DESCENT into HELL



5e

JKW

5th-Level Adventure


Demon
Slight

Descent Into Hell

*This adventure is designed for **three to five 4th- to 6th-level characters** and is optimized for **four characters with an average party level (APL) of 5**. This adventure takes place in the DMDave Worlds' setting of Blustrom, but can easily be placed in any campaign setting that has demons and portals to other dimensions. The characters enter a portal to the very home of demons in order to put a permanent end to Orgorus, One Who Devours.*

Background

Fifty years ago, the demon lord Orgorus walked among the people of Blustrom, leaving in his wake a river of blood, bone, and shattered lives. One such life belonged to a man called Sigeric: Orgorus possessed his body, took up a kitchen knife, and ripped into his wife and daughter. The demon made sure to keep Sigeric's spirit conscious as his family cried for mercy; Sigeric's mouth was filled with the demon's laughter, even as his eyes wept. Finished with this small amusement, Orgorus left the man alone amongst the bloody ruin of his family.

Sigeric has spent his entire life searching for a way to avenge his family's death. It would not be enough to slay Orgorus in the land of the living. For the demon to taste true defeat, he would have to be beaten in the very home of demons. Sigeric is no fool, however: his aging body and mind are no match for such power. Instead he seeks a champion–or champions–to dive into the depths of hell itself and bring him the head of Orgorus, so that he may look upon his foul face and know that the demon's life has truly ended.

Sigeric has finally found a way to enter the plane of hell: a profane ritual that, when completed, will open an arcane portal straight to Orgorus' lair. By possessing Sigeric, Orgorus inadvertently left an imprint of his spirit on the man's soul. This imprint is a map, a beacon. It will allow Sigeric to narrow the plane down to a sliver of probability. Wherever the portal takes the characters, however, they must return in eight hours or be lost to the depths of oblivion forever.

Who will become Sigeric's avatar of retribution? Who will dare to enter hell itself?

Adventure Hooks

The following plot hooks provide some possible ways for the characters to get involved in the adventure.

Sigeric's Plea. The characters catch wind of a rumor involving an old man and a portal to hell. Though the story sounds outlandish, the man is reportedly willing to pay upwards of one thousand gold to whoever helps him.

Sudden Portal. Sigeric decides to go at the task alone, overestimating his own strength. Luckily for him, the portal ritual malfunctions and it ends up appearing on a busy city street–right in front of the characters! He rushes forth to explain himself, and to offer his reward.

Demon Hunters. The characters enter a competition between Blustrom's knightly orders to see who can slay the most powerful demon. The royal family will decide the winner of this competition, and award 300 gold.

The Stygian Ramparts

Orgorus (**chain devil**) resides in a small, fortified slice of hell called The Stygian Ramparts. A lone tower watches over a river of lava and a wall of wrought iron. The only way to reach the tower is through a cave network and the rampart itself; as one might expect, Orgorus' realm is heavily guarded by a variety of lesser demons.

Time Limit. Sigeric informs the characters that they must return through the portal before eight hours have passed or be lost in hell forever.

More Time. Any character may spend a spell slot of their choice to channel magical energy into the portal. If they do, have them attempt a DC 20 Intelligence (Arcana) check. On a success, the time limit is increased by a number of hours equal to the spent spell slot's level. On a failure, that character takes 22 (4d10) fire damage as the portal destabilizes.

General Features

Oppressive Heat. At the beginning of every hour, each character must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or take a point of exhaustion. If a character figures out a way to cool off and rest for at least an hour, they may clear all points of exhaustion.

Cursed Realm. The demonic plane corrupts all, even inanimate objects. Whenever a character finds a magic item, roll a d20. On a 19-20, that item gains the following additional trait:

- **Curse: Tear the Veil.** Once daily at sunrise, roll a d20. On a 19-20, a demon or fiend of the GM's choice tears through a hole in reality.

Illumination. Treat every area as having no light unless specified otherwise.

Underground. The majority of the Stygian Ramparts is an underground cavern, the exception being the rampart itself, which provides a neat (and horrifying) view of the larger demonic plane.

Areas of the Ramparts

The following locations are keyed to the map of The Stygian Ramparts on the next page:





The Stygian Ramparts

1 – Portal Landing

This room is empty except for the shimmering portal that connects the plane of hell to the land of the living.

Hazard: River of Lava. The river of lava emits dim light within a five foot radius, and can only be crossed by hopping from one small island to another by performing three DC 15 Dexterity (Acrobatics) checks. If a character fails a check, have them perform a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw. On a success, they regain their balance. On a failure, they partially slip into the lava and take 4d10 fire damage.

2 – Lair of the Damned

The southern cavern is divided into three discrete corridors: to the west is the Lair of the Damned, where a succubus and her pet have made a home of wrought iron. Corpses are fused into the rock and metal, their faces frozen in the agony of their final moments.

Encounter: Succubus & Hell Hound. At the back of this corridor is something like a bedroom–almost. Soft furs are piled in a corner, and various furnishings from the land of the living have been transported here for the succubus' comfort. The **succubus** will shapeshift into a person the characters are familiar with and attempt to lull them into complacency; her primary motive is to survive. If she is attacked, then the **hell hound** will emerge from the shadows and defend her to the death.

Treasure. Searching the succubus' lair takes one hour. A careful search of her affects turns up a Copper Necklace set with Sardonyx (250 gp), a *sentinel shield*, and 50 gp.

3 – The Bone Pit

The southern cavern is divided into three discrete corridors: to the east is The Bone Pit, where the demons occupying The Stygian Ramparts have piled their earthly conquests. At the end of this corridor is a room with a pile of rotting corpses and bones stacked eight feet high.

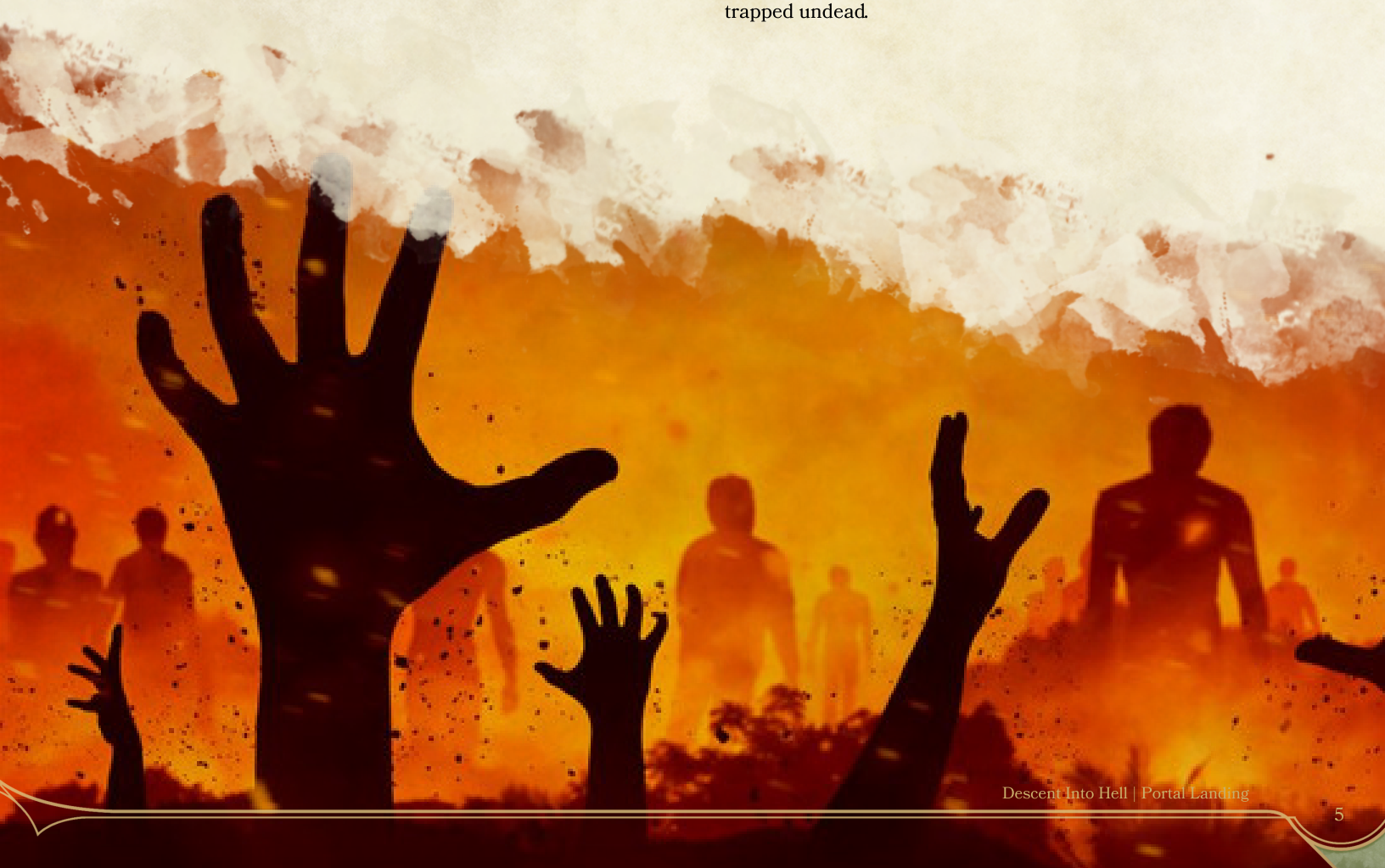
Encounter: Shadows. The restless spirits of the damned have been twisted into cruel **shadows**. Six of these shadows will follow intruders along the cavern walls and attack anyone who disturbs the bodies.

Treasure. Searching the corpse pile takes one hour. A careful search turns up a *short bow +1*, a *periapt of wound closure,* and 100 gp.

4 – Grasping Hallway

The southern cavern is divided into three discrete corridors: to the north is the Grasping Hallway, which is filled with the damned souls of the departed. Their spirits are trapped in undeath as their bodies are trapped in stone. The corridor is quite literally made out of bodies. Upon sensing intruders, those with mouths will begin to moan hungrily, eager for their next hapless meal.

Hazard: Grasping Hallway. For every ten feet that a character moves, have them perform a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw. On a success, they are able to navigate the maze of groping hands without getting pulled down. On a failure, they become overwhelmed by the hands of the undead and are knocked prone and become grappled (escape DC 15). Until the grapple ends, the character is restrained and has disadvantage on Strength checks and Strength saving throws, and receives 2d6 piercing damage at the beginning of their activation from the gnashing teeth of the trapped undead.



5 - Clearing

The corridor of moaning, hungry undead ends in an empty room. Stalagmites and stalactites abound, and one can hear the river of lava rumbling beneath the earth. A wrought iron staircase at the western edge of the area leads to The Rampart itself. The corpses of various humanoids are set naked on spikes here, their skin flayed to reveal rotting musculature and bloodied bone. Whatever earthly possessions these unfortunate souls carried into hell lie scattered around the room.

Treasure. Searching the room takes 1 hour. A careful search turns up a Marble Goblet set with Moonstone (250 gp), a fox fur shortsword scabbard (250 gp), 1,000 cp, 200 sp, and 70 gp.

6 - The Rampart

The iron staircase in area 5 leads outside onto The Rampart. It is constructed of iron, bone, humanoid skin, and fibrous knots of muscle. While standing in this area, one can look out onto the greater plane of hell: complex patterns of lava flows carve up the landscape, while bursts of flame illuminate briefly the demon lords' black citadels.

Hazard: Overwhelming Splendor. Any character with darkvision or currently under the effect of a spell, ability, or item that grants darkvision must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw while looking over the plane of hell. On a success, they are able to comprehend the landscape. On a failure, their mind begins to wheel violently at the sheer scope and horror of the plane: they take 2d6 psychic damage and have disadvantage on all ability checks and saving throws until they take a long rest outside of hell.

Encounter: Imp Flyover. Once halfway across the rampart, a patrol of five **imps** will divebomb the party. Any character with a passive Perception of 15 or less is surprised. As with the succubus, these imps understand that death in this plane is a permanent end; if three of them are cut down, the other two will flee.

7 - Corner Tower

A rounded tower platform lies on the northern end of The Rampart. It, too, is constructed of iron, bone, humanoid skin, and fibrous knots of muscle, with the added adornment of a large iron spike at its center. Stacked onto the spike, like a demonic shish kebab, are flayed humanoids.

Encounter: Knight of Orgorus. As soon as a character steps onto the corner tower, a Knight of Orgorus (a **wight** riding a **nightmare**) materializes from the Ethereal Plane. It is bound to the demon lord's service, and both knight and horse will fight to the death.



8 - Cave Entrance II

A spiral staircase of humanoid bone leads from the Corner Tower back underground, into the caverns. The lava's rumbling is audible here; methane and sulfur hiss through cracks in the broken earth, making the oppressive heat more unbearable still.

Trap: Bone Spikes. The DC is 15 to spot several runic carvings on the ground. A spell or other effect that can sense the presence of magic, such as *detect magic*, reveals an aura of conjuration magic around the runes. The trap activates when a character steps into a space containing a magic rune (indicated by the small circles on the map). When activated, a five-foot long spike of bone shoots out of the adjacent wall. Any creature occupying the space must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or take 4d10 damage.

Treasure: Hidden Stash. There is a pile of rocks acting as a false door on the western side of the cavern wall that leads to a four-foot high tunnel. At the back of the tunnel, buried in a shallow hole, is a pile of coins: 200 sp, 10 gp, and 1 pp. A DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals the unnatural configuration of rocks acting as the false door.

9 - Bridge of Bone

Still underground, Orgorus' tower–with the skull of some primordial demon perched atop it like a crown–looms over the lava flows. Before one can enter the tower, however, one must cross the lava via the Bridge of Bone.

Illumination. The lava flows emit dim firelight.

Encounter: Knight of Orgorus. As soon as a character steps onto the bridge, a Knight of Orgorus (a **wight** riding a **nightmare**) materializes from the Ethereal Plane. It is bound to the demon lord's service, and both knight and horse will fight to the death. The intruders shall not pass.

10 - Orgorus' Tower, F1

The first floor of the tower is a pentagonal room made of stone. Yet more corpses are stacked like firewood around the room, stripped of clothing, skin, and valuables. It is otherwise empty, providing a brief respite from the horrors outside. Two staircases wrap around the back of the room and disappear into darkness: they are wide enough for one medium sized creature and continue upwards for about one hundred feet. The stone stairs are slick with blood and gore.



11 - Orgorus' Tower, F2

The top of Orgorus' Tower provides an excellent view of The Bridge of Bone and the river of lava roiling beneath its arch. It is identical in shape and dimension to the first floor. The horns of the demon skull are visible from the staircase, looming thirty feet high to scrape the top of the cavern itself. A pentagram of blood has been drawn on the landing. Flayed corpses are arranged on spikes around the parapet like rubies in a crown. There is but one creature occupying the area, and he sits on a throne of wrought iron: Orgorus, One Who Devours.

Chains. Four rusted iron chains hang from the demon horns above: they each weigh one hundred pounds and are sixty feet long. Their ends are spooled around Orgorus' throne, awaiting his command.

Encounter: Orgorus, One Who Devours. Treat Orgorus as a **chain devil**, except he is wielding *Orgorus' bloody chain +1* (see the Appendix).

Treasure: Orgorus' Bloody Chain. Defeating Orgorus allows the characters to collect his enchanted chain weapon.

Concluding the Adventure: Return to Sigeric

If the characters successfully escape the plane of hell within the eight hour window, they'll find Sigeric waiting for them anxiously–as well as several city guards with a lot of questions on their minds. If you set this adventure in a city setting or some other populated space, consider adding some punitive consequences for helping Sigeric expose the world to hell.

Rewards

Sigeric will reward the characters what he promised only if they present Orgorus' head upon their return. Otherwise, he'll be quite disappointed and won't pay a single copper.

Appendix

Orgorus' Bloody Chain +1

Weapon (whip), rare, requires attunement

Requires Strength 16.

You have a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this weapon. A character attuned to this weapon may speak its command word to animate the chain. The animated chain is an object with AC 20, 20 hit points, resistance to piercing damage, and immunity to poison, psychic and thunder damage. While animated, the wielder can spend a bonus action to have it make an attack or grapple a target the character can see; the animated chain can grapple one creature but can't be used to make attacks while it is grappling a creature.

Enter The Inferno

Fifty years ago, the demon lord Orgorus walked among the people of Blustrom, leaving in his wake a river of blood, bone, and shattered lives. One such life belonged to a man called Sigeric: Orgorus possessed his body and performed unspeakable acts of depravity that left his soul scarred and broken.

Now, decades later, Sigeric has found a way to enter the plane of hell itself. Alas, his body has grown old and feeble in the intervening years. He requires champions to venture forth in his stead: these blessed few will bring retribution to the underworld.

It's time for a demon to meet its maker.

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Map Design: Limithron
Part of the DMDave **Setting of Blustrom**
Demon Nights Logo by SplatteredInk

