prestidigitation*, *shocking grasp*

1st-5th level (3 5th-level slots): *crown of madness*, *clairvoyance*, *contact other plane*, *detect thoughts*, *dissonant whispers*, *dominate beast*, *telekinesis*, *vampiric touch*, *fear*

Sionn's Aura. At the start of each of Gol'Og's turns, each creature of his choice within 5 feet of him must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or take 10 (3d6) psychic damage, provided that Gol'Og isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Sickle. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage



GOL'OG'S THRONE

Gol'Og's Throne is a Fifth Edition adventure designed for **three to six characters of 5th to 6th level**, and is optimized for a party of **four 5th-level characters**. The orc warlock Gol'Og and his Shadowclaw clan followers threaten to overlap the Plane of Shadow with the Material Plane. It will be up to a brave group of adventurers to travel through the shadow gate and defeat Gol'Og and his forces within his Plane of Shadow fortress. Should the adventurers fail, Gol'Og threatens to bring death and darkness through the shadow gate and into the Material Plane. This adventure can be placed into any campaign that includes multiple planes or dimensions, preferably including a plane of shadow, death, darkness, or similar.

BACKGROUND

Gol'Og and his Shadowclaw forces have succeeded in constructing a shadow gate, which allows free movement between the Plane of Shadow and the Material Plane. Previously, the Shadowclaw could only move between realms by finding intermittent portals that appeared during the full moon—but now, with the gate finished construction, the clan can begin to bring the full scope of their plans to bear. Slowly, shadow essence will leak from the gate and begin to consume the region, setting the stage for the resurrection of Sionn, Prince of Oblivion.

In the meantime, Gol'Og and his forces travelled into the Plane of Shadow to establish their fortress, where it could be much more easily defended from potential threats on the Material Plane. Gol'Og has built a throne for himself inside his new fortress, where he communes with Sionn endlessly, fighting to keep control of his own personality. Sionn has promised Gol'Og planar royalty and immortality in return for his service, but Gol'Og can only realize these benefits if his mind has not been entirely overtaken by the Prince of Oblivion. Gol'Og lurks inside his new fortress, praying, meditating, and conducting rituals to build his strength and harness his latent power. If the adventurers cannot destroy Gol'Og for good, the Shadowclaw clan threatens to wreak a dark havoc on the Material Plane.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

There are a variety of reasons the characters may venture into the Plane of Shadow to confront Gol'Og. A few of these reasons are outlined below:

An Incursion Begins. Shadows, wraiths, and the shambling undead grow quickly in number, and people are scared of leaving their homes. Their origin has been traced back to a terrifying discovery: a portal in the wilderness that radiates dark energy. The Shadowclaw clan is surely behind this—if no one ventures into the

portal and destroys Gol'Og, the entire region may be consumed by darkness.

Nobles United. Gol'Og has built a fearsome reputation for himself, and the regional nobility have now been convinced of the legitimacy of the Shadowclaw threat. They offer 1,500 gp for anyone who can venture into the Plane of Shadow and slay the one known as Gol'Og, Heir of Shadow.

Dark Dreams. A cleric, paladin, or other religious member of the party is plagued by nightmares where horrible monstrosities pour into the world from a shadow gate. Words or an omen from their deity implore them to journey to the gate, venture inside, and find and slay the one known as Gol'Og, so that he may never unleash his terror upon the world.

THE PLANE OF SHADOW

The adventure begins by assuming that the characters have traveled through the shadow gate on the Material Plane to enter the Plane of Shadow. The party should have at least a rough idea of where the Shadowclaw fortress is located, whether they previously intimidated Shadowclaw clan members, received a dark vision, or contacted an interplanar entity for the information. The Plane of Shadow is a dark, twisted mirror of the Material Plane—mountains and major landmarks may appear in the same places, though they manifest differently on the Plane of Shadow. Depending on where the GM has placed Gol'Og and the Shadowclaw clan in their own campaign, the party may be adventuring through misty foothills, dead and gnarled forests, or spirit-filled swamps.

Regardless of the Plane of Shadow environment the characters find themselves in, finding the Shadowclaw fortress after passing through the shadow gate requires two successful DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) checks. The party can make these checks once for every hour they spend navigating the Plane of Shadow. Upon each failed Wisdom (Survival) check, the party may stumble onto one of the following Plane of Shadow encounters:

Encounter: Sobbing Mushrooms. The party encounters a patch of seven mushrooms approximately three feet tall. Each mushroom bears a realistic humanoid face in its stem that twitches, blinks, and sobs loudly. The mushrooms cannot otherwise communicate and wail continuously. Any creature that comes within 10 feet of the mushrooms causes them to shriek in fear. Creatures within 30 feet of the mushrooms when they shriek must make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw, taking 10 (3d6) psychic damage on a failed save, or half that amount on a successful one.

Encounter: Hangman's Tree. A young man who has been hung from a large oak tree calls out for help from the party as they pass by. He grasps futilely at the noose around his neck, and his face is purple. If the party engages him in conversation, he does little other than beg desperately for them to cut him down. The hanging man is in fact a nefarious illusion. If any character comes within five feet of him, his form becomes wispy and spectral as he flies from the noose as a **ghost**. The ghost immediately attempts to use its horrifying visage and possession abilities, and fights until it is destroyed.

Encounter: Duplicate Shadows. The party stumbles into an area particularly dense with ambient shadowstuff. In response to the presence of the adventurers, **shadows** matching the silhouettes of each party member manifest before them and begin to attack. They fight until they are destroyed.

Encounter: Bleeding Heart. The party comes across what appears to be a boulder-sized heart nestled among the twisting brambles of a thicket. The heart beats erratically, and black blood oozes and spurts outwards from its arteries. Two **wraiths** (their size is **large**) emerge from the thicket and attack the party if any characters come within 60 feet of the heart. The heart belonged to one of two stone giants that stumbled into the Plane of Shadow and could not find their way out. The plane's necrotic energy has warped it, and it remains protected by the giants in death. The rest of their corpses were scavenged long ago.



GOL'OG'S FORTRESS

Once the characters have successfully navigated to the Shadowclaw fortress, read aloud the following:

Two menacing gargoyles that look like winged goblins flank a towering set of stone doors carved into the side of a hill. A lantern hangs beside the doors and burns with a purple flame. Standing nearby is a lone orc, wearing studded leathers and armed with an axe.

The gargoyles are non-magical statues. The orc is a lookout posted to keep watch for intruders, rare though they may be in the Plane of Shadow. At the first sign of trouble, the lookout will retreat through the doors to the fortress to sound the alarm.

GENERAL FEATURES

The Shadowclaw fortress has been built into a hillside not far from the shadow gate. It is not the clan's only base, but it quickly became their

headquarters after its construction. Unless otherwise stated, its features are described as follows:

Ceilings, Walls, and Floors. The fortress is constructed from thick slabs of black granite. Walls are two feet thick and ceilings are 10 feet high. Hallways are 5 feet wide.

Doors. Doors are made from Plane of Shadow oak and reinforced with iron bands. They have AC 15 and 18 hit points. Locked doors can be opened with a successful DC 14 Dexterity check using thieves' tools or a DC 16 Strength (Athletics) check.

Light. The interior of the fortress is lit with dim light by torches that glow with purple flame through the *continual flame* spell.

1. ANTECHAMBER

This small room is empty of furniture. Dozens of bleached humanoid skulls have been nailed to the north and south walls in neatly organized rows. Doors exit to the east and south.

Treasure: Trapped Soul. This antechamber is decorated with the skulls of the Shadowclaw's enemies. The use of *detect magic* reveals that one of the skulls is surrounded by an aura of necromantic magic. The skull originally belonged to a bard whose soul has now been partially trapped within it. The skull may be used as an arcane focus, and characters who wield it can use it to cast *vicious mockery* using their own spellcasting ability.

Secret Door. A secret door in the north wall of this room connects it to the fortress barracks. The door can be found with a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check.

2. CISTERN

A dark cistern filled with water rests in the middle of this otherwise empty chamber. A dark hallway extends to the east.

The cistern holds water fouled by the Plane of Shadow and the presence of the Prince of Oblivion. Good-aligned creatures who gaze into the pool see the illusion of a corpse floating just below the surface. This illusion fades if the water is disturbed.

3. KENNEL

Characters approaching this room with a passive Perception of 12 or higher can hear bestial scratching, slurping, and crunching coming from beyond the door. When the characters enter the room, read aloud:

This room reeks of rot, must, and defecation. Patches of hay are scattered about the floor. In the middle of the room, two black-furred wolves gnaw greedily at the corpses of two humans that are locked in an iron cage suspended from the ceiling.

Doors in this room exit to the north and west.

Encounter: Shadowclaw Wolves. The two wolves in this room are feasting on the corpses of humans brought back from a previous raid on the Material Plane. They are fiercely defensive of their meal and immediately attack anyone they



do not recognize as loyal to the Shadowclaw clan. They fight viciously to the death. They each use **winter wolf** statistics, though their cold breath ability deals necrotic damage instead of cold damage.

4. KITCHEN AND MESS

Characters approaching this room can hear the sounds of boisterous conversation in Orcish coming from beyond the door. When the characters enter the room, read aloud:

The butchered carcasses of two mammals are suspended from thick iron hooks that hang from the ceiling in the north end of the room. Along the west wall is a stone countertop littered with carving knives, food scraps, and bones. Gathered around a long wooden table in the middle of the room are a bunch of raucous orcs.

Doors in this room exit to the east, west, and south. Characters who inspect the hanging carcasses can determine them to be deer. There is nothing of value to be found in this room; only various carving instruments, raw meat, and discarded bones.

Encounter: Feasting Orcs. Gathered around the table digging into a meal of meat are six orcs and one orc veteran blessed with a **lesser dark gift** (see page 4). The orcs quickly gather their nearby weapons and immediately attack any intruders. The orcs fight until the death, as any who surrender will surely be slowly tortured and murdered by Gol'Og and Blackcleaver.

5. BARRACKS

Six double bunk beds are arranged against the east and west walls of this room. At the foot of each bed is an iron strongbox. Two hides are stretched across tanning racks in the middle of the room. Swords, axes, and bows hang on wall mounts near the beds.

Treasure: Strongboxes. There are 12 strongboxes in this room in total. Each strongbox can be opened with a successful DC 14 Dexterity check using thieves' tools or a DC 20 Strength (Athletics) check. Alternatively, the party may find individual keys on the bodies of

orcs throughout the fortress. The strongboxes cumulatively contain the following loot:

- 32 cp, 24 sp, and 11 gp
- Two necklaces made from human teeth
- Seven mummified severed fingers
- Two rubies wrapped in cloth worth 50 gp each
- Spare tunics, small daggers, and other worthless items

6. WAR ROOM

A large canvas map is unfurled across a thick wooden table in the middle of this chamber. Eight chairs have been pushed up against the perimeter of the room. Trophies are mounted on the walls—the head of a bear, a row of shrunken heads, and a hulking great axe. Multiple doors exit to the east, west, north, and south.

This room is where Gol'Og and the Shadowclaw clan plot their next moves. The map on the table depicts the surrounding Material Plane region, with certain settlements marked with black X's denoting recent or planned raids.

Treasure: Great Axe. The axe on the wall is a +1 greataxe that originally belonged to Zhurga's father, Narfu. A character who has the axe on their person loses all color in their vision.

7. ARMORY

Characters approaching this room can hear the sound of metal hammering against metal coming from beyond the door. When the characters enter the room, read aloud:

A forge in the north wall of this room belches purple flame. In front of the forge stand three orcs, one of which brings a hammer down repeatedly against a blade lying on an anvil. A nearby table holds blacksmith's tools and raw materials. Weapon and armor racks line the walls and are well-stocked with blades, studded leathers, and other equipment.

This room serves as the Shadowclaw forge and armory. The weapon and armor racks hold equipment of fine but otherwise mundane quality. The use of *detect magic* reveals an aura of necromancy magic around the forge itself as well

as the weapon in progress on the anvil. The fires of the forge have been blessed by Sionn to enchant any weapon tempered in their flames. A weapon crafted using the forge gains the following traits:

- It has +1 to attack and damage rolls.
- **Lifesteal.** Critical hits against non-undead creatures delivered with the weapon restore health to the wielder equal to the damage dealt.

Encounter: Blackcleaver. Zhurga

"Blackcleaver" Azuk is here (an orc gladiator with the **greater dark gift**, see page 5) alongside two other orcs who are in the process of crafting her a special weapon. Blackcleaver and the other orcs immediately attack any intruders, fighting until they are destroyed.

8. CHAPEL

Three stone ravens are perched atop a blood-stained boulder that rests in the middle of this chamber. Atop a nearby stone pedestal is a small ritual knife and an empty bowl.

Hazard: Altar. The boulder in this room is an altar to Sionn, Prince of Oblivion. The three stone ravens were carved out of its shape and are a common good omen to the orcs. Members of the Shadowclaw frequently make offerings of blood upon the altar in worship to Sionn and in the hopes of becoming worthy of receiving a dark gift. A character who desecrates the altar summons the angry orc spirits of a **wraith** and two **shadows** that manifest to defend it, fighting until they are destroyed.

9. TORTURE CHAMBER

Characters approaching this room can hear the repeated, overlapping sounds of metal striking against stone. When the characters enter the room, read aloud:

The walls and floor of this chamber are splattered and smeared with blood. A stone table against the east wall is littered with torture instruments. An empty cage hangs from the ceiling. A torture rack sits empty in the middle of the room. Against the north wall, a slumping figure is

restrained in a wooden chair by iron manacles and securely gagged. The south end of this room gives way to a natural cavern wall, where six zombies shamble amongst the rubble, mindlessly hacking away at the stone with pickaxes.

Hazard: Zombies. This torture chamber is being expanded by undead thralls bound in servitude to Gol'Og. They pay no attention to the characters unless their work is interrupted, at which point the six **zombies** attack and fight until they are destroyed.

Cleric Nia. The figure slumped in the chair is Nia Haim (LG female human **priest**) a local cleric who had proven to be a thorn in the Shadowclaw's side for the past few weeks, having successfully led an assault on one of their camps and personally killing a half-dozen clan members. Nia is unconscious and near death after being interrogated by Blackcleaver. She has 1 hit point remaining and is out of spell slots. If Nia receives at least 10 points of healing, she will be able and willing to join the party's assault on the fortress. She can explain her history with the Shadowclaw clan and that she works for a temple in a nearby village.

Treasure: Key and Nia's Belongings. Atop the table with the torture instruments is the key that unlocks Nia's manacles, as well as her mace, prayer book, and holy symbol.

10. GOL'OG'S QUARTERS

The door to this room is locked. When the characters enter, read aloud:

A stone bed covered in sheepskins and a simple stone desk are the only pieces of furniture in this room. Atop the desk is a quill and bladder of ink. A bat flitters about in a small cage that hangs from the ceiling. Two bulging leather sacks sit in the northeast corner of the room. There is a cold firepit in the center of the room below a vent in the stone above.

The bat is a non-magical pet of Gol'Og's. The cage it is kept in is closed with a simple latch. If the cage is opened, the bat promptly flies through the vent in the ceiling and disappears.

Gol'Og's Writings. Characters who make a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check of the room can find a bundle of scrolls that has been wedged between the altar and the floor. The writings were hidden by Gol'Og, as writing is uncommon among the orcs, and the scrolls detail his personal internal struggle with Sionn as he fights for his own sanity. The scrolls appear to suggest that Gol'Og is writing down a muddled conversation between multiple voices inside his own head. Characters who take a few minutes to read the writings can discern the following:

- Gol'Og's mind is inhabited by an entity known as Sionn.
- Sionn has given Gol'Og great power.
- Sionn wants to expand his influence into the Material Plane.

Treasure: Leather Sacks. The leather sacks in this room belong to Gol'Og. One of the leather sacks holds numerous alchemical ingredients and several potions contained within leather pouches rather than stoppered vials. The potions include two *potions of greater healing*, a *potion of clairvoyance*, a *potion of hill giant strength*, and a *potion of invisibility*. The second leather sack holds loose treasure as well as a variety of spell components, including:

- 57 cp, 9 sp, and 115 gp
- Two diamonds worth 150 gp each
- 4 carnelians worth 50 gp each



NIA HAIM

11. GOL'OG'S THRONE

Steps rise to a dais in the middle of this hexagonal room, atop which is a throne of black stone, its armrests carved to resemble screaming faces. On the ground in front of the throne are dozens of lit candles arranged in a large circle. Inside the circle, the stone is decorated with markings and patterns drawn in charcoal and ash. Six pillars are arranged equidistantly around the perimeter of the room.

Encounter: Gol'Og, Heir of Shadow. Gol'Og, Heir of Shadow (see page 5, apply the **greater dark gift** template) spends most of his time seated upon the throne communing with Sionn. He is joined by two **orc** adherents who tend to him and prepare his ritual circle. Gol'Og may communicate briefly with the characters but is unwilling to negotiate and will fight to the death.

Treasure: Gol'Og. On Gol'Og's person is the key to his personal quarters as well as a *ring of spell storing*.

Ritual Circle. The candle formation and markings within it compose a ritual circle of divination and conjuration magic that Gol'Og uses to commune with and draw power from Sionn. A character who examines the circle and succeeds on a DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check can determine its purpose. A character who succeeds on a DC 20 Intelligence (Arcana) check can determine how to use the ritual circle. If Gol'Og has been slain, the circle can be used to contact Sionn, Prince of Oblivion. If Sionn does not currently inhabit a body, characters that use the ritual circle must make DC 18 Wisdom saving throw. The first character to fail this saving throw becomes possessed by Sionn.

Sionn inhabits his host until they die or he decides to abandon them.

AFTERMATH

If Gol'Og has been slain, Sionn, Prince of Oblivion, loses his host and his grip on the world of the living. Any remaining Shadowclaw clan members will soon fracture when they discover that their leader and the source of their power is dead. The characters are free to destroy the shadow gate without obstruction. Any lieutenants who remain alive, such as Blackcleaver or Nasus the Whisperer, may attempt to contact Sionn and establish themselves as hosts for his presence on the Material Plane. If all of Gol'Og's lieutenants have been slain, it is likely Sionn will not resurface for a long time. With the Shadowclaw clan out of the picture, the original Thunderfel clan of the region may seek to regain old territories taken from them by Gol'Og. At GM discretion, this may present further opportunities for adventure.

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